

# Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

**Date: Tuesday 25th November 2025**

**Time: 4.00 pm**

**Venue: Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath**

**Councillors:** Robin Moss, Hal MacFie, Toby Simon, Malcolm Treby,  
Duncan Hounsell, Jess David, Gavin Heathcote, Stuart Bridge and Shaun Hughes  
(for Colin Blackburn)



**Michaela Gay**

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## NOTES:

1. **Inspection of Papers:** Papers are available for inspection as follows:

Council's website: <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

Paper copies are available for inspection at the Guildhall - Bath.

2. **Details of decisions taken at this meeting** can be found in the minutes which will be circulated with the agenda for the next meeting. In the meantime, details can be obtained by contacting as above.

## 3. **Recording at Meetings:-**

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 now allows filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control.

Some of our meetings are webcast. At the start of the meeting, the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed. If you would prefer not to be filmed for the webcast, please make yourself known to the camera operators.

To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, we require the consent of parents or guardians before filming children or young people. For more information, please speak to the camera operator.

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## 4. **Public Speaking at Meetings**

The Council has a scheme to encourage the public to make their views known at meetings. They may make a statement relevant to what the meeting has power to do. They may also present a petition or a deputation on behalf of a group.

**Advance notice is required not less than two full working days before the meeting. This means that for meetings held on Thursdays notice must be received in Democratic Services by 5.00pm the previous Monday.**

Further details of the scheme can be found at:

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=12942>

## 5. **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

When the continuous alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building by one of the designated exits and proceed to the named assembly point. The designated exits are signposted. Arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of disabled people.

## 6. **Supplementary information for meetings**

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## Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel - Tuesday 25th November 2025

at 4.00 pm in the Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath

### A G E N D A

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
2. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair will draw attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as set out under Note 6.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting declarations of interest are received from Members in any of the agenda items under consideration at the meeting. Members are asked to indicate:

- (a) The agenda item number in which they have an interest to declare.
- (b) The nature of their interest.
- (c) Whether their interest is **a disclosable pecuniary interest** or an **other interest**,  
(as defined in Part 4.4 Appendix B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests)

Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer or a member of his staff before the meeting to expedite dealing with the item during the meeting.

5. TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN
6. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING
7. MINUTES (Pages 7 - 10)
8. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE
9. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2026/27 (Pages 11 - 48)
10. Q2 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2025/26 (Pages 49 - 84)
11. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT FINANCE AND ACTIVITY (Pages 85 - 98)

12. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME UPDATE (Pages 99 - 106)
13. PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS AND BY-ELECTIONS RECHARGES (Pages 107 - 118)
14. CAPITAL DELIVERY PROJECT ASSURANCE (Pages 119 - 136)
15. PANEL WORKPLAN (Pages 137 - 140)

This report presents the latest workplan for the Panel. Any suggestions for further items or amendments to the current programme will be logged and scheduled in consultation with the Panel's Chair and supporting officers.

The Committee Administrator for this meeting is Michaela Gay who can be contacted on [michaela\\_gay@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:michaela_gay@bathnes.gov.uk), 01225 394411.

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**BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

**MINUTES OF CORPORATE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING**

Tuesday 16th September 2025

Present:- **Councillors** Robin Moss, Hal MacFie, Toby Simon, Malcolm Treby, Colin Blackburn, Duncan Hounsell, Jess David and Gavin Heathcote

Apologies for absence: Councillors: Ian Halsall

**159 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**160 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

**161 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Ian Halsall gave his apologies.

**162 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**163 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

**164 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING**

There were none

**165 MINUTES**

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meetings as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

**166 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE**

The Council Leader was present and stated that he would answer any questions under this item and others.

**167 Q1 MONITORING REPORT**

The officer introduced the report.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor MacFie asked about the difference in numbers regarding international visitors. The Council Leader explained that the Chinese market had not fully recovered since Covid where the US had bounced back. He stated that this trend is in line with UK inbound and museum numbers. He added that the Roman Baths have received accreditation based on value for money and that the spend per individual is up. He stated that this was a credit to the Heritage Team.

Councillor Heathcote asked for confirmation that the 8 residential placements in Children's Services (£2.7m) were young people and not asylum seekers. The officer stated that was how he understood it. The Council Leader explained that there could be some policy development work regarding the private sector exploiting Local Government.

Councillor David asked if there is confidence in the level of savings regarding the BOB (Being Our Best) scheme. The officer explained that any savings are delayed due to the delays in the programme – we are currently working through the appeals process.

Councillor David asked if agency costs are a factor. The officer explained that relevant services will be working with HR (Human Resources) colleagues to address this.

Councillor MacFie asked about flexible capital receipts. The officer explained that this was introduced by the Government so capital profit can be used to fund one off revenue costs if certain criteria are met. The Council Leader gave an example of the Englishcombe Lane project where significant revenue savings could be used towards staff costs.

Councillor Blackburn asked about our marketing budget line outside of Visit West which is funded by WECA (West of England Combined Authority). The Council Leader explained that there is a marketing team in Heritage Services and we are aware of the need to push.

Councillor Simon asked that the Panel look at the Council Tax Reduction Scheme again and asked if there was a feel for levels of arrears. The officer explained that he did not have specific figures but thought that collection figures were generally holding up. Regarding Council Tax, the Council Leader added that we are lobbying the Government to take into account the number of students in a city with regard to the Fair Funding Review.

Councillor Treby asked how it is decided which Capital Schemes are paused. The officer explained that Capital Schemes generally would have a project contingency and there is also a corporate contingency.

Councillor Treby asked if there had been any change in the risk environment since the report went to Cabinet in July. The officer explained that the Fair Funding amount is still unclear and we will find out November/December time.



Councillor Moss stated that we have an officer coming to the November meeting of the Panel to talk about the Capital Programme and stated that the outcome of the Fair Funding Review is likely in the week before Christmas. He stated that there will be transitional protection. The officer stated that a couple of weeks are needed to work through it and transition funding would be 3 years. He added that Business Rates are unclear for us, there may not be protection regarding pilot reductions.

In response to a question from Councillor Moss regarding home to school transport, the officer explained that demand is not certain until we get confirmation of the September intake numbers. There is no flag of significant variance so far.

Councillor Moss noted that a small number of placements can have an impact on budgets. He asked if any placements were ceasing and if there was any discussion with the NHS regarding medical/social care. The officer stated that discussions are ongoing with our health partners. The Council Leader added that the new Director of Children's Services will be looking at procurement and that other authorities have been more ruthless in their discussions with the NHS.

The Chair thanked officers and the Council Leader.

## **168 PROCUREMENT UPDATE**

The officer introduced the report and gave a presentation, the slides are attached to these minutes.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Simon stated that the 'social value' work is appreciated. He asked about member involvement being more proactive in terms of contract vetting. The officer explained that member involvement at the point of design was built in during the Standing Order Review. Councillor Simon explained that he was a member of that group and wanted it to go further. The Council Leader explained that the Cabinet Member for Resources is working with the Resources Director on this. Councillor Simon stated that members could look at scoring/weighting systems. He welcomed the start that had been made.

In response to a question from Councillor Treby, the officer explained that there is no forecast at this stage on how much more would go to local businesses.

Councillor Moss thanked the officer for the report and noted the balance between legal requirements and the outcomes we want. He stated that in the legislation, contracts are not supposed to be broken down in size but the Voluntary Sector have highlighted that smaller contracts are more winnable for SMEs and the Voluntary Sector. He added that larger organisations have bid writing teams. There are concerns about contracts being awarded late. He also stated that with larger integrated care boards, 'local' might mean larger than we think and asked whose policy (NHS or Council) takes precedence. The Council Leader stated that it would be the one that pays.

In response to a question from Councillor Blackburn, the officer confirmed that the Council property company is inside the procurement rules.

The Chair thanked the Council Leader and officer.

**169    PANEL WORKPLAN**

Panel members noted the workplan with the following items scheduled for future meetings:

November 2025

- Home to School Finance Report
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme Update
- Capital Delivery Project Assurance
- Parish Council Election and by-election recharges

January 2026

- Library IT
- Budget discussion

The Panel agreed a new meeting date in February 2026 for the Panel to review feedback from each PDS Panel on the Budget.

The meeting ended at 5.09 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>	
MEETING:	<b>Corporate Policy Development &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>
MEETING:	<b>25<sup>th</sup> November 2025</b>
TITLE:	<b>2026/27 Medium Term Financial Strategy</b>
WARD:	All
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>	
<p><b>List of attachments to this report:</b></p> <p>Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 Cabinet Report</p> <p>Appendix 2: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 – 2030/31</p>	

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy was considered by the Cabinet at their 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 meeting. It sets out the strategic direction and priorities for the Council as well as outlining the financial context and challenges the Council faces over the next five years.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

The Panel is asked to;

- 2.1 Note and discuss the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

## **3 THE REPORT**

- 3.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 – 2030/31 Cabinet report and supporting appendices is included as the appendices to this paper and for Panel consideration.

- 3.2 The report sets out the current financial challenge, strategic direction and financial priorities for the Council, as well as the financing mechanisms available to the Council to achieve this. The key sections of the report for Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny to review and discuss are:

- Section 5 – The Current financial position 2025/26
- Section 6 – The Drivers of Demand
- Section 7 – Outlook for Government Grant Funding
- Section 8 – Council Tax

- Section 9 & 10 – The Financial outlook and managing the strategy
- Section 11 – Corporate Strategy and Council priorities

- 3.3 The final detail of the budget will need to be informed by the Chancellors budget statement on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and the 2026/27 provisional settlement from Government to Councils expected in December. The settlement will include the impacts of the new government mechanism for allocating grants to local government through a new funding formula as part of their “Fair Funding” proposals. The MTFS has been based on an interpretation of the initial government consultation proposals which have been modelled and validated externally in the absence of any specific local authority figures being provided by government.
- 3.4 The MTFS therefore assumes fair funding will be implemented as proposed over the medium term and that it will have a significant negative impact on the Council’s financial position. Along with prior years cuts to funding, constraints will continue and budget options will therefore be guided by the priority areas of service delivery as set out in the Corporate Strategy.
- 3.5 We will be making more information available on our budget plans following the budget announcement and provisional settlement and this will also be subject to scrutiny by the Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 The annual Medium Term Financial Strategy and planning process allocates resources across services with alignment of these resources towards the Council’s corporate priorities.

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 5.1 These are contained throughout the attached report and appendices.

## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.
- 6.2 The Medium Term Financial Strategy includes a section on specific risks.

## **7 CLIMATE CHANGE**

- 7.1 This is an information only report about the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy, it therefore does not include any decisions that have a direct impact on Climate Change.

## **8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 None

## 9 CONSULTATION

9.1 The Cabinet Member for Resources has been consulted on the drafting of the MTFS report as well as the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer.

<b>Contact person</b>	Jeff Wring - Director of Financial Services, Assurance & Pensions (S151 Officer) <a href="mailto:Jeff_Wring@bathnes.gov.uk">Jeff_Wring@bathnes.gov.uk</a>  Gary Adams, Head of Financial Management <a href="mailto:Gary_Adams@bathnes.gov.uk">Gary_Adams@bathnes.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers</b>	Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 and Financial Outlook – Council Agenda February 2025  2025/26 Quarter 2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring.
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	

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Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	13 November 2025	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 3661
TITLE:	2026/27 Medium Term Financial Strategy	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix 1 – Medium Term Financial Strategy		

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the strategic direction and priorities for the Council as well as outlining the financial context and challenges the Council faces over the next five years and the strategy that will be used to inform its annual budget process.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet is asked to;**

- 2.1 Approve the attached Medium Term Financial Strategy in Appendix 1.

## **3 THE REPORT**

- 3.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provides the framework for strategic planning, articulating the organisation's key aims and ambitions and guiding our activities with medium term budget setting and planning. It sets out the current financial challenge, strategic direction and financial priorities for the Council, as well as the financing mechanisms available to the Council to achieve this.
- 3.2 The MTFS models future years funding requirement for the Council's revenue budget and identifies where there are income shortfalls that require new savings plans. The strategy sets out the approach to address funding gaps prior to budget setting and the associated risks. Due to the financial challenges the Council faces, the MTFS sets out the strategic management options based on the high-level planning assumptions used in the MTFS budget forecast.
- 3.3 One of the key priorities in preparing this strategy is on understanding the impacts of Fair Funding on the Council, which is the new government

mechanism allocating grants to local government through a new funding formula. At the time of writing the MTFS the government have not yet published the results of the fair funding consultation exercise and their final plans for how the new model will be implemented. We have therefore based the MTFS on the initial government proposals which we have attempted to model and then validate externally.

3.4 The MTFS therefore assumes fair funding will be implemented as proposed over the medium term and that it will have a significant negative impact on the Council's financial position. Along with prior years cuts to funding, constraints will continue and budget options will therefore be guided by the priority areas of service delivery as set out in the Corporate Strategy.

3.5 Following the updating of assumptions, including the projected impacts of the Fairer Funding reforms, the current MTFS shows a budget gap of £8.9m for 2026/27 with projected budget gaps in each year of the period covering 2027/28 to 2030/31 as follows:

Budget Planning	Future years assumptions £m					Total
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	
Growth Requirement	11.97	16.49	14.49	14.92	15.21	73.08
Funding Increase	2.10	5.58	4.49	9.88	10.29	32.34
<b>Annual Funding gap</b>	<b>9.87</b>	<b>10.91</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>5.04</b>	<b>4.92</b>	<b>40.74</b>
Savings Proposals	0.96	0.85	0.10	0.10	0.10	2.11
<b>Remaining Funding Gap</b>	<b>8.91</b>	<b>10.06</b>	<b>9.90</b>	<b>4.94</b>	<b>4.82</b>	<b>38.63</b>

3.6 The level of uncertainty and risk is abnormally high for this strategy due to the uncertainties and impacts of Fair Funding which have compounded an already challenging financial position.

3.7 Officers therefore have been actively working on options to manage the funding gap within the budget proposals for some months and these will be subject to consultation in the normal way later in the year.

3.8 All of this work will then culminate in the budget proposals for 2026/27 which Cabinet will formally review early in 2026.

## 4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy as outlined is part of the preparation for the budget and Council Tax setting for 2026/27 which will be considered by this Council in February 2026. Equality analysis will be carried out on specific budget proposals as part of that process.

## 5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 The resource implications are outlined within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy attached to this report.



## 6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

6.2 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy includes a section on specific risks.

## 7 CLIMATE CHANGE

7.1 The Corporate Strategy highlights that “Addressing the Climate Emergency” is one of the key themes reflected in the administration’s priorities. This includes plans to work with local communities to deliver the Council resolution agreed in March 2019 to declare a climate emergency, and for the area to become carbon neutral by 2030.

## 8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 The supporting paper outlines options for balancing future budgets.

## 9 CONSULTATION

9.1 A consultation plan is being assessed to ensure stakeholder engagement for the key aspects of the strategy and this will take place during December / January.

<b>Contact person</b>	Jeff Wring - Director of Financial Services, Assurance & Pensions (S151 Officer) <a href="mailto:Jeff.Wring@bathnes.gov.uk">Jeff.Wring@bathnes.gov.uk</a>  Gary Adams, Head of Financial Management <a href="mailto:Gary.Adams@bathnes.gov.uk">Gary.Adams@bathnes.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers</b>	Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 and Financial Outlook – Council Agenda February 2025
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	

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## **Appendix 1 - Bath & North East Somerset – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27 - 2030/31**

### **1. Purpose of the Strategy**

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provides a budget setting framework which details the available resources for strategic financial planning, articulating the organisation's key aims and ambitions and guiding our activities with medium term budget setting and planning.

The MTFS will model the future years funding requirement for the Council's revenue budget and identify where there are income shortfalls that require new savings plans. The strategy will set out the approach to address funding gaps prior to budget setting and the associated risks. Due to the current financial challenges the Council faces the MTFS sets out strategic management options based on the high-level planning assumptions in section 9.

One of our key priorities in preparing this strategy is on understanding the impacts of Fair Funding on the Council, which is the new government mechanism allocating grants to local government through a new funding formula. At the time of writing the MTFS the government have not yet published the results of the fair funding consultation exercise and their final plans for how the new model will be implemented. We have therefore based the MTFS on the initial government proposals which we have attempted to model and then validate externally.

The MTFS therefore assumes fair funding will be implemented as proposed over the medium term and that it will have a significant negative impact on the Council's financial position. Along with prior years cuts to funding, constraints will continue and budget options will therefore be guided by the priority areas of service delivery as set out in the Corporate Strategy.

### **2. Expected Outcomes from the Strategy**

The objective of this document is to publish existing Council agreed plans and set the future years strategic resourcing plan; recognising the resourcing requirement to meet the administration's priorities to deliver the 2023 – 2027 Corporate Strategy for the Council, whilst maintaining a balanced budget over the next five years.

A balanced budget requires the financial plan to set out how income will equal spend over the short and medium term. Plans will take into account cost savings alongside income growth strategies as well as useable reserves.

Operating and funding the Council in the current economic environment with constrained national public finances due to continued low economic growth continues to be challenging, the Council is impacted due to services being exposed to either people or contract inflation, alongside the additional demands on Children's and Adult Social Care. The Council has responded to this challenge over the past three years and in 2024/25 ended the financial year in a balanced position after transfers from reserves of **£0.21m**. The strategy therefore focusses on how this approach can be adopted in the current and future years addressing the short, medium and long-term financial planning requirements whilst implementing the Fair Funding mechanism.

### 3. Executive Summary and recommendations from the MTFS for consideration

The overall aim of the Medium Term Financial Strategy is to:

- Set out and deliver the Council's priorities within affordable and sustainable financial constraints;
- Ensure that the administration's (Council's) strategic priorities are reflected in its capital programme and also that the capital programme is affordable;
- Ensure that cash flows are adequately planned so that cash is available when required and the Council can meet its capital spending obligations; and
- Set a sound financial planning framework to underpin the effective financial management of the Council.

This MTFS update is taking place at a time of great uncertainty in respect of government funding for the period from 2026/27 onwards. The government launched a consultation on its "Fair Funding Review" over the Summer which detailed the direction of travel for Local Government funding and its distribution.

The Core principles of the Fair Funding Review as set out by government include:

- **Funding Simplification:** Last updated in 2013/14. Aim is to streamline the system by consolidating multiple grants into fewer, more predictable funding streams.
- **Needs-Based Allocation:** Using updated Relative Needs Formulas to assess local demand for services like adult social care, children's services, and fire and rescue.
- **Area Cost Adjustment:** Recognising regional differences in the cost of delivering services, such as higher wages or transport costs in rural or urban areas.
- **Resources Adjustment:** Factoring in each authority's ability to raise revenue locally, especially through council tax.
- **Business Rates Reset:** Overhauling the Business Rates Retention Scheme to reflect current economic conditions and ensure fairer distribution.
- **Devolution and Local Empowerment:** Reducing central government micromanagement and giving councils more control over spending decisions.
- **Ending Competitive Bidding:** Phasing out short-term, competitive grant applications in favour of multi-year settlements that offer stability.
- **Transitional Protection:** Gradually implementing changes over three years (2026–2029) to avoid sudden funding shocks.

The government has not provided exemplifications to show how the range of funding changes will impact on individual Councils. In the absence of such information the Council has used modelling undertaken by sector experts alongside our own funding information to forecast potential impacts. It must be noted that the potential outcomes of the Fair Funding Review should be treated with a degree of caution given that we are still awaiting the government's response to the consultation process. Additionally the implementation of the mechanism and final decisions and specific allocations will not be known until the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is announced. This is currently anticipated around Christmas although no specific date has currently been announced. This uncertainty and lack of exemplifications makes financing planning extremely challenging.

The modelling undertaken forecasts that the Council will be a net loser from the proposed changes. The main reasons are due to the relative needs of the Council being assessed as lower than other areas who have greater levels of deprivation, the assessment that the Council has a relatively higher ability to generate resources through Council Tax (having a relatively higher Taxbase) and the redistribution of Business Rate income arising from the proposed Business Rate Reset.

For financial planning and updating the MTFS, which was previously based on a largely cash flat roll forward of grant funding, the estimated impact is an estimated reduction in funding at an overall level of £13m over the next 3 years. This is profiled with estimated reductions of £4m in 2026/27, £4m in 2027/28 and £5m in 2028/29.

The following section provides details of the main grants the Council currently receives at 2025/26 levels. It is not currently possible to estimate individual impacts of the Fair Funding Review on each grant as these are subject to the outcomes of the review and finalisation of which grants will be rolled into core funding.

Despite this uncertainty the Council still needs to plan its finances for the medium to longer term and therefore the Strategy is based on best estimates at this stage. The Council has a good track record in savings delivery, in 2024/25 the budget had a savings requirement of £16.42m, of which 77% (£12.66m) were delivered in full, 17% (£2.78m) were mitigated through savings, contingency or income elsewhere in the respective service, with the remaining 6% (£0.98m) delayed until 2025/26 or addressed through the budget setting proposals. As a result of the ongoing budget challenge the 2025/26 budget requires the delivery of £14.01m in savings and income generation plans.

The MTFS base case as set out in the report (section 9) estimates that the Council will need to find up to £40.74m (including the £2.11m already identified) in savings over the next five years. This is based on the assumption that Council tax increases are capped at 4.99% for the five year period 2026/27 to 2030/31. This consists of a general increase of 2.99% and an Adult Social Care Precept increase of 2%.

The main contributing factors that are driving the budget gap is the new fair funding model along with sustained inflation and higher than expected interest rates due to cost-of-living, these impact the Council's running costs as well as the supply chain for external provision. In addition, the Council continues to see demand and activity rise for essential Social Care services, which is compounded by high market costs and a reliance on out of area provision.

In the shorter term the profile of the savings shows a requirement of £9.87m next year, of which there are confirmed planned savings of £0.96m.

To manage this risk section 10 of the report sets out the savings range and the level that has been used for planning purposes.

To manage financial risk the Council holds £12.58m of unearmarked reserves, this is reviewed annually as part of the Council's budget proposal where the S151 Officer carries out an assessment of budget risk and reserve levels to manage these risks.

The Council holds Revenue Budget Contingency and Financial Planning / Smoothing reserves that enable one-off transitional funding to meet revenue costs. Over the life of the MTFS these reserves when drawn down will be replenished to ensure financial resilience and availability for future years budgets. These reserves are replenished within the five year MTFS period. Flexible capital receipts will

continue to be utilised to fund the one off costs of transformation that result in delivering ongoing savings, this use will be in line with government guidance.

Capital spending will focus on the delivery of priority schemes within affordability levels, the 2026/27 Capital programme is being reviewed to ensure the most accurate delivery timetable, resulting in a more accurate budget profile.

As part of delivering this strategy plans are being put in place to engage with all elected members, partners and the public as part of the budget process for 2026/27 and the following years.

#### **4. The Medium Term Financial Strategy**

The MTFS outlines the factors which are expected to drive future costs and sets out the funding projections and our strategy for addressing the funding gap. It supports the medium term policy and financial planning process at the heart of setting revenue and capital budgets.

The core principles underlying the MTFS are as follows:

- That the Council will seek to maintain a sustainable financial position over the course of the five year planning period of the MTFS;
- That the Council will make provision for pressures, demographic changes, and inflation where appropriate with new priorities added only if “headroom” is achieved;
- The deployment of the Council's limited resources will be focused towards essential services and those that contribute to the delivery of the Corporate Strategy, tackling the Climate Emergency and giving residents a bigger say.
- Council tax increases have been included within the term of the MTFS to support essential services.
- New sustainable income opportunities are to be identified and maximised wherever possible while maintaining current income streams through current economic uncertainty.

## 5. The Current Financial Position

### 2024/25 Outturn

The Council delivered an adverse outturn position after carry forwards of £0.21m as follows:

<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Revised Budget £m</b>	<b>Outturn £m</b>	<b>Variance Over / (Under) £m</b>
Leader of Council	(0.27)	(0.44)	(0.16)
Climate Emergency and Sustainable Travel	1.52	1.46	(0.07)
Council Priorities and Delivery	6.28	5.94	(0.34)
Resources - Services	6.36	5.72	(0.63)
Resources - Corporate	3.19	(2.09)	(5.29)
Economic and Cultural Development	(5.87)	(4.47)	1.40
Adult Services	62.88	62.95	0.07
Children's Services	46.41	52.59	6.18
Highways	(0.95)	(2.20)	(1.25)
Neighbourhood Services	27.09	28.30	1.21
Built Environment and Sustainable Development	2.92	2.79	(0.13)
<b>Portfolios Total</b>	<b>149.56</b>	<b>150.55</b>	<b>0.99</b>
Partial Release of Provision	0.00	(0.99)	(0.99)
<b>Total (before Carry Forwards)</b>	<b>149.56</b>	<b>149.56</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Carry Forward Requests (underspends)	0.00	0.21	0.21
<b>Total (including Carry Forwards)</b>	<b>149.56</b>	<b>149.77</b>	<b>0.21</b>

The £0.21m overspend was funded by a transfer from the Revenue Budget Contingency Reserve, which is used to fund unbudgeted revenue pressures which are unable to be mitigated by management and recovery actions.

### Budget 2025/26

The 2025/26 net budget of £151.71m was approved by Council in February 2025. Quarter 2 budget monitoring to the end of September, shows a projected overspend of £2.42m against the revised budget of £152.10m as shown below.

Current monitoring highlights the continued impact of demand pressures on Council services, which have continued to increase since budgets were approved in February 2025.

<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Revised Budget £'m</b>	<b>Year End Forecast £'m</b>	<b>Variance Over / (Under) £'m</b>
Leader of Council	(1.00)	(1.00)	0.00
Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset	3.43	3.46	0.03
Resources - Services	32.45	33.71	1.26
Resources - Corporate	5.15	3.50	(1.65)
Resources - Corporate Contingencies	9.83	0.00	(9.83)
Resources - Being Our Best Programme	(4.00)	(0.03)	3.97
Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development	(9.21)	(5.75)	3.46
Adult Services	64.08	65.07	0.99
Children's Services	42.74	48.75	6.00
Communications and Community	5.20	5.73	0.53
Sustainable Transport Strategy	(8.73)	(9.10)	(0.37)
Sustainable Transport Delivery	8.16	8.02	(0.15)
Built Environment and Sustainable Development	3.99	3.66	(0.33)
<b>Total</b>	<b>152.10</b>	<b>156.01</b>	<b>3.91</b>
<i>Job Evaluation and Pay Structure Reserve</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>(1.49)</i>	<i>(1.49)</i>
<b>Quarter 2 Forecast Outturn Variance</b>	<b>152.10</b>	<b>154.52</b>	<b>2.42</b>

Children's Services are forecasting the largest cost pressure of £6m, primarily due to high-cost packages required to support the most vulnerable and complex young people in the area. Adult Services and Corporate Estate are also forecasting significant expenditure pressures, while staffing costs across the organisation have increased because of the pay and grading review associated with the Being Our Best programme. Income is lower than budgeted for both the Roman Baths and the Commercial Estate, however Parking Services are seeing income exceed expectations. Lower borrowing costs and strong treasury management performance are also helping offset the adverse financial position.

The £2.4m forecast over budget position includes the use of £9.8m budgeted contingencies and the use of the Job Evaluation and Pay Structure reserve (£1.5m).

Directors are actively developing mitigation plans for the service areas which are in an over budget position, identified above, to manage this position in year and bring the Council back into a balanced position. Mitigations will be reported through the quarterly monitoring reports to Cabinet. In the event the above budget position cannot be fully mitigated the Council's Revenue Budget Contingency Reserve and unearmarked reserves will need to be utilised, subject to approval. Should this be required there would be a requirement to replenish these reserves in future years, putting further pressure on meeting the medium-term budget gaps.

## 6. Drivers of Demand

### The Economic outlook

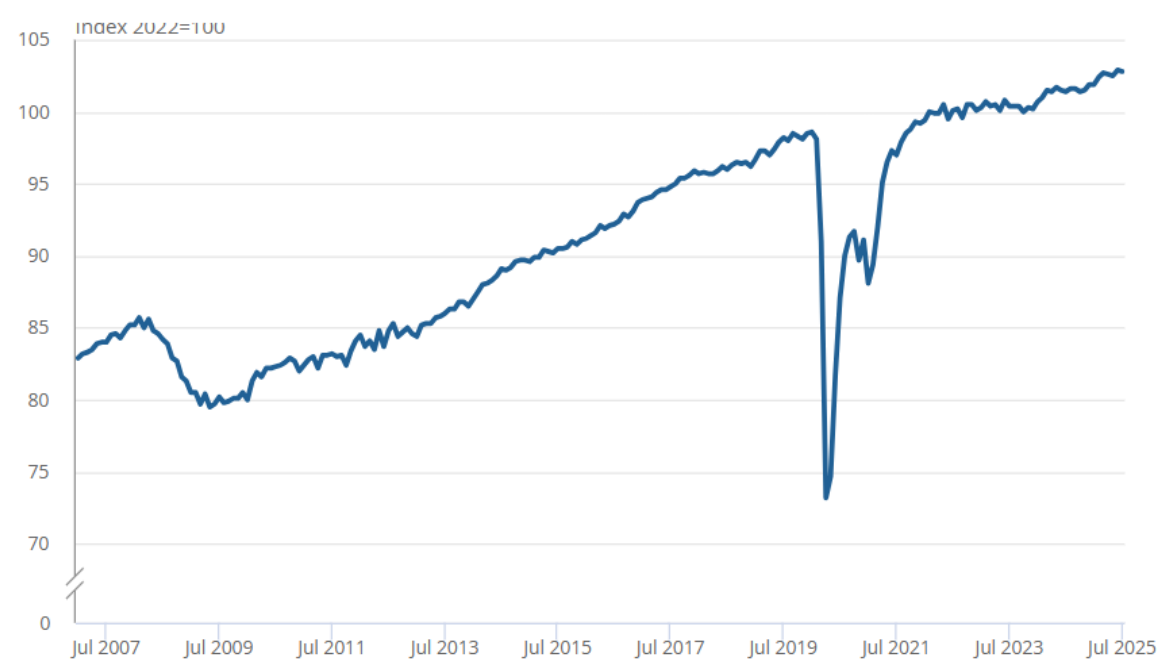
The post pandemic UK economy made a good recovery leading to an increase in activity, this created a shortage of supply at an international level resulting in a rise in inflation. In addition, the war in Ukraine impacted on energy supply and price that drove inflation to its highest level since the 1970's. Since 2022 growth has been sluggish and well below the pre pandemic range of 1.8% - 2% achieved between 2010 and 2019.

The diagram below shows that real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is estimated to have grown by 0.2% in the three months to July 2025, compared with the three months



to April 2025. This rate of growth has slowed since the peak of 0.8% growth in the three months to April 2025.

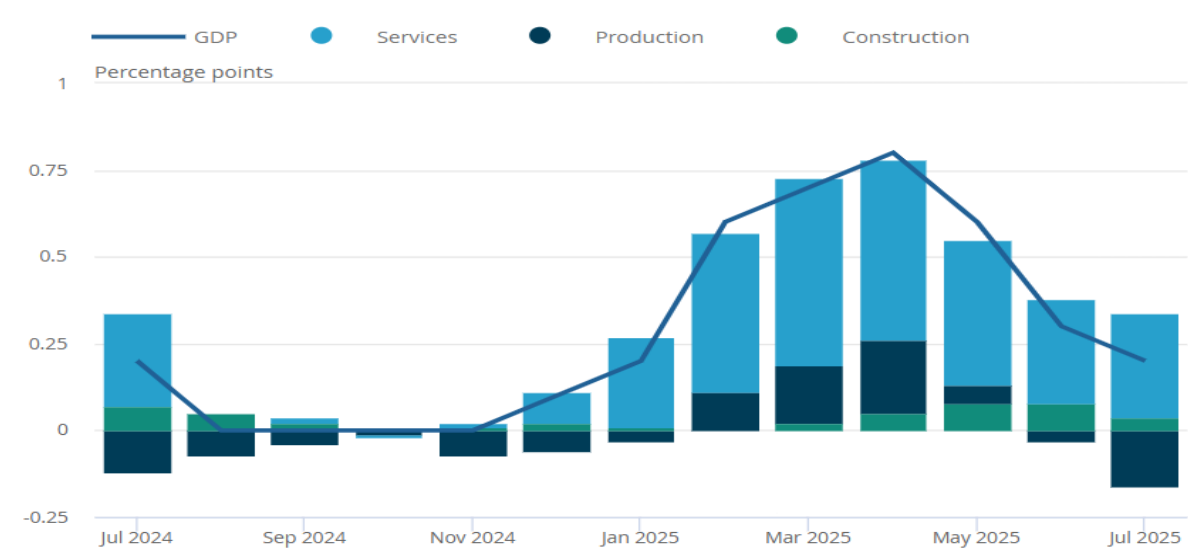
Monthly index 2022=100, January 1997 to July 2025, UK



Source: Office for National Statistics - Monthly GDP

The chart below shows the monthly sector movements contributing to the changes in UK GDP with overall monthly movements ranging between +0.75% and 0% over the past year.

Contributions to three-month GDP growth, July 2024 to July 2025 UK



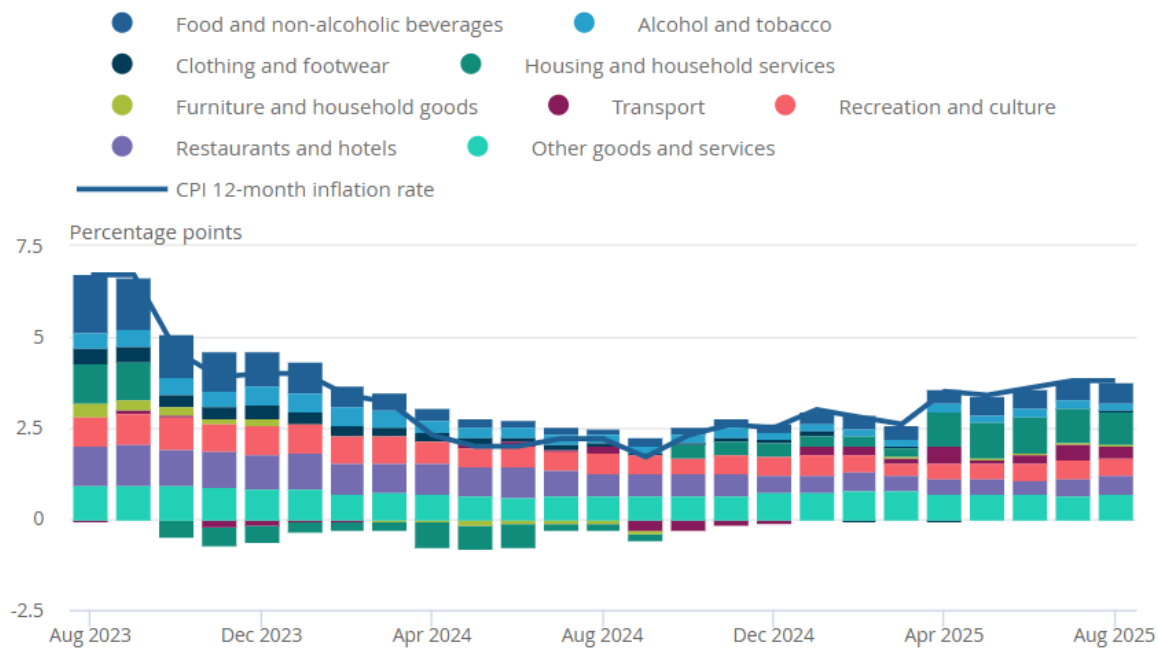
Source: GDP monthly estimate from the Office for National Statistics

The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rose by 3.8% in the 12 months to August 2025, in line with the same increase in the period to July. On a monthly basis, CPI rose by 0.3% in August 2025, the same rise when compared with August 2024.

These levels of inflation have impacted on the cost of running the Council and its budgets resulting in an increase in staffing costs for employed and contracted employees, also on its supplies and services provided through contracts. Pay and contract inflation estimates have been refreshed to take into account the economic outlook.

The make up by sector in the movement in CPI can be found in the graph below.

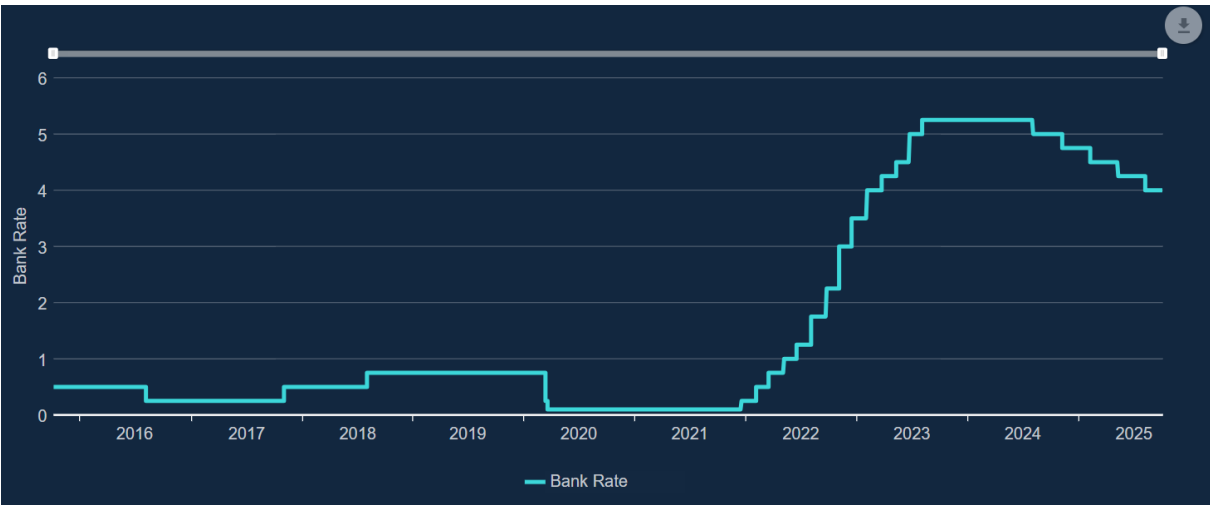
**Contributions to the CPI annual inflation rate, UK, August 2023 to August 2025**



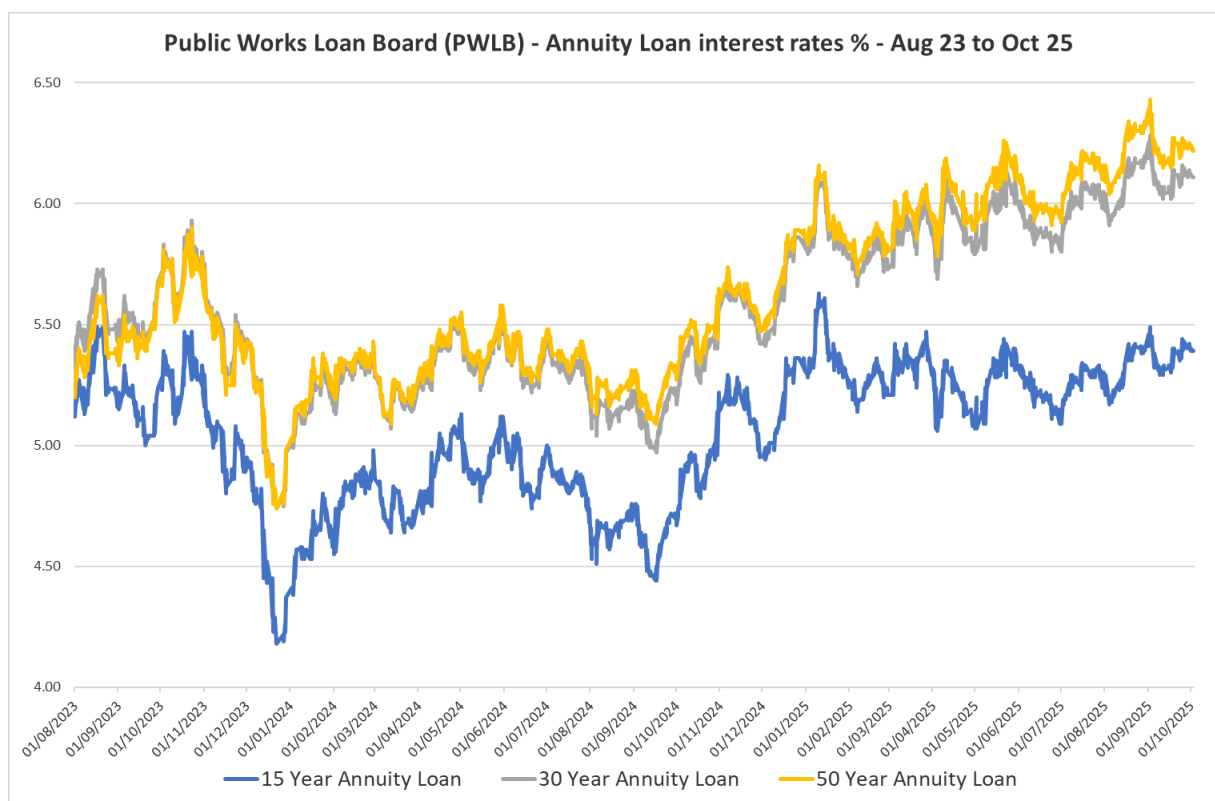
Source: Consumer price inflation from the Office for National Statistics

The Bank of England base interest rate reached a low of 0.10% in March 2020 before rising to 5.25% through the period to September 2023, where it remained until a 0.25% rate cut to 5.00% was agreed in August 2024. There has since been four further 0.25% reductions giving a rate of 4% agreed at the August 2025 Monetary Policy Committee meeting. This has an impact on the interest earned on the Council's cash balances and on the short term borrowing rates from the public works loan board (PWLb) for borrowing required to fund the Council's capital programme. The medium to longer term PWLB borrowing rates remain elevated and are driven by investor expectations on inflation, economic growth and central bank monetary policy.

**Official Bank of England Interest rate**



The graph below shows the latest PWLB interest rates trend for 15 year, 30 year and 50 year loans:



For new Capital borrowing scheme affordability is being calculated with a 5% cost of capital rate with borrowing likely to target the short to medium term maturity range if longer term rates remain elevated.

### Economic impact on the Councils income budgets

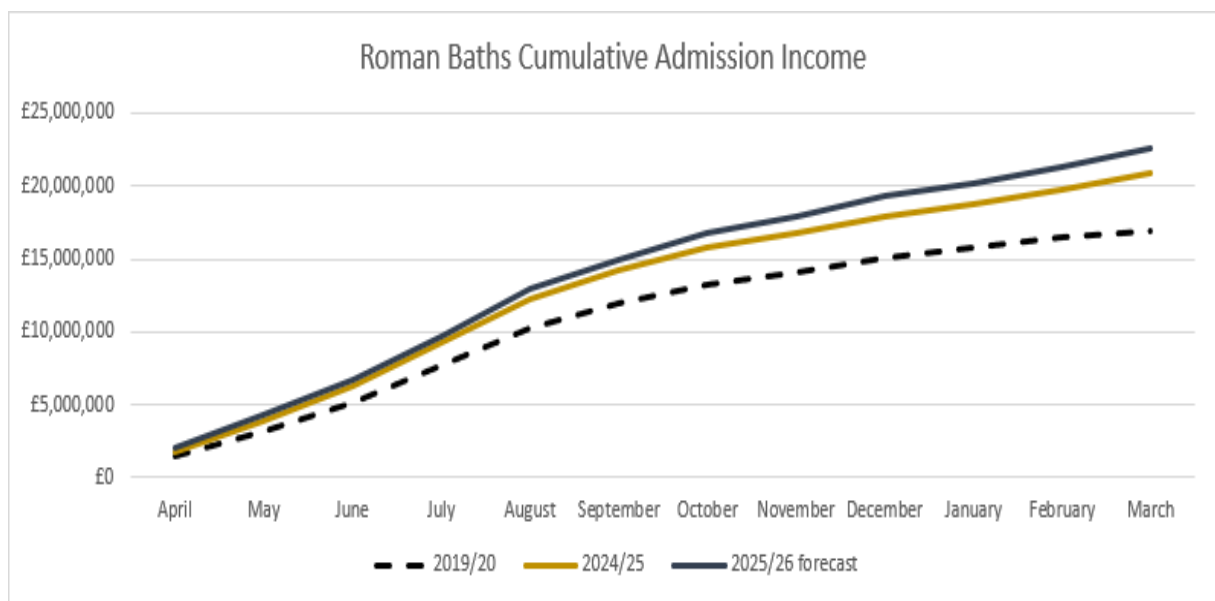
Current performance for the Council's main income generating services are below:

#### Culture & Heritage Services Income

Culture and Heritage Services income budgets are largely driven by visitor numbers to the Roman Baths. The budget for 2024/25 was set at 1,100,000 visitors, 92% of the pre-pandemic footfall.

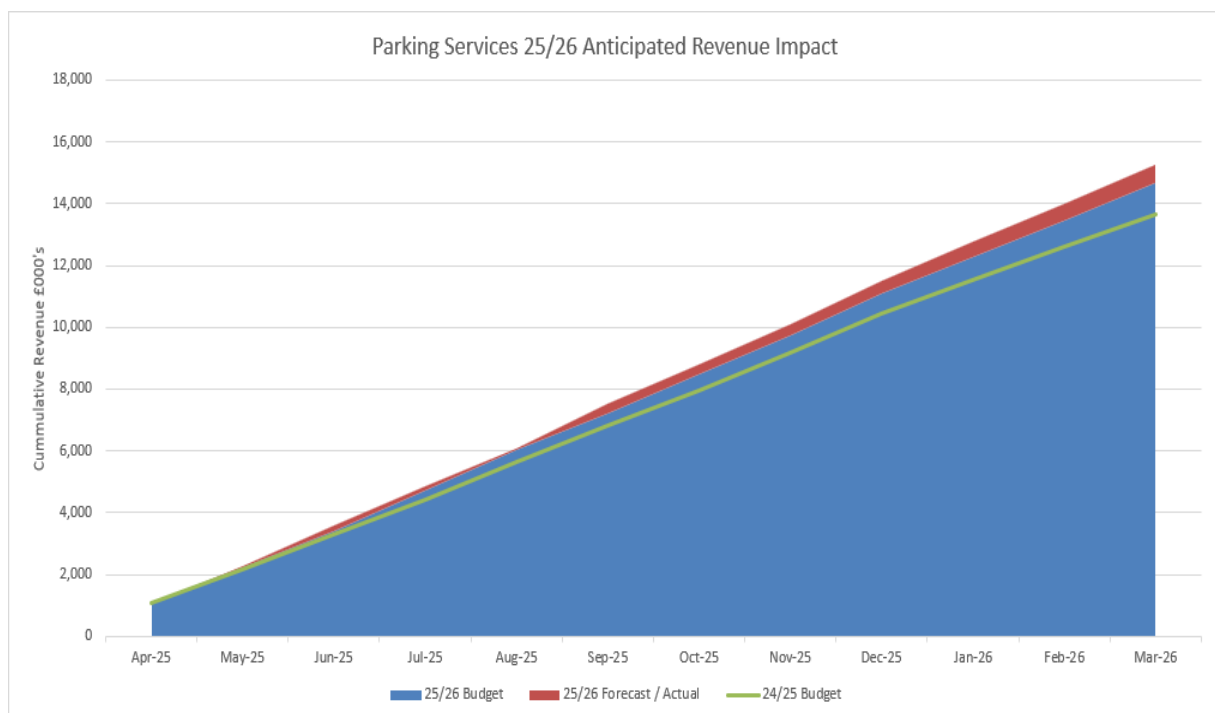
In 2024/25 Culture and Heritage Services significantly exceeded pre-COVID income and the chart below shows that the Service anticipates 2025/26 surpassing this total and delivering the highest income and surplus that the Service has ever returned to the Council.

However, footfall over the first half of the financial year was down on budget. This has been driven by an unanticipated reduction in US visitors, an increase in the numbers of domestic visitors taking overseas holidays and continued inflation pressures constraining disposable incomes.



## Parking Services Income

Prior to the pandemic, the Parking Services income budget was c£12m. This has increased to £13.7m in 2024/25, and £14.7m in 2025/26. These increases reflect continued increase in parking use and planned parking price rises but also built in additional revenue associated with new Residential Parking Zones and emissions-based charging, which in 2024 was deployed across all car parking. Strong income is supported by changes in the national job market which have enabled the team to fill all vacant Civil Enforcement Officer posts, from a position during the pandemic where 50% of posts (15 in total) were vacant. The service is currently projecting an overall year end £0.5m favourable position due to the continued strong performance of all parking locations, with a positive performance during the first half of 2025/26.



Adult Social Care

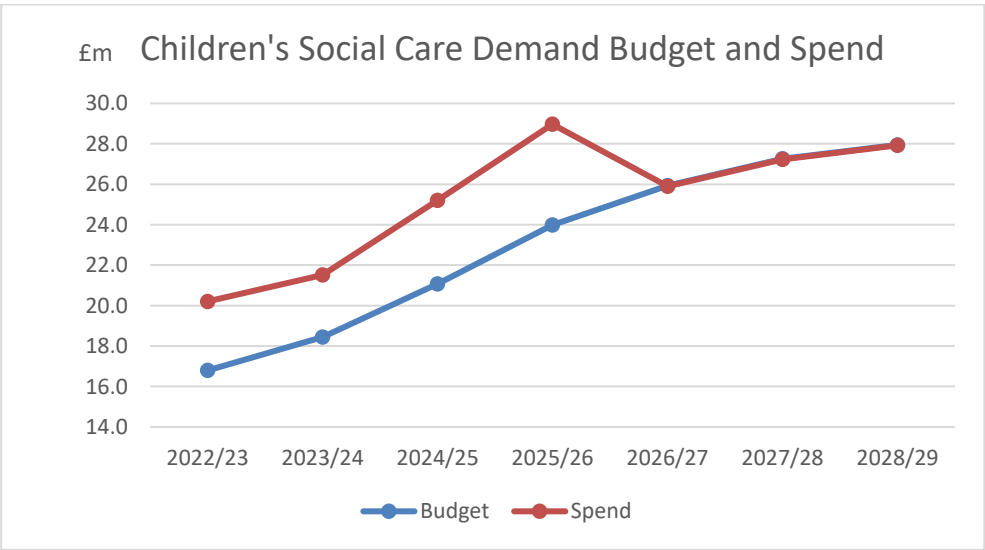
The Council has sought to set realistic and deliverable budgets through the MTFS and budgeting process. Significant resource has been added to Adult and Children’s services over the last few years whilst both services have delivered other savings and efficiency gains.

The challenges facing Adult Social Care (ASC) nationally as well as locally continue. It is predicted that demand for adult social care is projected to increase significantly in future years, largely due to an ageing population. The cost of care is also increasing and those entering care generally need higher levels of care and support. The capacity to deliver required care is impacted by recruitment and retention issues within the provider market. Inflationary pressures and market stability issues continue in the independent sector. These challenges are impacting all ASC users and carers. Funding for Market Sustainability of £3.2m was again received in 2025/26 from the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund and this has been used to support the market challenges mentioned.

The MTFS allocates £19.5m for demographic and contract inflation pressures within ASC over the next five years, service demand levels are being reviewed and the current trend has shown that caseload is back to activity levels previously seen. Complexity of need and provider costs are continuing to increase.

Children’s Social Care

As demonstrated from the graph below Children’s Services expenditure has not been manageable within the current budget envelope. The service continues to see increasing cost in the numbers of children in care, in addition to the increasing costs of supporting disabled children at home. The number of children looked after (LAC) by the Council is currently 233. This number includes 23 that are classed as Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). The MTFS allocates £6.2m for demographic and contractual inflationary pressures within Children’s Services over the next five years.



A further area of pressure within Children’s Services is the significant increases in children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). This is adding to the pressure on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) managed by the Council. The 2024/25 outturn resulted in a DSG cumulative overspend of £32.79m. The overspend of the DSG in year in 2024/25 was £10.53m. The historical deficit and

in year overspends are being addressed via the Safety Valve project in conjunction with the Department for Education (DfE) over a 6 year period.

In 2022/23, the first payment from the DfE of £7.68m was received and a further payment in 2023/24 of £0.55m has been received. A revised plan was requested by the DfE during 2023/24, this has been submitted and is awaiting agreement. The overspend is recorded as a specific unusable reserve in the Local Authority (LA) accounts.

Children's Services are very cognizant of the continued financial pressure that is resultant from the expense of providing appropriate care and placements to meet the needs of our children and young people. To mitigate these pressures Children's Services are delivering a targeted response through an enhanced Transformation Programme and detailed scrutiny of all areas of activity and spend. This has included a focused placements taskforce responsible for cost assurance and ensuring that young people's needs are met through the most effective and sustainable means possible.

2025/26 & 2026/27 has been deemed as a transformational period for the implementation of The Families First Partnership (FFP) Programme. This is a new national programme set up in the Department for Education (DfE) and supported by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Department of Health and Social Care and the Home Office. Through the programme, government is working in partnership with local areas (local authorities, police, health, education, childcare settings and other relevant agencies) to improve their local services and systems that help and protect children and families. The reforms include the introduction of Family Help, strengthening multi-agency child protection, and improving engagement with family network

## 7. Outlook for Government Grant Funding

As detailed above this MTFS update is taking place at a time of great uncertainty in respect of government funding for the period from 2026/27. The government launched a consultation on it's "Fair Funding Review" over the Summer which detailed the direction of travel for Local Government funding and its distribution.

The Funding Review will update the methodology for distributing a fixed amount of funding between local authorities. The underlying data used in the current grant distribution system hasn't been updated since 2013 when the Business Rate Retention system was introduced.

The Core principles of the Fair Funding Review as set out by government include:

- **Funding Simplification:** Last updated in 2013/14. Aim is to streamline the system by consolidating multiple grants into fewer, more predictable funding streams.
- **Needs-Based Allocation:** Using updated Relative Needs Formulas to assess local demand for services like adult social care, children's services, and fire and rescue.
- **Area Cost Adjustment:** Recognising regional differences in the cost of delivering services, such as higher wages or transport costs in rural or urban areas.
- **Resources Adjustment:** Factoring in each authority's ability to raise revenue locally, especially through council tax.
- **Business Rates Reset:** Overhauling the Business Rates Retention Scheme to reflect current economic conditions and ensure fairer distribution.

- **Devolution and Local Empowerment:** Reducing central government micromanagement and giving councils more control over spending decisions.
- **Ending Competitive Bidding:** Phasing out short-term, competitive grant applications in favour of multi-year settlements that offer stability.
- **Transitional Protection:** Gradually implementing changes over three years (2026–2029) to avoid sudden funding shocks.

The government has not provided exemplifications to show how the range of funding changes will impact on individual Councils. In the absence of such information the Council has used modelling undertaken by sector experts alongside our own funding information to forecast potential impacts. It must be noted that these potential outcomes of the Fair Funding Review should be treated with a high degree of caution given that final decisions and specific allocations will not be known until the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement is announced. This is currently anticipated around Christmas although no specific date has currently been announced. This uncertainty and lack of exemplifications makes financing planning extremely challenging.

The modelling undertaken forecasts that the Council will be a net loser from the proposed changes. The main reasons are due to the relative needs of the Council being assessed as lower than other areas who have greater levels of deprivation, the assessment that the Council has a relatively higher ability to generate resources through Council Tax (having a relatively higher Taxbase) and the redistribution of Business Rate income arising from the proposed Business Rate Reset.

For financial planning and updating the MTFs, which was previously based on a largely cash flat roll forward of grant funding, the estimated impact is an estimated reduction in funding at an overall level of £13m over the next 3 years. This is profiled with estimated reductions of £4m in 2026/27, £4m in 2027/28 and £5m in 2028/29.

The following section provides details of the main grants the Council currently receives at 2025/26 levels. It is not currently possible to estimate individual impacts of the Fair Funding Review on each grant as these are subject to the outcomes of the review and finalisation of which grants will be rolled into core funding.

### Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

The Council received Revenue Support Grant (RSG) in 2025/26 of £1.256m (2024/25 £0.831m). The increase of £0.425m reflected the transfer into RSG of £0.411m in respect of the specific grants listed below, based on 2024/25 grant amounts, and an inflationary uplift of £0.014m on the core RSG:

- Extended Rights for Home to School Transport Grant - £0.379m
- Electoral Integrity Grant - £0.017m
- Transparency Code Grant - £0.013m
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures Grant - £0.002m

The RSG allocated to B&NES has been rolled into the 100% Business Rate Pilot Scheme, with the Council retaining an equivalent amount of business rates instead of receiving a RSG payment.

### New Homes Bonus

The New Homes Bonus is a grant paid by central government to local councils to reflect and incentivise housing growth in their areas. It is based on the amount of extra Council Tax revenue raised for new-build homes, conversions and long-term empty homes brought back into use. There is also an extra payment for providing affordable homes.

The Settlement has outlined that the New Homes Bonus would continue in its current format for a final year in 2025/26. This resulted in a 2025/26 New Homes Bonus grant payment of £0.913m for new housing growth over the past year, an increase of £0.586m from 2024/25.

### Social Care Grant

The 2025/26 settlement confirmed a further £2.2m Social Care grant funding which was combined with the continuation of the existing Social Care Support grant to give a revised total of £15.45m.

### Adult Social Care Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund Grant

The Local Government Finance Settlement included grant funding for 2025/26 of £3.193m through the Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund Grant.

### Local Authority Better Care Fund Grant

The 2025/26 Settlement included the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund Grant, previously received as a separate grant. The total grant for 2025/26 was £6m.

### Better Care Fund

The Better Care Fund is intended to incentivize the integration of health and social care, requiring Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and Local Authorities to pool budgets and agree an integrated spending plan. Greater integration is seen as a potential way to use resources more efficiently, by enabling people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer and to provide the right care in the right place at the right time.

The Council and ICB's Better Care Fund has a minimum funding contribution of £18m in 2025/26, a 3.9% uplift on 2024/25. The Strategy currently estimates that funding will continue at current levels with inflationary uplift given annually to help fund the known pressures on both the Council and the ICB.

### Children's Social Care Prevention Grant

The final 2025/26 settlement announced a new Children's Social Care Prevention grant with total funding of £270m. The grant is to fund the national rollout of "Family Help" a whole family preventative service. Conditions placed on the grant were published in the final settlement. The Council's share of the grant for 2025/26 was £0.401m and it is assumed that this is ring-fenced to cover the costs of implementing the Family Help service.

### Children's & Families Grant

The government announced proposals to consolidate 6 children's social care programmes into a new Children's & Families Grant. The programmes are as follows:

- Supporting Families
- Supported Accommodation Reforms - New Burdens to LAs
- Staying Put
- Virtual School Heads Extension for previously looked after children
- Leaving Care Allowance uplift
- Personal Advisors

Funding for each component maintained 2024/25 funding levels and the Council's total of the consolidated funding is £0.982m



## Public Health Grant

The 2025/26 Public Health Grant allocations were announced on the 7th February 2025. The Council's grant for 2025/26 is £10.901m, an increase of £0.627m over the 2024/25 grant. The grant is ring-fenced to public health activity.

## Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging Funding

2025/26 is the first year of the Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (pEPR) scheme. The extra funding announced at the Autumn Budget included a guarantee that local authorities in England will receive at least £1.1 billion in total in 2025/26 from the new Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (pEPR) scheme, with each local authority guaranteed at least the level of income indicated in provisional local payment figures for the first year. The payment for the Council in 2025/26 is £2.7m, which was incorporated into the budget reflecting the cost pressures and investment made into waste services in this and previous years budgets. Future years funding will be based on data submitted by the Council to the scheme administrators, and this is currently included at the same level for future years.

## Employers National Insurance Increase

The government announced that £515 million of new funding would be provided in 2025/26 to support councils and mayoral combined authorities with the costs associated with the increase in employer National Insurance Contributions (NICs). Individual allocations were based on 2023/24 Revenue Outturn data and were published at the final settlement. The 2025/26 grant allocation was £1.3m.

## Business Rates

There will be a series of changes to the Business Rate Retention System coming into effect from 2026/27. These include:

- A full reset of the Business Rate baseline, where Business Rate growth above baseline achieved since 2013 will be redistributed based on the updated needs assessments as part of the Fair Funding proposals.
- A Business Rate revaluation with the changes to properties Rateable Values implemented with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.
- Proposals to introduce new lower business rate multipliers for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure properties, funded by increasing the multipliers for businesses with rateable values of more than £500,000.
- Consideration by government on whether the multipliers are increased with inflationary uplifts or frozen.
- Reviewing whether the current 100% pilot schemes, including the West of England scheme, continue to operate after the reset.

The estimated impacts of the business rate reset have been included within the Fair Funding reductions referred to in the sections above.

The MTFs includes assumptions for the estimated levels of future Business Rate income, together with making specific provisions for appeals, changes in reliefs and growth and deletions. These assumptions will be kept under review as the final budget is developed, and system changes are finalised. Any surplus or deficit on the Business Rate Collection Fund and associated income will be transferred to or from the Business Rates Reserve for consideration as part of the Business Rates calculations for future years. This approach will include any changes that arise from the final settlement announcement relating to Business Rates.

## Business Rates collection fund

The MTFS factors in the reduced 2024/25 actual Business Rates collection fund outturn position of £1.16m which requires funding in 2026/27. This will be funded by a transfer from the Business Rate Reserve which is earmarked to smooth Business Rate income over the medium term. This forecast will be reviewed and updated to take account of the 2025/26 in year performance of the Collection Fund as part of finalising the Business Rates income forecasts for the 2026/27 budget.

## Schools Funding

Schools are funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which is initially allocated to the Council by the Department for Education (DfE). The DSG supports all expenditure in schools (who set their own budgets) and the activities that the Council carries out directly for schools. It does not cover the statutory responsibilities the Council has towards parents. These responsibilities are funded through the Council's main revenue funding and included as part of the proposed budget.

As schools convert to academies the DfE take back the element of DSG payable to the local authority in order to make payments direct to the academies.

For the 2026/27 financial year the DfE have yet to provide the provisional allocations of DSG increases. Normally these are provided in July but, due to the timing of the national budget, the DfE have delayed any announcements on the DSG allocations. It is anticipated that the information will be made during November. The DfE have made announcements of how specific grants allocated to schools in 2025-26 will be passported to schools in a formulaic approach and the grant is usually rolled into the National Funding Formula (NFF) allocations for schools in 2026-27

With the introduction of the NFF the DSG was ring-fenced for schools from 2018/19 making the local authority responsible for the demographic pressures being observed in the SEND / High Needs element of the DSG. In 2022/23 the local authority signed a safety valve agreement with the DfE to agree a plan to recover the deficit in the High Needs Block of the DSG with support from the DfE. During 2023/24 due to continued pressure on the finances of the High Needs Block the DfE placed the LA in enhanced monitoring and required the LA to develop a revised plan to recover the deficit. In September 2025 the LA was informed that DfE officials had recommended to ministers that B&NES should be returned to the normal monitoring process, though we await formal feedback. Once approved, the DfE will resume payments of the safety plan funding totalling £11.2m over the remainder of the plan

The deficit recovery plan shows our proposals to review our processes to encourage schools to develop early support for pupils with SEND thus limiting the need for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). We are also creating more localised provision to limit expenditure on expensive non-maintained special school places. The Education Capital Programme has been utilised to direct resources to provide additional SEND places in mainstream schools and extend special school provision.

We successfully bid for a new Special School, to be built under the free school programme, though both these new schools are currently pending national decisions in relation to the planned SEND reforms which may direct capital funding away from specialist provision and into mainstream provision.

As part of the recovery, the schools were asked to contribute resources from schools allocations to support the SEND expenditure. Regulations allow up to 0.5% of the

schools block to be transferred to the high needs block to support the SEND expenditure providing approval of schools through the Schools forum is obtained. The Schools forum has agreed this transfer every year up to 2025/26.

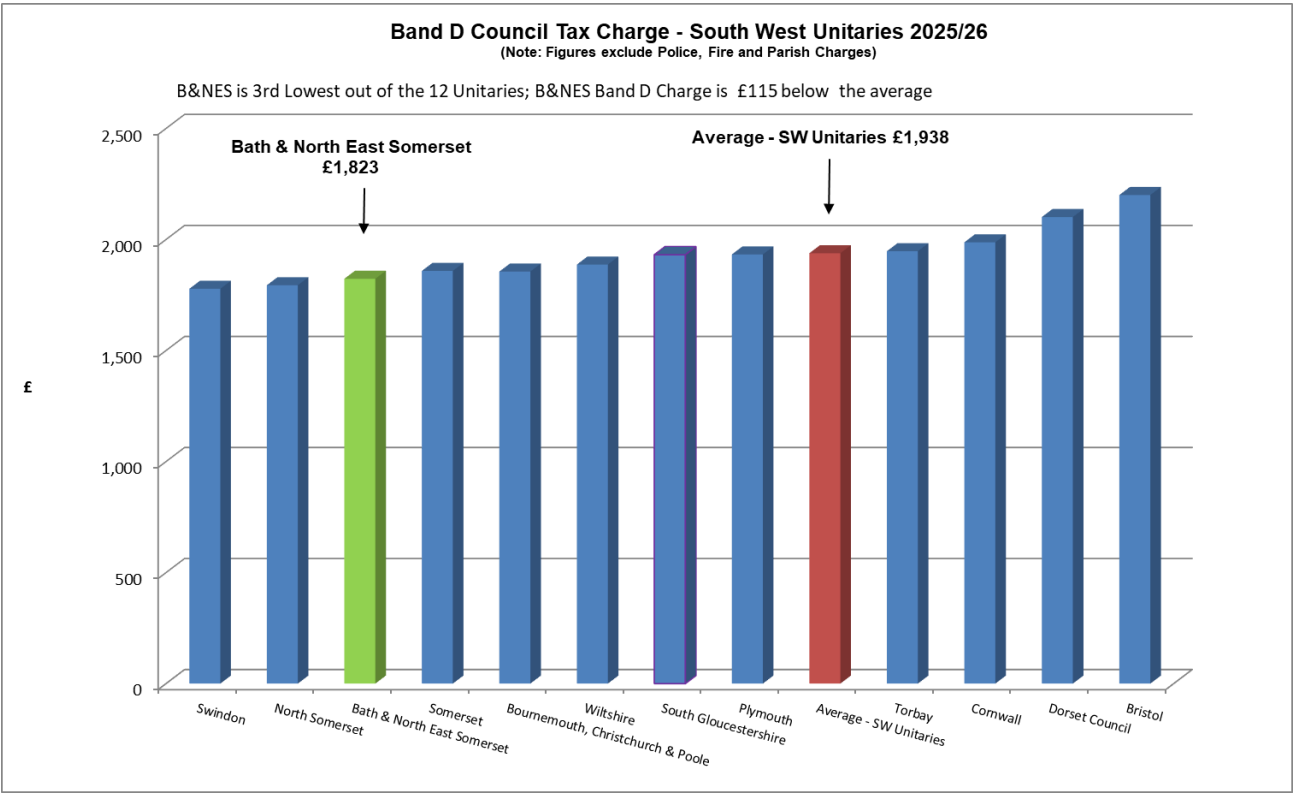
The school’s contributions are limited to 1 year under the NFF regulations and therefore further consultation is currently underway to gain a transfer from the schools block in 2026/27. This continues the transfers that have occurred in prior years and would amount to approx. £720k.

When schools convert to academies their reserves transfer to them and therefore school reserves have reduced significantly as a result reflecting that only 5 schools (1 Secondary and 4 Primary) remain as maintained schools. We anticipate the last remaining secondary school will convert to academy in the coming 18 months.

8. **Council Tax**

Comparison of 2025/26 Council Tax

The chart below shows how B&NES compares (3<sup>rd</sup> lowest) to other South West unitary authorities:



Council Tax collection fund

The MTFS factors in the negative 2024/25 actual Council Tax collection fund outturn position of £0.34m which requires funding in the 2026/27 Budget. It is proposed that this one-off impact is funded from the financial planning earmarked reserve. This forecast will be reviewed and updated to take account of the 2025/26 in year performance of the Collection Fund as part of finalising the Council Tax base and income forecasts for the 2026/27 budget.

Council Tax Precept

The current funding gap in the MTFS assumes a **2.99% increase** in council tax in 2025/26 and future years. This assumes that the Government’s referendum principles

in respect of general Council Tax will allow increases of up to 3% in 2026/27 and future years. In addition, the MTFS assumes that the Council tax base will grow with incremental growth of 1% per annum from 2026/27 onwards.

### Adult Social Care Precept

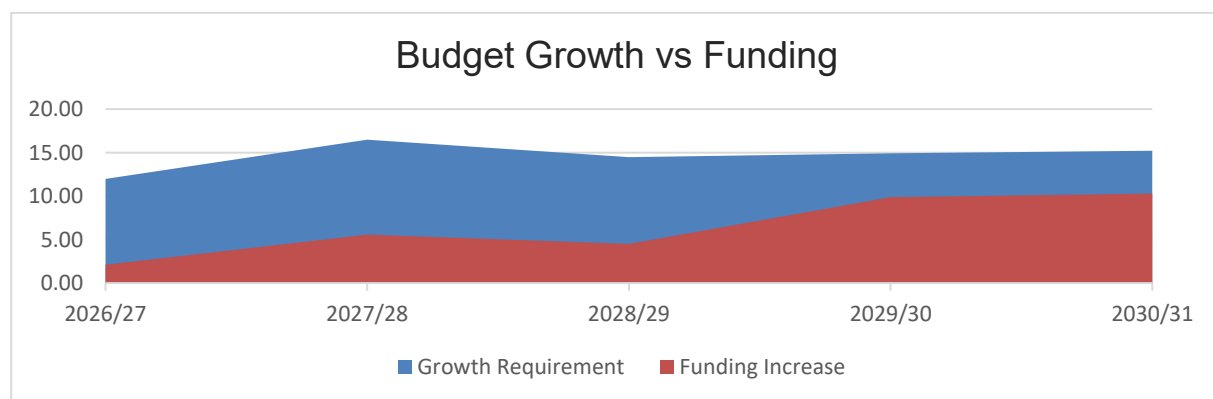
The MTFS assumes that the Government will recognise the continued pressures facing Adult Social Care (ASC) authorities, and continue to allow for a further 2% increase per annum for 2026/27 and future years.

## 9. Financial Outlook

Following the updating of assumptions including the projected impacts of the Fairer Funding reforms the current MTFS shows a budgets gap of £8.9m for 2026/27 with projected budget gaps in each year of the period covering 2027/28 to 2030/31 as follows:

Budget Planning	Future years assumptions £m					Total
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	
Growth Requirement	11.97	16.49	14.49	14.92	15.21	73.08
Funding Increase	2.10	5.58	4.49	9.88	10.29	32.34
<b>Annual Funding gap</b>	<b>9.87</b>	<b>10.91</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>5.04</b>	<b>4.92</b>	<b>40.74</b>
Savings Proposals	0.96	0.85	0.10	0.10	0.10	2.11
<b>Remaining Funding Gap</b>	<b>8.91</b>	<b>10.06</b>	<b>9.90</b>	<b>4.94</b>	<b>4.82</b>	<b>38.63</b>

The funding gap over the medium term can be analysed further to identify additional pressures on expenditure and the impact of funding reductions in income as follows:



The MTFS has been updated to reflect changes in service demographic, inflation and ongoing pressures highlighted through the 2025/26 Quarter 2 budget monitoring report which are unable to be directly mitigated on an ongoing basis. These increases in growth are partly mitigated by releasing £6.8m of the corporately held contingency which form part of the 2025/26 base budget, favourable pension contribution rates arising from the latest triennial pension fund revaluation estimates.

Key changes are highlighted in the following table:

<b>Change in Financial Assumptions</b>	<b>2026/27 Movement £'000</b>
Fair Funding Estimated Impact	4,000
Demographic Growth	1,158
Inflation	2,313
Rebasing In Year Pressures	7,206
Children's 2026/27 Savings Rebasing	1,383
Grant Income	(0.716)
Council Tax	(1.307)
Employers Pension Contributions	(4.000)
Increase Corporate Contingency release to £6.8m	(6.515)
<b>Total Changes</b>	<b>3.522</b>

## Indicative Budget Forecast

The detail of the budget gap is shown in the table below and outlines additional cost pressures and changes in funding:

Budget Planning	Future years assumptions £m				
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
<b>Budget Requirement (Previous Year)</b>	<b>151.71</b>	<b>153.81</b>	<b>159.39</b>	<b>163.88</b>	<b>173.76</b>
Budget Adjustments	(6.80)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Pay & Pension	3.57	5.71	4.49	5.28	5.46
Demographic Growth	4.72	3.82	3.59	3.72	3.92
Contract Inflation	5.13	4.13	3.24	3.31	3.38
New Homes Bonus Grant	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Capital Financing	1.81	1.97	2.02	1.21	1.05
Settlement grant funding	(0.02)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Budget pressure / rebasing	3.55	0.85	1.14	1.40	1.40
<b>Funding Requirement Sub Total</b>	<b>11.97</b>	<b>16.49</b>	<b>14.49</b>	<b>14.92</b>	<b>15.21</b>
<b>Draft Budget Before Savings</b>	<b>163.68</b>	<b>170.30</b>	<b>173.88</b>	<b>178.80</b>	<b>188.97</b>
Proposed Savings Plans	(0.96)	(0.85)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Estimated Savings Required	(8.91)	(10.06)	(9.90)	(4.94)	(4.82)
<b>Savings Requirement Sub Total</b>	<b>(9.87)</b>	<b>(10.91)</b>	<b>(10.00)</b>	<b>(5.04)</b>	<b>(4.92)</b>
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>153.81</b>	<b>159.39</b>	<b>163.88</b>	<b>173.76</b>	<b>184.04</b>
<b>Funding of Budget Requirement</b>					
Council Tax	136.86	145.49	154.28	163.45	173.02
Business rates retention	20.09	21.90	22.60	23.31	24.03
Fair Funding - Estimated Impact	(4.00)	(8.00)	(13.00)	(13.00)	(13.00)
Reserve transfers From	1.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Reserve transfers (To)	(0.60)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Funding of Budget Requirement Total</b>	<b>153.81</b>	<b>159.39</b>	<b>163.88</b>	<b>173.76</b>	<b>184.04</b>

The forecast includes the following cost pressures and assumptions:

- **Pay Inflation** – Estimated 3.00% in 2026/27 and future years.
- **Council tax** – General assumed at 2.99% and Adult Social Care precept 2% in 2026/27 and future years.
- **Pension Costs** – Projected reduction in Employer's Pension Contributions of 3 to 3.5% anticipated with effect from 2026/27 from the triennial revaluation and the associated improvement in the funding levels of the Avon Pensions Fund.
- **Demographic Growth & Increase in Service Volumes** – Additional demand from new placement and market pressures in Adult & Children Social Care;
- **Interest Rates** – Short Term Interest rate reductions to follow movement in Bank of England base rate currently 4% for treasury management cash investments with borrowing rates estimated at 5%. The Council will fix budget interest rates following the provisional settlement;
- **Inflation** – Impacts of Contract and Commissioning inflation across services.
- **Budget Pressures / Rebasing** – 2026/27 budget rebasing currently informed from the 2025/26 Q2 Council monitoring position where emerging pressures cannot be directly mitigated.
- **Capital Spending** – an allowance has been made to fund previously agreed provisional schemes requiring borrowing.
- **Borrowing** – longer term borrowing costs have been factored into the MTFS however the authority will continue to optimise the use of cash balances subject to market conditions and the overriding need to meet cash outflows;
- **Reserves** – The MTFS includes a £1.1m transfer from the Business Rate Reserve to fund the Business Rate Collection Fund deficit carried forward from the 2024/25 outturn position, £0.3m from the financial planning reserve to fund the carried forward Council Tax Collection Fund Deficit and a transfer of £600k to the Revenue Budget Contingency Reserve in line with the planned replenishment of the reserve following use to mitigate the impact of Covid in prior years.

## 10. Managing the Medium Term Financial Strategy

Current estimates are that £40.7m savings will now be required over the next five years including savings already approved.

The strategy has outlined that due to the current uncertainties with government funding allocations, the focus of savings plans will be on achieving a balanced budget in 2026/27 with work to develop a transformation plan over the medium terms continuing over the next 12 months. The current projected savings requirement for 2026/27 is £9.87m, including the rebased savings plans of £0.96m already identified. Due to the budget impact of rising demand, inflation and government funding changes this puts 75% of the 5 year MTFS savings in the next 3 years.

### Budget management plan

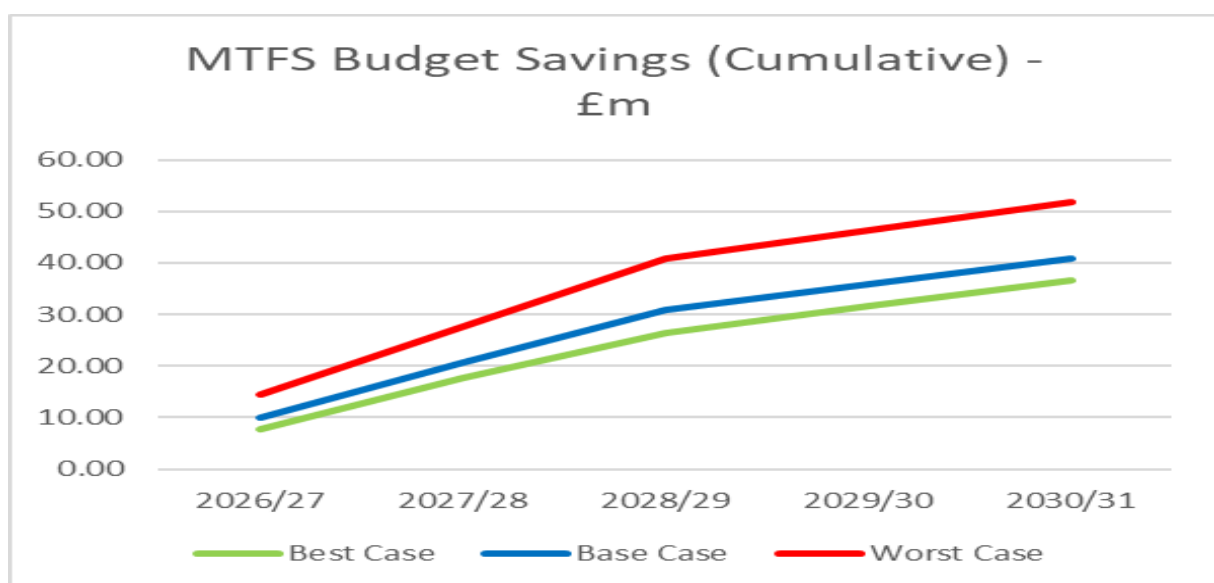
The following approach is recommended to create a robust plan of action, manage change and balance the budget.

## Budget Setting Principles

- New policy or service demand funding requirements need to be evidenced with robust and realistic estimates for future years.
- For additional budget funding, un-avoidable growth only – other growth will require a defined funding source / saving.
- New savings will need to be material and over £50k per item, savings below this value will not be accepted (no use of one-off service reserves).
- The focus needs to be on high value strategic areas of change enabled by Business Change delivering multiyear savings.
- Stop doing will need to demonstrate how risk is appropriately managed.
- Savings with reputational / political implications need early engagement with Cabinet portfolio holders, with early, proportionate equality impact assessments completed.
- Savings proposals will need to have a budget profile in line with delivery plans that span multiple years.
- Delivery cost and timescale for implementation needs to be fully understood and captured in the budget proposal.

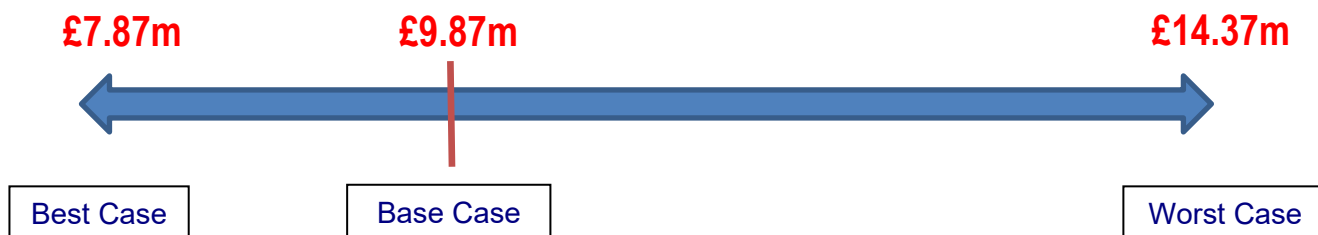
To manage the strategy financially and over a longer term there will need to be transformational changes to the organisations operating model and ways of working to support the way we approach budget planning to ensure a fully achievable set of proposals can be taken forward across the life of the strategy.

The chart below shows how the MTFS base case presented in this report may change due to the ongoing uncertainty over future funding and risks with managing current service demand and delivering savings.



Over the 5 year MTFS period the worst case scenario has a saving requirement of £51.7m, £11m higher than the base case and the best case scenario has a savings requirement of £36.5m, £4.2m lower than the base case.

The savings scale below shows how the range of savings requirement for 2026/27 may change based on these risks:



The base case is based on the budget assumptions and figures in section 9 of this report.

The worst-case scenario builds in allowance for the following potential adverse variations against the base case assumptions:

- Fair Funding Changes 50% worse than currently assumed impact - £2m
- Risk allowance for increased Service Demographic and Demand Pressures - £1.5m
- Risk Allowance on Council key Service income streams - £1m

The best case scenario builds in allowance for the following potential favourable variations against the base case assumptions:

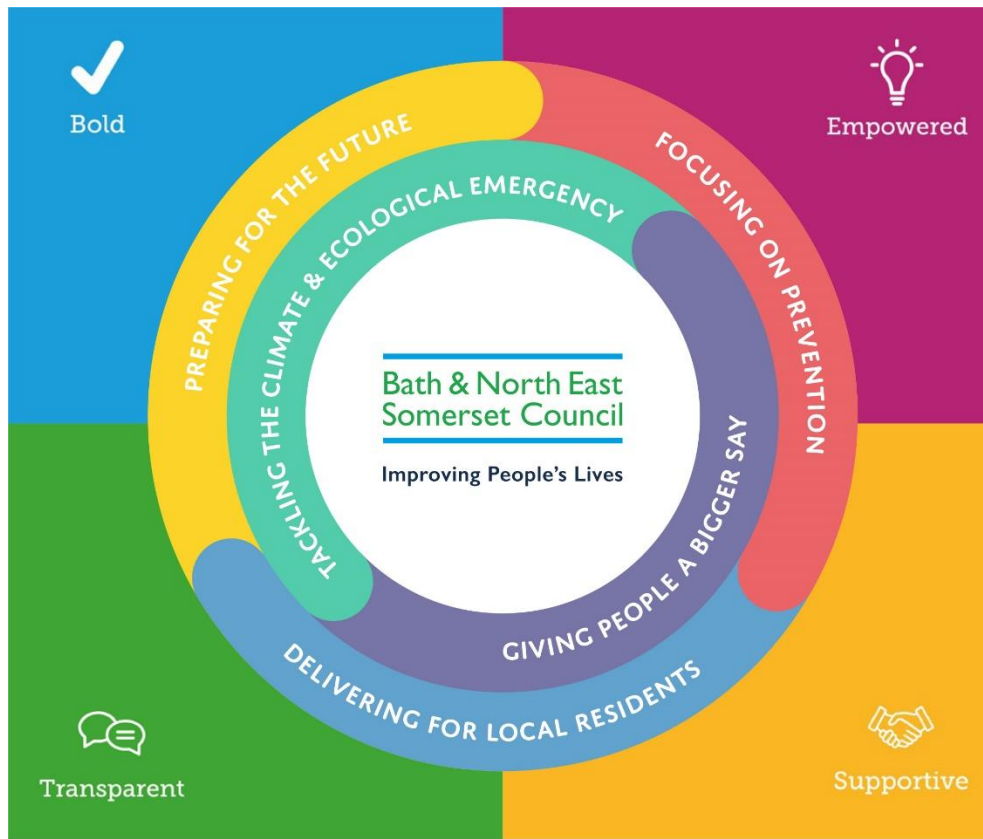
- Fair Funding Changes 25% better than currently assumed impact - £1m
- Additional Funding included in LG Financial Settlement recognising key demand service pressures - £1m

For financial planning purposes the base case is the most realistic assessment that recognises that numbers may move between now and the end of December. In the event that the local government funding position moves to the worst case the Council will need to consider further mitigations from the revenue budget.



## 11. Corporate Strategy and Council priority areas

The Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the financial framework for allocating resources across the Council. How this is achieved will require close alignment to the Council's Corporate Strategy as set out in the diagram below:



<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/document-and-policy-library/corporate-strategy-2023-2027>

Alignment to the strategy creates the “golden thread” which drives what we do ensuring that setting budgets and managing our people - our most valuable resource - are guided by the council's priorities. It also means that our commitments are realistic and achievable.

### Prioritising and allocating resources

To address longer-term financial planning and ensure corporate priorities shape our financial planning, for the 2026/27 and future years' budgets we are developing a more strategic approach built around:

- Identification of key scenarios, particularly in the light of central government fiscal policy and approach to local government funding
- Agreeing key priorities which will support delivery of our Corporate Strategy, in the light of the resources available to the council over the medium term
- Establishing a longer-term approach to budget planning, including investing in prevention to address budget pressures and reduce costs
- Introducing a new operating model which delivers the council's purpose through innovation in our ways of working

## 12. Capital Programme

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities was updated in December 2021. The objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure that the capital expenditure plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice and in full understanding of the risks involved.

It requires authorities to assess capital expenditure and investment plans in the light of overall organisational strategy and resources and ensure that decisions are made with sufficient regard to the long-term financial implications and potential risks to the authority.

The Council follows this approach through:

- Continuing to review all existing schemes to simplify, challenge deliverability and put forward a more accurate funding and expenditure profile over multiple years;
- Minimising new schemes except those that meet corporate priorities;
- Agreeing an affordable limit for new schemes requiring corporate borrowing;
- Ensuring adequate investment in assets supporting key service provision (including meeting health and safety requirements or replacing obsolete or inefficient assets/equipment) and generate revenue savings for the council; and
- Delivering or working with partners to deliver high priority government funded programmes and West of England programmes where they meet corporate priorities.

The Capital Programme will retain the clear separation of schemes for **Full Approval** and those which are for **Provisional Approval**.

Items gaining **Full Approval** are clear to proceed to full scheme implementation and delivery, subject to appropriate project management and governance.

Items for **Provisional Approval** will require either a further Officer decision or in some cases a formal Cabinet member decision for Full Approval. The budget estimates for schemes shown for Provisional Approval are therefore included on an indicative basis, and as an aid to planning.

The Capital Programme will retain narrative only reference to pipeline projects and grant funding in early stage progression. These items will require further decision to incorporate into the programme at a later date, in line with the delegations outlined in the February Budget report.

The capital programme is aligned with the Community Infrastructure Levy allocations agreed for the coming financial year.

The following shows the capital programme approved in February 2025 as part of budget setting:

### Capital Schemes for Approval

<b>Cabinet Portfolio: Capital Schemes</b>	<b>Budget 2025/2026 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2026/2027 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2027/2028 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2028/2029 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2029/2030 £'m</b>	<b>Total £'m</b>
Resources	17.701	9.767	0	0	0	<b>27.468</b>
Economic & Cultural Sustainable Development	11.932	16.786	14.557	1.792	0.050	<b>45.117</b>
Leader	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Climate Emergency & Sustainable Travel	5.395	0.032	0.008	0	0	<b>5.435</b>
Built Environment & Sustainable Development	5.314	1.500	0	0	0	<b>6.814</b>
Adult Services	2.270	1.909	1.789	1.839	1.789	<b>9.597</b>
Children's Services	12.631	1.351	0	0	0	<b>13.982</b>
Neighbourhood Services	4.054	0.050	0.050	0.050	0.050	<b>4.254</b>
Highways	17.116	2.901	0	0	0	<b>20.017</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>76.413</b>	<b>34.296</b>	<b>16.404</b>	<b>3.681</b>	<b>1.889</b>	<b>132.683</b>

### Capital Schemes for Provisional Approval (Subject to)

<b>Cabinet Portfolio: Capital Schemes</b>	<b>Budget 2025/2026 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2026/2027 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2027/2028 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2028/2029 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2029/2030 £'m</b>	<b>Total £'m</b>
Resources	7.650	9.889	41.500	28.500	9.500	<b>97.038</b>
Economic & Cultural Development	14.589	11.776	6.677	26.802	8.835	<b>68.679</b>
Leader	0.214	0	0	0	0	<b>0.214</b>
Climate Emergency & Sustainable Travel	18.905	18.196	1.065	0.600	0.550	<b>39.316</b>
Built Environment & Sustainable Development	7.191	9.387	21.230	3.635	3.635	<b>45.077</b>
Adult Services	1.317	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.050	<b>1.607</b>
Children's Services	15.071	5.914	0	0	0	<b>20.985</b>
Neighbourhood Services	10.900	11.672	12.311	1.919	3.465	<b>40.267</b>
Highways	8.708	24.789	9.012	9.762	8.997	<b>61.268</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>84.545</b>	<b>91.703</b>	<b>91.875</b>	<b>71.298</b>	<b>35.032</b>	<b>374.453</b>

## Funded By

<b>Financing</b>	<b>Budget 2025/2026 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2026/2027 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2027/2028 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2028/2029 £'m</b>	<b>Budget 2029/2030 £'m</b>	<b>Total £'m</b>
Grant	73.309	42.809	14.500	8.836	8.786	<b>148.241</b>
Capital Receipts/RTB	2.745	8.400	0.635	0.635	0.202	<b>12.617</b>
Revenue	2.292	3.570	0.050	0.050	0.050	<b>6.012</b>
Borrowing	73.705	66.400	92.315	65.456	27.883	<b>325.759</b>
3rd Party (inc S106 & CIL)	8.907	4.820	0.778	0.003	0	<b>14.508</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>160.957</b>	<b>125.999</b>	<b>108.279</b>	<b>74.980</b>	<b>36.921</b>	<b>507.136</b>

Note this does not include slippage from 2024/25 which totalled £16.2m.

An allocation of £1.3m revenue budget to support new schemes has been factored into 2026/27, this is fully committed to the schemes and maintenance programmes added in the 2025/26 and previous years budgets. Any further capital investment requiring funding from corporately supported borrowing will require either the reduction of existing schemes or for the additional costs of borrowing to be incorporated in the 2026/27 and future years revenue budgets. The more detailed capital strategy will be updated for approval as part of the budget in February 2026.

Capital receipts will be used flexibly on appropriate revenue expenditure and further adjustments may be made as part of setting the budget for 2026/27 subject to any revision to government guidance being published. The current programme will continue to be reviewed to ease this financial impact.

The intention is to take a measured approach between borrowing in the current market climate and the utilisation of internal cash flow wherever possible. Borrowing has been factored into the strategy to ensure that the authority can meet its future borrowing obligations. The decision on the timing of new borrowing will still be driven by market factors, particularly movements in interest rates to provide overall value for money to the Council.

New capital schemes will be considered on a priority basis to minimise the impact on Council funded borrowing, and where appropriate maximise the use of external funding including the application of grants.

## Capital Risk Contingency

There are three levels of risk provision in relation to the capital programme.

- Individual major projects within the capital programme hold their own contingency in accordance with good project management practise to meet unavoidable and unforeseen costs;
- The 2025/26 capital programme included a funded corporate risk contingency of £3.8m;
- The corporate risk assessment on which the general reserves target is based includes an element in the context of the capital programme based on the risks of the current programme.

As with all capital projects, relevant risks are being considered as part of the overall risk-assessed general reserves and the Corporate Risk Register.

## Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy

The Council is required to make revenue provision to repay capital spend that is financed by borrowing (either supported or unsupported). This is called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The Department of Communities & Local Government has issued regulations that require full Council to approve a MRP Policy in advance each year, or if revisions are proposed during the year they should be put to the Council at that time.

## **11. Earmarked and Non-Earmarked Reserves**

Earmarked Reserves are set aside for specific purposes whereas Non-Earmarked Reserves are retained to meet unforeseen risks. A regular review of financial risks to assess the optimum levels of balances and reserves will be reported to members annually. This ensures that the authority has sufficient funds to meet its key financial risks. The strategy remains that balances remain at a level that covers these key risks.

To manage financial risk the Council holds £12.58m of unearmarked reserves.

The following table shows each of the key earmarked reserves held for financial planning, the expected opening balance for 2026/27 and anticipated closing balance after the projected use:

	<b>Estimated Balance 31/03/2026</b>	<b>Proposed Transfers</b>	<b>Projected Use in Year</b>	<b>Current Estimated Balance 31/3/27</b>
	<b>£'m</b>	<b>£'m</b>	<b>£'m</b>	<b>£'m</b>
Revenue Budget Contingency	2.18	0.60	0.00	2.78
Financial Planning and Smoothing Reserve	3.61	(0.34)	(0.54)	2.73
Transformation Investment Reserve	3.19	0.00	(1.00)	2.19
Job Evaluation & Pay Structure Reserve	1.25	0.00	(0.25)	1.00
Restructuring & Severance Reserve	3.33	0.00	(1.50)	1.83

## Flexible use of Capital receipts

The strategy requires flexibility around capitalising costs and the flexible use of capital receipts to fund redundancy, transformation, and ICT costs where appropriate to free up reserves in line with the availability of capital receipts.

## **12. Reviewing the Strategy**

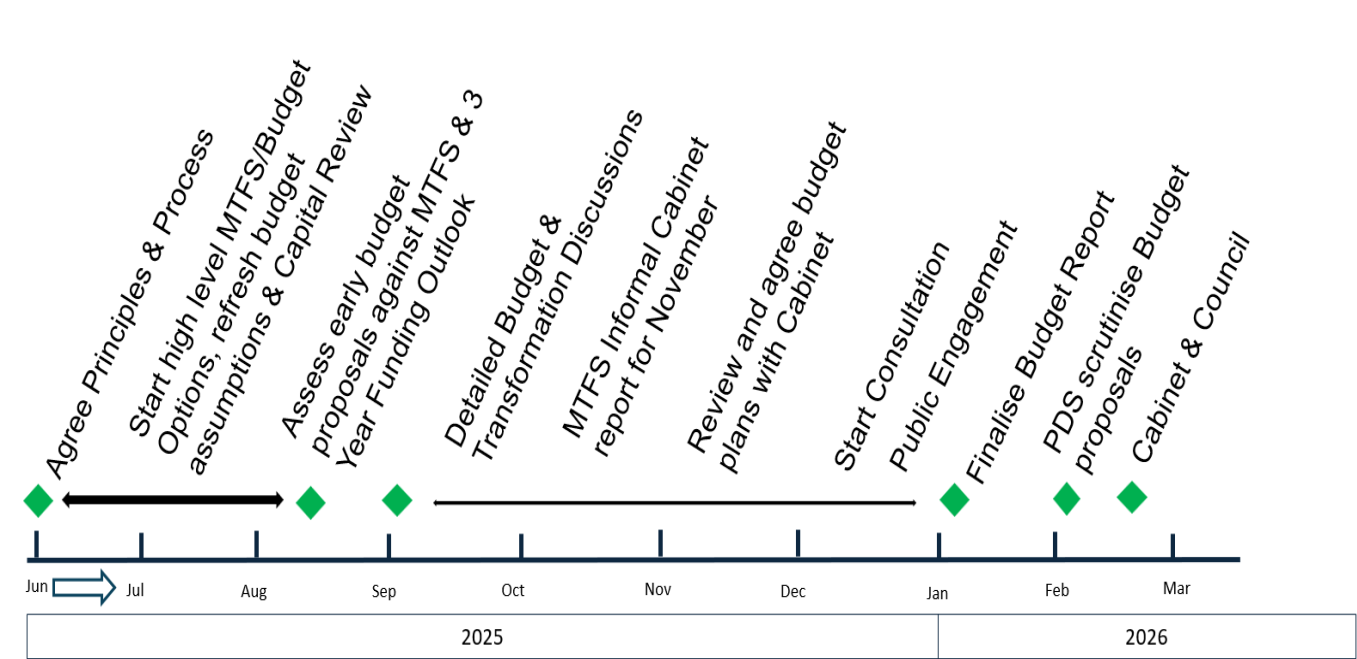
This strategy will naturally span the life of the Council Plan but will be reviewed annually to take into account changes within and external to the organisation. In more uncertain times the strategy will be reviewed more frequently.

### 13.Public/Stakeholder Engagement

Subject to the timing of central government funding announcements we plan to engage on more detailed budget proposals in December 2025 / January 2026, this will also be subject to scrutiny by Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels.

### 14.Budget Setting Timetable

The diagram below sets out the budget planning timetable.



### 15.Risks to the Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Strategy and Plan make regular risk predictions. The key risks to the plan are currently seen as:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Update
Operational budget pressures due to rising demand	Likely	High	There is the risk of unplanned and unbudgeted growth in demand on Council services, particularly in Adult & Children’s Social Care.
Volatility and uncertainty around business rates	Likely	High	<div>The impacts of the current economic challenges will increase the volatility and uncertainty around business rate income. Changes in the charges for Retail, Leisure and Hospitality businesses are planned to be introduced by the government for 2026/27.</div> <div>We continue to monitor arrears, CVAs, and liquidations with a specific reserve held to manage in-year volatility.</div>

Changes to Government Policy that affects future funding	Likely	High	New government policy and funding reforms that are planned for implementation from 2026/27 are likely to have an impact on resourcing of Council services and priorities. The MTFS includes an estimate of the potential impact on funding. This will continue to be assessed once further details are announced and the government confirms funding allocations.
Contract inflationary pressure	Possible	High	With increase in wage, energy and fuel costs, Council contracted services are at risk of above budget price increases. Capital Schemes may need to be paused due to unfunded viability gaps due to increased supply chain costs.
Viability risk on the Councils Commercial Estate assets held for income generation.	Possible	High	Current asset reviews have identified that due to the age and complexity of the Councils Commercial Estate, some assets operating costs and capital investment needs may exceed annual rental income values. This will be managed through a detailed asset review that informs a programme of prioritisation for investment in the estate.
Reinstated government restrictions in the event of a new pandemic.	Possible	High	This is certainly a material risk, whilst not one the Council has direct control over, every step would be put in place to follow government guidance following the recommendations of our Director of Public Health.
Impact on Reserves	Possible	High	Without additional government grant funding in recognition of unfunded pressures there is the risk that Council reserve levels are not enough to manage in-year and future years risk.
Capital projects not delivered resulting in revenue reversion costs or liabilities from underwriting agreements	Possible	High	The Council has a number of projects within this category. These risks will continue to be monitored and reported. An assessment is made as part of the budget process to ensure that revenue reserves are sufficient to meet these risks. The capital programme methodology looks to de-risk projects wherever possible.
Interest rates increase	Possible	Medium	A reserve is available for borrowing to manage market risk and long-term borrowing costs have been factored into the longer-term MTFS. Long term borrowing rates remain

			elevated due to market concerns around fiscal stability both in the UK & the US.
Funding pressures through WECA, ICB and other partners	Possible	Medium	Ensure good communication links with partner organisations.

The key risks will continue to be monitored throughout the budget setting process and subsequently outlined in each budget setting report to Council and will be reviewed regularly, and reported through budget monitoring to Cabinet.



<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>	
MEETING:	<b>Corporate Policy Development &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>
MEETING:	<b>25<sup>th</sup> November 2025</b>
TITLE:	<b>Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring, Cash Limits and Virements – April 2025 to September 2025</b>
WARD:	All
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>	
<p><b>List of attachments to this report:</b></p> <p>Appendix 1 - Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring, Cash Limits and Virements – April 2025 to September 2025 Cabinet Report</p> <p>Annex 1: Revenue Monitoring Commentary</p> <p>Annex 2: Key Scheme Capital Monitoring Commentary</p> <p>Annex 3: Revenue Savings Monitor</p>	

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 The report was considered by the Cabinet at their 13th November 2025 meeting. It presents the April 2025 to September 2025 revenue and capital budget monitoring for 2025/26.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

The Panel is asked to;

- 2.1 Note and discuss the Revenue & Capital Q2 2025/26 Monitoring Report.

## **3 THE REPORT**

- 3.1 The Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring report and supporting main detailed appendices are included as the appendices to this report and for Panel consideration.
- 3.2 The summarised Council budget monitoring position is as follows, full details are included in the main report (Appendix 1):
- 3.3 The net revenue forecast position for 2025/26 is £2.4m over budget. Managers across the organisation continue to prioritise cost control measures to bring the budget back to a balanced position before year-end.
- 3.4 Children's Services are forecasting the largest cost pressure, primarily due to high-cost packages required to support the most vulnerable and complex young people in the area. Adult Services and Corporate Estate are also forecasting significant expenditure pressures, while staffing costs across the organisation

have increased because of the pay and grading review associated with the Being Our Best programme.

- 3.5 Income is lower than budgeted for both the Roman Baths and the Commercial Estate, however Parking Services are seeing income exceed expectations. Lower borrowing costs and strong treasury management performance are also helping offset the adverse financial position.
- 3.6 The £2.4m forecast over budget position includes the use of £9.8m budgeted contingencies and use of the Job Evaluation and Pay Structure reserve (£1.5m).
- 3.7 Savings of £14.01m were included in the 2025/26 budget. At present £9.15m savings are forecast as delivered, with the remainder either being mitigated through alternative measures, or flagged as delayed or undeliverable. On-going budget pressures are being considered through the Council's budget setting process to ensure they do not continue to create financial pressures in 2026/27.
- 3.8 The current position of the 2025/26 Capital Programme is a forecast of £106.2m against a budget of £146.4m. Of the variance of £40.2m, £39.6m is anticipated will be rephased into future years.

#### **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 The annual Medium-Term Financial Strategy and planning process allocates resources across services with alignment of these resources towards the Council's corporate priorities. This report monitors how the Council has performed against the budget and Capital Programme set in February 2025.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 5.1 These are contained throughout the attached report and appendices.

#### **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 The substance of this report is part of the Council's risk management process. The key risks in the Council's budget were assessed by each Director, with these risks re-assessed regularly as part of the budget monitoring process.

#### **7 CLIMATE CHANGE**

- 7.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget process aligns resources towards the corporate priorities and objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy, which includes tackling the climate emergency. This report monitors the Council's financial performance against those budgets.

#### **8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 None.

#### **9 CONSULTATION**

- 9.1 Consultation on the Cabinet Report was carried out with the Cabinet Member for Resources, Directors, Section 151 Finance Officer, Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer.

<b>Contact person</b>	<p><i>Gary Adams – Head of Financial Management</i>  <a href="mailto:Gary_Adams@bathnes.gov.uk">Gary_Adams@bathnes.gov.uk</a></p> <p><i>Jeff Wring - Director of Financial Services, Assurance &amp; Pensions (S151 Officer)</i>  <a href="mailto:Jeff_Wring@bathnes.gov.uk">Jeff_Wring@bathnes.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Background papers</b>	Revenue and Capital Budget Setting reports;
<p><b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b></p>	

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APPENDIX 1		
Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2025	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 3651
TITLE:	Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring, Cash Limits and Virements – April 2025 to September 2025	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
<p><b>List of attachments to this report:</b></p> <p><b>Appendix 1</b> – Revenue Monitoring Commentary</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> – Key Scheme Capital Monitoring Commentary</p> <p><b>Appendix 3 (i) &amp; 3 (ii)</b> – Proposed Revenue Virements &amp; Revised Revenue Cash Limits</p> <p><b>Appendix 4 (i) &amp; 4 (ii)</b> – Capital Virements &amp; Capital Programme by Portfolio</p> <p><b>Appendix 5</b> – Revenue Savings Monitor</p>		

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### a) Revenue budget

The Revenue budget outturn is currently forecast to be £2.4m over budget. Managers across the organisation continue to prioritise cost control measures to bring the budget back to a balanced position before year-end.

Children's Services are forecasting the largest cost pressure, primarily due to high-cost packages required to support the most vulnerable and complex young people in the area. Adult Services and Corporate Estate are also forecasting significant expenditure pressures, while staffing costs across the organisation have increased because of the pay and grading review associated with the Being Our Best programme.

Income is lower than budgeted for both the Roman Baths and the Commercial Estate, however Parking Services are seeing income exceed expectations. Lower borrowing costs and strong treasury management performance are also helping offset the adverse financial position.

The £2.4m forecast over budget position includes the use of £9.8m budgeted contingencies and use of the Job Evaluation and Pay Structure reserve (£1.5m).

Savings of £14.01m were included in the 2025/26 budget. At present £9.15m savings are forecast as delivered, with the remainder either being mitigated through alternative measures, or flagged as delayed or undeliverable. On-going budget pressures are being considered through the Council's budget setting process to ensure they do not continue to create financial pressures in 2026/27.

### b) Capital budget

The current position of the 2025/26 Capital Programme is a forecast of £106.2m against a budget of £146.4m. Of the variance of £40.2m, £39.6m is anticipated will be rephased into future years.

### c) Council Tax and Business Rates

The current forecast on Council Tax is an in-year collection fund deficit of £0.41m. The Council's share of the deficit is £0.34m and this represents a negative variance of 0.3% against the 2025/26 budgeted income.

The current in year forecast for the Business Rate element of the collection fund is a deficit of £0.63m, of which the council's share is £0.59m and this represents a negative variance of 0.9% against the 2025/26 budgeted net rates.

### d) Council Reserves

The Council holds general unearmarked reserves of £12.6m, this is held corporately to manage in year financial pressures that cannot be mitigated within existing budget levels.

## 1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 This report presents the financial monitoring information for the Authority for the 2025/26 financial year, using information available up to the end of September 2025.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked:

- 2.1 To note the 2025/26 revenue budget position detailed within the report (as at the end of September 2025).
- 2.2 To note and approve where required the revenue virements listed in Appendix 3(i).
- 2.3 To note the capital year-end forecast detailed in paragraph 3.32 of this report.
- 2.4 To note the changes in the capital programme including capital schemes that have been agreed for full approval under delegation listed in Appendix 4(i).

## 3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Budget Management Scheme requires that the Cabinet consider the revenue and capital monitoring position four times per year.

### REVENUE BUDGET

- 3.2 The financial landscape for Local Government continues to be challenging. The 2025/26 Budget was agreed by Council in February 2025, which outlined the significant budget risks the organisation was facing. A high-level risk analysis was conducted in Quarter 1 monitoring, and this has now been built on through a much more detailed forecast for Quarter 2 with information available up until the end of September 2025.
- 3.3 Service Directors have been asked to outline the actual expected outturn for the year and the reasons to date for over / under budget forecasts. For revenue budgets which are forecast to be over budget, the Directors are expected to seek compensating savings to try and bring budgets back to balance.
- 3.4 A summary by Portfolio of the revenue position as at the end of the second quarter is shown in the table below:

Portfolio	Revised Budget £'m	Year End Forecast £'m	Variance Over / (Under) £'m
Leader of Council	(1.00)	(1.00)	0.00
Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset	3.43	3.46	0.03
Resources - Services	32.45	33.71	1.26
Resources - Corporate	5.15	3.50	(1.65)
Resources - Corporate Contingencies	9.83	0.00	(9.83)
Resources - Being Our Best Programme	(4.00)	(0.03)	3.97
Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development	(9.21)	(5.75)	3.46
Adult Services	64.08	65.07	0.99
Children's Services	42.74	48.75	6.00
Communications and Community	5.20	5.73	0.53
Sustainable Transport Strategy	(8.73)	(9.10)	(0.37)

Sustainable Transport Delivery	8.16	8.02	(0.15)
Built Environment and Sustainable Development	3.99	3.66	(0.33)
<b>Total</b>	<b>152.10</b>	<b>156.01</b>	<b>3.91</b>
<i>Job Evaluation and Pay Structure Reserve</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>(1.49)</i>	<i>(1.49)</i>
<b>Quarter 2 Forecast Outturn Variance</b>	<b>152.10</b>	<b>154.52</b>	<b>2.42</b>

- 3.5 The current year-end forecast is a £2.42m over budget position, after the use of £9.8m contingency and £1.49m pay reserve.

## Portfolio Commentary

- 3.6 Key forecast variances and associated planned mitigating actions by Portfolio are as follows (a more detailed breakdown can be found in Appendix 1):

### Leader of the Council

This portfolio only contains the Housing Delivery Vehicle (Aequus), of which a breakeven position is forecast.

### Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset (£0.03m adverse variance)

Parks and Open Spaces have a small staffing pressure, partially offset by over-recovery of staff time to projects with the Environmental Monitoring team.

### Resources – Services (£1.26m adverse variance)

Rental income shortfall within the Commercial Estate is the key area of pressure within the portfolio, although increased service supported borrowing costs and the cost of legal representation are also forecast to be contributing to increased costs within the service, totalling £0.9m.

Staffing pressures exist across Waste and Fleet Services, Legal Services and Revenues and Benefits, while the ICT service hasn't been able to deliver all savings linked to the move to cloud based solutions yet. HR and Procurement services staffing underspends help partially mitigate these pressures

### Resources – Corporate (£1.65m favourable variance)

Interest rates have been favourable when compared to what was expected at budget setting on both borrowing and cash balances, resulting in an estimated £0.65m benefit to the council.

Some of the council's capital programme needs to be reprofiled into future years, resulting in less borrowing requirement in year (£0.8m). This was also the case last financial year, resulting in a lower Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge in this year's accounts (£0.2m).

Corporate contingencies and being our best programme financial implications follow in the next section of the report.

### Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development (£3.46m adverse variance)

Heritage Services ended the 2024/25 financial year £0.6m short of its net income target, primarily due to lower visitor numbers than anticipated compared to when setting the budget.



A total of 993k visitors came to the Roman Baths in 2024/25, with an increase to 1.1m visitors budgeted for 2025/26. Based on current demand data, visitor numbers are expected to fall short of budget, a trend that reflects what's happening across the sector, particularly in sites with high international visitor numbers. Visitor numbers are estimated at 985k for 2025/26.

Lower retail sales linked to lower visitor numbers and cost pressures linked to the vacation of the Culverhay site are adding to the financial challenge this year, which is estimated at a £2.3m overspend. A variety of cost mitigations are being pursued, as well as extra focus on wider income generating products.

The Corporate Estate service also ended last year with a financial pressure which continues into 2025/26. The key reason is undelivered budgeted savings linked to rationalising the estate, which has not progressed as quickly as anticipated. Staffing and maintenance costs are being actively managed to help offset the pressure.

The Regeneration service currently holds the budget for Bath Quays South (BQS), which at present is not fully let and as such is leading to a shortfall in budgeted income.

### **Adult Services (£0.99m adverse variance)**

Adult Social Care reported a balanced position for 2024/25; this was following a transfer of £0.4m from the Adult Social Care Reserve. Increased activity had been seen in 2024/25 with demand for package placements increasing on average by 16%. The cost of care also continued to increase during the year due to the economic and market factors experienced through 2024/25 and the increasing complexity in care needs.

For 2025/26, the service is currently forecasting a net over budget position of £1.0m.

The overbudget positions seen in the Older Peoples and Learning Disabilities services, have continued into 2025/26, current forecast is £1.4m over budget. Residential Care and Home care are the areas of pressure within the older people's service, the number of residential placements stood at 154 as at the end of September 2025, compared to 143 at May 2025 and 129 at September 2024. This rapid rise continues to create budget pressure. Homecare hours stood at 4,701 as at September 2025, compared to 4,361hrs in May 2025 and 4,151hrs in September 2024. Whilst the increased use of homecare is in line with the services strategy, the continued increase in residential placements is impacting on overall costs.

The review of the pooled arrangements within the learning disabilities service was concluded in 2024/25, and new agreed joint funding arrangements are now in place. These arrangements now replace the previous long standing pooled funding arrangements with BSW ICB. However, budget pressure in residential and Supported living services has continued into 2025/26, with the service currently forecasting a £1.2m overspend.

Both services are working to reduce the budget pressures and be assured of costs. Arrangements for hospital discharges have continued into the current year enabling close working with BSW ICB to ensure effective and efficient discharge of clients. We continue to work closely with BSW ICB on both these areas to ensure appropriate funding is agreed.

The other areas within the service are forecasting to be balanced or under budget by a total of £1.6m, which will leave the net service forecast at an over budget position of £1.0m.

### **Children's Services (£6.0m adverse variance)**

Children's Services (excluding home to school transport) closed the 2024/25 financial year with a £4.78m overspend, largely driven by rising demand and Residential placement costs. At quarter 1 a risk range of £4m to £8m was projected. The Quarter 2 forecast position is an over budget position of £6m. This is split as £5.7m across Children's Social Care and £0.3m from Education pressures.

Despite increased budget provision for 2025/26, a late-year increase of eight new Residential placements (Q4 2024/2025) resulted in a £2.7m pressure rolling forward. These pressures increased further during Q1 of 2025/26 following a further 4 additional placements required to safeguard vulnerable young people, increasing the pressure in Residential placements by a further £1.4m, to £4.1m total pressure.

Upward cost pressure from the market combined with higher cost packages required to support the most vulnerable and complex young people and increased demand are continuing to put a potential significant strain on the budget.

Ongoing pressures also stem from the support needs of disabled young people being cared for at home, a total of £0.6m pressure and £1m salary pressure from agency usage to cover vacancies and respond to demand.

In Education, teachers' pension costs, and historical reduced income pressures continue from 2024/25 totalling £0.26m, along with agency staffing pressures from the Education Psychology Team.

Home to School Transport has a small pressure of £0.02m due to demand and market price pressure. This position is the net pressure post implementation of planned savings initiatives, which have been a success. However, it should be noted that the full demand picture from the new academic year will not be known until later in the Autumn.

To mitigate these pressures Children's Services are delivering a targeted response through an enhanced Transformation Programme and detailed scrutiny of all areas of activity and spend, including but not limited to children's residential placements. This has included a focused placements taskforce responsible for cost assurance and ensuring that young people's needs are met through the most effective and sustainable means possible. This process will lead to reductions in cost for the financial year 2026/27. Other workstreams major on placement sufficiency and amending the market structure. These workstreams will deliver reduced costs over the medium term.

### **Schools (Dedicated Schools Grant)**

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) overspent for 2024/25 by £10.53m taking the cumulative to deficit at the end of 2024/25 to £32.795m.

Additional overspend for 2025/26 is anticipated at a similar, but slightly higher level than 2024/25, circa £12m. This overspend is due to the costs associated with supporting pupils with SEND needs and is marginally above the Safety

Valve plan in place currently. The Safety Valve plan seeks to address the built-up deficit of overspend of the DSG and bring spend in line with the grant allocation by the end of the Safety Valve term in 2030/31.

### **Communications and Community (£0.53m adverse variance)**

Income is lower than expected in Bereavement Services (£0.1m), and Licensing and Pest Control services (£0.2m), whilst undelivered savings and staffing pressures are generating an adverse position in Customer Services too (£0.2m).

### **Sustainable Transport Strategy (£0.37m favourable variance)**

Parking income is exceeding budgeted levels (£0.5m), while a shortfall in staffing time recharged to projects within the Transport Strategy service is partially offsetting this (£0.1m).

### **Sustainable Transport Delivery (£0.15m favourable variance)**

Staffing underspends and increased income across Network and Traffic Management are the key reasons for the favourable portfolio variance.

### **Built Environment, Housing & Sustainable Development (£0.33m favourable variance)**

The majority of the favourable variance is as a result of increased income across the Development Management service area, with small underspends across Building Control and Housing also contributing.

## **Budgeted Contingencies**

3.7 When setting the 2025/26 budget, in recognition of the significant budget risks associated with national insurance changes, demand on statutory services rising above modelled levels, alongside savings delivery risk, the following contingencies and provisions were included in the budget:

- Corporate Contingency (£3m) for savings delivery risk and slippage
- Contract Inflation Provision (£2.6m) for the impacts of Employer National Insurance on supplies and services and contract spend across services.
- High Risk Service Demand and Cost Increase Provision (£4.2m)

3.8 All £9.8m of budgeted contingency has been released within the Quarter 2 forecast position to partially offset pressures as outlined across council services in section 3.6 and savings shortfalls outlined in section 3.9.

## **Savings Performance**

3.9 The 2025/26 revenue budget approved savings of £14.01m. Delivery of these savings will be monitored throughout the year, with £9.15m forecast as achieved at the end of September, representing 65% delivery. Of the £4.86m not currently achieved, £2.04m are being mitigated through savings, contingency or income elsewhere in the respective service, while £0.68m of savings are currently delayed until 2026/27 and £2.15m are forecast as unachievable, resulting in material forecast pressures.

## **Being Our Best Programme**

- 3.10 Included within the approved savings target is £2m of additional cost reductions relating to the organisation's Being Our Best programme. The programme was budgeted to deliver a £4.5m reduction in organisation staffing costs by 2025/26. As at the end of 2024/25, £0.5m had been delivered. Currently it is forecast that a further £1m will be delivered in year, resulting in a shortfall against the budgeted target of £2.5m.
- 3.11 The pay and grading review across the organisation has resulted in a net increase in salary costs. The increase has exceeded the budget by £1.49m and as such is creating both an in-year and on-going pressure. A Job Evaluation and Pay Structure reserve was created last financial year to cover any one-off impacts from the programme. It is recommended that this reserve is used to cover the in-year pressure (on top of estimated pay protection costs of £0.25m) and has been included as a direct mitigation in the quarter 2 summary table.

## **Budgetary Control and Management Action Plans**

- 3.12 The Council has a positive record of strong financial management. Directors are actively developing mitigation plans for the service areas which are in an over budget position to manage the financial position in year and bring the Council back into a balanced position.
- 3.13 In the event the above budget position cannot be fully mitigated a combination of specific service reserves (such as the Adult Social Care Reserve) and the Council's Revenue Budget Contingency Reserve will need to be utilised, subject to approval. Should this be required there would be a requirement to replenish these reserves in future years, putting further pressure on meeting the medium-term budget gaps.

## REVENUE BALANCES AND RESERVES

3.14 The Employer's national pay offer for 2025/26 has now been agreed and was within the 4% inflation included in the budget. Service budgets have been adjusted for Quarter 2 reporting to reflect the new pay levels.

### Key Reserves

3.15 The following table shows the balances of key reserves at the beginning of the year, planned use, and expected balance at the year-end based on current forecast:

Reserve Title	Balance as at 01/04/2025 £'m	Projected Use / Commitments £'m	Estimated Balance 31/03/2026 £'m
Revenue Budget Contingency	2.97	(0.79)	2.18
Financial Planning and Smoothing	6.67	(3.06)	3.61
Transformation Investment	4.53	(1.34)	3.19
Restructuring & Severance	4.83	(1.50)	3.33
Job Evaluation and Pay Structure	3.00	(1.75)	1.25

### Flexible Capital Receipts

3.16 Flexible Capital Receipts are being utilised for revenue spend that results in ongoing revenue savings. The February 2025 Budget Report – Efficiency Strategy confirmed a continued £11.5m allocation of capital receipts for this purpose. This has now been updated to reflect the re-profiled requirement and re-phasing into 2025/26 as follows:

	Actual Usage 2017/18 to 2024/25 £'m	Forecast Usage 2025/26 £'m	Est Total Usage £'m
Flexible Capital Receipts	11.11	0.39	11.50

3.17 Unapplied capital receipts of £3.380m were carried forward from 2024/25, with £0.105m received in 2025/26 so far and further forecast if £1.3m against £3.8m budgeted, with the sale of Lewis House now expected in 2026/27. This reprofiling is partly offset by other new identified sales.

### General Fund Un-Earmarked Reserve

3.18 The General Fund Un-Earmarked Reserve is retained to meet the Council's key financial risks. The risk assessment has set a range of between £11.8m and

£13.0m to meet those risks in the 2025/26 financial year. The reserve has a current uncommitted balance of £12.6m in line with the level reported in the 2025/26 Budget Report.

### **Revenue Budget Virements**

- 3.19 Any revenue budget virements which require Cabinet approval are listed in Appendix 3(i). Technical budget adjustments are also shown in Appendix 3(i) for information purposes, as required by the Budget Management Scheme.

### **COUNCIL TAX, COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT AND BUSINESS RATES**

- 3.20 The 2025/26 tax base allowed for the same number of Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) recipients as at the end of November 2024 to continue into 2025/26. The budget estimate of costs of LCTS were set at £11.0m. The current cost estimate is £0.5m under budget at £10.5m with 6,288 working age claimants and 3,364 Pensioner claimants.
- 3.21 The actual outturn position on LCTSS and the impact on the Council Tax collection fund will depend on a number of variables, including the change in number of claimants and the period claimants remain eligible for support whilst seeking employment and this will continue to be monitored closely during the year.
- 3.22 The current overall forecast on Council Tax is an in-year collection fund deficit of £0.41m. This is mainly due to less than budgeted second homes and long-term empty properties where a premium is charged, and an increase in students occupied properties. This adverse variance is partially offset by a favourable trend against budget in LCTSS costs and single person discount. The Council's share of the deficit is £0.34m and this represents a negative variance of 0.3% against the 2025/26 forecast income.
- 3.23 The Council's share of the decreased 2024/25 Council Tax Collection Fund final outturn position of £0.34m, as reported to Cabinet in July has been reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy update which is also reported to this Cabinet meeting.

### **Business Rates**

- 3.24 The government announced, as part of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement in November 2023, that the retail, hospitality, and leisure business rate relief scheme would be extended for a sixth year into 2025/26, but with a reduction in the level of relief from 75% to 40% whilst maintaining the cap on the relief at £110,000 per business.
- 3.25 The Council continues to be recompensed for the reduction in business rate income arising from this relief via a s31 compensation grant. The current level of retail business rate relief granted is £4.9m which is £0.6m above the £4.3m originally estimated for 2025/26.
- 3.26 Gross rates after reliefs is currently £0.9m adverse mainly due to the £0.6m adverse retail relief and £0.3m adverse small business rate relief against budget.
- 3.27 These adverse impacts on the collection fund are partially offset by a favourable forecast in relation to the provision for appeals, which is currently forecast to be

£0.3m lower than budget. This is mainly due to some releases in respect of the 2017 rating list provision.

- 3.28 The current overall in year forecast for the Business Rate element of the collection fund is a deficit of £0.63m, of which the council's share is £0.59m.
- 3.29 The forecast overall impact on the business rates collection fund position including reliefs and appeals will continue to be reviewed during the remainder of the year.
- 3.30 Section 31 grant income from Business rate compensation grants is currently forecast to be £0.53m above budget, this relates to increased relief granted in respect of Retail Relief and Small Business Rate Relief.
- 3.31 As set out in the Budget Report, any surplus or deficit on the Business Rate Collection Fund and associated income will be transferred to or from the Business Rates Reserve for consideration as part of the Business Rates calculations for future years and this position will be reflected in the 2026/27 budget.

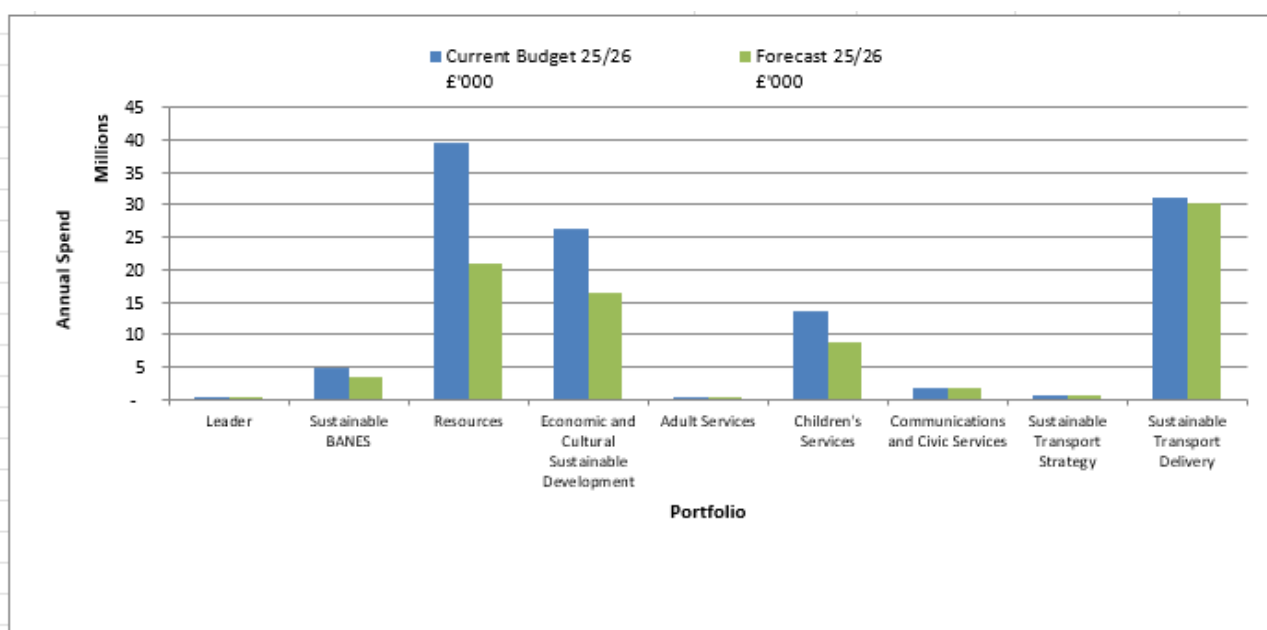
## **CAPITAL BUDGET**

- 3.32 The current position of the 2025/26 Capital Programme is a forecast of £106.2m against a budget of £146.4m, giving a variance of £40.2m, £39.6m of which is forecast to be re-phased to future years.
- 3.33 The following table shows a summary of the current position by Cabinet Portfolio. The full breakdown of the Capital Programme by Portfolio can be found in Appendix 2(ii) with key scheme commentary in Appendix 2. Appendix 4(i) sets out budget changes actioned since the February Budget setting report.

Portfolio Summary Monitor	Annual Current Budget 2025/26 £'000	Forecast 2025/26 £'000	In-Year Variance 2025/26 £'000	Forecast Re-phasing to Future Years £'000
Leader	60	60	-	-
Sustainable BANES	4,915	3,385	1,530	1,529
Resources	39,461	21,056	18,404	18,404
Economic and Cultural Sustainable Development	26,201	16,354	9,846	9,846
Adult Services	293	293	-	-
Children's Services	13,526	8,844	4,682	4,682
Communications and Civic Services	1,666	1,648	18	-
Sustainable Transport Strategy	547	547	-	-
Sustainable Transport Delivery	31,093	30,099	994	994
Built Environment and Sustainable Development	28,643	23,964	4,679	4,118
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>146,405</b>	<b>106,252</b>	<b>40,153</b>	<b>39,574</b>

*Note: Some of the figures in this table are affected by rounding*

The graph below illustrates the value and forecast against budget for all in year capital budgets by Cabinet Portfolio:





## Capital Commentary

3.34 The key in-year programme variances, in order of scale by portfolio, are as follows:

### **Resources: £18.404m rephasing to future years**

- Commercial Estate Programmes - Refurbishment £3.8m, Fire Safety £1.5m, Re-Investment /Jollies £1m - arising from resource constraints.
- Orange Grove £0.8m – paused to review repair options.
- Neighbourhood Services Vehicles £6.2m – including 6 electric RCVs on order for delivery in June 2026.
- Waste Infrastructure Modernisation £2.4m – re-phased in line with signed contracts. On track for completion in September 2026.
- Property Company Investment £2.5m – lower forecast Aequus loan drawdowns.

### **Economic & Cultural Sustainable Development: £9.8m rephasing**

- Corporate Planned Maintenance £2.5m – a review undertaken on the progress of orders & historic performance has refined estimates.
- Heritage Collection Centre £0.5m – the withdrawal of Bath Spa University has stopped current project; alternative site options are being explored.
- Somer Valley Enterprise Zone £6.5m – land assembly is now expected later than previously forecast.

### **Built Environment & Sustainable Development: £4.679m, with £4.118m rephasing to future years**

- Social Rent – £2.0m - Danes Lane delivery being key scheme in 2025/26.
- Bath Western Riverside 2 - £1m – focus is currently on £18m grant funded remediation activity with site planning permissions to be advanced in 2026.
- Disabled Facilities Grants - £0.5m no scope to catch-up on past carry-forwards.
- Local Authority Housing Fund - £0.6m saving with all properties purchased within government grant.

### **Children's Services: £4.682m rephasing to future years**

- Small Residential Unit (Charlton House) – £4m Project was paused whilst Ofsted registration was clarified but has now restarted.
- Capitalised Maintenance - £0.6m Programme delivery updated after summer repair programme.

### **Sustainable B&NES: £1.530m rephasing to future years**

- Parks Improvements £0.6m – multiple S106 projects rephased.
- Renewable Energy Development Fund £0.3m - realigned with delivery of Solar projects to increase capacity towards the 12kw target set for the corporate estate.

### **Sustainable Transport Delivery: £0.944m rephasing to future years**

- Clean Air Zone £0.3m – Queen Square Wayfinding has been delayed.
- Local Active travel £0.3m – s106 funded Public Right of Way Schemes now programmed into 2026/27.

## RISKS

3.35 The key risks to the budget were outlined in the Council's 2025/26 Budget Report, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance. These have been reviewed and are listed below, along with any additional emerging risks:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Update
Operational budget pressures due to rising demand	Likely	High	There is the high-risk of unplanned and unbudgeted growth in demand on Council services, particularly in Adult and Children's Social Care. Budgeted contingencies are in place to help mitigate the risk.
Contract inflationary pressure	Likely	High	With increase in wage, energy and fuel costs, and the Employers National Insurance increase, Council contracted services are at risk of above budget price increases. This is an economic risk that has been recognised in the budget with a contract inflation risk provision for potential areas that cannot be mitigated through activity management. Capital Schemes may need to be paused due to unfunded viability gaps due to increased supply chain costs.
Volatility and uncertainty around business rates	Likely	High	<p>The impacts of the current economic challenges will increase the volatility and uncertainty around business rate income. In 2025/26 this risk has been partly offset by the extension of the business rate relief scheme for Retail, Leisure and Hospitality businesses, although the level of relief has reduced.</p> <p>We continue to monitor arrears, CVAs, and liquidations with a specific reserve held to manage in-year volatility.</p>
Changes to Government Policy that affects future funding	Likely	High	New government policy and funding reforms that are planned for implementation from 2026/27 are likely to have an impact on resourcing of Council services and priorities. This have been assessed against available information but will not be fully understood until December 2025 when the Local Government Finance Settlement is announced.
Viability risk on the Councils Commercial Estate assets held for income generation.	Possible	High	Current asset reviews have identified that due to the age and complexity of the Councils Commercial Estate, some assets operating costs and capital investment needs may exceed annual rental income values. This will be managed through a detailed asset review that informs a programme of prioritisation for investment in the estate.
Reinstated government restrictions in the event of a new pandemic.	Possible	High	This is certainly a material risk, whilst not one the Council has direct control over, every step would be put in place to follow government guidance following the recommendations of our Director of Public Health.
Impact on Reserves	Possible	High	Without additional government grant funding in recognition of unfunded pressures there is the risk that Council reserve levels are not enough to manage in-year and future years risk.
Capital projects not delivered resulting in	Possible	High	The Council has a number of projects within this category. These risks will continue to be monitored and

revenue reversion costs or liabilities from underwriting agreements			reported. An assessment is made as part of the budget process to ensure that revenue reserves are sufficient to meet these risks. The capital programme methodology looks to de-risk projects wherever possible.
Interest rates increase	Possible	Medium	A reserve is available for borrowing to manage market risk and long-term borrowing costs have been factored into the longer-term MTFS. Long term borrowing rates remain elevated due to market concerns around fiscal stability both in the UK & the US.
Funding pressures through WECA, ICB and other partners	Possible	Medium	Ensure good communication links with partner organisations.

## 4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The annual medium-term financial planning process allocates resources across services with alignment of these resources towards the Council's corporate priorities. This report monitors how the Council is performing against the financial targets set in February 2025 through the Budget setting process.

## 5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 The financial implications are contained within the body of the report.

## 6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The substance of this report is part of the Council's risk management process. The key risks in the Council's budget are assessed annually by each Director, with these risks re-assessed regularly as part of the budget monitoring process.

## 7 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 7.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget process aligns resources towards the corporate priorities and objectives set out in the Corporate Strategy, which includes tackling the climate emergency. This report monitors the Council's financial performance against those budgets, and therefore does not include any decisions that have a direct impact on Climate Change.

## 8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 None

## 9 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Consultation has been carried out with the Cabinet Member for Resources, Directors, Section 151 Finance Officer, Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer.

- 9.2 Consultation was carried out at meetings and via e-mail.

<b>Contact person</b>	<p><i>Gary Adams – Head of Financial Management</i>  <a href="mailto:Gary_Adams@bathnes.gov.uk">Gary_Adams@bathnes.gov.uk</a></p> <p><i>Paul Webb – Senior Finance Manager</i>  <a href="mailto:Paul_Webb@bathnes.gov.uk">Paul_Webb@bathnes.gov.uk</a></p> <p><i>Jeff Wring - Director of Financial Services, Assurance &amp; Pensions (S151 Officer)</i></p>
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	<a href="mailto:Jeff.Wring@bathnes.gov.uk">Jeff Wring@bathnes.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers</b>	<i>Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 and Financial Outlook (E3590)</i>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	

Portfolio Number and Description		Cashlimit Number and Description	Current Budget £000	Actuals to date 31/09/2025	Forecast £000	Outturn Variance Over / (Under) £000	Forecast Outturn Variance Analysis	Outturn Recovery Plan	
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Leader of Council									
P04	Leader of Council	1112	Housing Delivery Vehicle	(1,000)	0	(1,000)	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P04 Leader of Council				(1,000)	0	(1,000)	0		
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset									
P39	Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset	1127	Environmental Monitoring (Air Pollution)	222	57	171	(51)	Over recovery of staff time against projects is the key reason for the favourable variance	Not applicable
P39	Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset	1137	Green Transformation	701	633	701	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P39	Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset	1147	Parks & Open Spaces	2,510	1,417	2,591	81	Staffing pressures within the service, along with a £25k pressure due to dilapidations at Combe Down allotments.	Any opportunities for vacancy management or stopping discretionary spend will be actioned where possible.
P27 Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset Total				3,433	2,107	3,463	30		
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Resources - Services									
P19	Resources	1032	Information Technology	8,562	6,201	8,762	200	Delays in realising intended cost savings from reducing servers as result in the move to cloud based provision is causing a pressure across the service.	All upcoming contract renewals are being scrutinised to reduce where possible.
P19	Resources	1040	Finance	3,366	2,097	3,426	60	Staffing pressures across financial systems and financial services teams.	Vacancy management in conjunction with optimising staffing resources charged to projects will be prioritised.
P19	Resources	1041	Revenues & Benefits	2,340	2,686	2,453	113	A combinations of uncertainty around grant income and staffing pressures are generating the forecast adverse position.	Prioritising court fee income recovery will help offset some of the existing expenditure pressures.
P19	Resources	1042	Risk & Assurance Services	1,754	640	1,754	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1047	Human Resources & Organisational Development	3,118	1,708	3,018	(100)	Staffing underspends across the service.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1053	Council Solicitor & Democratic Services	3,446	2,026	3,574	128	Under recovery of staff time to projects and cost pressures associated with recent by-elections are generating a forecast pressure.	Prioritising staff recharges to projects to ensure cost recovery where possible.
P19	Resources	1054	Hsg / Council Tax Benefits Subsidy	405	1,409	405	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1081	Commercial Estate	(12,111)	(6,271)	(11,221)	890	Rental income shortfall is the key area of pressure, although increased service supported borrowing costs, the cost of legal representation and external charges are also forecast to be contributing to the reported adverse position. The rental income budget was increased by £0.2m for 2025/26 to reflect works to void units that would be completed during the early part of the year, allowing an increase in assets that could be let. Working to make properties available to market and let have been delayed due to insufficient resources in the maintenance team.	We are funding 2 posts in the maintenance team to provide the required resource to expediate works to buildings to enable us to offer the letting to the open market. This may not result in a full years rental income in this financial year (due to possible rent free periods) but it will ensure we have an ongoing income stream from the property for future years.
P19	Resources	1101	Neighbourhoods & Environment - Waste & Fleet Services	18,909	10,675	19,077	168	The service are continuing to see pressures on staffing costs, due to covering sickness and vacancies with temporary staff to avoid service failure. This is an unbudgeted cost, although there is a significant improvement on sickness costs from last year. This has been offset by increased income, including trade waste, garden waste, reuse shop and additional third party income from Pixash. Small savings on maintenance at Pixash depot and waste treatment and disposal costs also help mitigate the staffing pressures.	Any opportunities to increase income or stopping discretionary spend will be actioned where possible.
P19	Resources	1118	Procurement & Commissioning	406	677	286	(119)	Vacancies within the service are creating an underspend on staffing costs.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1132	Business Change	775	503	775	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1143	Corporate Office	1,744	790	1,660	(84)	Underspends on staffing and contract budgets.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1145	Capital Programme and Project Delivery	(260)	374	(260)	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P19 Resources - Services Total				32,453	23,513	33,709	1,256		

Portfolio Number and Description		Cashlimit Number and Description		Current Budget £000	Actuals to date 31/09/2025	Forecast £000	Outturn Variance Over / (Under) £000	Forecast Outturn Variance Analysis	Outturn Recovery Plan
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Resources - Corporate									
P19	Resources	N/A	Being Our Best Programme - Savings	(2,509)	0	(30)	2,479	Slippage in delivery of programme savings for 2025/26	Directors and Heads of Service have been tasked with increasing the pace of delivery to ensure the financial pressure is minimised where possible.
P19	Resources	N/A	Being Our Best Programme - Pay and Grading Review	(1,488)	0	0	1,488	Increase in staffing budgets as a result of pay and grading review and role profile mapping	Use of reserves to cover the increased costs are recommended and will be considered at year-end.
P19	Resources	N/A	Corporate Contingency	9,830	0	0	(9,830)	Release of corporate contingency to offset organisational budget pressures	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1055	Capital Financing / Interest	5,476	(3,075)	4,639	(837)	The forecast under budget position is due to a combination of £400k from lower rates achieved on new borrowing when compared to budgeted rates, £250k from higher rates earned on investments than budgeted, and a £187k lower Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge, reflecting the rephasing of capital projects reported in the 2024/25 capital outturn report.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1056	Unfunded Pensions	1,388	690	1,388	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1057	Corporate Budgets including Capital, Audit and Bank Charges	(7,877)	725	(8,687)	(810)	Lower corporately supported borrowing (CSB) costs of £800k associated with capital schemes with spend to be reprofiled into future years in line with current delivery forecasts.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1058	Magistrates	12	0	12	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1059	Coroners	575	(114)	575	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1060	Environment Agency	268	201	268	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P19	Resources	1061	West of England Combined Authority Levy	5,309	3,716	5,309	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P19	Resources - Corporate Total			10,984	2,145	3,474	(7,510)		
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development									
P33	Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development	1018	Heritage Services	(14,192)	(8,778)	(11,850)	2,342	<p>The forecast assumes a continued reduction in group visitors of 6%, in line with industry performance to date and in line with September performance at the Roman Baths. It assumes growth of 1% in individual visitors through to the end of the year. This is again based on the level growth seen during September. It is an improvement on the performance through the summer, but a lower rate of growth than initially projected. We are forecasting 985,266 visitors at the Roman Baths in 2025/26. This new forecast in visitors results in a further reduction to admission income of £1.02 million on our Quarter 1 estimate.</p> <p>There is a further income pressure on retail sales and catering concession as a result of lower visitor numbers translating into fewer customers in the shop and diners in the Pump Room. These have added a further pressure of £339k.</p>	<p>The Service has mitigated the reduction in admission income by £350k through decisions we've recently taken to extend the £2 surcharge for on the day ticket purchases and increase the ticket price between Christmas and New Year when we are normally very busy.</p> <p>There are further mitigations of £377k that the service has identified, in addition to the £550k which was built in to the Quarter 1 estimate.</p>
P33	Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development	1038	Corporate Estate Including R&M	4,942	3,701	5,635	693	<p>Budgeted savings have not yet been achieved due to slippage in rationalising the estate through disposal or redeployment, and the delay in the adoption of the Corporate Landlord model.</p> <p>Property costs are high due to assets being held void. Some mitigations are available through recharging staff time to projects and holding posts vacant whilst smarter structures are implemented. There is also a balance to be struck in managing this year's financial position and further impacting future years' costs.</p>	Ongoing prioritisation of revenue spend across the estate, recharging of time to projects, alongside vacancy savings from mid-year recruitment are being adopted to mitigate the estimated overspend.
P33	Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development	1052	Regeneration	(508)	984	(67)	441	Unlet floor space at No.1 Bath Quays South is resulting in a shortfall against the budgeted income target.	Market sentiment and demand continues to be challenging given wider national and global macro-economic pressures. No.1 Bath Quays is now the only quality Grade A, EPC A, accommodation in the City and the remaining vacant accommodation sits well within general occupational needs, meaning the accommodation is well suited to tenant requirements as the market improves.
P33	Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development	1109	World Heritage	128	71	129	1	No material variance reported	Not applicable
P33	Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development	1128	Business & Skills	415	507	402	(13)	No material variance reported.	Not applicable
P33	Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development Total			(9,215)	(3,516)	(5,752)	3,463		

Portfolio Number and Description		Cashlimit Number and Description		Current Budget £000	Actuals to date 31/09/2025	Forecast £000	Outturn Variance Over / (Under) £000	Forecast Outturn Variance Analysis	Outturn Recovery Plan
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Adult Services									
P20	Adult Services	1019	Leisure	302	1,363	302	0	The deed of variance on leisure contract has now been signed and is effective from start of October 2025. This is in line with budget plan for 2026-27. The tax advantages the deed of variance provides will produce a growth in income in 2026-27.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1036	Adults Substance Misuse (DAT)	82	(331)	82	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1073	Adults & Older People- Mental Health Commissioning	8,552	4,315	8,329	(223)	Forecast continues to be under budget. However some known hospital discharges are likely to lead to increased demand/increased costs. All reviews/requests for funding remain scrutinised at the joint forums with Health.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1086	Adult Care Commissioning	4,625	2,384	4,613	(12)	The forecast includes delivery of the £325k savings target.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1088	Older People & Physically Disabled Purchasing	14,307	7,840	15,676	1,369	We have seen a significant rise in demand for our services linked to supporting people to live independent lives in their own homes, keeping people safe and supporting hospital discharge and preventing readmission. We are seeing people living longer with care needs and also a rise in needs relating to Mental Health concerns.	We are continuing our scrutiny of care packages working with the Occupational Therapy service to maximise independence and with the partners in the community wellbeing hub.
P20	Adult Services	1091	Learning Disabilities Commissioning	19,614	8,853	20,789	1,175	Continued Demand for services is resulting in an over budget forecast , particularly with the needs of young people transitioning into adult services.	Continued scrutiny of packages of care, working with BSW ICB Health colleagues, to ensure the appropriate reflection of health contributions.
P20	Adult Services	1093	Physical Disability, Hearing & Vision	3,957	1,602	3,607	(350)	Forecast continues to be under budget, however there are known transitions of young people to adult services which remain under scrutiny and review as to the need for longer term on going services.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1094	Public Health	0	(3,740)	0	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1110	Better Care Fund	(7,999)	(7,153)	(7,999)	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1113	CCG B&NES CHC and FNC Payments	0	614	0	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1114	Community Equipment	253	346	253	0	Demand pressures are being met from funding earmarked to support hospital discharge and maintaining independence within the Better Care Fund (BCF).	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1123	Safeguarding Adults	(1,992)	(2,263)	(2,004)	(12)	One off savings linked to staff turnover	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1124	Community Resource Centres & Extra Care Income	8,792	4,072	8,398	(394)	Fee income has risen as a result of improved occupancy , in particular, the improved occupancy at Cleeve Court Community Resource Centre achieved through a phased approach over the last 6 months has contributed to this. Agency use has risen in first half of the year across the services, but actions have been taken to bring this down. The service has also reviewed and increased our fee rates in line with local providers which has supported increase in fee income position and forecast.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1141	Social Care	9,703	4,568	9,394	(310)	Vacancy savings in lieu of a staffing restructure which comes into effect from 1.10.25. Agency staff have been used on an interim basis to cover some of the posts.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services	1146	Provider Services	3,880	1,954	3,628	(253)	Salary savings due to staff turnover.	Not applicable
P20	Adult Services Total			64,077	24,423	65,068	991		

Portfolio Number and Description		Cashlimit Number and Description		Current Budget £000	Actuals to date 31/09/2025	Forecast £000	Outturn Variance Over / (Under) £000	Forecast Outturn Variance Analysis	Outturn Recovery Plan
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Children's Services									
P21	Children's Services	1076	Children, Young People & Families	22,209	14,732	27,936	5,726	The main driver of pressure is Residential placements overspend at £4.1m. Additional placements that have been required in order to safeguard young people in conjunction with the increasing costs of these placements due to the increasing complexity of need that young people are presenting with, and the continued lack of sufficiency in the placement sector. The next largest pressure is salary at £1m which is due to agency staffing usage to both cover vacancies that are difficult to recruit to and to respond to the demand within the service. The remainder of the pressure is due to increased spend to support our families with disabled children in their home. This area has a pressure of £0.6m. This position includes full delivery of the budgeted £2.3m savings targets for 25/26.	In addition to the established review panels for new and existing placements and packages of care, a detailed review of all placements and packages of care is near completion, allowing for detailed service actions plans and responsive financial modelling. Agency usage reduction will be targeted where possible with urgency. A service redesign is underway to align with the Government's Families First initiative and is part of transformation activity overseen by the Children's Transformation Board. Other workstreams target placement sufficiency and market structure. Transformational outcomes will be delivered over the medium term.
P21	Children's Services	1077	Inclusion & Prevention	3,296	1,580	3,215	(80)	Under budget position due to one-off staffing savings, primarily within the Children Centres service.	Not applicable
P21	Children's Services	1078	Education Transformation	5,628	127	5,944	316	£0.15m pressure from Teacher Pension costs. £0.1m pressure due to historical income pressures. Balance of overspend due to staffing pressures as a result of agency use in the Education Psychology Team due to service demands. This pressure was £0.17m but has been largely mitigated by holding vacancies elsewhere.	Plan to hold vacancies where possible until the new financial year, and stop any discretionary spend that is possible.
P21	Children's Services	1079	Schools Budgets	(1,506)	1,005	(1,506)	0	Although no variance reported there is an underlying overspend of the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) this year forecast of circa £12m. This is £0.28m higher than the planned overspend position held within the Safety Valve plan. The Safety Valve plan seeks to address the built-up deficit of overspend of the DSG and bring spend in line with the grant allocation by the end of the Safety Valve term in 2030-31.	The historical deficit and in year overspends are being addressed via the Safety Valve project in conjunction with the Department for Education (DfE) over a 6 year period.
P21	Children's Services	1116	Integrated Commissioning - CYP	1,580	349	1,600	20	Over budget position is as a result of spend on Children's and Young People's equipment.	This spend is primarily contracted, however any opportunity for spend reduction in non contracted areas will be pursued.
P21	Children's Services	1117	Safeguarding - CYP	102	(98)	102	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P21	Children's Services	1142	Home to School Transport	11,435	4,297	11,455	20	As expected the service are seeing significant increases in cost relating to both demand and market price which is creating a financial pressure in delivering the statutory home to school transport service. However, the savings implemented by the service have reduced this position significantly. The forecast is based on quarter 1 data but modelled on the increase in demand that the service are currently seeing.	Any opportunities for vacancy management or implementing further route savings will be actioned where possible.
P21 Children's Services Total				42,744	21,992	48,747	6,002		
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Communications and Community									
P36	Communications and Community	1089	Community Safety	402	361	390	(12)	No material variance reported	Not applicable
P36	Communications and Community	1044	Communications and Marketing	316	148	315	(1)	No material variance reported	Not applicable
P36	Communications and Community	1115	Registrars Service	(73)	(275)	(73)	(0)	No material variance reported	Not applicable
P36	Communications and Community	1119	Emergency Planning	758	344	732	(26)	An underspend on contract expenditure due to being in the early stages of the CCTV maintenance contract are more than offsetting pressures on staffing due to sickness backfill requirements.	Not applicable
P36	Communications and Community	1121	Events and Active Lifestyles	453	(414)	460	7	No material variance reported	Not applicable
P36	Communications and Community	1122	Customer Services (Including Libraries)	3,113	1,479	3,333	220	A 2024/25 savings target around reducing customer related costs across the organisation is still unachieved. Staffing and materials pressures are also contributing to the projected overspend.	Investment in digital solutions across customer interactions and postage costs will bring down the costs of running the service in the medium term.
P36	Communications and Community	1139	Public Protection	1,406	876	1,619	213	Pressures on licensing income is the main contributor to the adverse forecast variance. The service has also seen a reduction in pest control income, a staffing pressure and increased water monitoring costs.	Limited scope to find savings within the service to offset income shortfall. Expenditure being closely monitored and any savings opportunities will be realised.
P36	Communications and Community	1144	Park and Ride	(546)	1,907	(546)	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P36	Communications and Community	1148	Bereavement Services	(629)	(186)	(504)	125	A small staffing pressure within the service. Bereavement services are also seeing a pressure on cremation income at Haycombe Crematorium.	Any opportunities for vacancy management or stopping discretionary spend will be actioned where possible.
P34 Communications and Community Total				5,200	4,240	5,728	527		



Portfolio Number and Description		Cashlimit Number and Description		Current Budget £000	Actuals to date 31/09/2025	Forecast £000	Outturn Variance Over / (Under) £000	Forecast Outturn Variance Analysis	Outturn Recovery Plan
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Sustainable Transport Strategy									
P37	Sustainable Transport Strategy	1103	Transport & Parking Services - Parking	(9,150)	(4,786)	(9,656)	(506)	Parking income is continuing to remain above budgeted levels, but we are seeing some pressures on permit income. The overall position has been reduced by £210k due repayment of borrowing for a resident parking zone (RPZ) implementation.	Not applicable
P37	Sustainable Transport Strategy	1129	Clean Air Zone	0	(735)	0	0	No variance reported.	Not applicable
P37	Sustainable Transport Strategy	1135	Transport Strategy	419	2,329	552	133	A shortfall in staff time recharged to projects has resulted in this forecast adverse position.	Opportunities are being explored for recharges to new projects along with a review of future spend to help mitigate the adverse position.
P05 Sustainable Transport Strategy Total				(8,732)	(3,192)	(9,104)	(372)		
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Sustainable Transport Delivery									
P38	Sustainable Transport Delivery	1133	Network & Traffic Management	1,005	166	829	(176)	Staffing underspends and income generation over and above budget across the service is generating the favourable variance.	Not applicable
P38	Sustainable Transport Delivery	1134	Highway Maintenance	7,157	2,336	7,186	29	Pressure on gully emptying due to an increase in costs since the introduction of the third tanker for Clean & Green initiatives. Pressures on the staffing due to recruitment issues in the structures team and team manager post. This overspend is reduced due to a reduction in our annual electricity price for street lighting.	Any opportunities for vacancy management or stopping discretionary spend will be actioned where possible.
P05 Sustainable Transport Delivery Total				8,162	2,501	8,016	(147)		
Detailed Analysis of Budgets for Built Environment and Sustainable Development									
P35	Built Environment and Sustainable Development	1029	Housing	2,378	(586)	2,357	(21)	Domestic abuse service expenditure has been maintained within the grant allocation and therefore hasn't relied on budgeted contingency, whilst there are small staffing underspends across the service, which combined are more than mitigating a shortfall in income on Homeseach implementation fees.	Not applicable
P35	Built Environment and Sustainable Development	1106	Development Management	1,531	242	1,247	(285)	Planning income over and above budgeted levels, combined with staffing underspends are generating the favourable variance.	Not applicable
P35	Built Environment and Sustainable Development	1138	Building Control	84	(73)	61	(23)	A combination of increased income staffing underspends has generated a favourable variance.	Not applicable
P35 Built Environment and Sustainable Development Total				3,993	(417)	3,664	(329)		
Council Total				152,101	73,797	156,012	3,911		
Use of Job Evaluation and Pay Structure Reserve				0	0	(1,488)	(1,488)	Recommended use of reserve to mitigate costs of implementing new organisational pay and grading structure.	Not applicable
Revised Council Total				152,101	73,797	154,524	2,423		

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## FINANCE BUDGET MONITORING QUARTERLY DASHBOARD - April to September 2025

CAPITAL APPENDIX 2 - KEY SCHEME VARIANCE ANALYSIS					
		Sum of 25/26 Forecast £'000	Sum of 25/26 Total Current Budget £'000	Sum of 25/26 Variance £'000	Re-phasing to Future Years £'000
<b>Children's Services</b>					
<b>Basic Needs - School Improvement / Expansion</b>	<p>Programme Highlights:</p> <p>St Keyna Primary - An expansion by one form entry to enable a 420 place school, with a new 6 classroom block built to Passivhaus standard: Delay to completion is due to the building control sign off for the cavity walls and fire stopping. Planned completion is December 2025.</p> <p>Oldfield School Technical Block - The project is complete and occupied from June 2025.</p> <p>Keynsham East towards provision of Two Rivers playing field - This will be delivered across 2025/26 and 2026/27.</p> <p>A feasibility budget will be rephased into 2026/27 to fund future studies.</p>	3,196	3,246	50	50
<b>Schools Capital Maintenance Schemes</b>	<p>Schools Condition Grant provides for a programme of repair and maintenance works to maintained schools. The programme of works identified to be carried out in 2025/26 include : On-going programme of repairs at Newbridge Primary: 1) Re-wiring and replacement LED lighting – complete; 2) On-going assessment and repair to a boundary wall; 3) Removal of old music block and re-provide new external learning space 4) repairs/replacement to windows and concrete window surrounds 5) roof repairs 6) external doors replacement – rephase £20k budget to 2026/27. Twerton Infants 1) LED lighting upgrade – complete with a few final elements to be finalised in October half term. 2) Roof covering replacements including strengthening – contractor appointed, programme to be advised. At St Keyna Primary 1) LED lighting upgrades to be carried out on completion of the Expansion project – rephase £100k budget to 2026/27.</p> <p>Paulton Juniors – works to a retaining wall in the playground.</p> <p>Rephasing includes Radon works will continue into 2026/27 £36k, contingency £50k, minor works £226k and Emergency Works £147k.</p>	1,422	2,002	580	580
<b>SEND (Special Education Needs &amp; Disability) Capital Programme</b>	<p>Projects to provide Resource Bases and SEND adaptations at schools and colleges across BANES are progressing well. Projects in delivery are:</p> <p>1) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) 20 place Resource Base (RB) new build at Ralph Allen, completed August 2025 for September 2025 occupation.</p> <p>2) ASD 20 place RB remodelling at St Mark's - project completed to budget June 2025, ready for September 2025 occupation.</p> <p>3) Abbot Alphege separation works, adaptations and remodelling for Alternative Provision (AP) relocation from the Culverhay site. The contractor started on site June 2025. As the school building is returning to the Council following the closure of Abbot Alphege Primary, new leases are being drawn up for two Multi Academy Trusts (MATs - AP on the ground floor and HERs will continue to occupy the first floor) to occupy the building. Due to complete for October 2025 half term occupation. Currently on time and within budget.</p> <p>4) Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), 10 place RB new build standalone building at Mulberry Park Primary. Planning submitted with a target date for determination October 2025 and the contractor tender specification will be published in Quarter 3. Completing for September 2026 occupation. £54k to be rephased into 2026/27.</p>	3,210	3,262	52	52
<b>Small Residential Unit - New Residential &amp; Day School - Charlton House</b>	<p>Due to Ofsted registration requirements the project was paused while further research and development was carried to determine the number of bedrooms that could be provided for the children's home; now confirmed that the project will provide two separate homes, each for 4 children whilst the SEND school remains as at 30 places. The project re-started September 2025 working towards stage 2 for Gateway sign off. Due to the delays, £2,649k budget to be rephased into 2026/27 and £1,351k 2027/28.</p>	668	4,668	4,000	4,000

**FINANCE BUDGET MONITORING QUARTERLY DASHBOARD - April to September 2025**

**CAPITAL APPENDIX 2 - KEY SCHEME VARIANCE ANALYSIS**

		Sum of 25/26 Forecast £'000	Sum of 25/26 Total Current Budget £'000	Sum of 25/26 Variance £'000	Re-phasing to Future Years £'000
<b>Economic and Cultural Sustainable Development</b>					
<b>Bath Quays North</b>	Works are progressing with design team appointment being finalised to secure amendments to the existing planning consent. This will result in full utilisation of 2025/26 Budget. Analysis of delivery options against the planning objectives is in progress to develop fully worked up scheme.	1,358	1,358	-	-
<b>Corporate Estate Planned Maintenance</b>	Due to long-term staffing constraints, the focus has been reactive, essential maintenance (as well as elsewhere commercial estate work to maintain income-generating. At the time of writing orders are placed for £1,086k and also we are out to tender for £724k. A completed works snapshot-Care Home repairs to a retaining wall and new hydraulic lift controls, works to various closed burial grounds, resurfacing and non-highway bridge remedials and new LED lighting at the Civic Centre.	3,111	5,611	2,500	2,500
<b>Somer Valley Enterprise Zone - Infrastructure</b>	Substantial consultancy/professional advice is in progress along with necessary surveys are underway. Land assembly is expected at end of in 2025/26 into 2026/27, A further WEMCA funding bid to deliver enabling works with start anticipated in June 2027, with an 18-month timescale.	2,500	8,897	6,397	6,397
<b>Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal Programme</b>	A Town Centre Masterplan is at an advanced stage which together with the Regeneration Action Plan for the town will confirm the scope of the next stage of project delivery utilising CIL and s106 funding, including reallocation from Parks. Underspend to budget will be carried forward to 2026/27.	200	257	57	57
<b>Bath City Centre Renewal Programme</b>	This programme contains a series of projects and installations in Bath city centre to improve the accessibility of the public realm. This includes works to install electricity points for markets and street traders at Milsom Street, small scale public realm works in the Milsom Quarter and new street furniture in Kingsmead Square.	1,128	1,128	-	-
<b>Milsom Quarter Masterplan Delivery</b>	Public Realm improvements progressing to full design with WEMCA business Case due to be submitted in November 2025. Broad St Yards scheme outline design completed and meetings underway to find a Joint venture partner before progressing further Walcot Gateway due diligence completed.	613	613	-	-
<b>Radstock Regeneration</b>	Improvements to create a community hub and event space in Trinty Church has led to funding awarded to Radstock Town Council and works have started on site . Additional budget from grant award pending.	194	194	-	-
<b>Fashion Museum Renovation</b>	Development continues on design and broader project work to inform the investment in and conversion of the grade 2 listed, Old Post Office Building in Bath to provide a future Fashion Museum as centrepiece to transform the Milsom Quarter area of Bath into a fashion destination. It is a strong fundraising proposition, and it should be possible to raise funds to support this project, through a mix of West of England and National Heritage Lottery grant funders, individual philanthropy and corporate sponsorship.	1,768	1,923	155	155
<b>High Street Recovery</b>	The project is redeveloping Council owned vacant units in Keynsham Temple Street/Riverside to bring them back into productive use and employment. Contractors appointed to start on site in November and on track for completion by March 2026.	1,126	1,126	( 0)	( 0)
<b>Corporate Estate Decarbonisation Programme</b>	Work is in progress to deliver solar schemes and improve data systems and carry out feasibility only Hydro works.	250	250	-	-
<b>Guildhall Roof Refurbishment</b>	Major £4m refurbishment now approved to proceed with completion of design and specification in Q3, along with working towards listed building consents.	190	190	-	-

**FINANCE BUDGET MONITORING QUARTERLY DASHBOARD - April to September 2025**

**CAPITAL APPENDIX 2 - KEY SCHEME VARIANCE ANALYSIS**

		Sum of 25/26 Forecast £'000	Sum of 25/26 Total Current Budget £'000	Sum of 25/26 Variance £'000	Re-phasing to Future Years £'000
<b>Resources</b>					
<b>Commercial Estate Refurbishment Programme</b>	A programme is underway to repair and improve vacated commercial properties for new lettings. Resource challenges impacted progress in Q1 and Q2, but additional specialist support is expected to enhance delivery in the second half of the year.	2,148	5,948	3,800	3,800
<b>Property Company Investment - Council (Loan): Developments</b>	The Aequus loan requirements arises from business cases from homes for rent. The variance reflects updated forecast of loans aligned to the business plan.	1,350	3,816	2,466	2,466
<b>Orange Grove</b>	Project paused whilst asset repair options are being re-evaluated .	113	919	806	806
<b>Pixash Site Redevelopment</b>	Main completed and we are delivering final works in quarter 3, including snagging, a lockout system, an upgraded fire wall, new recycling optical sorting line and light bar modifications. Overage and retention are not yet paid and we expecting to release contingency £192k.	140	332	192	192
<b>Waste Infrastructure Modernisation</b>	The project is to provide a Recycling Centre (RC) at Locksbrook Road (South) and to co-locate Cleansing Services with the Transport Depot in Locksbrook Road (North). A contractor is now appointed with planned works for Unit 1 Locksbrook North to complete by end of March 2026, to be followed by Unit 2 Locksbrook to complete by August 2026. The Recycling Centre (Locksbrook South) starts February 2026 to be delivered by September 2026. We are ensuring adherence to planning conditions and are undertaking flood risk assessment, asbestos and roof surveys. We are currently on schedule, with slippage representing refinement of budgets in light of contractor appointment and an updated schedule of works.	3,646	6,048	2,402	2,402
<b>Commercial Asset Re-Investment</b>	Remedial works at the former Jolly's building are progressing, with the contractor on-site. The programme is on track and the rephasing represents refinement to the programme . The team is working to minimise further delay risks. The main contractor has commenced on site. Detailed opening up works have progressed during the summer along with extensive window repairs and redecoration works. Scaffold access, including back propping is now in place permitting large areas of re-roofing works.	5,327	6,327	1,000	1,000
<b>Commercial Estate Fire Safety Works</b>	Works completed to date have indicated a greater complexity than envisaged which will extend the timescales into future years .We are currently assessing the resource impacts of this to inform future years budgets.	1,000	2,452	1,452	1,452

**FINANCE BUDGET MONITORING QUARTERLY DASHBOARD - April to September 2025**

**CAPITAL APPENDIX 2 - KEY SCHEME VARIANCE ANALYSIS**

		Sum of 25/26 Forecast £'000	Sum of 25/26 Total Current Budget £'000	Sum of 25/26 Variance £'000	Re-phasing to Future Years £'000
<b>Sustainable BANES</b>					
<b>Bath River Line</b>	Project to delivery Bath River Line improvements through Bath. Phase 1A is in construction, Phase 1B is out to tender and due to start on site in January 2026. The Wayfinding scheme is due for completion in November 2025. Phase 1C requires a funding uplift which will be arranged via a Change Request, which will be submitted Q3 2025/26. Feasibility and Development for Phase 2 is to be progressed in 2026/27 and move to delivery in 2027/28.	1,721	1,721	-	-
<b>Parks Improvements Programme</b>	Projects highlights : 1) Weston: Picnic Benches, Social Seating, path and entrance works, we have commissioned access audit and designs. We will consult with Active Weston then look to deliver by Q4 2025/26 2) Hedgemead: There is no resource to deliver in 2025/26 so rephasing in full to 2026/27 3) Linear Park: Completed planned works, with the residual budget funded from by 3rd party contribution proposed to deliver a shelter 4) Foxhill: We are ready to start works on Hawthorne's, Grove & Backstones & continue feasibility at Springfields. Works will continue 2026/27 and we will rephase £250k 5) Manor Rd: We have commissioned a bridge to cover a ditch at one of the entrances. Further works are planned for when the ground is dryer/firmer along with vegetation clearance. We will rephase £40k 6) Abbots Wood: Ground investigation and design works are complete. RIBA stage 4 is nearly complete. We are currently requesting permission to proceed with planning and RIBA stage 5 for delivery in 2026/27. We will rephase £150k 7) Teviot Rd: We have completed the Grant payment to Keynsham Town Council to carry out works. 8) Allotments: We are delivering new allotments at Hawthorne in 2026/27 with further site options being investigated. We will rephase the full budget 9) Paulton Parish Council: We have completed the Grant payment to Parish Council to carry out works.	415	1,022	607	607
<b>Sustainable Transport Delivery</b>					
<b>CAZ - Clean Air Zone</b>	The CAZ-Public Realm residual budget is being spent on the Queen Square Wayfinding project, with £332k of works being rephased into 2026/27.	495	827	332	332
<b>Highways Maintenance Block</b>	All workstreams across Highway Maintenance are progressing well. Carriageway Resurfacing and Surface Dressing works are mainly completed. Phase 1 and 2 of the Spray Injection Patching Programme are completed. We also carried out emergency repairs to resurface a section of the A37 near Pensford following an extensive fuel oil spill.	10,359	10,359	-	-
<b>CRSTS Liveable Neighbourhoods</b>	<p>A full business case fully identifying proposed interventions for 11 Liveable Neighbourhood (LN) areas was approved by WEMCA in September 2024, releasing the remaining CRSTS grant to deliver these schemes before 31 March 2027.</p> <p>Under the programme, 5 trials of through traffic restrictions have been conducted using Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs). The schemes in Southlands, Weston, Queen Charlton Lane, Whitchurch and Church Street, Widcombe were made permanent in 2024. More recently, the trial in Sydney Road was made permanent following public consultation in October 2025. A decision on the remaining trial in Lower Lansdown will be made later in Autumn 2025.</p> <p>8 LN schemes are now in the delivery phase, the first construction planned for December 2025. Two schemes have been paused at this time (Pulteney Estates Area and London Road and Snow Hill) and the scheme in Lower Lansdown will await the outcome of the decision on the trial schemes before proceeding. A change request is being drafted to confirm these changes with Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA).</p>	3,306	3,306	-	-

**FINANCE BUDGET MONITORING QUARTERLY DASHBOARD - April to September 2025**

**CAPITAL APPENDIX 2 - KEY SCHEME VARIANCE ANALYSIS**

		Sum of 25/26 Forecast £'000	Sum of 25/26 Total Current Budget £'000	Sum of 25/26 Variance £'000	Re-phasing to Future Years £'000
<b>CRSTS Manvers Street Remediation</b>	This is an WECA funded budget held for Manvers Street Remediation. The preliminary design is now complete following surveys and a decision has been made to fully refurbish the Manvers Street section of road. A tender was released over the summer of 2025, the outcome of which is expected shortly. Delivery is expected to commence in 2026.	4,260	4,260	-	-
<b>CRSTS Somer Valley Links (SVL)</b>	This project aims to improve travel between Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Westfield and Bath via the A367, the A37 and the A362 link road between them. The project seeks to provide better bus infrastructure and enable more walking and cycling through a variety of interventions such as quiet routes, travel hubs and segregated cycle tracks. Following the public consultation which was undertaken in Spring 2025, the project has now been split into 3 overall phases, each of which will be supported by an FBC. The first of these will be submitted to WECA in January26 with construction to begin in spring and complete by March27.	2,278	2,278	-	-
<b>Local Active Travel Safety Programme (LATS)</b>	All schemes are progressing as planned, with the exception of S106 Public Right of Way schemes. Most schemes are at detailed design stage or consultations are underway. Completed schemes are: Crossing at Monkedale Road/Sandpits Park, Widcombe Hill, Bathampton plus Church Hill/North Road Junction Safety Improvements.	3,120	3,382	263	263
<b>CRSTS - Scholars Way Delivery</b>	The scheme is funded through £2m CAZ funding, £3m CRSTS funding, awarded in Summer 2025, along with £370k LATS funding for the Oakley & Copseland crossings. Delivery and construction have now commenced. Construction is complete on the first 2 site locations, Ralph Allen School Crossing and St Martin's Garden Primary School, with works now ongoing on 3 next sites; Entry Hill, Bradford Road, Midford Road. Scholars Way West scope is due to be completed by January 2026.	2,205	2,205	-	
<b>School Streets</b>	School Streets aim to improve the environment directly outside schools at the start and end of the school day by restricting access for most of the motorised vehicle traffic. The selected schools are St Phillips Primary School, Widcombe Infant and Primary Schools and St Stephen Primary School. Utilising funding of £250k CAZ reinvestment reserve, one-off revenue funding of £87k as well as the potential to attract future funding opportunities. Mainly revenue works to date developing proposals with schools and assessing feasibility, with planned delivery across the financial years in Easter Holidays 2026.	43	250	207	207
<b>Built Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development</b>					
<b>BWR Phase 2</b>	Homes England funded work continues at pace. Remediation element the largest element of the budget and is under constant review and Berkeley are required to deliver a fully remediated site by March 26. HE Funding availability to March 26, Highways works and works to boundary wall are at risk of falling outside the programme and funds will need to be available to complete works. Budget outside of Homes England funding is forecast to underspend by £1m which will then be carried forward to fund BWR planning application and associated costs for the site in 26 27. Also preliminary works continue in relation to Midland Road and consideration will be needed re 26 27 funding requirements.	17,560	18,560	1,000	1,000
<b>Disabled Facilities Grant</b>	Forecasting to broadly to spend the 2025-26 government grant allocation. Carry forward of previously unused grant is also reflected in this budget and whilst we are aiming to increase staffing capacity to deploy reserve to reduce waiting list demand, it is unlikely to have significant impact this financial year.	1,784	2,284	500	500
<b>Englishcombe Lane Supported Housing</b>	Scheme to provide 16 homes for neurodivergent clients with Learning Difficulties and Autism. Business Case was for £10.9m approved by Single Member Decision E3633 on 11th September, with budget approval pending imminent award for £2.2m Home England Grant.	371	371	-	-

FINANCE BUDGET MONITORING QUARTERLY DASHBOARD - April to September 2025

CAPITAL APPENDIX 2 - KEY SCHEME VARIANCE ANALYSIS

		Sum of 25/26 Forecast £'000	Sum of 25/26 Total Current Budget £'000	Sum of 25/26 Variance £'000	Re-phasing to Future Years £'000
<b>Local Authority Housing Fund (Ukrainian/Afghan homes)</b>	The Council is on track to meet the required number of properties for the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) programme Round 3, with one remaining property to purchase. This MHCLG programme is due to complete by March 2027. There is potential underspend to return of grant to government (MHCLG).	620	1,181	561	
<b>Social Rent Programme (Phase 1 of BANES Homes)</b>	Works continues on site to deliver ten affordable, energy efficient, apartments in Dane's Lane, Keynsham. Feasibility work being undertaken for proposals at Redfield Road and land adjacent to Sainsbury's car park in Midsomer Norton.	2,654	4,661	2,007	2,007
<b>Communications and Civic Services</b>					
<b>Bath City Centre Security</b>	The final stage of all security works at Beau Street was completed September 2025 and the final account is expected to be within budget.	1,035	1,035	-	



Savings Proposal Title	Description	Cash Limit	Cash Limit Description	Exp / Income	Permanent Saving Value £000	One-Off Saving Value £000	Permanent Savings Delivery Forecast	One-Off Savings Delivery Forecast	Total Savings Delivery Forecast	Total Savings Forecast Variance	Saving delayed until 2026/27	Saving mitigated by one-off underspend or income	Saving mitigated on an on-going basis	On-going budget pressure	Variance Commentary
Portfolio: Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset															
Fees and Charges	Inflationary increases in discretionary fees	1147	Parks and Open Spaces	Income	(7)	0	(7)	0	(7)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Sustainable Bath and North East Somerset Total					(7)	0	(7)	0	(7)	0	0	0	0	0	
Portfolio: Resources															
Being Our Best Programme	Targeted staffing savings from Being Our Best Programme through the planned review and rationalisation of the council's management and operating structures.	1047	Human Resources & Organisational Development	Exp	(2,000)	0	0	0	0	2,000	0	2,000	0	0	Delays to the programme has a knock-on impact to service smarter structure proposals. The programme will partially deliver against the £2.5m built into the budget for 2024/25, but will not deliver the additional £2m in the 2025/26 budget
Household Support Fund Grant	Recover admin costs from Household Support Fund grant	1041	Revenues & Benefits	Exp	(50)	0	(50)	0	(50)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
City Region Deal Business Rates Pool - Tier 3 income	Increased income from the City Region Deal Business Rates Pool	1057	Corporate Budgets incl. Capital, Audit & Bank Charges	Income	(1,000)	0	(1,000)	0	(1,000)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Commercial Estate - Increased Income	Deliver additional income by refurbishing empty commercial properties more quickly so they can be let.	1081	Commercial Estate	Income	(200)	0	0	0	0	200	200	0	0	0	The commercial estate income forecast currently comprises revenue from assets within both the Commercial and Corporate Estates. As at Quarter 2 there is an expected shortfall of £507k on the rental income target and therefore it is not anticipated that the budgeted increase in income will be achieved this year.
Recycling Income	Income growth projected for 25-26 due to market prices and optical sorting at new facility.	1101	Waste & Fleet Services	Income	(450)	0	(450)	0	(450)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecasting as fully delivered, however this is subject to market fluctuations so remains a risk
Green Waste Fees and Charges Uplift	Increase garden waste fees from £57 to £70 per year to cover the increasing collection costs of running the service, so that subscribers contribute more to the cost of the service.	1101	Waste & Fleet Services	Income	(350)	0	(350)	0	(350)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecasting as fully delivered, however renewals are due in June/July, so will have a more accurate picture at Quarter 2 monitoring
Income From New Fees and Charges For Businesses	Introduction of new chargeable services for commercial customers in our fleet workshop and charge developers for waste & recycling containers to be provided for each new build property.	1101	Waste & Fleet Services	Income	(77)	0	(37)	0	(37)	40	0	40	0	0	Pressures on achieving commercial income, mitigated by increased income across waste services
Fees and Charges	Inflationary increases in discretionary fees	1101	Waste & Fleet Services	Income	(48)	0	(48)	0	(48)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Resources Total					(4,175)	0	(1,935)	0	(1,935)	2,240	200	2,040	0	0	
Portfolio: Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development															
Heritage Business Plan	Update to projected surplus to reflect visitor projections, updated income forecasts and service efficiencies	1018	Heritage Services	Income	(2,148)	0	0	0	0	2,148	0	0	0	2,148	As a result of a continuation of visitor numbers below the budgeted 1.1m at the Roman Baths, the Service has put forward an adjustment to the MTFS and does not anticipate delivering this savings target.
Corporate Estate & Development – Corporate Landlord	Reducing Corporate Estate size and holdings and reduce energy costs through investment in renewables and retrofit.	1038	Corporate Estate Including R&M	Exp	(275)	0	0	0	0	275	275	0	0	0	Although some properties / land have been identified for disposal, they have minimal impact on the reduction of our running costs. With more assets being identified, this saving could materialise over the next few years.
Bath Quays South Lettings	New lettings secured for Bath Quays South (BQS) offices over and above previous financial projections.	1052	Regeneration	Income	(150)	0	0	0	0	150	150	0	0	0	BQS is partially vacant so not earning rental income. All spaces are due to be filled in May 26, therefore we hope to achieve the full rental income for the 26/27 financial year.
Visit West	WECA funding has now replaced Unitary Authority contributions and no commitment is required at a Council level from 25/26 onwards.	1126	Visit Bath	Exp	(75)	0	(75)	0	(75)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Income Generation From New Regeneration Assets	Potential income stream to Corporate Estates team from joint projects with Regeneration to unlock under used assets and support with grant funded activities.	1052	Regeneration	Income	(50)	0	0	0	0	50	50	0	0	0	Both new and historic savings targets are challenging to meet until the estate is rationalised and running costs of existing assets are reduced.
Business and Skills: Recharge Officer Time To Projects	Provide Business and Skills services to employers through external grant funded activity only and reduce additional Council support.	1128	Business & Skills	Income	(6)	0	(6)	0	(6)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Economic And Cultural Sustainable Development Total					(2,704)	0	(81)	0	(81)	2,623	475	0	0	2,148	

Appendix 5 - Revenue Savings Monitor

Savings Proposal Title	Description	Cash Limit	Cash Limit Description	Exp / Income	Permanent Saving Value £000	One-Off Saving Value £000	Permanent Savings Delivery Forecast	One-Off Savings Delivery Forecast	Total Savings Delivery Forecast	Total Savings Forecast Variance	Saving delayed until 2026/27	Saving mitigated by one-off underspend or income	Saving mitigated on an on-going basis	On-going budget pressure	Variance Commentary
Portfolio: Adults Services															
Adult Social Care Commissioning	This proposal will be achieved through maximizing the use of the Better Care Fund and Improved Better Care Fund to protect social care expenditure.	1110	Better Care Fund	Income	(650)	0	(650)	0	(650)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Adult Social Care Commissioning	This proposal will be achieved through efficient management of contracts for services and optimisation of commissioning resources.	1086	Adult Care Commissioning	Exp	(75)	0	(75)	0	(75)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Review of Care Packages	The approach to social care reviews under the Care Act will ensure people's needs are being met, their outcomes are being achieved and that support when needed is provided in the most cost effective way. Savings have been identified through matching levels of care to people's needs.	1073 & 1088	Adults & older People, Adults & Older People Mental Health	Exp	(900)	0	(900)	0	(900)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Technology Enabled Care	This proposal will be achieved by using technology enabled care to reduce social care resource requirements. Technology enabled care products such as personal alarms and pendants, bed and chair sensors, pills dispensers and door sensors support people to undertake daily living tasks and enable independence.	1091	Learning Disabilities	Exp	(50)	0	(50)	0	(50)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Provider Services Income Opportunities	As a provider of Learning Disabilities Day Services, Community Resource Centres - Residential Care Homes and an Extra Care Service the council has always offered a service to self-funders. This proposal seeks to increase the level of income generated from self-funders, placements commissioned by other local authorities and Integrated Care Board (ICB) by charging the actual cost of delivering care.	1124 & 1146	Provider Services	Income	(250)	0	(250)	0	(250)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Prevention and Early Intervention in Adult Social Care	Deliver savings through efficiencies from services, recommissioning services within existing budget and maximising alternative funding sources for housing related support.	1086	Adult Care Commissioning	Exp	(402)	0	(402)	0	(402)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
RVP Leisure Facilities	New contract in place for the operation of the leisure facilities in RVP including tennis courts, adventure golf, events spaces and café.	1019	Leisure	Income	(15)	0	(15)	0	(15)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Adult Services Total					(2,342)	0	(2,342)	0	(2,342)	0	0	0	0	0	

Appendix 3- Revenue Savings Monitor

Savings Proposal Title	Description	Cash Limit	Cash Limit Description	Exp / Income	Permanent Saving Value £000	One-Off Saving Value £000	Permanent Savings Delivery Forecast	One-Off Savings Delivery Forecast	Total Savings Delivery Forecast	Total Savings Forecast Variance	Saving delayed until 2026/27	Saving mitigated by one-off underspend or income	Saving mitigated on an on-going basis	On-going budget pressure	Variance Commentary
Portfolio: Children's Services															
Reunifications	The savings will be delivered by an increase in family reunifications and step downs from residential placements.	1076	Children, Young People & Families	Exp	(1,400)	0	(1,415)	0	(1,415)	(15)	0	0	0	0	Additional achievement is offsetting under achievement for the Early Help Saving in cashlimit 1116 Integrated Commissioning - CYP.
Specialist Commissioning Saving	These savings will reduce reliance on high-cost placements, particularly out-of-area or unregulated provisions, promoting stability and better outcomes for children. However, achieving these savings requires a careful balance to ensure cost reductions do not compromise the quality, safety, or suitability of placements, which are essential for meeting the complex needs of Children Looked After.	1076	Children, Young People & Families	Exp	(923)	0	(923)	0	(923)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Home to School Transport Savings	Reduced costs as a result of investment in internal provision.	1142	Home to School Transport	Exp	(600)	0	(600)	0	(600)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Early Help	Early help in B&NES aims to provide children, young people and families with the right support at the right time by the right service as soon as needs are identified to prevent them getting worse.	1116	Integrated Commissioning - CYP	Exp	(150)	0	(135)	0	(135)	15	0	0	0	0	Under achievement is offset by over achievement for the Reunifications saving in cashlimit 1076 Children, Young People & Families.
Children's Services Total					(3,073)	0	(3,073)	0	(3,073)	0	0	0	0	0	
Portfolio: Sustainable Transport Delivery															
Parking Services - Income Rebasing	Increased income rebasing across Highways and Parking Services	1103	Transport & Parking Services - Parking	Income	(560)	0	(560)	0	(560)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Parking Charges Review	Income generated from the implementation of a parking review and emissions-based pay and display	1103	Transport & Parking Services - Parking	Income	(334)	0	(334)	0	(334)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Parking Permit Charges Review	Income generated from a review of the baseline charge for on street parking permits, including emissions-based resident parking permits	1103	Transport & Parking Services - Parking	Income	(172)	0	(172)	0	(172)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Parking Reinvestment Fund	Budget saving by not spending the Reinvestment Fund in Parking Services (one-off 2025/26 only).	1103	Transport & Parking Services - Parking	Exp	0	(210)	0	(210)	(210)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Fees and Charges	Inflationary increases in discretionary fees	1134	Highway Maintenance	Income	(2)	0	(2)	0	(2)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Fees and Charges	Inflationary increases in discretionary fees	1133	Network & Traffic Management	Income	(11)	0	(11)	0	(11)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Sustainable Transport Delivery Total					(1,079)	(210)	(1,079)	(210)	(1,289)	0	0	0	0	0	
Portfolio: Communications and Community															
Registrars	Increased income forecast for the service	1115	Registrars Service	Income	(45)	0	(45)	0	(45)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Park and Ride	Updated income forecast for the Park and Ride	1144	Park & Ride	Income	0	(200)	0	(200)	(200)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Fees and Charges	Inflationary increases in discretionary fees	1148	Bereavement Services	Income	(7)	0	(7)	0	(7)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Neighbourhood Services Total					(52)	(200)	(52)	(200)	(252)	0	0	0	0	0	
Portfolio: Built Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development															
Housing	Housing - reprofile work on Housing delivery - (25/26 one off saving)	1029	Housing	Exp	0	(75)	0	(75)	(75)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Housing	Budget for capital delivery of housing programme to match pipeline (25/26 one-off saving)	1029	Housing	Exp	0	(75)	0	(75)	(75)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Fees and Charges	Inflationary increases in discretionary fees	1138	Building Control	Income	(20)	0	(20)	0	(20)	0	0	0	0	0	Forecast as fully delivered
Built Environment, Housing and Sustainable Development Total					(20)	(150)	(20)	(150)	(170)	0	0	0	0	0	
Council Total					(13,452)	(560)	(8,589)	(560)	(9,149)	4,863	675	2,040	0	2,148	

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<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>	
MEETING	<b>Corporate Policy Development &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>
MEETING	<b>25<sup>th</sup> November 2025</b>
TITLE:	<b>Home to School Transport – Financial Update</b>
WARD:	All
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>	
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> None	

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 The Panel has requested an update on the operation and financial position of the council's Home to School Transport Service.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

The Panel is asked to;

- 2.1 Note and discuss the financial update.

## **3 THE REPORT**

### **3.1 Introduction**

3.1.1 The provision of home to school transport is a vital service that enables children to access education. For many families, particularly those with children who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), this service is not just a logistical necessity, it is a lifeline that ensures their children can attend school safely and consistently.

3.1.2 As a local authority, we have a statutory responsibility to support eligible children in accessing education. In fulfilling this duty, we play a crucial role in protecting some of our most vulnerable residents — children with complex and challenging needs who often require tailored transport arrangements. These services are not only essential for their educational development but also for their social inclusion and overall wellbeing.

However, the cost of delivering home to school transport has been rising significantly in recent years across England, with the most acute pressures seen in the SEND sector. Increasing demand, more complex individual needs, and a constrained provider market are contributing to escalating costs that are placing considerable strain on council budgets. This report outlines the current financial pressures, explores the underlying drivers, and sets out how we are managing

these challenges while continuing to uphold our commitment to supporting vulnerable children.

### **3.2 Services provided**

A school pupil is considered to be an 'eligible child' if they meet one or more criteria based on the distance they live from the school or if that route is unsafe, if they cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school due to SEND, or mobility issues, or low-income families. The council uses the criteria as set out in statutory guidance under the Education Act 1996.

#### **Distance Criteria:**

- Under 8 years old: Lives more than 2 miles from their nearest suitable school.
- Aged 8 or over: Lives more than 3 miles from their nearest suitable school.

#### **Special Educational Needs, Disability, or Mobility issues:**

- If a child cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school due to special educational needs, disability, or mobility problems, even if accompanied, they are entitled to free transport.

#### **Unsafe Walking Route:**

- If the route to school is deemed unsafe, even if within the statutory walking distance, the child is eligible.

#### **Low-Income Families:**

- Children from families entitled to free school meals may qualify under extended criteria, such as:
  - Aged between 8 and 11 and who live more than two miles from the nearest school
  - Aged 11-16 and attending one of the three nearest suitable schools between 2–6 miles away.
  - Attending a school up to 15 miles away if it's the nearest school preferred on grounds of religion or belief.

The Passenger Transport team provides the council's Home to School Transport service. In 2024/25 academic year, it transported approximately 2,700 children each school day. This consisted of the following (please note, the numbers of children transported to school fluctuates on a daily basis):

Table 1: number of children transported during 2024/25 academic year

1,859 mainstream children	Children attending mainstream schools, eligible through meeting distance, unsafe route or low-income criteria.
703 Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) children	Children attending mainstream or SEND through meeting distance, unsafe route or low income and SEND criteria.
55 Alternative Provision children	Mainstream children attending primary and secondary aged alternative provision schools due to permanent exclusion or preventative measures where the child is at risk of exclusion. Distance, unsafe route and low income criteria eligibility have to be met.
55 Hospital Education Reintegration Service (HERS) children	Children attending the HERS school due to being medically unable to attend their registered school.

The Education Eligibility team receives a transport application from a child's family, which is assessed according to eligibility criteria. If the child is deemed eligible, the Passenger Transport team is notified that transport is required. The council's eligibility policy was recently revised and adopted via a Single Member Decision in June 2024, after consideration at the Children, Adults, Health & Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel in May 2024.

Mainstream transport is arranged after considering:

- available public transport routes
- seat availability on existing contracted routes
- the safety of walking routes to any existing pick-up points.

SEND transport is arranged by considering:

- seat availability on existing routes,
- the needs of the new child
- the needs of the other children already using the route.

If there are no available seats on existing contracted routes, no existing routes to the school, or no suitable transport options, a new route is tendered.

## **Transport Options**

Transport is arranged following a clear transport hierarchy to mitigate costs - starting with the use of scheduled public transport, through large contracted vehicles, Personal Transport Budgets paid to parents and carers to transport their own child/children, specialist internal fleet provision, small contracted vehicles and only in very specific cases single occupancy taxis.

The council owns thirteen 16-seat low floor coachbuilt wheelchair accessible mini-buses, which have been specifically built and equipped to transport passengers with differing mobility needs. It now also owns seven cars and twenty drivers are employed as well as 40 guide escorts to help those SEND children who require assistance on their journeys. The drivers and guide escorts are specifically recruited and trained to be able to work with children with a wide range of needs. We have a duty to safeguard children using the transport we provide to ensure they are emotionally supported and protected from risks, as well as ensuring they are physically safe.

Outside of times when not in use for school transport, the council's minibuses provide the Bath Dial-a-Ride service. The cars are also used outside of 'typical' school start and end times to transport some Alternative Provision and Hospital Education Reintegration Service (HERS) pupils who have different school times.

### **Personal Travel Budgets (PTBs)**

These are payments offered to families of eligible children, particularly those with SEND, to arrange their own transport to school. This allows parents to tailor travel to their child's needs and can be more cost-effective for the council compared to contracted transport services. PTBs are only provided when safe, appropriate, and financially viable.

### **Independent Travel Training**

This training helps young people, especially those with SEND, learn how to travel to school safely on their own. It promotes confidence and independence, and can reduce long-term reliance on council-funded transport, where appropriate.

## **3.3 Independent review of Home to School Transport in B&NES**

The council benefits from an experienced and well-performing team that delivers home to school transport efficiently and with a clear focus on value for money. This has been independently validated through a recent external review by consultants PeopleToo in autumn 2024, who confirmed the team's effectiveness in managing complex transport arrangements and delivering positive outcomes for children and families.

The consultants commented "Compared to other local authorities supported by Peopletoo, B&NES demonstrates better performance across many analysed metrics." They identified the following strengths in B&NES:

- We are receiving good rates on prices for external 6-8 seater, 16-seater minibus and coach routes when compared to benchmark rates.



- Generally, the most frequently used external transport providers offer good value, across all vehicle types [ie taxis, minibuses, coaches]
- Internally delivered routes have a lower average cost than comparable routes delivered by external providers.
- Lower than average use of guide escorts suggests the appraisal of whether to deploy their use on a route is robust in B&NES.
- The proportion of children with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) supported by transport is lower than comparable authorities.
- Personal Travel Budget uptake amongst SEND pupils is 12%, which is higher than the average rate in comparable councils of 9%, but best practice uptake is 15%, suggesting room for improvement.

They also noted the following potential opportunities:

- The level of out-of-area routes is high; increasing the volume of placements in-district would reduce costs.
- The cost of taxis is significantly higher than the benchmark. A commissioning strategy and consideration of in-house models is key.
- B&NES has a lower than average uptake of Independent Travel Training (ITT) (1% vs 3%). There's potential to grow the cohort of children completing ITT.

Commentary on these opportunities is given in section 3.8.

Separate to this review, B&NES was an active participant in the development of the recent Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (ADEPT) toolkit for local authorities on SEND Home to School Transport. B&NES' service is cited in the guidance document as an example of good practice for our review and analysis of single occupancy taxi routes and for having established a cross-service project team to enable best use of resources.

B&NES is also a member of the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ACTO), which brings together council officers who are responsible for passenger transport services such as Home to School Transport. Our team manager is on the ACTO School Transport Committee, which enables the council to keep up to date on different ways of working across the country.

### **3.4 Improvements & efficiencies already undertaken**

To address the overspend in Home to School Transport and to improve the service delivery, a cross-service project team was set up 2023 that included officers from Passenger Transport, Education, Finance, IT and Business Intelligence, and overseen by directors from Education and Place Management. The project team has driven through the changes and improvements described here.

Prior to 2024, there were separate transport teams in Education and Passenger Transport, which were in different directorates covered by two different finance

managers. These were brought together into a combined team under a new manager in order to provide a clear focus to drive operational and financial improvements. The new team is responsible for personal travel budgets, independent travel training, mainstream and SEND transport, as well as community transport, Bath Dial-a-Ride, private hire and contract bus routes. They have retained close contact with the SEND team in Education.

The budget for Home to School Transport moved from Education to Highways Delivery in 2024/25 in order that the team delivering the service also managed its financial performance.

During 2024/25, various improvements were made to IT systems and processes within the Home to School Transport team to reduce time spent on administrative tasks. A Business Lead post was also created, the purpose of which is to undertake more thorough analysis of transport options and routes in order to achieve better value for money. Previously, there was not sufficient capacity within the team to do this.

### **Introduction of council-owned cars**

Historically, councils could operate minibuses (9-16 seats) under a Section 19 Permit (from the 1985 Transport Act). This section was later amended to include cars with 8 seats or fewer. However, B&NES could not operate cars because legally it was not possible to hold both a Section 19 Permit as well as a commercial PSV Operator's Licence, which is needed to run our minibuses. The withdrawal of Section 19 in relation to cars in around 2022 left a gap in the licensing regime for 'not-for-profit' operation of vehicles in the 'less than 9 – 16 passenger seat' class. Some local authorities started to explore methods of self-operation. Legal opinion was sought that found the self-operation as we proposed in B&NES would be 'not-for-profit' and therefore fell outside of any licensing regime. A decision was taken to invest in a small fleet of cars (8 passenger seats or less) to self-operate in place of contracted taxis, driven by drivers directly employed by B&NES.

Introduction of council-owned cars has proved very effective. Since early 2025, seven cars have been bought and seven car drivers employed which operate on routes that would have been fulfilled by taxis. The cars have been purchased second hand in order to keep the operation cost effective. Additional work is found for these cars and drivers during the normal school day which further adds to overall savings.

### **Dynamic Purchasing System**

Routes that cannot be provided by our in-house fleet of vehicles are tended through a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) and are awarded to the lowest bidder to ensure we get the best value for every journey. A DPS is a procurement system which allows approved contractors to join at any time, providing they meet the required criteria. All contractors on the DPS have the opportunity to bid on every route that is tendered which creates competition and helps to secure the lowest possible price. However, there are a limited number of transport and taxi operators in the local area. On some routes we may not receive more than a single bidder to an invitation to tender.

### 3.5 Service costs

The costs to the council of providing Home to School Transport, together with the annual budget, is summarised in the table below.

Table 2: Cost of home to school transport

Year	Cost	Budget
2018/19	£5,440,224	£4,633,370
2019/20	£5,182,502	£5,227,610
Post-Covid		
2022/23	£7,382,881	£6,454,842
2023/24	£8,893,886	£7,778,271
2024/25	£10,806,896	£9,402,709
2025/26		£11,435,130

The increased budget for 2025/26 budget includes a £1.7m uplift (on top of contract inflation, National Insurance increase, staff pay award) in recognition of the previous year's overspend and to take account of the expected growth in numbers of children being eligible for the service, together with increases in transport costs.

A sum of £350,000 has been allocated within the budget in 2025/26 to allow for the purchase of additional car transport and to employ more drivers to help reduce the use of taxis. A savings target of £600,000 has also been factored into this year's budget, to be achieved through use of council-owned cars instead of contracted taxis.

At Quarter 2 of 2025/26 we are reporting the achievement of this savings target. We will continue to look at options to use our own cars, meaning there may be further savings this financial year.

### 3.6 Service pressures – national context

In June 2025, the Local Government Association (LGA) published a report into the future of Home to School Transport based upon research involving local authorities across the country. It found that between 2021/21 and 2023/24 expenditure grew on average by more than 20% a year. Over the past decade, they estimate that the amount spent has increased by £1.23 billion.

The LGA's research found that single occupancy taxis were a key factor in increased costs. This is due to increasingly complex behavioural and medical needs, more bespoke education arrangements that prevent group transport and evolving parental expectations around transport provision. It also noted local authorities have reported that new housing developments have contributed to

the growing costs of mainstream home to school transport due to developers often being reluctant to create new school provision.

There is national interest in the impact this statutory service is having on local government finances. In July 2025, the parliamentary Public Accounts Committee announced that Home to School Transport would be included in its next programme of inquiries.

In October 2025, the National Audit Office published its report into Home to School Transport. It noted that this is one of the fastest-growing areas of spend for councils and that expenditure on the service consistently exceeds the budgeted amount. Other findings included:

- Between 2015/16 and 2023/24, local authority spend on school transport rose 106% for children with SEND compared to 9% for mainstream school transport.
- EHCPs or statements of special educational need increased by 166% between January 2015 and January 2025.
- On average, it costs local authorities five times more to provide transport per child with SEND than on other children.
- Local authorities are struggling to balance the statutory duty to provide transport for eligible children with their duty to balance their budget.

### **3.7 Service pressures in B&NES**

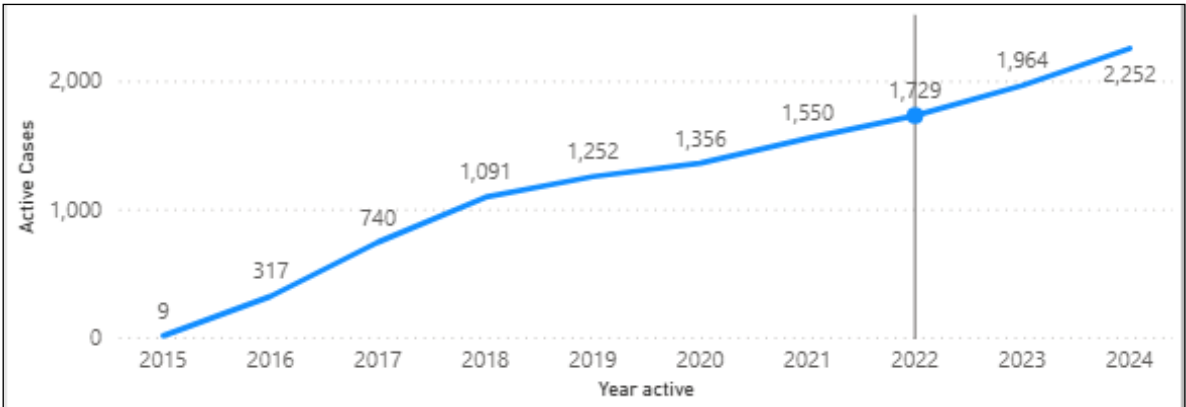
The number of school children transported by the council's Home to School Transport Service has been continually increasing in recent years. Whilst there has been a modest increase in mainstream children making up these numbers, there has been significant growth in transport for SEND children.

The number of B&NES children and young people needing support with special educational needs and disabilities has been steadily rising. In the academic year of September 2024 - July 2025, there were 31,881 children and young people going to school in B&NES. Around 18.8% of those children and young people needed support with SEND. This is 0.7% higher than the national average.

From early years to further education, we want learning to be a positive experience for our children and young people. We want all our children and young people to feel like they belong and that there is a consistent, inclusive experience for every child and young person in education, no matter where they go.

The number of children with EHCPs has increased significantly, as shown in Figure 1. As of 7 October 2025, the number of active EHCPs (where a child is in education) was 2,629. An EHCP does not provide automatic entitlement to free school transport, but their increase in number has led to a rise in Home to School Transport costs. This is due to the greater need for specialist provision, which often involves travel to schools further from home and the use of tailored transport arrangements such as individual taxis or guide escorts to meet specific needs.

Figure 1: Growth in active Education, Health & Care Plans



A large proportion of SEND children are being educated at special schools outside of the district because of a shortage of places within the local area. The impact of this is the journeys to school are longer and therefore cost more. This means there are fewer opportunities to coordinate children’s journeys, resulting in more individual vehicle trips to transport them. At the same time, as the demand for transport for SEND children has grown, costs of transport have also increased.

The wide geographical spread of schools that children living in B&NES are transported to by the council is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: locations of schools served by B&NES Home to School Transport (dark circles = SEND, light circles = mainstream)

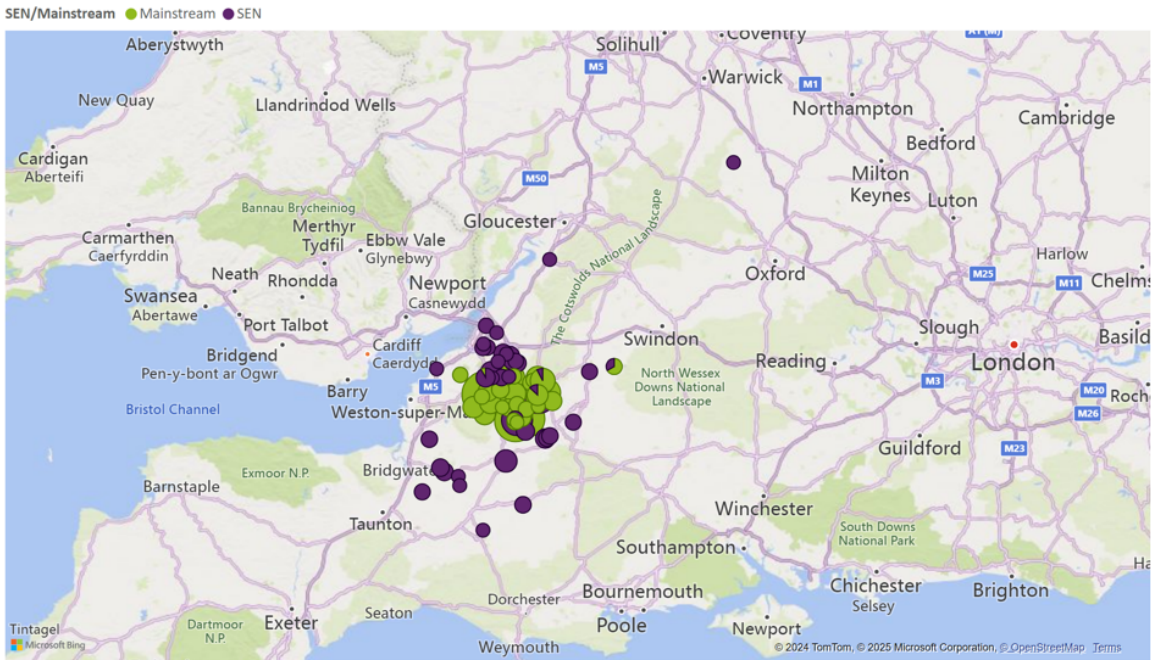


Table 2 below shows the number of children provided with Home to School Transport broken down by pupil type. Please note, the numbers are indicative since there are frequent changes throughout the year.

Table 2: Types of school pupils provided with home to school transport

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Mainstream	1,751	1,681	1,794	1,817	1,764	1,859
SEND	438	483	515	560	592	703
AP	7	14	11	24	39	55
HERS	2	9	16	27	35	55

Whilst the number of mainstream children has seen a modest increase, there have been significant increases in the number of children transported in the SEND, Alternative Provision and Hospital Education Reintegration Service eligibility categories.

The largest impact on the cost of providing Home to School Transport has been the need to use taxis, particularly for SEND children. Tables 3 and 4 below shows this increased demand.

Table 3: Number of single occupancy taxis for SEND children

2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
27	27	35	60

Table 4: Total number of SEND schools to which transport has been provided

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
33	37	37	41	40	48

In 2024/25, the cost of taxis with a single SEND child passenger without a guide escort ranged from a daily cost of £87.50 per return journey to £283.25.

The reasons why SEND single occupancy taxis are being used has been analysed in more detail:

- 14 single occupancy taxis provided due to it being the only route to a school
- 16 single occupancy taxi routes where the child cannot share with other children to maintain a safe and positive journey.
- Other single occupancy taxi routes are being provided for logistical reasons where there is no other available route from the nearby area.

There is a need to provide guide escorts on some routes to maintain the safety of children and/or the driver.

Table 5: Total number of routes requiring a guide escort

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
51	53	55	57	67	79

When council-employed driver and guide escort posts are vacant or if an employee is unable to work due to illness, we have to use agency staff to maintain the statutory service. In 2024/25, £670,155 was spent on agency staff. For those routes that are contracted, the contractor is required to provide an alternative driver if a driver “calls in sick”.

As the volume of children provided with transport has increased together with the number of routes, the capacity within the team has come under pressure due to a large increase in workload being undertaken by the same number of staff. This has limited the resource within the team to seek efficiencies in the options considered for the provision of transport, since the priority has to be to fulfil the statutory function of delivering eligible children safely to school every day.

### **3.8 Further improvements being explored**

We are seeking to employ further drivers and purchase more cars in order to reduce reliance on the use of taxis. We aim to make full use of all our vehicles and drivers throughout the day where possible. The team operates the Bath Dial-a-Ride service using its minibuses. There are fewer opportunities for car driver work in between school start and finish times which means additional car drivers will need to be employed on a part-time basis.

However, there are a limited number of people who will accept a role that only pays them to work at the start and end of the school day and in term time only. This means it is challenging recruiting to these specialist driver roles. We are currently exploring the possibility of combining roles in different council teams to provide full time employment that would enable us to operate more in-house cars. We expect to be able to operate two more cars by the end of 2025/26.

We have reached a point at which there is little benefit in increasing the number of minibuses operated by the council as we have already fully exploited all the available ‘additional’ work during the school day. The current fleet is fully deployed during the day on a mixture of Community Transport, NHS Patient Transport / Bath Dial-a-Ride and private hires. This ‘additional’ work helps keep the operating costs of our in-house fleet low. Purchasing our own coaches (rather than use of contractors) has also been ruled out because of the high purchase cost and the lack of opportunities to make an income from such vehicles outside of the start and end of the school day to contribute to their running costs.

We are in the process of replacing seven of our minibuses which have reached the end of their serviceable life. Three of these will be larger than the vehicles they replace and will provide us with an extra 20 seats overall.

The combining of the two former teams and creation of the Business Lead post has not yet realised its potential due to recent absences within the team. The new structure only became fully operational in October 2025 because of the need to focus on keeping the service running as demand has grown. Capacity within the team is under review to ensure the provision of this essential statutory service is sustainable as demand continues to increase. With the recent improvements and efficiency measures implemented within the Passenger Transport team, any opportunities of reducing single occupancy taxis will be explored further, following full consideration of the reasons behind each single occupancy taxi and the individual child's needs.

The Education team is currently investigating whether a mentor service could be trialled to include some element of transport provision for some SEND children as an alternative to taxis. The cost of doing this could be favourable and it would also provide a more supportive and tailored service to each child's needs, improving their overall educational outcomes.

Some education providers already arrange their own transport, and we are also looking at whether this could be extended to Alternative Provision providers.

The opportunities identified in the independent review that could generate the greatest potential efficiencies have been investigated and are being actioned as described. The review also recommended increasing the level of Independent Travel Training (ITT) and use of Personal Travel Budgets.

There are limited opportunities to exploit ITT because there are few children currently travelling on contracted routes who could move to public transport. Contracted routes tend to operate where there is no public transport. The B&NES Travel Support Service is currently performing almost 50% above capacity and we are supporting the service to expand in the near future. The current service focuses on transitions to post-16 further education placements. Potential expansion to younger age groups from year 9 are being considered, but barriers exist, including levels of public transport available in rural areas.

Similarly, Personal Travel Budgets should only be used when they can take the place of a contracted route and are therefore reliant on there being suitable public transport routes.

### **3.9 Creation of more SEND places in schools**

Ultimately, the biggest impact on the cost of providing home to school transport would be more school places within the local area to cater for SEND children. We need to use the funding that is available to us as wisely as possible. We have a plan for SEND in B&NES, our SEND Capital & Sufficiency workstream, and a crucial part of this is the creation of more SEND places in schools. so that more children and young people can stay in their local area, now and in the future.

The aims for the SEND Capital and Sufficiency workstream are as follows:

- Ensure there is sufficiency of school places and provision for children with SEND.
- Reduce lengthy journeys to the appropriate provision.



- Ensure children are educated at their most local special school. Reduce our reliance on independent placements so that we only place those whose needs cannot be met by the increased provision within B&NES.
- Develop a joined up, agile approach to SEND place planning, with dedicated capacity and systems to regularly review and respond to sufficiency (including costs) in our local area.

Current SEND capital projects include:

- Two Free Schools on the Culverhay site; a generic 120-place special school and a 55-place Alternative Provision (AP) school. Whilst both were approved by the Department of Education, the Free School programme has been paused, and we await a decision from Government. In the meantime, we continue to progress the programme from our end, such as the clearance of the site.
- A 30-place Free Special School, via the presumption process, for pupils aged 11-18 with autism and complex needs by repurposing the council owned Charlton House in Keynsham.
- Expansion of our specialist resource base/unit places in B&NES, such as the two new secondary resource bases for children with autism that opened in September 2025, each with the capacity to welcome 20 children.

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 The council has statutory duties under the Education Act 1996 to provide free home-to-school transport for certain children of school age (5–16).

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 5.1 The impacts of the continuing increase in demand for Home to School Transport are outlined above.

## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance. The service inputs into the Highways Risk Register to ensure that all service risks are considered and monitored in line with council best practice. Any significant risks are escalated through the Place Management Directorate Risk Register and into the Corporate Risk Register
- 6.2 It is important to note that the number of children eligible for Home to School Transport is expected to continue growing, especially children who need support with SEND. The transport efficiency measures outlined in this report will help control costs, but it is anticipated that the overall cost to the council of providing transport for eligible children will continue to increase for the foreseeable future.

## **7 EQUALITIES**

- 7.1 No adverse impacts have been identified as a direct result of this report. An Equality Impact Assessment has not been completed in relation to this update

because it has been provided for information and does not propose any changes to the service that could have an impact upon equalities.

## 8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 No adverse impacts have been identified as a direct result of this report.

## 9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None.

## 10 CONSULTATION

10.1 This report was undertaken in consultation with the Director of Place Management, the Director of Education & Safeguarding, Monitoring Officer, S151 Officer and the Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

<b>Contact person</b>	Paul Garrod – Head of Highways, Parking & Passenger Transport <a href="mailto:paul_garrod@bathnes.gov.uk">paul_garrod@bathnes.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers</b>	Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (2023), <i>SEND Transport Toolkit</i> <a href="https://adeptnet.org.uk/sites/default/files/media/2023-11/ADEPT%20SEND%20Transport%20Toolkit_Nov%202023_0.pdf">https://adeptnet.org.uk/sites/default/files/media/2023-11/ADEPT%20SEND%20Transport%20Toolkit_Nov%202023_0.pdf</a>  Local Government Association & Isos Partnership (2025), <i>The Future of Home to School Transport</i> <a href="https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Home%20to%20school%20transport%20report%20final%202025.pdf">https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Home%20to%20school%20transport%20report%20final%202025.pdf</a>  National Audit Office (2025), <i>Home to school transport</i> <a href="https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Home-to-School-transport.pdf">https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Home-to-School-transport.pdf</a>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	11th November 2025	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 9999
TITLE:	Council Tax Reduction Scheme Update	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1 Letter to households		

## 1 THE ISSUE

Under the current rules of the council's Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme, residents receiving income-related Employment Support Allowance (ESA) are entitled to full council tax support. In contrast, those receiving Universal Credit (UC) receive a percentage reduction based on where their weekly income falls within pre-defined income bands. As ESA recipients have been migrated to UC during 2025, some residents have experienced a reduction in the level of council tax support they receive. Officers have been asked to review the experience of the last 6 months for this cohort, and the impact migration has had on their Council Tax Support entitlement and ability to pay council tax.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to;

- 2.1 Note the impact of Universal Credit migration on recipients previously entitled to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).**
- 2.2 Note the support mechanisms currently in place for this cohort where Council Tax liability presents financial hardship.**

### **2.3 Note the financial implications of fully disregarding the Limited Capability for Work-Related Activity (LCWRA) component within Universal Credit for the purposes of Local Council Tax Support.**

## **3 THE REPORT**

- 3.1 ESA claimants started the migration process to Universal Credit from September 2024; however, this significantly increased from April 2025 with a timetable scheduled by the DWP which means that all ESA recipients will be migrated by the end of March 2026.
- 3.2 Officers have sampled cases over a relatively long period of time to review the effects which migration has had on this cohort, from January 2025 to October 2025. This was done to understand the effect on LCTS and claimants' ability to pay. It is estimated that around 1600 households have migrated across that period. Within this group, officers have looked at a sample of 564 cases to determine the reduction in support and have checked whether these residents are up to date with their council tax.
- 3.3 Claimants were assessed in their new council tax support band, so that officers could see the proportionate loss in support for claimants from the sample group, all of which had previously received 100% support.

New Reduction level	Percentage of Sample
100%	1%
85%	26%
60%	47%
40%	11%
20%	3%
0%	12%

- 3.4 Most claimants in the sample experienced a reduction in support placing them in mid-range income bands, with the highest proportion seeing a 40% reduction in support, although the trend appeared to change with a higher proportion than expected receiving no support under the income-banded rules. Officers therefore drilled down into this cohort of 67 cases which would no longer receive any support at all to determine trends which caused this loss of entitlement.
- 3.5 Of the 67 cases which lost all entitlement, 21 no longer qualified because their savings and capital was above the £6,000 limit for people who receive Universal Credit. This capital threshold is lower than the £10,000 or £16,000 threshold for the legacy council tax support rules. The other 46 households did not qualify because their weekly income exceeded the appropriate threshold. The average weekly income for this cohort was £627.53 excluding any Universal Credit for Housing costs or Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance.
- 3.6 Officers looked at each household within the new income bands to determine whether they were in arrears, had historic arrears (and so a history of non-payment for different reasons), or were up to date.

Reduction level	Historic Arrears	Arrears	Up to date
100%	40%		60%
85%	15%	35%	55%
60%	10%	34%	56%
40%	10%	28%	62%
20%	32%	10%	58%
0%	14%	19%	67%

There is not much variation within each group of the percentage of households which are up to date with their council tax. The 20% cohort has a higher percentage of households with historic arrears, but there are only 19 households in total within the 20% cohort, so this might distort the results of the analysis. A higher proportion of households who receive no support under the income banded rules are up to date with their council tax, and this may be because they have a higher weekly income or access to savings to pay the council tax. Those who do not qualify because their capital is above £6,000 will be eligible to reclaim council tax support if their capital falls below that level.

- 3.7 Households struggling to pay council tax may apply for discretionary support from the Welfare Support team. This was highlighted during the 2023 consultation, prior to scheme changes which saw the disregard of the Housing Costs element and revision of discount amounts and income band thresholds. As the cohort which has recently migrated from legacy benefits to Universal Credit may not have seen that consultation material, because it was not relevant to their individual circumstances at the time, officers drafted and issued a mailshot to explain the reason for their new council tax bill and highlighted discretionary help available through the Welfare Support team. A copy of this letter is included as an appendix to this report. A list of claimants with historic arrears has also been passed to the council tax recovery section, and officers within that team have been proactively contacting households to highlight available support and to enter into payment arrangements to clear historic debts.
- 3.8 A significant number of households within the sample population, and those which have migrated from ESA to Universal Credit receive the Limited Capability for Work related Activity component. This is a relatively high amount of money, totalling £97.65 per week for each qualifying adult. This is higher than the standard allowance for a single adult and although the Government plan to reduce the LCWRA element from 2026/27 to £50.14 per week for new claims, existing claimants will not see a reduction. Officers have been asked to look at options to consider for changing the LCTS scheme rules, and disregarding the LCWRA element from the income assessment would make a difference to those who have migrated from ESA to Universal credit, but this would come at a significant cost to the scheme. When officers modelled the costs of changes to the scheme from 2024, there were approximately 1709 claimants who received the LCWRA element. Disregarding this element from those claims, and those which have migrated during the last 12 months would probably cost around £500,000.
- 3.9 Officers have also considered whether some sort of arrangement where those who migrate across to Universal Credit may receive some form of transitional protection from having to pay more council tax, however this functionality does not currently exist for the software system used to calculate LCTS claims, and

given the advanced stage of Universal Credit Managed Migration, by the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2026, which is the earliest date that the council could theoretically make changes to the scheme rules, there should be no ESA claimants left on the legacy scheme. Any changes to the scheme would also require a public consultation, investment in tools to model the cost of scheme changes accurately, and careful planning and system testing. It would not be possible to do this by the time that full council meet to set the council tax for 2026/27, so the earliest that any changes could take effect, should Cabinet wish to propose any modifications would be from April 2027.

- 3.10 In summary, most claimants within the sample group who have migrated from ESA and Income Support to Universal Credit are up to date with their council tax. The council has also maintained supportive measures to help households who cannot afford to pay, and there are time constraints and financial and resource implications involved in making scheme changes. In light of these findings, officers recommend maintaining the current scheme and continuing to monitor the impact of migration.

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 The Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme is governed by the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended annually. These regulations set out mandatory provisions for pension-age claimants and provide the framework within which local authorities design schemes for working-age residents.

The authority to implement and revise the LCTS scheme is derived from the Local Government Finance Act 2012, which replaced Council Tax Benefit with locally administered schemes from 1 April 2013. Decisions relating to the scheme are made under the council's powers as set out in this Act and associated regulations.

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 5.1 The cost of the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme is met through a reduction in the council tax base. This means that the total amount of council tax to be collected must account for the revenue foregone due to reduced liability for eligible claimants.
- 5.2 As a result, the scheme has a direct impact on the funding available to the billing authority and precepting authorities, including parish councils. Any changes to the scheme, such as adjustments to eligibility criteria or levels of support, must be carefully considered, as they could affect the overall distribution of council tax income and place additional financial pressure on both the council and its partners.
- 5.3 The implications extend to all council tax payers, who may experience changes in their liability depending on how the scheme is funded. Therefore, any proposed amendments should be subject to consultation and equality impact assessment to ensure transparency and fairness.
- 5.4 Staffing resources required to administer the scheme are already in place within the Revenues and Benefits service. However, significant changes to the scheme may require additional training, system updates, or temporary

increases in workload, which could have short-term staffing and operational impacts.

## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance. It should be noted that any changes to the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme carry potential legal, financial, and reputational risks.

## **7 EQUALITIES**

An EQIA has not been carried out for this report, because a decision has not been proposed to make changes to the LCTS scheme.

## **8 CLIMATE CHANGE**

This report does not impact climate change or carbon neutrality.

## **9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None

## **10 CONSULTATION**

Deputy S151 Officer.

<b>Contact person</b>	Damian Peak. 01225 396613. <a href="mailto:damian_peak@bathnes.gov.uk">damian_peak@bathnes.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers</b>	<i>Appendix 1 Letter to Households</i>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	

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Name  
Address 1  
Address 2  
Address 3  
Address 4  
Postcode

Date :7<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Dear

**Re: Council Tax Support and Changes to Benefit Income**

You have recently claimed Universal Credit, or you may have been asked to transition to Universal Credit as part of a national change. We are writing to inform you that this change may affect the amount of Council Tax Support you receive, which could result in an increase to your Council Tax bill.

Council Tax Support is calculated based on your weekly household income. However, please note that the following elements are not included in this calculation:

- The Housing Costs element of your Universal Credit
- The Childcare element of your Universal Credit
- Any Housing Benefit received for living in supported accommodation
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

It is important to keep up to date with your Council Tax instalments. Failure to do so may result in court costs and enforcement action.

If you are concerned about your ability to pay Council Tax, you may be eligible for additional financial assistance. You can apply online for support through the Discretionary Crisis Fund:

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/apply-discretionary-crisis-scheme>

Yours sincerely

Welfare Support Team

Bath and North East Somerset Council

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Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Corporate PDS Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	25 November 2025	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E TBC
TITLE:	Parish and Town Council Election Recharges	
WARD:	All Parish and Town Councils in Bath and North East Somerset	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix A – Estimate of costs of Parish and Town Council Elections and By-Elections		

## 1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Bath & North East Somerset Council currently covers the full costs incurred by the Returning Officer for all scheduled Parish and Town Council elections. At unscheduled elections (“by-elections”), the Council recovers 50% of the cost for the first by-election, and 100% of the cost if any additional by-elections take place in the same Parish or Town Council before the next scheduled elections.
- 1.2 This report invites the Cabinet Member to introduce recharges to Parish and Town Councils in Bath and North East Somerset for the costs incurred by the Returning Officer for all Parish and Town Council elections and by-elections, with effect from 1 April 2026.
- 1.3 This approach will generate savings of an estimated £40,000 at the next scheduled Parish and Town Council elections, which will take place on Thursday 6 May 2027, in combination with Bath & North East Somerset Council election. The budget set aside by the Council to cover the costs of all elections taking place on that date is £400,000.
- 1.4 The recharges to Parish and Town Councils are on a cost recovery basis only, and no income will be generated by the Council as a profit.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Corporate Panel is asked to:

- 2.1 Make comments on the introduction of recharges to Parish and Town Councils for all their election and by-election costs with effect from 1 April 2026.
- 2.2 Note the methodology for calculating the Parish and Town Council recharges as set out under paragraphs 3.8.1 to 3.8.4.

### **3 THE REPORT**

- 3.1 The cost incurred by the Returning Officer to deliver the key processes of an election has more than doubled in the last 13 years. As an example, the budget allocated by the government to the Local Returning Officer of Bath and North East Somerset to deliver the Police and Crime Commissioner election in 2024 was £500,000 compared with a budget of £242,000 at the first Police and Crime Commissioner election in 2012.
- 3.2 This increase is the result of a number of significant changes to the legislation governing the administration and delivery of elections, including the introduction of individual electoral registration in 2014, the introduction of voter ID at polling stations in 2023 alongside the requirement to make the voting process more accessible to voters with a disability. Printing and postage costs have risen (Royal Mail services continue to rise notably on an annual basis) as well as the majority of polling station hire fees.
- 3.3 At parliamentary elections and police and crime commissioner elections all costs incurred by the Returning Officer are recoverable from central government, whilst the cost of West of England Combined Authority elections can be reclaimed from WECA funds. As a result, these elections have no direct impact on the Council budget.
- 3.4 This is different at local government elections. The Council at present bears the full cost of Bath & North East Somerset Council elections, which take place every four years, and the full cost of all Parish and Town Council elections, which take place on the same date. Furthermore, if there are any Parish and Town Council by-elections between one scheduled election and the next one, the Council covers 50% of the cost of the first by-election; the cost of any subsequent by-elections which are held before the next scheduled election in that same Parish or Town Council, are wholly met by the Parish or Town Council.
- 3.5 Under Section 36 of the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Council is entitled to require Parish and Town Councils to repay the costs incurred by the Returning Officer for the delivery of their scheduled elections and by-elections.
- 3.6 Parish and Town Councils receive a precept via the Local Authority Council Tax to run the parish; this includes services such as allotments, lighting, cemeteries, etc. Parish and Town Councils will need to factor the contingency cost of contested scheduled elections and by-elections into their budget setting activities and ensure that they have sufficient funds to cover that cost.
- 3.7 Without a recharge policy in place, **all** Bath and North East Somerset Council taxpayers would continue to bear the burden of the cost of Parish and Town Council elections, regardless of whether they reside in one of the areas where there is a contested election or whether they have a Parish or Town Council at all (residents of Bath don't, for example). Introducing a recharge policy will ensure the cost is met

by the local residents of the area where there is an election through the parish precept. Most councils across the country, including our neighbouring authorities (North Somerset Council, Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council) recharge Parish and Town Councils for their election and by-election costs, using a methodology which is similar to the one outlined in paragraphs 3.8.1 to 3.8.4.

3.8 The Cabinet Member is requested to recover from Parish and Town Councils the costs for their scheduled elections and by-elections. This means:

3.8.1 At scheduled elections, which take place on the same day as Bath & North East Somerset Council elections, Parish and Town Councils will be each charged an initial flat fee of £100.00 for the setup and provision of statutory notices, nomination packs and administration of the nomination process. In the Parish and Town Councils where the election is contested (i.e. where there are more candidates standing for election than seats), the Parish or Town Council will be recharged the full cost of those elements which relate solely to the Parish or Town Council election (i.e. printing and postage costs of postal packs, printing of ballot papers, polling station stationery, staff costs for the preparation of postal votes, and for the verification and count of ballot papers, hire fee for the count venue). There will be other costs which will be shared with the Council, and these relate to those elements which are common to both elections (i.e. polling station staff fees and the polling stations hire fee). There will be no charge for poll cards.

3.8.2 For Parish and Town Council by-elections the charge will include an initial cost of £50 for the setup and provision of statutory notices, nomination packs and administration of the nomination process. If the election is contested, the charge will include the full cost incurred by the Returning Officer for the delivery of the election, also including the charge for poll cards if required.

3.8.3 The cost of parish elections and by-elections varies considerably from parish to parish, depending on the number of electors in that parish, the number of postal voters, the number of polling station and the turnout.

3.8.4 An estimate of the costs of Parish and Town Council elections in Bath and North East Somerset in May 2027 and of any by-elections from June 2027, is outlined in Appendix A. The appendix includes the following: -

- (a) A table with a summary of the estimated recharges to each Parish and Town Council, including separate columns each showing respectively (1) the recharge for uncontested scheduled elections, (2) the recharge for contested scheduled elections, (3) the recharge for uncontested by-elections and (4) the recharge for contested by-elections.
- (b) A table showing the dates of Parish and Town Council elections and by-elections in the last 10 years.
- (c) A section for each Parish and Town Council, with a breakdown of the election and by-election costs. The assumptions are based on 2025 costs of items and services, which are likely to see an approximate 10% increase in 2027.

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 Under Section 36 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 the Council is entitled to require Parish and Town Councils to repay the costs incurred by the Returning Officer for the delivery of their scheduled elections and by-elections.

## **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 5.1 If this recharge policy is introduced, the Council could achieve a potential saving of £40,000 at the May 2027 elections, if for example the same Parish and Town Council elections as 2023 were contested.
- 5.2 A Cabinet Member decision to impose charges, if made now, will enable Parish and Town Councils to make adequate provision for the cost of elections and by-elections from their budget setting activities in February 2026 onwards.
- 5.3 The recharge policy will take effect from 1 April 2026 and it is unlikely to affect Parish and Town Councils until the scheduled elections in May 2027. This means that Parish and Town Councils more than one financial year to plan for any increases in their precepts.

## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

## **7 EQUALITIES**

- 7.1 No adverse impacts have been identified.

## **8 CLIMATE CHANGE**

- 8.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

## **9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 9.1 The Council can continue to organise Parish and Town Council elections at no cost to the Parish and Town Councils. This is likely to have an adverse impact on the Council budget for the local government elections in May 2027.

## **10 CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 The representative body for local Councils, Avon Local Councils Association (ALCA) has been notified and has been requested to update Parish and Town Councils. The Parish and Town Councils have been consulted directly via email on Monday 18 August 2025.
- 10.2 The S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer have also been consulted and have no further comments.

<b>Contact person</b>	Aurora Loi
<b>Background papers</b>	No background papers
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	

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## Scheduled Election in May 2027

Parish Information	Full costs
Electorate	2,170
Postal voters	447
Number of ballot papers	2,200
Anticipated turnout at polling station (40%)	868
Anticipated turnout of postal voters (80%)	358
Overall turnout	1,226
Number of polling stations	1

### Printing and stationery costs

Cost of poll cards	£130.20
Cost of postal packs	£174.33
Cost of ballot papers	£330.00
Miscellaneous polling station stationery	£10.00
Miscellaneous count stationery	£10.00
Electsort poll cards	£150.00
<b>Sub-total printing and stationery costs</b>	<b>£804.53</b>

### Postage costs

Royal Mail postage cost of poll cards	£998.20
Royal Mail postage cost of outward postal votes	£545.34
Royal Mail postage cost of inward postal votes	£350.45
<b>Sub-total postage costs</b>	<b>£1,893.99</b>

### Staff costs

Postal vote preparation	£61.15
Postal vote opening	£97.84
Presiding officer	£342.18
Poll clerk	£246.31
Verification supervisor at night rate	£141.92
Verification assistant at night rate	£125.81
Count supervisor at day rate	£189.23
Count assistant at day rate	£167.66
<b>Sub-total staff costs</b>	<b>£1,372.11</b>

### Other costs

Administration fee	£100.00
Modern Democracy iPad fee	£147.37
Polling station hire fee	£160.00
Count venue hire fee	£350.00
<b>Sub-total other costs</b>	<b>£757.37</b>

<b>TOTAL SCHEDULED ELECTION COST</b>	<b>£4,827.99</b>
--------------------------------------	------------------



(if contested)

Costs to Batheaston Parish Council

£0.00

£174.33

£330.00

£10.00

£10.00

£0.00

**£524.33**

£0.00

£545.34

£350.45

**£895.79**

£61.15

£97.84

£171.09

£123.16

£141.92

£125.81

£189.23

£167.66

**£1,077.86**

£100.00

£73.69

£80.00

£350.00

**£603.69**

**£3,101.66**



## By-Elections from June 2027 (if contested)

### Parish Information

### Costs to Batheaston Parish Council

Electorate	2,170
Postal voters	447
Number of ballot papers	2,200
Anticipated turnout at polling station (40%)	868
Anticipated turnout of postal voters (80%)	358
Overall turnout	1,226
Number of polling stations	1

### Printing and stationery costs

Cost of poll cards	£130.20
Cost of postal packs	£174.33
Cost of ballot papers	£330.00
Miscellaneous polling station stationery	£10.00
Miscellaneous count stationery	£10.00
Electsort poll cards	£150.00
<b>Sub-total printing and stationery costs</b>	<b>£804.53</b>

### Postage costs

Royal Mail postage cost of poll cards	£998.20
Royal Mail postage cost of outward postal vot	£545.34
Royal Mail cost of postal votes (inward)	£350.45
<b>Sub-total postage costs</b>	<b>£1,893.99</b>

### Staff costs

Postal vote preparation	£61.15
Postal vote opening	£97.84
Presiding officer	£342.18
Poll clerk	£246.31
Verification supervisor at night rate	£141.92
Verification assistant at night rate	£125.81
Count supervisor at night rate	£141.92
Count assistant at night rate	£125.81
<b>Sub-total staff costs</b>	<b>£1,282.94</b>

### Other costs

Administration fee	£50.00
Modern Democracy iPad fee	£147.37
Polling station hire fee	£160.00
Verificaion and count venue hire fee	£0.00
<b>Sub-total other costs</b>	<b>£357.37</b>

## TOTAL BY-ELECTION COST

**£4,338.83**



<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>			
MEETING	<b>Climate Emergency and Sustainability Scrutiny Panel</b>		
MEETING DATE:	<b>27 November 2025</b>	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:	
TITLE:	<b>Capital Delivery Assurance</b>		
WARD:	<b>All</b>		
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>			
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b>			
<b>Presentation slides</b>			

## 1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The Council invests significantly in B&NES through its capital programme. The budget sets out the financial commitments of this within the [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#) adopted at the Council meeting in February 2025.
- 1.2 The Council has more than 260 live capital projects crosscutting all directorates and services. The range and scale are diverse, from play equipment to depots, housing to vehicle fleet, with individual project budgets ranging from £50k to £50M.
- 1.3 Effective monitoring and assurance on cost (value), quality and timely delivery of the programme is important to inform treasury management decisions on the best deployment of 3<sup>rd</sup> party grant, corporate capital and borrowing.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to:

### 2.1 Note

- (1) Capital financing methods and how the Council plans and deploys capital funds
- (2) Development of appropriate service and governance arrangements for the deployment of capital across the capital programme

## 2.2 Scrutinise

- (1) the revised governance arrangement of the capital programme
- (2) programme reporting and the roll out of Project for the Web (PftW).

## 3 THE REPORT

3.1 Centralised Service Model: The Council has now restructured its project delivery capability into a centralised service within Sustainable Communities that forms a part of the Housing and Capital Delivery directorate. This ensures a clear delineation between commissioning intention and delivery action, focussing our project delivery capability into one Project Management Office (PMO) service.

3.2 The service is structured into 5 principal functions with a dedicated capital finance lead under a Head of Service.

- Project management: a project management delivery resource to execute the projects within programmes
- Programme management: managers having oversight of a portfolio of projects with similar objectives sitting within a programme
- Commercial management: including procurement, contract management, framework management and supplier engagement and monitoring

3.3 Project Controls: Portfolio, Programme, Project management (P3M) Team will ensure that all information and resources are coordinated and give assurance that approved processes and tools are appropriately and consistently followed meaning the organisation is in the best possible position for effective delivery. All information, communication, monitoring and control functions for the programme will be coordinated through the Programme Controls Office.

3.4 Capital programme governance structure (refer to Slide 4 in attached powerpoint presentation) to ensure robust governance and clear, efficient decision making in delivery has been developed. The structure includes officer steering groups to provide direction of capital delivery, a Capital Strategy Group accountable for delivery of the capital programme and Place Shaping Group setting the strategy direction for the programme. Political oversight to inform and guide Decisions is provided through portfolio holders and Cabinet

3.5 Attendance at these governance groups are as follows:

Portfolio Leads – all Cabinet Members

Place Shaping Group – Executive and Corporate Directors

Capital Strategy Group – Director of Capital & Housing, Director of Place Management, Head of Capital Programme & Project Management, Head of Finance Management

Steering Groups – Chaired by Head of Sponsoring Service



3.6 Capital reporting dashboard and assurance: the Council now uses Microsoft Planner (Project for the Web) as the tool for management and reporting of projects.

3.7 By introducing Microsoft Planner (Project for the Web) the Council is better equipped to effectively manage and report on P3M through deploying project management resource and organise our project portfolio with strategic alignment. This database is a cloud-based project management tool that enables users to create and manage projects, collaborate with team members, and track project progress. It is part of the Microsoft Project family of tools and is designed to provide a simplified and intuitive experience for users whilst providing enhanced visual dashboard reporting through Power BI.

## 4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 None.

## 5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 A Portfolio, Programme and Project Management (P3M) Controls team is resourced in the service to deliver the capital reporting and governance with financial monitoring now managed by the in-service Finance Lead. This resource is funded by the programmes through a capital recharge mechanism.

5.2 The 2025/26 Budget Report set out the Council's 5-year capital programme. The Capital Programme retains the clear separation of schemes for Full Approval and those which are for Provisional Approval. Items gaining Full Approval are clear to proceed to full scheme implementation and delivery, subject to appropriate project management and governance. Items for Provisional Approval will require either a further Officer decision or in some cases a formal Cabinet member decision for Full Approval. The budget estimates for schemes shown for Provisional Approval are therefore included on an indicative basis, and as an aid to planning. The tables below set out the programme as well as the sources of funding.

Capital Spend Budgets	Budget 2025/2026 £'m	Budget 2026/2027 £'m	Budget 2027/2028 £'m	Budget 2028/2029 £'m	Budget 2029/2030 £'m	Total £'m
Full Approval	76.413	34.296	16.404	3.681	1.889	132.683
Provisional Approval	84.545	91.703	91.875	71.298	35.032	374.453
<b>Total</b>	<b>160.957</b>	<b>125.999</b>	<b>108.279</b>	<b>74.980</b>	<b>36.921</b>	<b>507.136</b>

Financing	Budget 2025/2026 £'m	Budget 2026/2027 £'m	Budget 2027/2028 £'m	Budget 2028/2029 £'m	Budget 2029/2030 £'m	Total £'m
Grant	73.309	42.809	14.500	8.836	8.786	148.241
Capital Receipts/RTB	2.745	8.400	0.635	0.635	0.202	12.617
Revenue	2.292	3.570	0.050	0.050	0.050	6.012
Borrowing	73.705	66.400	92.315	65.456	27.883	325.759
3rd Party (inc S106 & CIL)	8.907	4.820	0.778	0.003	0	14.508

<b>Total</b>	<b>160.957</b>	<b>125.999</b>	<b>108.279</b>	<b>74.980</b>	<b>36.921</b>	<b>507.136</b>
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## **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

6.1 Risk Management is completed at Service, Programme and Project level in line with the P3M project management manual. Examples of project risk analysis will be presented within the meeting.

## **7 EQUALITIES**

7.1 All capital projects and their decisions are subject to Equalities Impact Assessment at key decision gateways.

## **8 CLIMATE CHANGE**

8.1 Net zero by 2030 aspirations underpin all projects in the capital programme.

## **9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

9.1 None.

## **10 CONSULTATION**

10.1 Councillor Mark Elliot, Cabinet Member for Resources

10.2 Simon Martin, Director of Capital & Housing

10.3 Gary Adams, Head of Financial Management

<b>Contact person</b>	Tom Foster, Head of Capital Programme & Project Management
<b>Background papers</b>	<a href="#">Medium Term Financial Strategy</a> agreed in February 2025
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	

# Capital Programme Assurance

Corporate Scrutiny Panel

25 November 2025

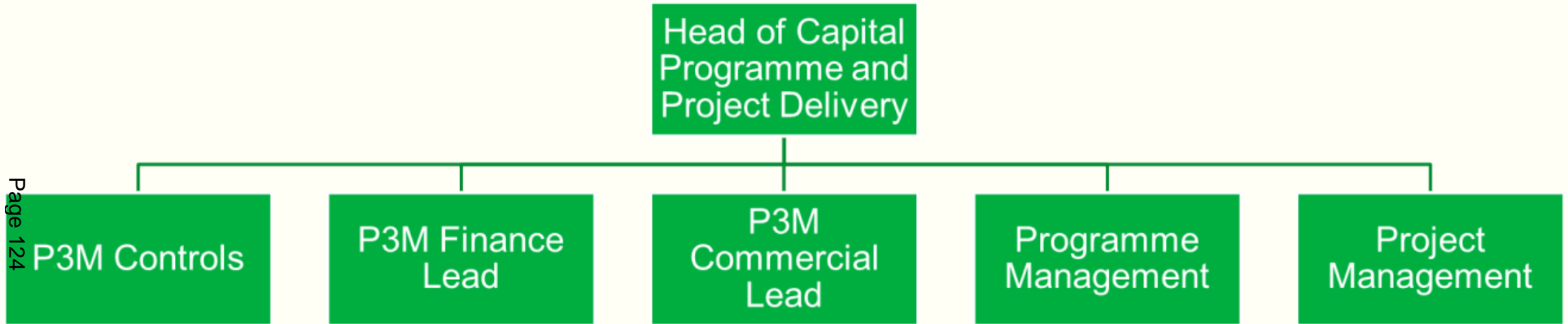
Page 123

Bath & North East  
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives



# Capital Programme and Project Management Service structure



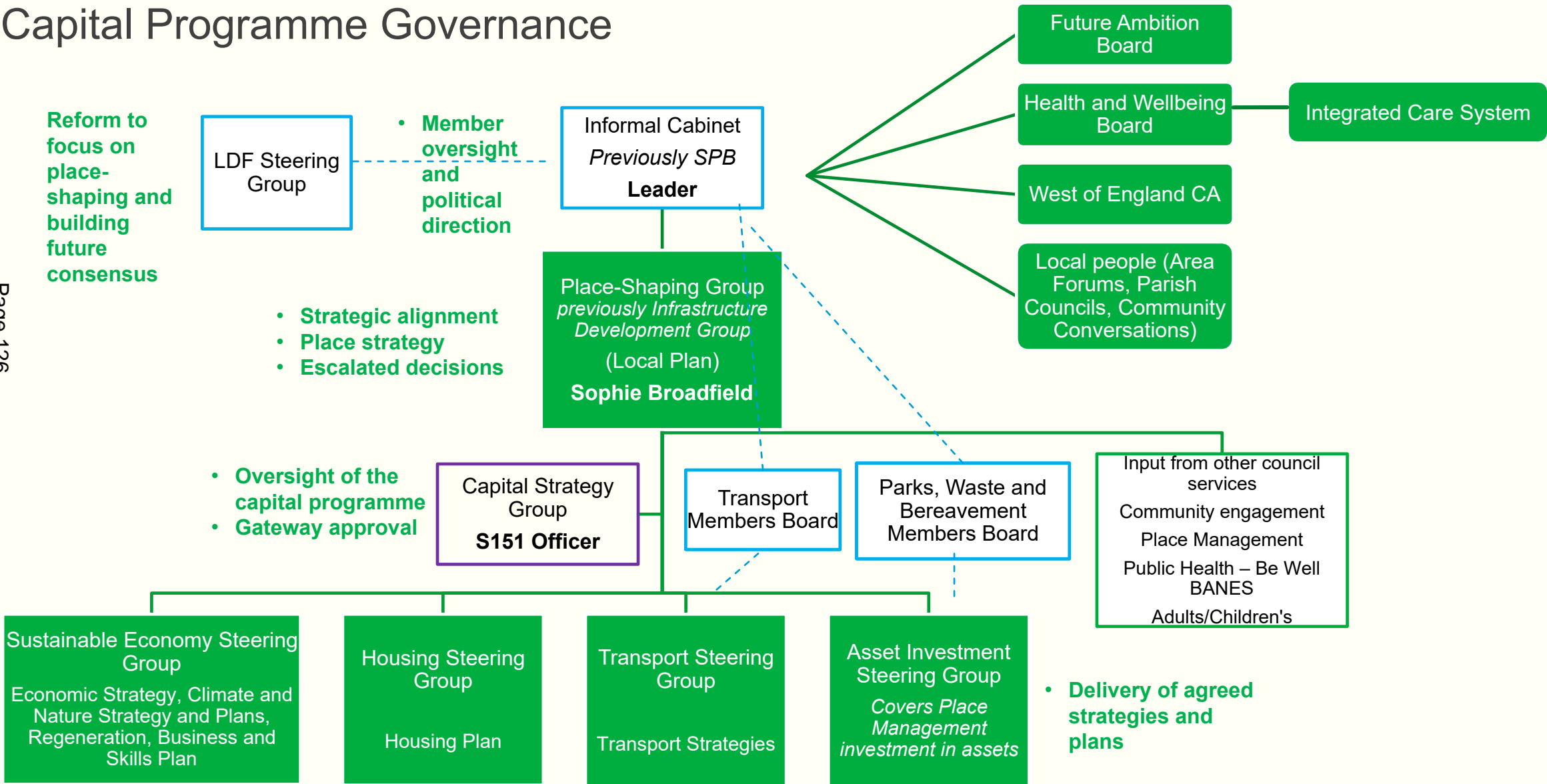
- This structure is based upon the P3M model of 'Portfolio, Programme and Projects' separating project management and delivery away from the 'business as usual' for service areas and providing an intelligent client function to effectively deliver projects.
- It creates a specific resource 'P3M Controls' to standardise processes and governance and reduce duplication.
- A programme-led approach to project delivery is supported by teams providing core expertise in finance and procurement.

# Capital Finance financial summary – existing situation

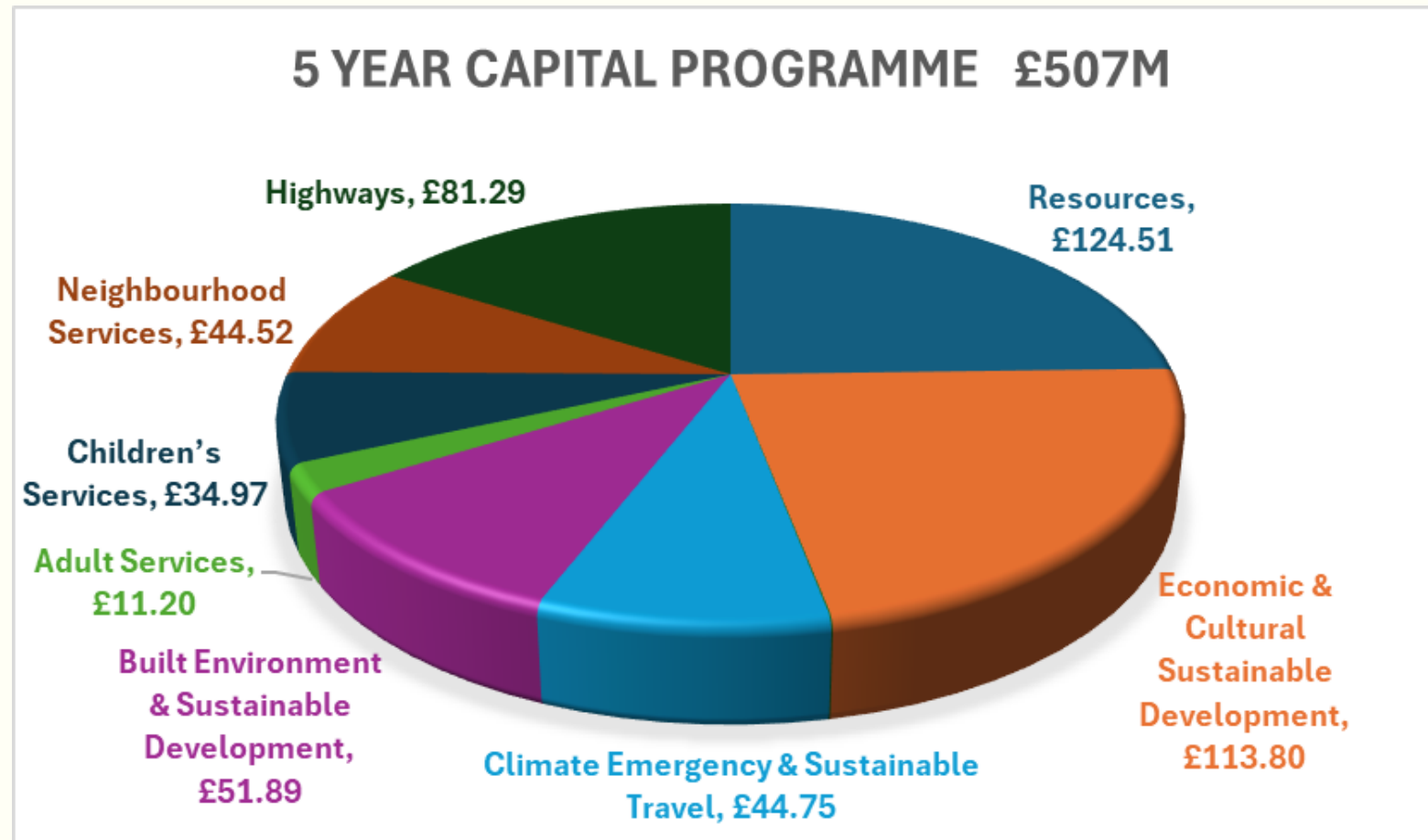
Portfolio Summary	2024/2025 Outturn Position			
	Capital Budget £'m	Outturn £'m	Variance £'m	Rephasing to 2025/26 Requested £'m
Leader	0.224	0.170	(0.054)	0.054
Climate Emergency & Sustainable Travel	3.926	3.079	(0.847)	0.847
Resources	11.178	6.762	(4.416)	4.416
Economic & Cultural Sustainable Development	14.388	10.896	(3.492)	2.388
Children's Services	9.276	5.558	(3.718)	3.582
Adult Services	2.389	2.349	(0.040)	0.039
Highways	17.541	15.312	(2.228)	2.221
Neighbourhood Services	5.318	4.021	(1.297)	1.293
Built Environment & Sustainable Development	6.294	4.894	(1.400)	1.400
Total	70.534	53.041	(17.493)	16.241



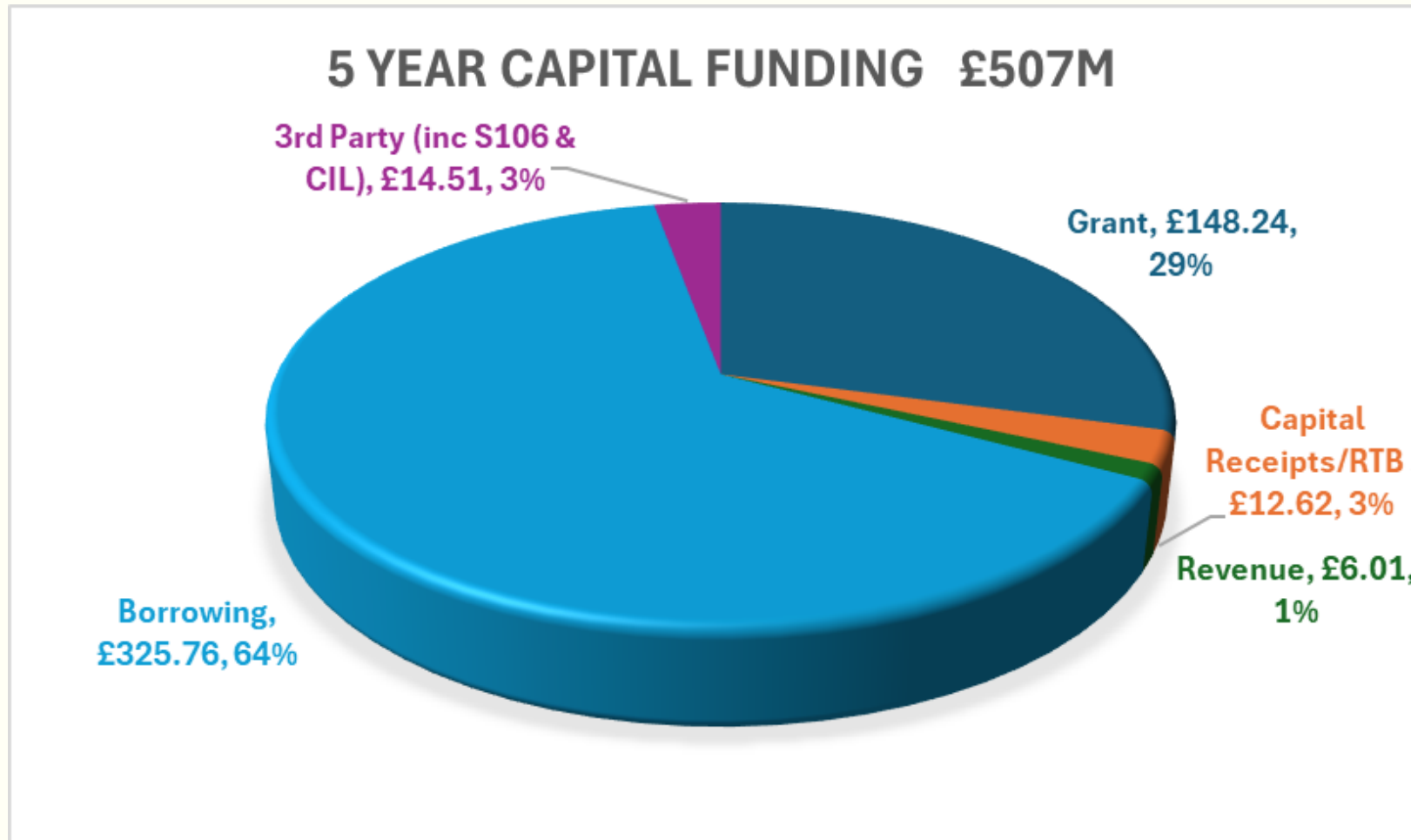
# Capital Programme Governance



## 2025/26 – 2029/30 (5 Year Capital Programme Summary)



## 2025/26 – 2029/30 (5 Year Capital Funding Summary)





## Capital Programme Project Management controls

**Context:** Atkins Realis conducted a PPM Maturity Assessment of the CRSTS Programme (2023) against industry best practice. BANES was scored at level 2 in maturity with the aim of becoming level 3 once the 5 key recommendations have been implemented. The RAG status are currently :

Recommendation	Action	Status
Outcome & Benefits Led Delivery	New Benefits Management Structure	Rollout & Embedding
Database & Reporting	Introduction of Project for the Web (MS Planner)	Rollout & Embedding
PMO Structure & Process	P3M Manual & Template Suite	Rollout & Embedding
Supporting Project Professions	Career Pathways	Approval
Robust Governance Structure	New Governance Framework	Rollout & Embedding

## What is Microsoft Project for the Web (Microsoft Planner)?



Microsoft's latest project management tool using cloud-based technology on Teams 365 platform

## Why Microsoft Project for the Web

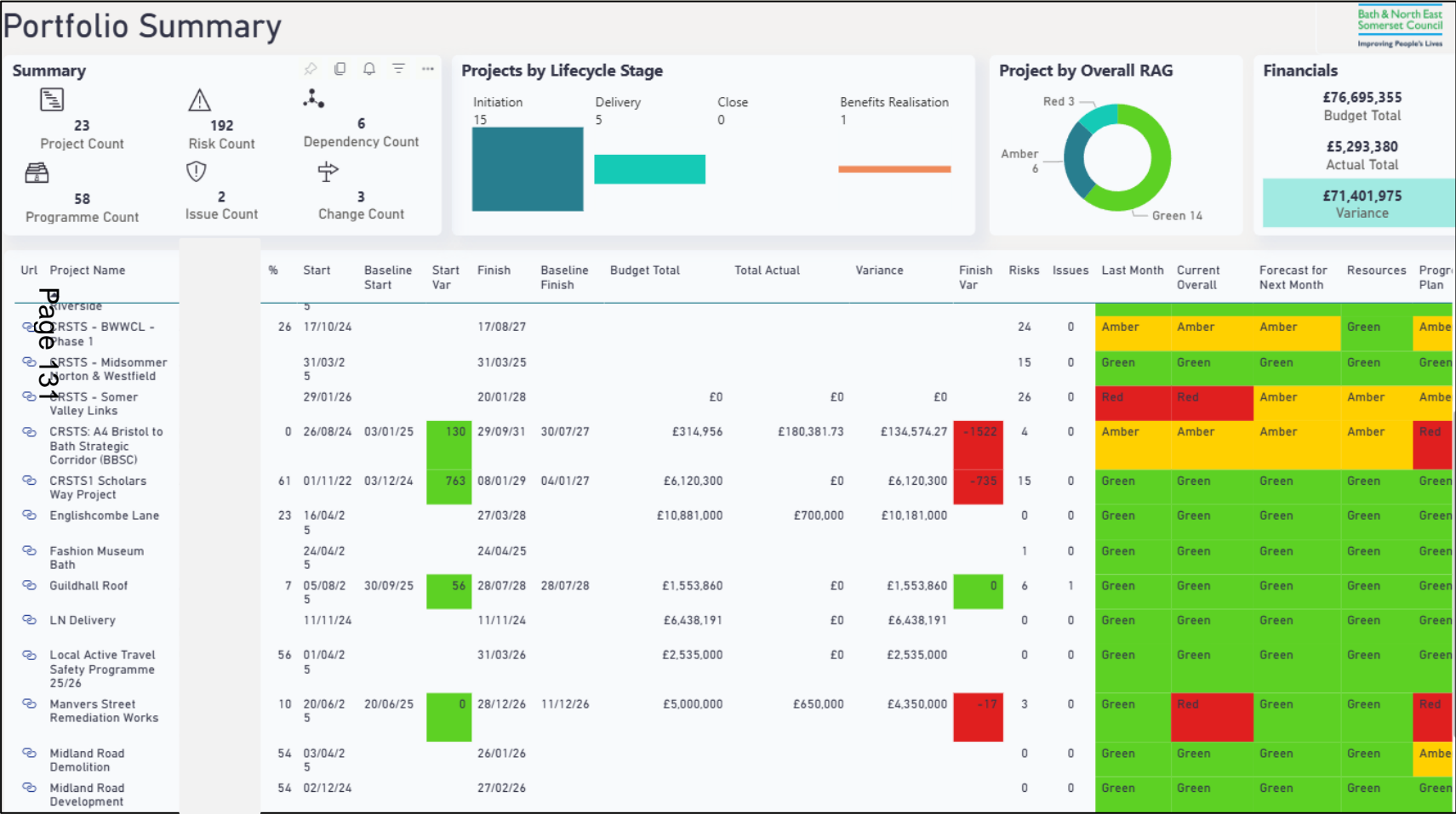
- ☐ Provides simple, powerful work management capabilities and can be used by project managers and team members to plan and manage projects of any size in a collaborative manner
- ☐ Provides a standardised approach to managing projects through:
  - ☐ Integrated planning
  - ☐ Scheduling
  - ☐ Risk management
  - ☐ Reporting & Power Bi Visualisation for Corporate Dashboards
- ☐ Interfaces with external stakeholders
- ☐ Aligns with client partner reporting requirements
- ☐ Affords scale up of processes for uplift from managing small to large projects

## Roadmap for Rollout

Involved 3 tranches of demo training between Nov 2024 – April 2025  
to cover all directorates across B&NES



# Capital Programme – Reporting Dashboard



- Example dashboard demonstrating PFTW reporting, including:
- Lifecycle stage
  - Overall completion percentage
  - Schedule information – versus baseline
  - Financial information – actuals vs budget
  - RAG status for key areas, including resourcing and risk

# Capital Programme – Example of quantified risk assessment

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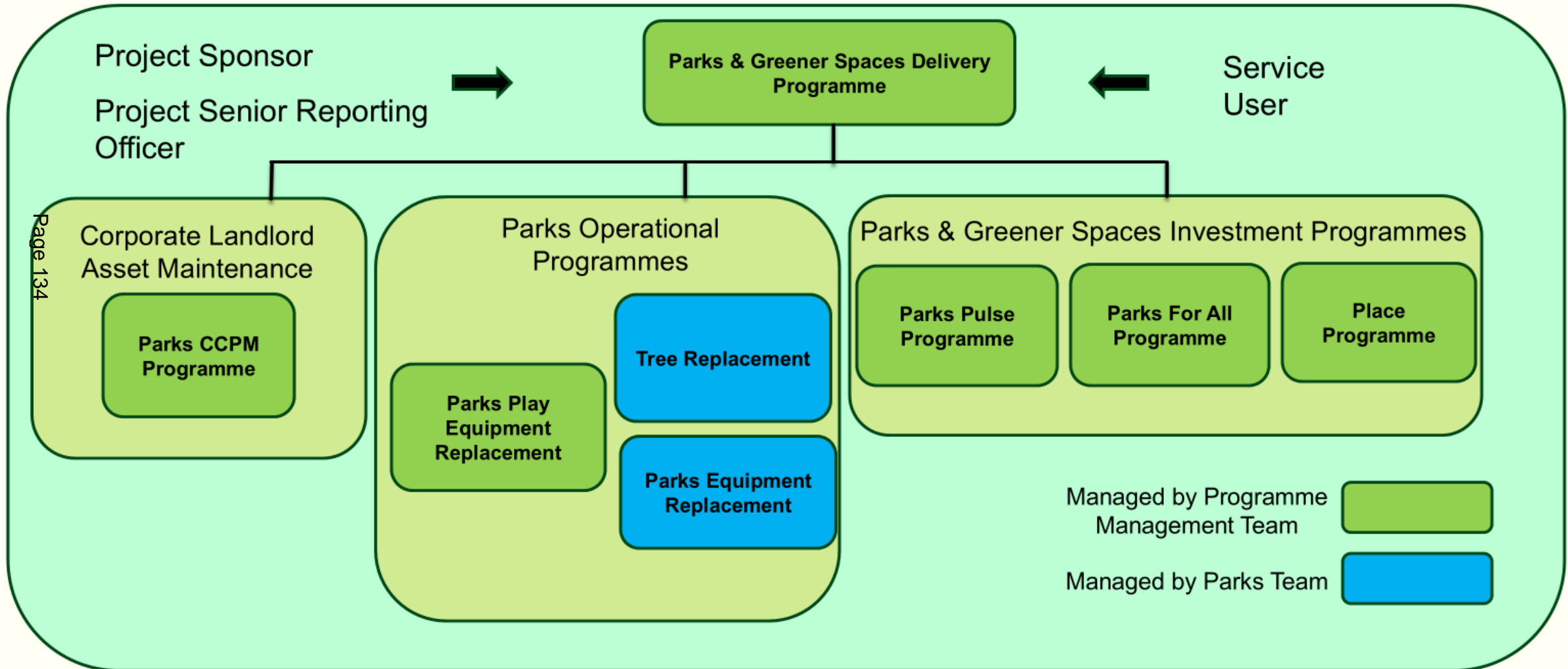
ID	Risk Description	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score	Mitigation Strategy	Owner	Status
R001	Delay in supplier delivery	3	2	6	Regular follow-ups; include penalties in contract	Procurement Team	Open
R002	Key team member leaves project	3	1	3	Cross-training; maintain updated documentation	HR	Open
R003	Budget overrun due to scope creep	2	3	6	Strict change control process	PMO	Open
R004	Regulatory changes affecting compliance	3	2	6	Monitor regulatory updates; legal consultation	Compliance Lead	Open
R005	Cybersecurity breach	4	1	4	Regular audits; implement security protocols	IT Security	Open

# Capital Programme Schedule Integration-the current programmes

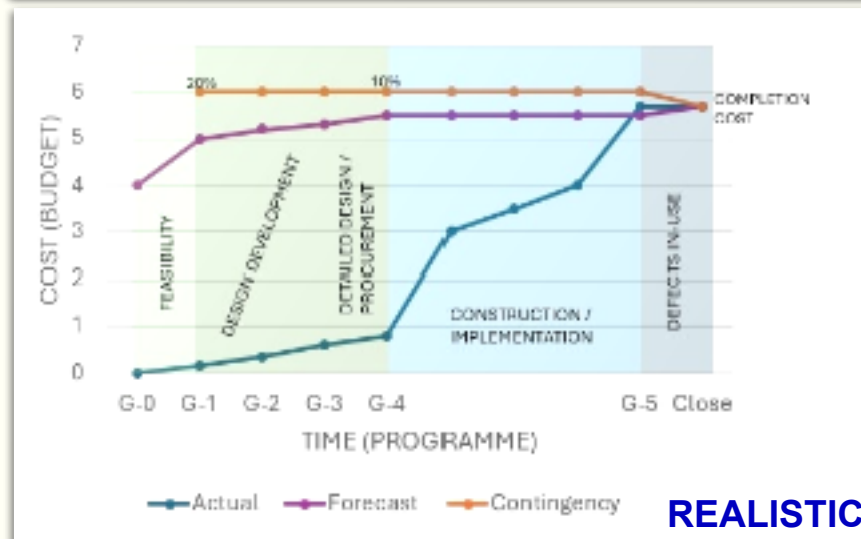
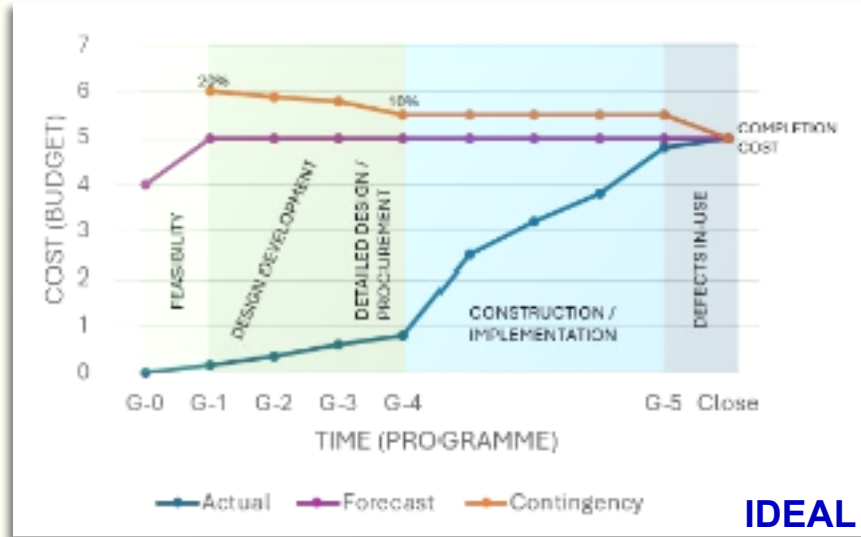
Each of the current programmes bring together a group of projects that have a combined objective and result in defined outcomes:

- **Liveable Neighbourhoods and Residents Parking Zones programme**, incorporating School Streets
- **City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement programme** delivering active travel projects across B&NES
- **Parks and Greener Spaces Delivery programme** including corporate landlord asset maintenance, parks operational replacement and greener spaces investment (*see example on slide12*)
- **Corporate Estate and Commercial Estate Capital Programme** including maintenance of our corporate estate and refurbishment of our corporate assets
- **Decarbonisation Programme** is delivering Net Zero Council projects, removing gas as a heating fuel from the Corporate Estate, optimising buildings and energy use to reduce consumption, generating renewable energy where possible, and electrifying the Council's fleet.
- **Housing Programme including** the sub-programmes of Specialist and Affordable Housing, Strategic Housing, and Service-Led Housing.
- **Waste and Crematorium Programme** delivering new recycling centres and investing in Haycombe Crematorium
- **Development and Regeneration Programme** including economic development opportunities such as Milsom Quarter
- **SEND Education Programme** assessing specific needs, exploring opportunities and delivering new SEND schools.

# Parks & Greener Spaces Programme Structure



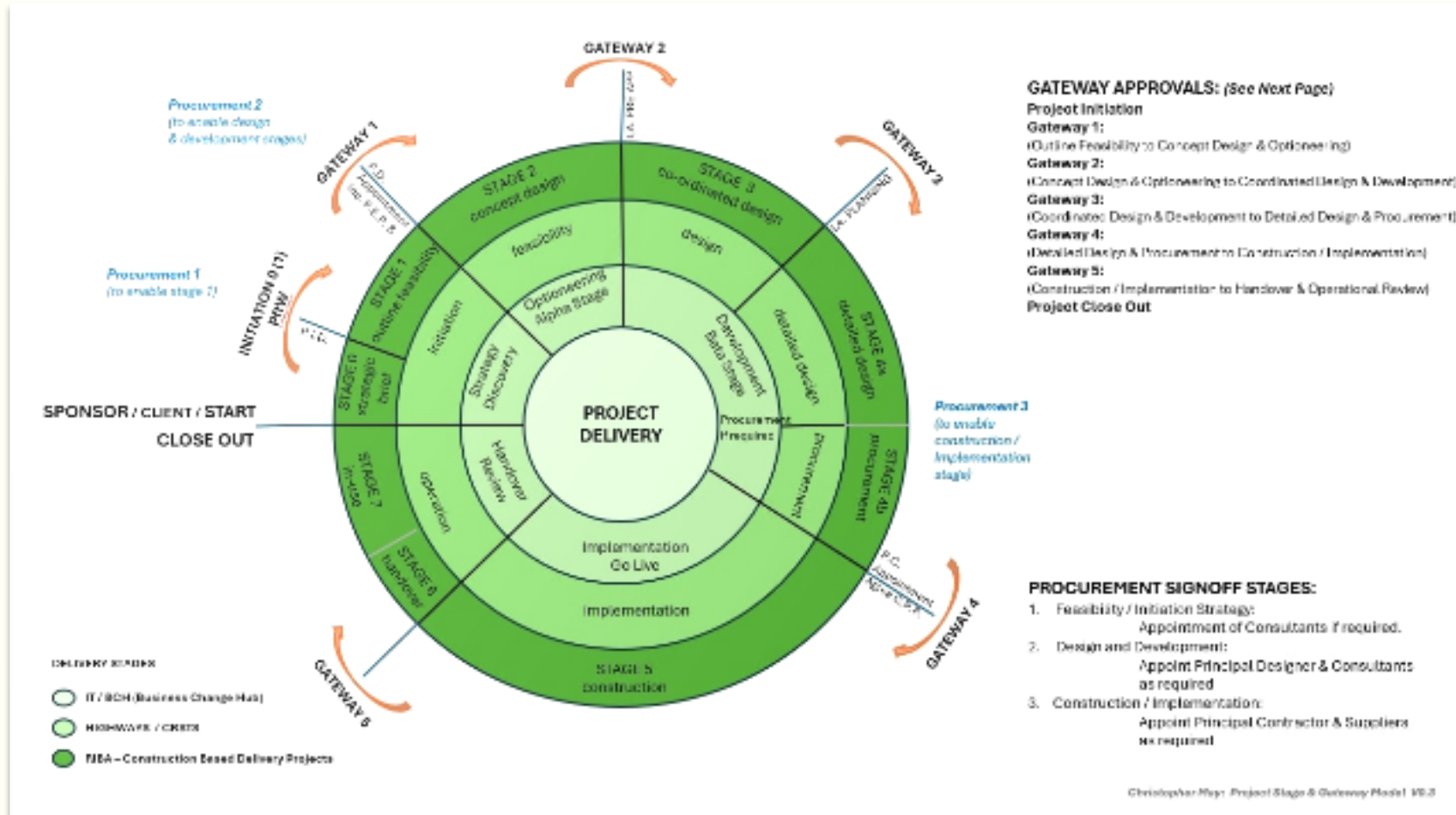
# Next Steps – Capital Project Delivery



- Gateway 0: Project Initiation – Need established with creation of brief and objectives. *Nominal expenditure for feasibility planning.*
- Gateway 1: Project Formally Established with Business Case and Execution Plan. Project Delivery Budget Cost forecast presented with suitable contingency. *(Determination if project is to proceed)*
- Project Contingency is set higher (typically 15-20%) to align to project risk profile, with the contingency gap reducing over the course of the project delivery programme, aligned to risk mitigation.
- Change Management is integral to project budget and delivery outcome, where budget forecast will likely increase closing contingency gap.
- Noting that the commitment to actual project cost and budget drawdown is typically just 10-20% of forecast budget, up until construction / implementation commencement.
- Budget expenditure during construction is not fluid and typically follows an 'S-Curve' pattern of drawdown.
- The project contingency is NOT a given project cost, but a risk mitigation safety net to enabling fluid project delivery against the perceived delivery programme.
- *Ref. P3M Project Gateway Delivery Model*



# Next Steps – Capital Project Delivery





## CORPORATE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

This Forward Plan lists all the items coming to the Panel over the next few months.

Inevitably, some of the published information may change; Government guidance recognises that the plan is a best assessment, at the time of publication, of anticipated decision making. The online Forward Plan is updated regularly and can be seen on the Council's website at:

<http://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgPlansHome.aspx?bcr=1>

The Forward Plan demonstrates the Council's commitment to openness and participation in decision making. It assists the Panel in planning their input to policy formulation and development, and in reviewing the work of the Cabinet.

*Should you wish to make representations, please contact the report author or, Democratic Services (). A formal agenda will be issued 5 clear working days before the meeting.*

*Agenda papers can be inspected on the Council's website.*

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Director Lead
<b>25TH NOVEMBER 2025</b>				
25 Nov 2025	<b>Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Q2 Budget Monitoring Report 2025/26</b>		Executive Director - Resources
25 Nov 2025	<b>Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27</b>		Executive Director - Resources
25 Nov 2025	<b>Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Home to School Transport Finance and Activity</b>	Paul Garrod Tel: 01225 39 4336	Executive Director - Chief Operating Officer
25 Nov 2025	<b>Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>	<b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme Update</b>	Damien Peak	Executive Director - Resources
Not before 3rd Nov 2025	<b>Cabinet Member for Resources</b>	<b>Parish Council Elections and By-Elections Recharges</b>	Aurora Loi Tel: 01225 47	Executive Director - Resources
25 Nov 2025 <b>E3599</b>	<b>Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel</b>			

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Director Lead
<b>27TH JANUARY 2026</b>				
27 Jan 2026	Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Library IT System Update		Executive Director - Chief Operating Officer
27 Jan 2026	Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Aequus Full Year Update	Simon Martin Tel: 01225 477407	Executive Director - Sustainable Communities
<b>3RD FEBRUARY 2026</b>				
<b>17TH MARCH 2026</b>				
<b>12TH MAY 2026</b>				
<b>7TH JULY 2026</b>				
<b>29TH SEPTEMBER 2026</b>				
<b>17TH NOVEMBER 2026</b>				
<b>FUTURE ITEMS</b>				
	Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Commercial Property Update	Richard Long Tel: 01225 477075	Executive Director - Resources

Ref Date	Decision Maker/s	Title	Report Author Contact	Director Lead
	Corporate Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	Annual Complaints Performance & Service Improvements Report	David Langman Tel: 01225 477013	Executive Director - Chief Operating Officer
The Forward Plan is administered by <b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES:</b> Democratic_Services@bathnes.gov.uk				