

Open

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

6pm
Thursday, 5 November 2026
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Members of Committee:

Chairman: Councillor N Martin
Vice-Chairman: Councillor F M Oborski MBE

Councillor J F Byng

Councillor V Caulfield

Councillor H E Dyke

Councillor N Gale

Councillor D Little

Councillor L Carroll

Councillor G Connolly

Councillor K Gale

Councillor I Hardiman

Councillor D Russell

Would Members please note that, to ensure continuity in scrutiny, substitutes should only be appointed for the Scrutiny Committee in exceptional circumstances.

Information for Members of the Public:

Part I of the Agenda includes items for discussion in public. You have the right to inspect copies of Minutes and reports on this Agenda as well as the background documents used in the preparation of these reports.

Part II of the Agenda (if applicable) deals with items of "Exempt Information" for which it is anticipated that the public may be excluded from the meeting and neither reports nor background papers are open to public inspection.

Disclosure of Interests

Members and co-opted Members of the Council are reminded that, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and the statutory provisions of the Localism Act, they are required to consider in ADVANCE of each meeting whether they have a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), an other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. If advice is needed, Members should contact the Monitoring Officer or other legal officer in good time before the meeting.

If any Member or co-opted Member of the Council identifies a DPI or ORI which they have not already registered on the Council's register of interests or which requires updating, they should complete the disclosure form which can be obtained from Democratic Services at any time, copies of which will be available at the meeting for return to the Monitoring Officer.

Members and co-opted Members are required to disclose any DPIs and ORIs at the meeting.

Where the matter relates to a DPI they may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.

Where the matter relates to an ORI they may not vote on the matter unless granted an advance dispensation.

Where a Member or co-opted Member has an NRI which directly relates to their financial interest or wellbeing, or that of a relative or close associate, they must disclose the interest at the meeting, may not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not stay in the meeting unless granted a dispensation.

Where a matter affects the NRI of a Member or co-opted Member, the Code of Conduct sets out the test which must be applied by the MEMBER to decide whether disclosure is required. Again please ensure you have spoken in ADVANCE to the relevant legal officer and determined whether it is appropriate to declare the NRI and leave.

Co-opted Members

Scrutiny Committees may wish to appoint Co-Opted Members to sit on their committee in order to add value to the scrutiny process. To appoint a Co-Opted Member, a Committee must first agree to appoint either a specific person or to approach a relevant organisation to request that they put forward a suitable representative (e.g. the

local Police Authority). Co-Optees are non voting by default but Committees can decide to appoint voting rights to a Co-Optee. The Co-Option of the Member will last no longer than the remainder of the municipal year.

Scrutiny Committees can at any meeting agree to terminate the Co-Option of a Co-Opted Member with immediate effect. Where an organisation is appointed to put forward a Co-Opted Member, they are able to send a substitute in exceptional circumstances, provided that they notify Democratic Services in advance. Co-Opted Members must sign up to the Members Code of Conduct before attending their first meeting, failure to sign will mean that they are unable to participate. This also applies to substitute Co-Opted Members, who will need to allow sufficient time before a meeting in order to sign the Code of Conduct.

The following will apply:

- i) The total number of voting co-opted members on any Scrutiny Committee will not exceed 25% at any one time.
- ii) The total number of voting Co-opted Members on any Review Panel will not be limited.
- iii) Those Co-opted Members with voting rights will exercise their rights in accordance with the principles of decision making set out in the constitution.

For Further information:

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information, you should contact Louisa Bright, Principal Committee and Member Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732763 or email louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

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* Unless there are no reports in the open session.

Wyre Forest District Council
Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 5 November 2026

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Appointment of Substitute Members To receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, together with the name of the Councillor for whom he/she is acting.	
3.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), an other registrable interest (ORI) or a non-registrable interest (NRI) in relation to any matter on the agenda. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
4.	Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the additional meeting held on the 15 October 2026.	6
5.	Budget and Performance Monitoring Q2 update To consider a draft of a Cabinet report from the Director of Resources that briefs members on the Council's financial and other performance at the end of Quarter 2 ending 30th September 2026 and presents the emerging budget pressures and known variances that are likely to have an impact on the outturn position for the 2026-27 financial year.	9
6.	Food Waste Collections and Funding Update To receive a briefing paper from the Head of Operations.	71
7.	Work Programme To review the work programme for the current municipal year with regard to the Corporate Plan Priority, Annual Priorities and the Forward Plan. Forward plan Wyre Forest District Council	74

8.	Press Involvement To consider any future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.	
9.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal & Governance before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	
10.	Exclusion of the Press and Public To consider passing the following resolution: “That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.	

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

11.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal & Governance before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2026 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: N Martin (Chairman), F M Oborski MBE (Vice-Chairman), E Bourne, V Caulfield, G Connolly, R Drew, P Dyke, I Hardiman, D Little, D Russell and N Wilson.

Observers

Councillors: M J Hart, M McDonnell, C Rogers and D Ross.

OS.41 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: J F Byng, H E Dyke, K Gale and N Gale.

OS.42 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor E Bourne was a substitute for Councillor J Byng.
Councillor R Drew was a substitute for Councillor K Gale.
Councillor P Dyke was a substitute for Councillor H Dyke.
Councillor N Wilson was a substitute for Councillor N Gale.

OS.43 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

OS.44 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

OS.45 Public Participation

In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Scrutiny Committees, three members of the public have registered to speak regarding agenda item 6 - Disposal of part of Burlish Country Park.

The Chairman invited the three registered speakers in turn to address the Committee.

Linda McKenzie spoke about the report recognising the site as a site of ecological importance for its contribution to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and nature recovery objectives. She commented that the report, whilst it comments that organised sport could deliver community benefits, the wellbeing benefits associated

with retaining the land as publicly accessible open space should be given greater weight, and in this instance the report did not support proceeding with the proposed disposal. She commented that the officers report had been carefully researched and presented and that all the points raised in it led to one decision only, that is a recommendation to reject the disposal of Burlish Meadows. She asked that Burlish Meadows be protected by including it as an open green space in the upcoming Local Development Plan and to remove any other designation that currently applied.

Mike Perry, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, advised that since 2018 the Trust had worked closely with the Council's Ranger Team to support the vision of transforming the former golf course into a publicly accessible green space for both people and nature. He advised that Burlish Meadows contains lowland acid grassland in recovery, one of the rarest habitat types in the UK, and the role of his organisation was to help halt and ultimately reverse the decline of nature. He thanked everyone at the Council involved in producing a thorough and well-balanced report and that it reached a clear and compelling conclusion, that the 20 acres of Burlish Meadows should not be sold and should remain a council controlled green space, managed for the benefit of both people and nature. He commented that the report highlighted the presence of rare and important species and habitats as well as the critical role the site plays within a wider ecological connectivity corridor and these fundamental considerations could not reasonably be deferred to a future planning process. He urged the Members to reflect carefully on the risks identified in the report should they choose to proceed with the sale contrary to the officer's recommendations.

Lucinda Caddick commented that it was a significant moment for Burlish Meadows and she wanted to acknowledge the recommendations. She was pleased that the Council was now recommending that the land is retained as part of the country park. She commented that she had never been opposed to Kidderminster Harriers having good facilities, but it was about whether those facilities came at the permanent loss of a publicly owned natural and community asset. She asked the Members to remember how the proposal had come about, that it was a request from Kidderminster Harriers and that the question should not simply be would the site be a good facility for the football club, but should be is selling this particular piece of public land the best outcome for the whole community. She asked the Members to ensure that the recommendations in the report were carried forward, and the land retained as part of Burlish Country Park, and the ecological, recreational and community value recognised by giving it local nature reserve status. She thanked the officers for taking the consultation responses seriously and thanked everyone in the community who took the time to make representations.

The Chairman thanked the public speakers for their participation.

OS.46

Disposal of part of Burlish Country Park

The Committee considered a draft of a Cabinet report from the Director of Commercial Services, about the disposal of part of Burlish Country Park.

The Director of Commercial Services presented the report and advised that previously the Cabinet had considered the potential disposal of part of Burlish Country Park and agreed, in principle, that officers should explore whether a disposal could be progressed, subject to the completion of a range of further work,

statutory processes and due diligence. Officers had undertaken that work in considerable detail. The report set out that the proposal had attracted significant public interest and generated a high level of engagement from residents, community groups and other stakeholders. The purpose of the report was to bring all the information together to provide a transparent assessment of the issues that had emerged through the process to enable Members to consider the matter with the benefit of a much fuller evidence-based report than was available when the matter was first considered. She advised the question was whether, having weighed the benefits, risks, opportunities and concerns throughout the process, there remained a compelling case to proceed with the disposal of the land, or whether the public interest was better served by retaining the land as part of the Burlish Country Park.

The Committee were then able to fully scrutinise the report and were given an opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

Cllr. Ian Hardiman thanked the officers for their diligence with the subject and the Director of Commercial Services for her time and thoroughness provided for the whole issue. He also commented that Kidderminster Harriers should not be forgotten and should be thanked and commended for their openness and the clarity provided.

The recommendations were proposed and seconded; there was a show of hands and it was unanimous.

The Chairman, thanked the Committee for their decision, she also thanked the officers for all their hard work. She thanked the speakers and said she hoped they felt heard and that the Council had listened, and it had increased their belief in the political arena. She commented that their passion had been heard as well as that of other people who had taken the time to write in. She also said she wanted to mention the Harriers, that they equally are part of the heartbeat of Wyre Forest and commented about the passion they have to bring the women's and young girls' football to Kidderminster, instead of having to travel to Droitwich, and hoped that they could find something and carry through with this.

Decision: Recommendation: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the information in the report and recommend to Cabinet to:

- 1.1 NOTE the responses received following publication of the statutory notice under section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, summarised in Appendix 2 of the report;**
- 1.2 CONSIDER the objections and representations received and the proposed response to those objections also set out in Appendix 2;**
- 1.3 AGREE that having considered the objections and representations received, the Council will not proceed with the disposal of part of Burlish Country Park and that the whole of Burlish Country Park will be retained in WFDC's ownership.**

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 6.24pm.

Report of: Helen Ogram, Director of Resources

Date: 5 November 2026

Open

Agenda item no. 5 - Budget and Performance Monitoring Quarter 2 2026-27

Summary

Attached is a draft of a Cabinet report on this subject, which Cabinet is expected to consider on 11 November 2026.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the report and provide recommendations to Cabinet.

Officer contact details

Name: Helen Ogram

Title: Director of Resources

Contact number: 01562 732907

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

11TH NOVEMBER 2026

Budget and Performance Monitoring Quarter 2 2026-27

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor D Ross, Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Head of Resources and s151 Officer
CONTACT OFFICERS:	Helen Ogram Helen.Ogram@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Diana Evans Diana.evans@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Lisa Hutchinson Lisa.Hutchinson@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Lucy Wright Lucy.wright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 - Wyre Forest District Council Revenue Budget Requirements Appendix 2 - Capital Programme Appendix 3 - Budget Risk Matrix Appendix 4 – Outstanding General Fund service income debt Appendix 5 – How we are doing performance reports <i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)</i>

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to brief members on the Council's financial and other performance at the end of Quarter 2 ending 30th September 2026 and to present the emerging budget pressures and known variances that are likely to have an impact on the outturn position for the 2026-27 financial year.
- 1.2 The report sets out the current forecast of income and expenditure against budget for 2026-27 for revenue expenditure. In addition, the report also provides key information relating to estimates of the Council's financial position for the next three years, highlighting the revised Funding Gap that will need to be closed to bring expenditure into line with income.

Revenue – The projected full year services variance at the end of Quarter 2 is £26k better than the approved budget, after inclusion of the capital account variances, the year-end outturn position is forecast to be £696k better than the position in the 2026-29 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Capital – the approved Capital Programme for 2026-27 is £29.102m, including slippage of £4.912m from 2025-26. The forecast slippage to future years at Quarter 2 is £10.894m, although further reprofiling will take place as part of the revised budget process where necessary.

- 1.3 The report also briefs members on current progress against the savings and efficiency targets in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and includes the quarterly “How are we doing” performance report. This combined report allows both Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee a rounded view of the Council’s performance including its financial position.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to NOTE:

- 2.1 **The projected budget variations, virements and comments within this report and Appendices 1 to 4.**
- 2.2 **The performance against measures and actions as set out in the report and Appendix 5.**
- 2.3 **The recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 5th November 2026.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Budget projections are reviewed regularly and reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on a quarterly basis. The 2026-27 Original Budget was approved as part of the 2026-29 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) by Council on 25th February 2026. Performance is measured against the Original Budget presented within the 2026-29 Strategy (Appendix 1). The current forecast shows a net underspend against the approved Budget of £696k.
- 3.2 The current assessment of the outturn position is based on a wide range of assumptions, predicted patterns of cost, service demand and behaviours and the forecasts continue to be refined.
- 3.3 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is a key context for the 2026-29 MTFS and financial monitoring. While the timetable and financial implications continue to develop, the Council must maintain strong financial discipline during the transition period by delivering planned savings, managing reserves prudently, monitoring transition costs and ensuring decisions support service continuity, statutory responsibilities and readiness for the new unitary arrangements.
- 3.4 The balanced budget approved by Council focuses on ensuring that the Council optimises the full range of income sources that affect its overall budget including Council Tax and Business Rates revenue, Government funding and other external specific grants, fees and charges and other elements of income from activities including returns from property and treasury investments.
- 3.5 Under the Business Rates Retention System (BRRS), the Council receives a share of growth in rateable value above the Government’s baseline assessment. Following the full reset of the BRRS as part of Fair Funding Review 2.0, new business rates baselines, baseline funding levels and tariff/top-up arrangements apply from 1st April 2026. For 2026-27 only, the Government has introduced a transitional safety net at 100% of each authority’s new Baseline Funding Level (BFL). This means that, where the Council’s retained business rates income falls below its new baseline, support should be available through the safety net mechanism up to that level. Current forecasts indicate that the Council is likely to receive a safety net payment in 2026-27.

- 3.6 Year-to-date monitoring shows that in year income from business rates payers is likely to be in-line with the position previously estimated and business rate appeal refunds also in-line with the position previously estimated with no noticeable increase in empty reliefs this position is being closely monitored (see section 12).
- 3.7 Collection rates at the end of the second quarter are on a par with those achieved last year for Council Tax.
- 3.8 The 2026-29 Medium Term Financial Strategy includes prudent assumptions for income generated from the Capital Portfolio Fund, recognising that this remains a significant and inherently variable income stream. Performance is kept under regular review, with active management of occupancy, lease events, rent reviews, arrears, service charge exposure and compliance obligations to protect the Council's financial position and reduce risk to Council Tax payers. The impact of the Fund on the MTFS will continue to be reported transparently, including any variance from budget, emerging risks to rental income or asset values, and any management action required to safeguard the Council's medium-term financial resilience.
- 3.9 The May 2024 Best Value statutory guidance, and the July 2026 consultation on proposed revisions to that guidance, place increased emphasis on financial sustainability, effective governance, scrutiny and the early identification of risk. The guidance identifies reliance on high-risk commercial income to support services or balance budgets as a potential Best Value concern. The Council's approach is therefore to retain strong oversight of commercial income activity, ensure business cases are supported by robust due diligence and prudent assumptions, and monitor performance through established governance arrangements. This supports timely challenge and management action where income, asset value or wider financial resilience risks emerge.
- 3.10 A revised Capital Strategy 2026-36 was approved by Council on 25th February 2026. The revised Strategy covers all capital expenditure and sets out reporting and planning for financial risk implications in relation to non-treasury investments.

4. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

4.1 Revenue Overview

Quarterly budget monitoring presents the full-year forecast position for the current financial year. The Quarter 2 forecast indicates an overall favourable revenue position against the approved budget. This remains subject to delivery of planned savings, continued monitoring of demand-led income and expenditure, and the impact of emerging pressures that are not yet fully quantified.

The Revenue Summary (Table 1) shows net expenditure by reporting group and incorporates costs funded by reserves where applicable. Table 1 sets out the current projected revenue outturn against the budget approved by Council on 25th February 2026. The forecast reflects known and quantifiable cost pressures, income variations, savings and cost reductions identified to date, and will continue to be reviewed through the quarterly monitoring cycle.

The movement in the estimated outturn position reported at Quarter 2, compared with the position reported at Quarter 1, arises largely within Community and Environment. The principal factors are higher fleet operating costs, including fuel; lower pay savings due to the use of agency and temporary staff to cover sickness absence; post regrades following job evaluation arising from last year's restructure; and CCTV costs that had not previously been recognised.

Table 1: Quarter 2 Revenue Budget Variances and Estimated Outturn 2026-27

SERVICE REPORTING GROUP	Approved Budget £000	Estimated Outturn £000	Quarter 2 Variances £000
Chief Executive and Legal and Governance	3,695	3,659	(36)
Community and Environment	7,389	7,333	(56)
Economic Development and Regeneration	427	486	59
Resources	1,172	1,123	(49)
Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services	2,033	2,039	6
Housing and Planning	2,810	2,671	(139)
WFF Savings target	(259)	(70)	189
Services Total	17,267	17,241	(26)
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	1,713	1,614	(99)
External debt Interest	1,041	787	(254)
Investment Interest	(838)	(1,155)	(317)
Capital Account (Other)	(2,407)	(2,407)	0
Total Capital account	(491)	(1,161)	(670)
Grand Total	16,776	16,080	(696)

The forecast should be viewed as a point-in-time assessment. Areas showing adverse movement, volatility or reliance on demand-led assumptions will continue to be subject to challenge, with management action developed where required to protect the year-end position and the Council's wider financial resilience.

- 4.2 **Capital programme** – progress of spend against capital programme is summarised below:

Table 2: Quarter 2 Capital Spend and Draft Slippage 2026-27

2026-27 Capital Programme	Latest Approved Budget (including slippage from 2025-26) £	Q2 Capital Expenditure 2026-27 £	Draft Slippage/ Reprogramming to future years at Q2 £
Community and Environmental Services	3,140,950	1,140,847	1,154,900
Resources and Revenues, Benefits & Customer Services	618,260	111,866	0
Housing & Planning	14,015,760	1,029,242	5,449,230
Economic Development & Regeneration	6,213,390	237,272	4,050,830
Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule	5,113,350	3,478,125	238,700
Total	29,101,710	5,997,352	10,893,660

Delivery of the capital programme continues to be affected by inflation, supply-chain pressures, contractor capacity, planning and regulatory requirements, and the timing of grant-funded schemes. Slippage can reduce in-year borrowing and financing costs, but it may also defer service benefits, increase future delivery risk and create revenue implications where interim arrangements, void costs or other holding costs arise. Scheme progress and profiling will therefore continue to be reviewed through the revised budget and capital monitoring process.

The majority of the Council's Capital Programme is financed from either borrowing or

capital grants, while some of the programme is funded directly from revenue or from capital receipts. There are revenue implications from capital expenditure funded from borrowing through interest charges and the statutory Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP).

5. RESERVES POSITION AND FUNDING GAP

Local authorities are required by law to have a balanced budget i.e., a plan based on sound assumptions which shows how income will equal spend over the short and medium term. Plans can take account of deliverable cost savings and/or income growth strategies as well as useable reserves. A budget is considered not to balance where increased uncertainty leads to budget overspends of a level which reduces reserves to unacceptably low levels. Any significant alteration in either expenditure or income may result in an unbalanced budget. Factors affecting a budget could include:

- Natural disaster
- sudden policy change
- demographic pressures
- unexpected funding pressures
- failure to realise planned savings or income growth

To avoid an unbalanced budget the council needs to be financially resilient to ensure that finances can withstand unexpected pressures. A large part of our financial resilience is secured via the adequacy of our general and earmarked reserves.

General Reserves

- 5.1 The tables below present the updated reserves position after reflecting the current Quarter 2 projected outturn for 2026-27 and the assumptions in the published 2026-29 MTFS. The projection incorporates known and emerging cost pressures, savings and income variations identified through this monitoring report. It should be treated as a point-in-time assessment and will continue to be refined as budget estimates, savings delivery and wider financial risks are updated.

Table 3: Reserves Statement Adjusted for Quarter 2 Estimated Outturn

Projection of reserves per MTFS adjusted for Draft Outturn 2025-26

Reserves Statement	Original Budget 2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
	£	£	£
MTFS assumed reserves as at 1st April 2026	5,262,010		
2025-26 Outturn adjustment (Pre-audit)	124,852		
Reserves at 1st April	5,386,862	5,978,942	5,137,332
MTFS assumed contribution to/(from) Reserves	(404,370)	(1,441,610)	(1,017,750)
Budgeted Release of Earmarked to Unallocated (General) Reserves	300,000	600,000	0
Estimated Outturn variance	696,450		
Contribution (from)/to Reserves	592,080	(841,610)	(1,017,750)
Reserves as at 31st March	5,978,942	5,137,332	4,119,582

- 5.2 The Council's expenditure plans exceed its forecast funding position in each year of the 2026-29 MTFS, with the gap currently being met through contributions from reserves. The planned use of more than £1m of reserves each year to support ongoing expenditure is not a sustainable or tenable medium-term position, as reserves provide only temporary support and do not address the underlying structural imbalance between recurring income and expenditure. If planned savings and income growth are not delivered in full, or if further cost pressures emerge, the call on reserves will increase and the Council's financial resilience and capacity to manage future risks will be further

weakened. This is particularly important in the context of Local Government Reorganisation, where the Council needs to maintain sufficient financial resilience to manage transition-related uncertainty and support an orderly move to the new arrangements. Cabinet and officers are therefore continuing to develop savings, efficiency and income-generation proposals to reduce reliance on reserves and secure a sustainable medium-term financial position.

Earmarked Reserves

- 5.3 The Council's earmarked reserves held at 1st April 2026 totalled £16.542m. These reserves are held for specific purposes and include balances relating to the timing differences inherent in the Business Rates Retention system, revenue contingency and risk provisions, and sums set aside to support capital expenditure plans through Direct Revenue Financing. The WFDC Budget reserve includes contingency balances created from additional investment income achieved in 2023-24 following the receipt of Government grant funding in advance. The remaining balance is now fully allocated and will be applied to meet eligible revenue costs that cannot be funded from capital resources and to provide short-term support while income streams are developed. The contingency balances also include a pensions reserve to mitigate the risk of future employer contribution rate increases, including the additional exposure arising from underperforming pension fund assets where the Council's investments remain within the higher-risk allocation.
- 5.4 A General Risk Reserve is held to meet one-off unexpected costs and to manage most future operational risks. Allocations against the reserve are approved by the Corporate Leadership Team.

Table 4: Earmarked Reserves latest balances

Earmarked Reserves	Reserves b/f at 01/04/26	Spend 30/09/26	Commitments outstanding	Balance available
	£000	£000	£000	£000
External Funding	(3,205)	74	3,188	56
Shared Service	(93)	0	93	(0)
WFDC Budget	(7,611)	67	5,036	(2,509)
Innovation Fund	(1,650)	24	931	(695)
General Risks	(2,244)	58	603	(1,584)
Sub Total	(14,803)	222	9,850	(4,731)
Business Rates (timing)	(1,456)	0	1,456	0
Capital Programme	(283)	0	283	0
Total	(16,542)	222	11,589	(4,731)

- 5.5 Reserves provide important short-term flexibility to manage unexpected costs, timing differences and specific risks. However, they are finite and should not be used to support recurring expenditure unless there is a clear and deliverable plan to remove the underlying pressure. The use of earmarked reserves will therefore continue to be controlled and prioritised, with any application assessed against the Council's overall financial resilience and the need to preserve sufficient reserves for known commitments, approved risks and transition-related uncertainty.

Information and Analysis – Financial Performance Summary

6. REVENUE DETAIL

- 6.1 This section provides further detail on the main revenue variances reported at Quarter 2, including new and emerging pressures that may affect the Council's ability to manage services within the budget envelope approved by Council in February 2026. The analysis has been prepared in consultation with the Corporate Leadership Team, Heads of Service and Service Managers, and will continue to be reviewed as forecasts are refined and management actions are developed. The movement from the Quarter 1 forecast arises mainly within Community and Environment, as summarised in the Revenue Overview above.
- 6.2 Table 6 summarises emerging budget pressures that are not yet fully reflected in the current forecast but may affect the 2026-29 MTFS if they crystallise.

Table 5: Quarter 2 Estimate of Major Revenue Variances Compared to Approved Budget

Estimate of major variances compared to approved budget			
	Quarter 1 2026-27 £	Quarter 2 2026-27 £	Change in Estimate £
Cost Pressures and budget savings			
Pay and other staff related variances (net)	(305,390)	(210,510)	94,880
Waste collection - tipping charges	(20,450)	(23,000)	(2,550)
Garage (fleet operational expenses including fuel)		93,500	93,500
Community Safety		43,500	43,500
Software maintenance (whitespace)	10,530	10,530	0
Vehicle hire charges (trade and garden waste)	16,380	16,380	0
Other net variances	33,400	53,640	20,240
Wyre Forest Forward Efficiency Target		34,280	34,280
Income targets exceeded			
Development management fee income	(84,300)	(84,300)	0
Car parking (pay and display, season tickets and enforcement)	(110,000)	(73,750)	36,250
Shared Service Income			
Garden Waste (New customers)		(30,000)	(30,000)
Arboricultural services		(25,000)	(25,000)
Private sector housing, fees and charges	(20,430)	(20,430)	0
Leisure Centre (CPI increase)		(19,270)	(19,270)
Trade Waste		(18,360)	(18,360)
Civil enforcement		(15,000)	(15,000)
Other income above target (various)	(12,570)	(25,720)	(13,150)
Wyre Forest Forward Income Target		93,000	93,000
Income shortfall			
Waste Transfer Station (CHG no longer using facilities)	21,000	21,000	0
Wyre Forest House - rental shortfall net of savings	76,000	51,240	(24,760)
Piano building - service charge income shortfall	45,000		(45,000)
Capital Portfolio Fund (Income shortfall)		78,630	78,630
Other Property variances (net)		14,060	14,060
Land charges fee income	10,130	10,130	0
Services Total	(340,700)	(25,450)	315,250
Reduced statutory charge for the use of assets (MRP)	(99,170)	(99,170)	0
Reduced external debt interest	(254,490)	(254,490)	0
Increased Investment income	(170,000)	(317,340)	(147,340)
Capital Account Total	(523,660)	(671,000)	(147,340)
Projected full year variance at Quarter 2	(864,360)	(696,450)	167,910

6.3 Emerging cost pressures (not fully quantified)

This report highlights new and emerging budget pressures that may affect the Council's ability to deliver services within the approved budget envelope over the medium term. Key areas requiring close monitoring include contract inflation and indexation, fuel costs, temporary accommodation and homelessness demand, specialist workforce capacity, ICT and software licensing, revenue consequences of capital programme slippage, LGR transition requirements and volatility in demand-led income streams. Replacement fleet vehicles are expected to improve fuel efficiency and help offset some fuel inflation; however, housing growth and the additional refuse collection round may increase mileage and operational demand, reducing the anticipated benefit. These pressures may not all crystallise in full, but they increase the sensitivity of the forecast and will continue to be reviewed through the quarterly monitoring cycle.

The April 2026 pay award has now been formally agreed for all three main local government negotiating bodies in England and Wales. The National Employers made a full and final offer of 3.3% on 24 March 2026 for NJC staff, Chief Officers and Chief Executives. Agreement for Chief Officers was reached on 2 June 2026, the NJC ("Green Book") settlement was concluded during August 2026 and announced publicly on 1 September 2026 and agreement for Chief Executives was reached on 24 August 2026.

The final settlement of 3.3% is above the 3% allowance included in the 2026-29 MTFS and is estimated to create a budget pressure of circa £50k.

In addition to the pay award, recruitment and retention pressures remain significant in Planning, Finance, Environmental Health and Legal Services. These pressures may increase reliance on interim, agency or specialist external support where vacancies cannot be filled through permanent recruitment.

Growth in not-for-profit specified accommodation remains a significant financial risk. Officers are aware of charitable and Community Interest Company providers establishing supported housing in the district, including accommodation that is not solely for local residents. Where housing benefit subsidy is capped, any shortfall falls to this Council. Officers continue to engage with providers to limit the impact on local council taxpayers where possible. The subsidy loss in 2025-26 was £116k, and the 2026-27 impact is expected to exceed both the previous outturn and the planning assumption.

The following government policy changes and wider system pressures will continue to be assessed as further information emerges. Where possible, officers will seek to mitigate the financial impact on the 2026-29 MTFS and will continue to make the case for fair and adequate new burdens funding:

- Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) may affect the MTFS through transition costs, workforce instability, delays to savings delivery and increased reliance on reserves ahead of vesting.
- The Government's increase in mandatory housing targets has materially increased the district's assessed housing requirement and altered the Council's housing land supply position. As a result, the next Local Plan review has had to be brought forward from the previously planned timetable and has to be completed within 30 months. The budgetary provision that has historically been made for local plan preparation was also based on a longer timetable. The acceleration means additional, and currently unbudgeted, revenue costs will arise earlier than planned for the preparation and commissioning of the supporting evidence base, specialist planning and legal advice, sustainability appraisal, public consultation, examination and associated programme management. The scale and timing of the financial impact are being assessed and will need to be reflected in the revised MTFS as the review programme is developed.

- Restoring councillors' access to the Local Government Pension Scheme from April 2026 may create additional cost if uptake exceeds the MTFS planning assumption.
- Renters Rights Act 2025 implementation may increase private sector housing and homelessness caseloads. The MTFS assumes new burdens funding will meet the full cost, but there remains a risk that local costs exceed the funding provided.
- Wider landlord regulation, including Renters' Rights reforms, EPC C requirements, tax changes and borrowing cost pressures, may reduce private rented sector supply and increase homelessness prevention and temporary accommodation costs.
- Asylum dispersal, criminal justice and prison release policies may increase demand for homelessness prevention, temporary accommodation and affordable private rented housing.
- From April 2027, default council tax payments over 12 months may affect cashflow and increase administration where taxpayers request to retain 10-month instalments.
- Simpler Recycling reforms remain a statutory requirement. The Council has delayed local implementation pending further review, taking account of LGR and opportunities to align future arrangements with North Worcestershire neighbours.

Council Tax Base - Council Tax discounts, awards and banding changes continue to be monitored closely, including the impact of consumer advice campaigns. There is a risk that the tax base grows more slowly than assumed, reducing Council Tax funding. Increasing requests for discretionary support also indicate growing pressure on household budgets.

Table 6 – Emerging Budget Pressures Not Fully Reflected in Tables 1 and 5

Pressure Area	Indicative Annual Impact	Executive Summary
Capital Programme Slippage	£££	Slippage may increase revenue expenditure through void property costs, security, business rates, maintenance, temporary provision, external hire and reduced rental income. Fleet delivery delays may also extend reliance on older vehicles and increase maintenance or hire costs.
Commercial Property Income	£££	Retail and food and beverage demand remains subdued, with uncertain rental growth, longer void periods, higher tenant incentives and increased insolvency risk. Compliance requirements also continue to place pressure on net returns.
Housing Benefit Subsidy Caps	£££	Growth in supported exempt accommodation, including out-of-area placements, creates subsidy exposure where eligible rent exceeds the rent officer determination. Any unrecovered subsidy shortfall falls to the Council.
Contract Inflation and Renewals	££	The 2026-27 budget includes a general non-pay inflation allowance and specific contract uplifts, but multi-year contracts due for renewal may exceed budgeted assumptions. Key areas include electricity supply and software licensing, including Microsoft Enterprise Licence renewal.
Specialist Workforce Capacity	££	Recruitment and retention pressures remain acute in specialist professional roles, particularly where national shortages and wider labour-

Pressure Area	Indicative Annual Impact	Executive Summary
		market competition affect permanent recruitment. This may increase reliance on interim, agency or external specialist support.
Housing Advice and Homelessness Support	££	Pressure in the private rented sector may increase demand for housing advice, homelessness prevention, emergency accommodation and related support services. This could increase both service demand and the cost of provision.
Council Tax Base	££	Increased applications for discounts and awards, slower housing growth and collection-rate pressures may reduce future Council Tax income through collection fund deficits and a lower tax base.
LGR Transition Requirements	££	Transition work may create additional programme, legal, finance, HR, ICT and data capacity requirements. There is also a risk that transition activity affects delivery of planned savings or requires short-term investment ahead of vesting.

Key £ = £10k to £25k/year; ££ = £25k to £100k/year; £££ = over £100k/year

- 6.4 The table below summarises the budget savings and income growth identified at Quarter 2.

Table 7 – Emerging Budget savings and income growth (included in Table 1 and Table 5)

Area	MTFS Assumption	Current Estimate	Impact	Detail
External debt interest and reduced minimum revenue provision	£2,754k	£2,400k	£££	Slippage on capital programme and extension of internal borrowing

7. REVENUE DETAIL - External Income

- 7.1 External income is an important part of the Council's financial position and supports delivery of a balanced budget. The latest forecast is shown in the table and graphs below. Overall performance is expected to be £137k ahead of the target approved by Council in February 2026.
- 7.2 The outstanding debt position for General Fund service income is included at Appendix 4. This provides further detail on aged debt across key income streams and supports monitoring of collection performance, arrears trends and recovery activity. Regular review of this position is important to protect cashflow, identify emerging affordability or collection risks, and ensure proportionate recovery action is taken while recognising wider pressure on household and business finances.
- 7.3 The table below details current projections for the Council's main revenue income sources.

Table 8: Quarter 2 External Income Variances and Estimated Outturn 2026-27

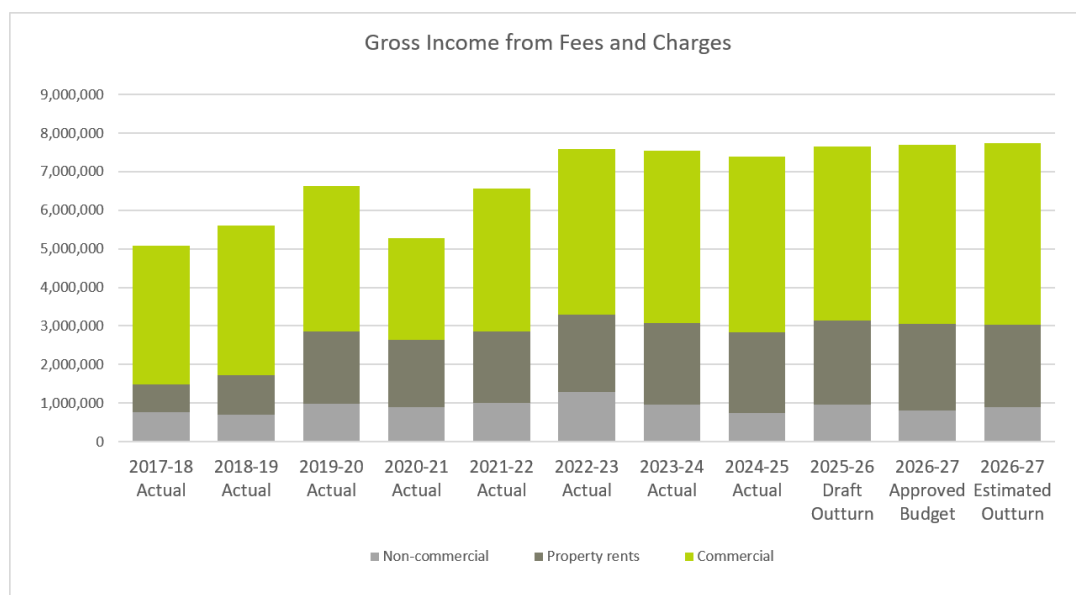
Source of Income	2025-26 Draft Outturn	2026-27 Current Approved Budget	Outturn Projection (Quarter 2)	Estimated Full Year Variance to approved budget	
	£			£	
Car Parks and Enforcement	(1,375,138)	(1,307,580)	(1,398,350)	(90,770)	
Wyre Forest Leisure Centre	(682,830)	(682,830)	(702,100)	(19,270)	
Waste	(1,726,720)	(1,680,000)	(1,707,360)	(27,360)	
Garage	(7,789)	(4,100)	(4,100)	0	
Arboricultural and Grounds Maintenance	(241,169)	(191,960)	(216,960)	(25,000)	
Parks and Green Spaces	(152,709)	(148,310)	(148,310)	0	
Street Cleansing	(153,102)	(134,560)	(141,130)	(6,570)	
Bewdley Museum	(182,493)	(149,040)	(153,040)	(4,000)	
Cemetery	(71,598)	(57,390)	(65,000)	(7,610)	
Property Rental	(2,177,195)	(2,253,820)	(2,109,890)	143,930	
Land Charges	(48,533)	(55,130)	(45,000)	10,130	
Professional and Business Services	(321,429)	(252,350)	(257,350)	(5,000)	
Regulatory Income	(1,202,289)	(963,510)	(1,068,240)	(104,730)	
Total	(8,342,994)	(7,880,580)	(8,016,830)	(136,250)	

Income is shown as a negative (-), and income growth is shown as a negative (-) variation.

The table includes Professional and Business Service external income and Private Sector licensing income that hasn't traditionally been captured by the Commercial Strategy and is therefore excluded from the graphs at paragraph 7.6 below to facilitate a like for like comparison and examination of trends

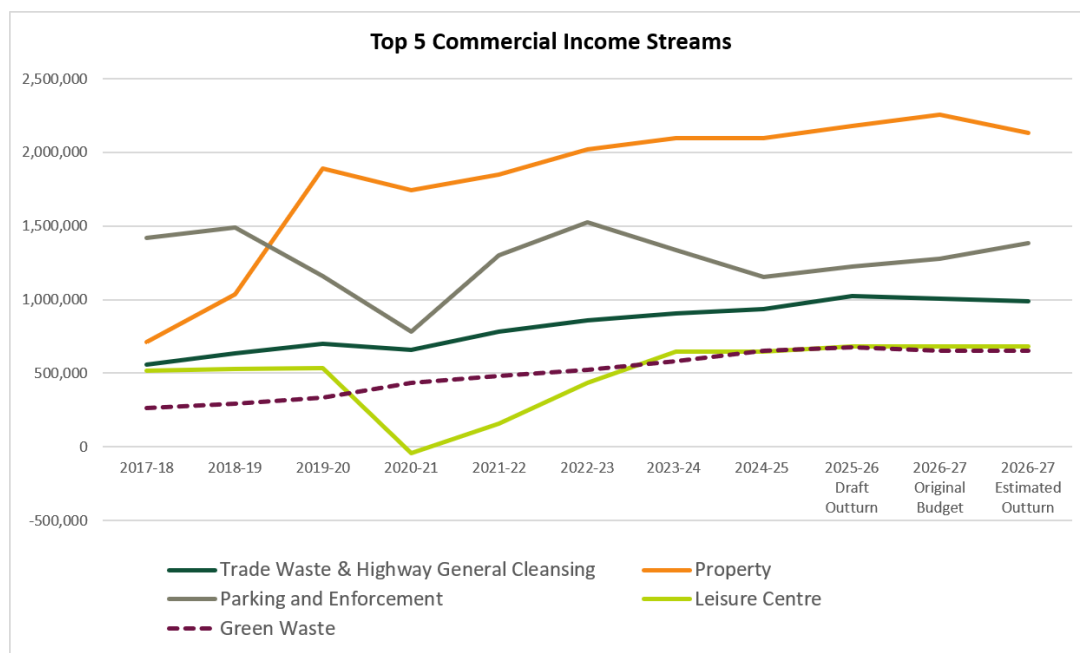
- 7.4 This positive performance against in year target and MTFs assumptions is primarily driven by demand led income streams, most notably planning and car parking. Parking enforcement also performed above target. Property rental income is below target. Actions to address the shortfall include active marketing of vacant space, progressing lease negotiations and rent reviews, and strengthened monitoring of vacancies, lease events and arrears, as set out further in paragraphs 3.8 and 7.10 to 7.15.
- 7.5 The Planning fee income growth is largely due to a higher than expected number of applications for windfall housing developments. The demand assumptions built into the Original Budget target had assumed that the increase in householder planning fees would deter people from making applications, but this has not been the case. The government introduced a structural increase to householder planning application fees in England on 1 April 2025, fees for a single home rose by 105% from £258 to £528. Fees could be increased further from December 2026 with the planned introduction of the 90% total cost recovery baseline. The current projection does not reflect this change. Overall, the income projection at Quarter 2 across services covered by the Commercial Strategy is above target but behind that achieved in 2025-26.
- 7.6 The graph below shows the long-term performance of income streams covered by the Commercial Strategy, including the growth achieved in previous years and the more recent pressures affecting some demand-led and commercial income sources.

Summary Income Performance 2017-18 to 2026-27

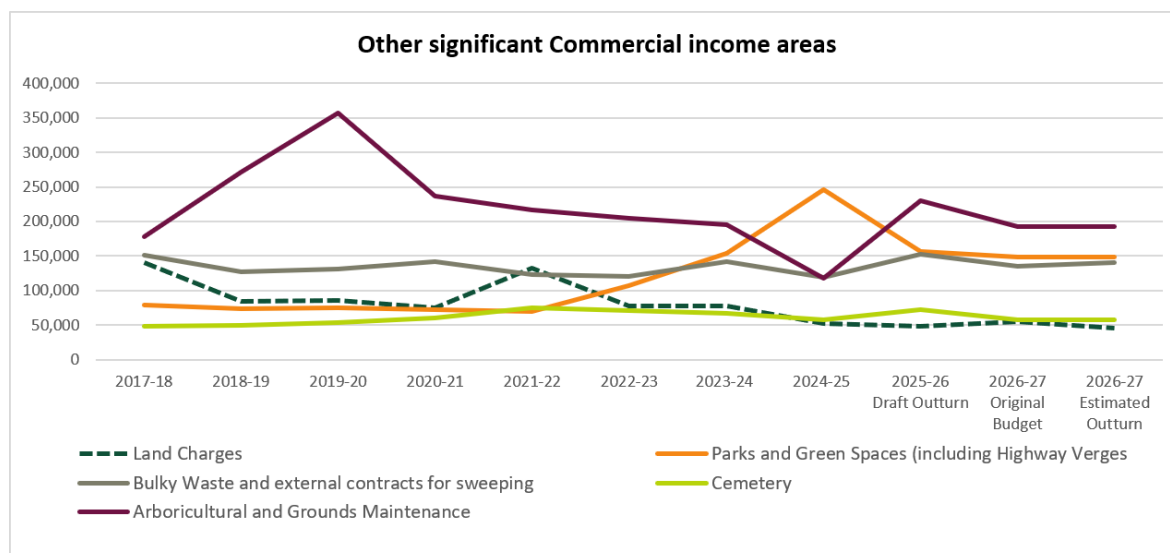


7.7 The graphs below detail performance for the income streams that fall under the Commercial Strategy.

Gross Commercial Income 2017-18 to 2026-27 – Top 5



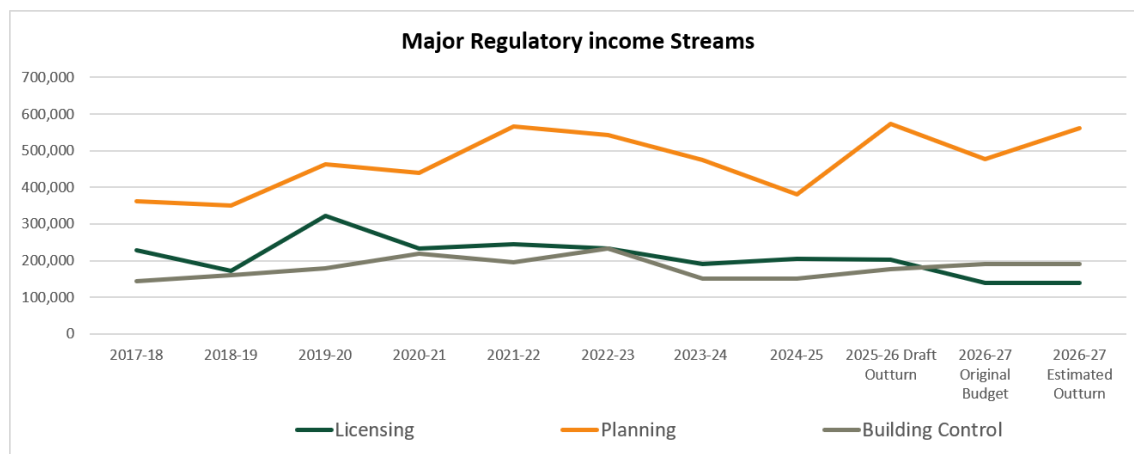
Gross Commercial Income 2017-18 to 2026-27 – Other



7.8 The viability of all commercial income activity covered by the strategy is examined by the Transformation and Commercial Programme Board. The Board was established to consider not only gross income performance but also the net return to the Council after marginal costs are considered.

7.9 The graph below presents the level of Regulatory Income received each year. In general, councils must not make a profit from regulatory functions and any surplus or deficit is ring-fenced and carried forward to future years. The planning fee income projection for 2026-27 is above the target in the 2026-29 MTFS, due to the uplift in planning fees and some of the budget planning assumptions concerning demand not crystallising.

Regulatory Income Sources - 2017-18 to 2026-27



7.10 **Capital Portfolio Fund** - The Capital Portfolio Fund supports regeneration, economic growth and housing, is allied to the Council's income generation/commercialism objectives and is financed from borrowing.

7.11 The intended outputs from acquisitions and developments under the strategy included full-time equivalent jobs created, safeguarded or facilitated through investment activity, improved occupancy of commercial premises and workspaces, business investment and growth in active enterprises. All projects were intended to be at least

cost neutral to the Council after borrowing costs and statutory charges, including Minimum Revenue Provision, were taken into account. Most were also expected to generate a financial return to support service priorities.

- 7.12 The table below summarises the current projected revenue impact of the Capital Portfolio Fund in 2026-27. The Quarter 2 forecast indicates that the overall target in the original budget is expected to be achieved. Variances generally reflect rent reviews, lease events, service charge exposure, voids and essential health and safety compliance work. Property management costs remain higher than assumed in the original business cases due to labour market pressures, although these costs were built into the current budget and do not represent a new pressure. Market rents remain subdued, but there are tentative signs of recovery. Lease churn continues due to natural breaks and expiries.

Table 9: Capital Portfolio Fund Strategy – Quarter 2 Financial Performance Summary

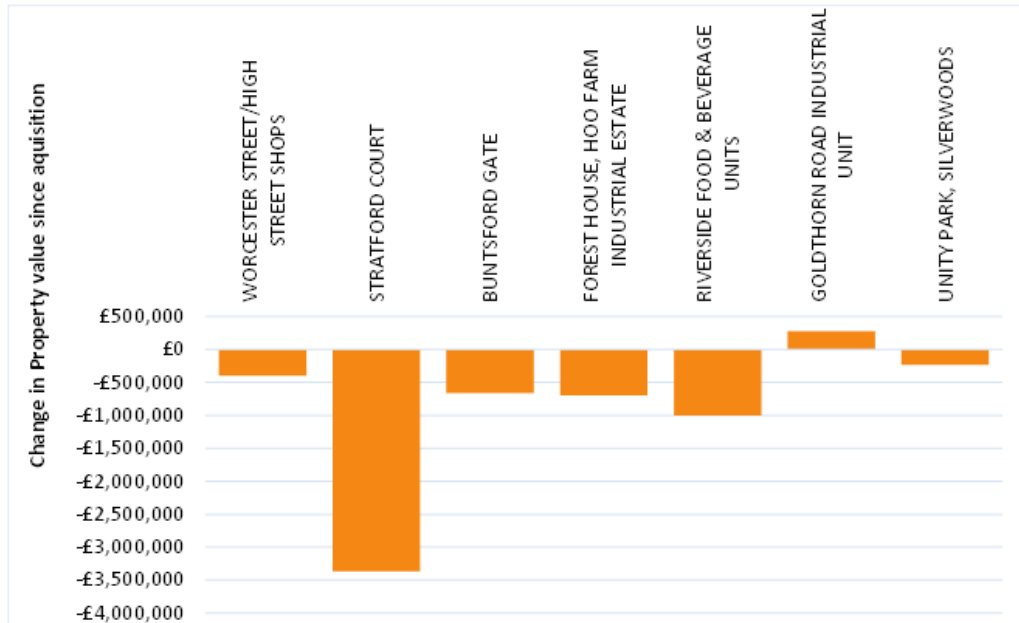
Property Portfolio Fund Net Impact on Council Tax after Statutory Charges		2025-26 Outturn £	2026-27 Original Budget £	Draft 2027-30 MTFS	
				Q2 Outturn projection £	Variance £
R276	High Street/Worcester Street	34,375	2,030	23,030	21,000
R277	Stratford Court	3,928	(43,160)	10,056	53,216
R278	Buntsford Gate	(54,179)	(36,020)	(37,845)	(1,825)
R279	Forest House	38,520	38,540	38,540	0
R280	Riverside	27,157	27,700	33,943	6,243
R281	Goldthorn Road	(102,781)	(107,410)	(93,160)	14,250
R282	Unity Park	13,155	11,440	11,440	5,820
R275	Property Portfolio Fund Admin account	0	0	0	0
Total		(39,825)	(106,880)	(13,996)	98,704

- 7.13 **Capital Portfolio Fund Debt** - The total overdue rent debt at 30th September 2026 was £17k. This represents 2% of the overall balance collected each year in relation to these properties. The majority of the arrears is in the over 120 days category and is being actively managed.

7.14 Change in Capital value

The overall reduction in the value of properties purchased under the Capital portfolio fund strategy, since acquisition, is 34%. The cumulative impairment shown in the Council's accounts at 31st March 2026 is £6.1m. It should be noted that under regulations, impairment is neutralised by a transfer to the capital adjustment account and does not fall as a charge to be met by tax payers and any loss is only realised on disposal of the assets. Due to the cyclical nature of the value of property assets and the link between value and weighted average lease length, the holding period between the date of acquisition and date of disposal is always likely to be a minimum of 5 years. The assets were acquired to meet operational objectives and not for capital appreciation. However, capital values will continue to be monitored for transparency.

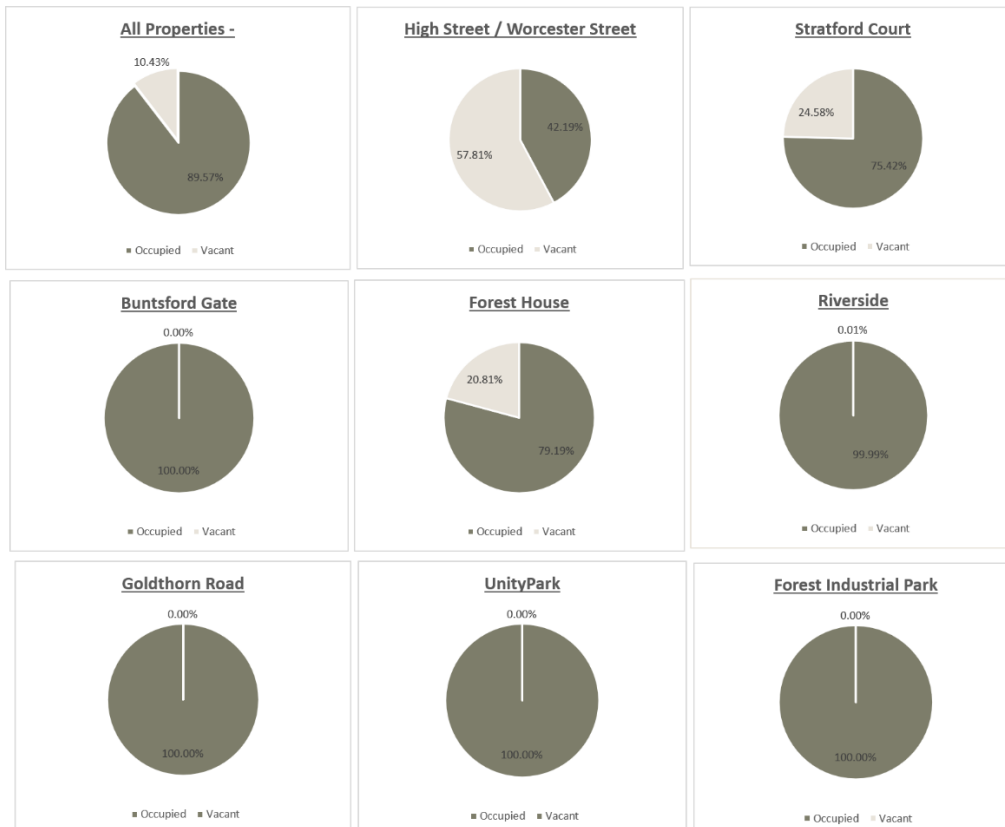
Change in Capital Value for Capital Portfolio Fund properties at latest valuation (31st March 2026)



7.15 Current Vacancy levels/Voids

There continues to be churn in leases due to natural breaks and expiries. Overall occupancy, at 89.6%, is good but lower than achieved in 2025-26. The properties held on High Street/Worcester Street have the highest vacancy rates. Development opportunities for the site continue to be explored, but the high cost of borrowing has a significant impact on viability.

Occupancy Rates for Capital Portfolio Fund properties at 30th September 2026



- 7.16 **Investment Income** – The Council’s investment approach prioritises security and liquidity before yield, in line with statutory guidance. The Quarter 2 monitoring position records an average in-house return of 4.14% on average cash balances of £31.436m and gross interest receivable of £650k, with the return 0.39 percentage points above the model benchmark. The projected 2026-27 outturn is £1.156m, which is £317k above the original budget in the 2026-29 MTFS. The position remains sensitive to interest rate movements, internal borrowing levels and the timing of external grant receipts. Internal borrowing continues to be used in the short term where this remains more cost effective than external borrowing, although delays in grant funding increase the likelihood that external borrowing may be required before the year end.

8. **CAPITAL DETAIL - MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS**

This section of the report provides an update on the significant schemes in the Capital Programme in 2026-27, highlighting the latest forecast of spend for the financial year. Council approved the Capital programme allocations at its meeting on 25th February 2026.

8.1 **Future High Street Fund**

The Future High Street Fund programme is now complete, having delivered Talbot Park and The Old Court creative and innovation hub, created jobs, redeveloped a brownfield site and improved public realm and pedestrian routes. The programme supported Corporate Priority One, Economic Growth and Regeneration, and Corporate Priority Three, A Clean, Safe and Green Place to Live, Work and Visit. The approved capital allocation was £28.996m, including £1.25m for a business case that will no longer proceed, funded through government and LEP grants, external borrowing and revenue reserves. Pending receipt of the outstanding £2.45m Revolving Infrastructure Fund grant from Birmingham City Council, now expected in 2026-27, the Council is providing internal bridging finance at an estimated cost of £8k per month in foregone investment income.

Talbot Park Connectivity Project (Public Realm) – Quarter 2 Progress Update

Talbot Park reached practical completion and opened on 2 May 2026. Only final invoices and the contract retention remain to be accounted for in 2026-27.

Table 10: Quarter 2 Financial Performance Summary (Talbot Park / FHSF Connectivity Project)

	Prior Years £	2026-27 £	2027-28 £	Total £
Capital Programme	9,818,440	106,190		9,924,630
Slippage from 2025-26	-155,670	155,670		155,670
Budget Adjustment (within total FHSF capital approval)	209,350			0
Budget spend profile	9,872,120	261,860	0	10,133,980
2026-27 Q2				
Acquisitions	2,408,914			2,408,914
Prelims and Pre construction	3,625,535			3,625,535
Construction	3,974,404	261,860		4,236,264
Other	229,255			229,255
Contractual costs met from revenue reserves	-365,988			-365,988
Total	9,872,120	261,860	0	10,133,980
Slippage to future years at Q2		0		

The Old Court/Creative Hub project (Former Magistrates Court)

The Old Court is operational, all planning conditions have been discharged and the final retention paid. The scheme's final outturn was £17.612m.

8.2 Brinton Park Heritage Lottery Fund Scheme

The Brinton Park scheme is nearing completion, having delivered major improvements including reinstatement of the historic ornamental pool and restoration of the park's Victorian landscape, supported by National Lottery Heritage Fund grant awarded in September 2020. The remaining works comprise café handover, landscaping and snagging.

In line with the approved bid, the project has delivered, or is completing, improvements to public spaces and existing green space, new public amenities and pedestrian paths, and opportunities for trainees to gain certificates.

Heritage will be	People will have	Communities
• better managed	• developed skills	• the local area/community will be a better place to work, live or visit
• in better condition	• volunteered time	• environmental impacts will be reduced
• better interpreted and explained	• learnt about heritage	• more people and a wider range of people will have engaged with heritage
• identified/recorded		

The scheme supports Corporate Priority Three, A Clean, Safe and Green Place to Live, Work and Visit.

The approved capital allocation is £3.060m, comprising the original £2.600m allocation and a further £460k from the Evergreen Investment Fund. Funding comprises National Lottery Heritage Fund grant, £460k of capital receipts, Section 106 contributions, revenue earmarked reserves and £200k of prudential borrowing.

Risk Assessment

Remaining risks relate to café handover, completion of landscaping and snagging, agreement of the final account and financial close-out. These continue to be monitored by the Major Projects Programme Board.

Table 11: Quarter 2 Financial Performance Summary (HLF - Brinton Park)

	Prior Years £	2026-27 £	2027-28 £	Total £
Capital Programme	1,942,270	1,037,240	80,490	3,060,000
Slippage from 2025-26	-403,720	403,720		0
Reprofiling of Budget (retention)		80,490	80,490 CR	0
Budget spend profile	1,538,550	1,521,450	0	3,060,000
2026-27 Q2				
Prelims and Pre construction	255,414			255,414
Construction & Other	1,283,136	1,440,960	0	2,724,096
Total	1,538,550	1,440,960	0	3,060,000
Slippage to future years at Q2		0		

8.3 Capital Slippage

The following capital schemes have been reviewed and reprogrammed into future years to align with forecast programme delivery.

Table 12: Capital Programme 2026-27 Estimated Slippage at Quarter 2

2026-27 Capital Programme Estimated Slippage at Q2	Draft Slippage for future years £	Budget anticipated to Slip at Q2 %	Comments
Community and Environmental Services Food Waste Collection (funded by Defra grant)	1,154,900	100.0%	Weekly food waste collections for households in the district are not being introduced until the Government provides the funding needed to run the service. The position will be reviewed considering local government reorganisation and the arrangements being made by other districts in North Worcestershire, to see whether there is an affordable and value for money approach that can be adopted. Will be slipped to 2027-28 as part of the revised budget process.
Housing & Planning Housing Strategy: Better Care Fund (BCF) - Disabled Facilities Grants	248,160	9.0%	Scheme ongoing. Shared service has commenced, so works anticipated to increase throughout the year.
BCF- Energy Efficiency	228,750	53.4%	Scheme ongoing. This fund supplements and provides an alternative to government capital funding where it cannot be applied or homes need additional support.
BCF- Disabled Adapted Units	240,000	100.0%	Awaiting grant of planning permission and finalisation of contract. Will be slipped to 2027-28 as part of the revised budget process.
Housing Assistance - Private Sector Measures (including Decent Homes Grant)	115,000	60.5%	Schemes ongoing with fire safety measures. Anticipate £75k spend for 2026-27 and the rest will slip to 2027-28.
Stourport on Severn Property Conversion	60,690	50.3%	Quotes received but over budget, so currently reviewing the scale of the work.
Flood Relief	8,410	29.6%	Grant approved for £10k and anticipate total expenditure of £20k for the year. Balance will slip into 2027-28.
Acquisition of Land at Horsefair, Kidderminster	49,590	100.0%	Start of project delayed as Registered Provider unable to commit resources at this time. Budget to slip.
Capital Projects Fund	3,733,880	50.0%	Subject to business cases & due diligence. 50% has been slipped to 2027-28.
North Worcestershire Property Flood Resilience Project	694,750	58.2%	Project underway; various grants already committed.
Pride in Place Programme (Birchen Coppice)	70,000	58.3%	No capital funding received to date.
Economic Development & Regeneration Capital Portfolio Fund (unallocated)	4,050,830	100.0%	Subject to business cases & due diligence. Slipped to 2027-28.
Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule Vehicles & Equipment & Systems Renewal Schedule	238,700	4.7%	Procurement of refuse freighters is complete. Procurement of other vehicles & equipment is underway with varying lead times. Some vehicle slippage identified as part of the revised budget process.
Total	10,893,660	37.43%	

9. TRANSFORMATION AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY SAVINGS PROGRAMME

- 9.1 The 2026-29 MTFS projects a funding gap of £1.5m by the end of the strategy period. Any new cost pressures, without additional Government funding or compensating savings, will increase this gap. Continued budget discipline and delivery of savings and efficiency proposals are therefore essential to maintain financial flexibility and protect the Council's medium-term resilience.
- 9.2 Financial sustainability remains the most significant challenge facing the Council. Since 2009, the Council has maintained a strong track record of identifying savings and income opportunities. The Commercial Strategy, Wyre Forest Forward programme and Transformation and Financial Sustainability Plan provide the framework for further efficiencies, cost reductions and income growth. The Corporate Efficiencies delivery unit has progressed the following actions:
- Additional debt recovery officer in revenues
 - Delivered savings from “smarter procurement” including review of postage and printing and collaborations with public sector partners
 - Exploring all viable areas for capitalisation of costs
 - Introducing discretionary charges for planning services
 - Establishing a shared service to deliver home adaptations across Worcestershire
- 9.3 Savings and income generation have helped reduce the immediate funding pressure, but further recurring savings, efficiencies and income opportunities are required to reduce reliance on reserves and support a sustainable medium-term financial position. This is particularly important in the context of Local Government Reorganisation, where stronger financial resilience, a clear savings pipeline and robust service cost information will support transition planning and help place the new arrangements on a more sustainable footing. Current estimates will continue to be refined by the Finance Team with service managers.
- 9.4 Progress has been made in 2026-27, including both recurring and one-off savings. Continued delivery remains important ahead of Local Government Reorganisation to ensure future arrangements are supported by a clear savings pipeline, robust service cost information and reduced reliance on reserves. The approved MTFS targets are summarised in the table below.

Table 13: Quarter 2 Wyre Forest Forward Savings - Performance Summary

Transformation and Financial sustainability savings	2026-27 £000	2027-28 £000	2028-29 £000
Cummulative Prior year savings achieved	4,966	4,848	4,747
Savings achieved 2026-27 (YTD)	193	95	115
Total Savings Achieved	5,159	4,943	4,862
MTFS 2026-27 Savings Targets			
Wyre Forest Forward Efficiency and Transformation	96	149	212
Localism	24	100	100
Commercial Income growth (incl.Property)	143	284	320
Savings Target at 01/04/2024	263	533	632
Savings achieved 2026-27			
Wyre Forest Forward Efficiency and Transformation			
Smarter procurement	65	15	15
Service efficiencies and innovation	4	4	4
- Shared Services WHAS)	69	72	75
	138	91	94
Localism			
Transfers to BTC (£40k budget reduction net of lost income (£7k and grant £29k)		4	21
	0	4	21
Income growth (net) - Commercial			
Commercial Strategy	55		
	55	0	0
Total Savings achieved in-year	193	95	115
Total Budget Savings not yet achieved	70	438	517

10 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES AND VIREMENTS

- 10.1 Service managers may only incur expenditure within approved Council policy where there is sufficient budget provision, or where a virement or supplementary estimate has been approved in accordance with Financial Regulations 6.7 and 6.8. The permitted limits are £20,000 for revenue expenditure and £50,000 for capital expenditure. No virement requests require reporting to Cabinet in Quarter 2.

11 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Investments

- 11.1 At 30th September 2026, the Council held £26.305m in investments. Investment balances fluctuate during the year due to the timing of precept payments, grant receipts and capital programme cashflows. Treasury activity continues to prioritise security and liquidity, with returns remaining above the model benchmark. The estimated 2026-27 investment income outturn is £1.156m, an improvement on the original budget in the 2026-29 MTFS.
- 11.2 The approved limits set out in the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy, approved by Council on 25th February 2026, were not breached

during Quarter 2 of 2026-27. A full mid-year update will be considered by the Treasury Management Review Panel on 2nd November 2026.

External Borrowing

- 11.3 At 30th September 2026, the Council had external borrowing of £30m. The Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) at 30th September 2026 was £47.673m, representing the Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes. The difference between the CFR and external borrowing is currently being met through internal borrowing of approximately £17.673m.

Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits

- 11.4 The Council's approved Treasury and Prudential Indicators are set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS). The Council has operated within the approved treasury limits, prudential indicators and Treasury Management Practices during the period to 30th September 2026. The relevant indicators are shown below.

Prudential Indicator as Per Original Budget	2026-27 Budgeted Indicator	Actual at 30 th September 2026
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	60,660,000	47,673,000
Gross Borrowing	50,000,000	30,000,000
Internal Borrowing	10,660,000	17,673,000
Internal Borrowing as % of CFR	17.57%	37.07%
Authorised Limit for external debt	75,000,000	30,000,000
Operational Boundary for external debt	65,000,000	30,000,000
Limit on Principal sums invested > 365 days	5,000,000	-
Maturity structure of fixed interest rate borrowing – upper limits (for future borrowing undertaken)		Maturity structure of existing loan portfolio (No new borrowing undertaken during Quarter 2)
Under 12 months	10%	3.33%
12 months to 2 years	10%	3.33%
2 years to 5 years	25%	13.33%
5 years to 10 years	50%	13.33%
10 years and above	100%	66.38%

12 REVENUE DETAIL – Central Items Business Rates and Council Tax

- 12.1 Council Tax and Business Rates are significant sources of funding for Council services and are central to the assumptions underpinning the MTFs. Changes in the tax base, rateable values, reliefs, collection performance and write-offs can affect the resources available to the Council

and the financial position of the collection fund. Close monitoring supports timely and reliable forecasting, informs management action and provides a sound evidence base for financial planning during the transition to new arrangements through Local Government Reorganisation.

- 12.2 Council Tax discounts, exemptions, awards, banding changes and collection rates are monitored closely because they affect the tax base, collection fund and future funding. Slower housing delivery or increased eligibility for discounts and exemptions could reduce Council Tax income and create additional pressure on the MTFS.
- 12.3 Officers continue to work with the Valuation Office Agency to monitor rating list changes, appeals and other collection fund movements. The financial impact, including any implications arising from the revised Business Rates Retention System, will be reflected in the MTFS as forecasts are refined.

12.4 Collection Rates

Council Tax: At 30 September 2026, in-year Council Tax collection was 57.30%, unchanged from the same point in 2025-26. The increasing use of 12-month instalments shifts receipts later in the year, making direct year-on-year comparison less reliable as an indicator of final collection performance.

Business Rates: At 30 September 2026, in-year Business Rates collection was 47.80%, compared with 46.49% at the same point in 2025-26. The improvement partly reflects the Council paying its own business rates in a single instalment at the start of the year, so the position should not be treated as evidence of a higher final collection rate.

Council Tax and Business Rates write-offs continue to be monitored. Recent cases reflect voluntary bankruptcy orders, petitions, individual voluntary arrangements and debt relief orders, alongside growth in households for which recovery options are limited. These trends indicate continuing pressure on household finances and may increase collection fund risk if they persist.

13 How are we doing performance summary

- 13.1 Financial and service performance are closely connected: budget variances may reflect changes in demand, delivery or outcomes, while operational performance can indicate where future financial pressures or management action may arise. Considering both alongside each other gives members a more rounded view of the Council's position and supports proportionate, evidence-based decisions about priorities and resources
- 13.2 The Council monitors performance and progress against the priorities in the Corporate Plan 2023–2027.
- 13.3 Performance management supports all Council activities by tracking progress, identifying potential issues early and enabling remedial action. It also informs the decision-making processes that underpin delivery of the Corporate Plan.
- 13.4 The Council uses a number of processes to monitor performance, including:
 - Corporate Plan Actions
 - Corporate Risks and associated actions
 - Leading Measures – looking forward at future outcomes
 - Lagging Measures – looking back to see whether improvement actions achieved the outcomes or outputs expected

Performance is reviewed regularly and reported quarterly to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. This report provides a strategic overview of Quarter 2 performance, focusing on the activities and achievements that support the priorities in the Corporate Plan.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

QUARTER 2 2026/27



Economic growth and regeneration



Talbot Park Award Success
Talbot Park named Project of the Year 2026 at the CECA Midlands Awards.



Stourport Regeneration Progress
Bridge Street community building progressed through RIBA Stage 3 and reached planning submission stage.



BetaDen Business Accelerator
New cohort of businesses launched, with accelerator programme secured through March 2027.



Securing financial sustainability for services that local communities value



545 Volunteer Hours
Volunteers contributed 545 hours to support museum services and community engagement.



Habitat Improvements Across Three Sites
Habitat enhancement work delivered at Puxton Marsh, Stourvale Wetland and Vicarage Farm Heath.



Brinton Park Regeneration Nearing Completion
Major construction milestones achieved ahead of completion in Q3.



A clean, safe and green place to live, work and visit



35 Homes Made More Energy Efficient
Energy efficiency improvements completed through the Warm Homes Grant programme.



2 Pollinator Patches Created
Two pollinator patches established across the district.



1,000+ Households Registered for Housing
More than 1,000 households registered through the new housing register system.



14 New Bin Lorries Delivered
New fleet introduced to help keep waste collections running smoothly.

13.5 Corporate Priority One - Economic growth and regeneration

Key Activities in Quarter 2:

- **Piano building:** Ongoing activity to identify suitable tenants, working with marketing agents. Joint agency is being explored in respect of the office space, terms issued to potential Food and Beverage unit occupier.
- **Lion Fields (Joint Venture):** The procurement of a development partner progressed to Stage 2 during Q2, with shortlisted bidders invited to submit detailed tenders. The Council continued to progress the procurement despite changes in the bidder market, with the Stage 2 process continuing into Q3.
- **The Old Court site:** Work to market the office space has continued. The booking platform has gone live with the aim to increase income and provide space for small businesses. Terms issued for potential tenant of Grosvenor suite, and potential expansion of occupation is under discussion with an existing tenant in the building. The Old Court and Weaving Sheds were highly commended in the regional “Best Public or Community Building” Local Authority Building Control (LABC) awards.
- **Bewdley Museum:** Museum project has created a brighter, more welcoming and accessible space for visitors. The upgraded area can now also be used for exhibitions and events, enhancing the overall visitor experience. Plans to utilise the space as an indoor café option over the winter are ongoing.
- **Stourport (Bridge Street/regeneration):** The proposed multi-purpose community building progressed substantially through RIBA Stage 3 during Q2. The design was further developed following public consultation and pre-application engagement, including revisions to better reflect the character of the Conservation Area. Technical surveys, site investigations and specialist assessments also progressed, bringing the scheme to the point of planning submission at the end of Q2/very beginning of Q3.
- **Talbot Park:** Talbot Park was named Project of the Year at the CECA Midlands Awards 2026 in the £3m–£10m category in September 2026, recognising the engineering excellence, innovation and collaborative delivery of the town centre regeneration scheme. Wyre Forest District Council and McPhillips were also highly commended in the Client Team of the Year category.
- **Career Worcestershire programme :** The council continues to support activity through the Career Worcestershire programme, delivered from The Point at Kidderminster College.
- **BetaDen:** Continuing delivery of the tech accelerators at the Old Court into the new financial year till 31st of March 2027. New Cohort of businesses began end of September.
- **Worcestershire Growth Hub:** The council continues to support this activity after the completion of UKSPF. £70k provided for this financial year and a commitment to provide a further £70k in 2027/28.
- **High Street Regeneration:** The former Record Stacks site has been cleared and will be paved as part of the ongoing regeneration of Kidderminster High Street, helping to improve the appearance and usability of the town centre.

13.6 Corporate Priority Two - Securing financial sustainability for services the local communities value

Key Activities in Quarter 2:

- **Museum events:** In Q2 Bewdley Museum delivered a wide-ranging programme of community and educational activities, including 14 school sessions, 11 events, 2 exhibitions, and 6 workshops, engaging residents, visitors, and local schools across the district. This work was further supported by 545 volunteer hours, demonstrating strong community involvement and helping to enhance learning, participation, and access to cultural and environmental opportunities.
- **Brinton Park:** Major progress was made during Q2 towards completion of the multi-million-pound regeneration project. Construction and commissioning activities continued throughout September, alongside preparations for completion and handover. The Community Engagement Officer also commenced her role in September 2026, supporting community involvement, activities and the future use of the park. The project is expected to be completed during Q3
- **Public Access:** Improved public access to nature reserves interpretation panels and walking routes at Britannia Gardens, sign and gate systems to be installed soon.
- **Habitat Management:** Rangers have been working with contractors and volunteers to improve habitat at Puxton Marsh SSSI, Stourvale wetland and Vicarage Farm heath LNR. A partnership project is underway with the Environment agency fund further habitat works at Puxton Marshes.

13.7 Corporate Priority Three - A clean, safe and green place to live, work and visit

Key Activities in Quarter 2:

- **Flood management:** The North Worcestershire Water Management service were successful in its bid to the regional flood committee for funding for individual property protection measures in the North Worcestershire area including Wyre Forest.
- **Fly-Tipping Enforcement and Public Awareness Campaign:** Officers carried out visits to trade premises across all three towns to verify commercial waste disposal arrangements, resulting in one Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) being issued and paid. The team investigated reports of fly-posting, graffiti and fly-grazing, taking appropriate action to resolve or monitor issues, and undertook a joint site visit with a social landlord which led to an FPN being issued for fly-tipping. The Council's first warning letter was also issued to a landowner regarding the removal of Japanese knotweed from private land. In addition, officers worked with Franche Primary School to address parking and road safety concerns, with a follow-up meeting planned. Overall, the team maintained a proactive enforcement approach, progressing investigations, achieving enforcement outcomes and working in partnership to tackle environmental crime and community concerns.
- **Street Cleansing:** The council expanded Wyre Forest's kerbside recycling service to include aluminium foil and plastic tubes, supporting Simpler Recycling requirements and helping increase recycling rates across the district.
- **Warm Homes Grant: Energy** efficiency improvements to 16 properties were completed in quarter 2 bringing the total to 35.
- **Pride in Place consultation:** Launched surveys and informal consultation programme to give local communities a direct say in shaping future investment.

- **Housing Delivery and Planning Approvals:** Approved 27 residential units.
- **Housing register:** Following the delivery of the new housing register system we have over 1000 households registered.
- **Affordable housing:** Completed 6 affordable homes in Q2 2026/27.
- **Help Provide More Cultural Events:** Delivered a varied programme of free summer events across Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn, including the annual Music in the Park programme at Brinton Park and Riverside Meadows, featuring concert bands, brass bands, choirs, pop acts and rock performers over seven weeks. Alongside other family-focused and community activities, the programme provided accessible cultural and recreational opportunities, attracted strong attendance and positive feedback, encouraged greater use of parks and public spaces, and enhanced the district's cultural offer for residents and visitors throughout the summer.
- **Work with Town Councils and Community Groups to Improve Parks and Open Spaces:** Supported a range of free activities in local parks through partnership working with community organisations, including environmental and educational sessions delivered by the Severn Rivers Trust at Riverside Meadows, weekly Park Yoga sessions at Brinton Park, and free football sessions delivered by Kidderminster Harriers Community Football at Springfield Park and White Wickets. These activities encouraged residents and families to make greater use of local parks and open spaces while promoting learning, physical activity, health, wellbeing and community participation.
- **Waste management:** Operational Services has welcomed the final of its 14 new bin lorries, which will help keep collections 'running smoothly'.
- **Pollinator Patches Created:** Our ranger team has created two new pollinator patches to help support wildlife across the district. The new areas are located near Beales Corner in Bewdley and alongside the River Stour in Kidderminster, close to the bus depot roundabout. Further 2 more sites proposed for 2027.

13.8 Other achievements:

- The council launched a scoping consultation with regards to the Local Plan review.

14 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

14.1 The information below gives a summary of the authority's performance in respect of complaints. In Quarter 2 the Council received 55 complaints. This compares with 33 during Quarter 1.

- 47 complaints (85%) were resolved at stage 1
- 8 (15%) complaints were escalated to Stage 2
- 33 (70%) was partially upheld, 4 (9%) awaiting outcomes
- 0 complaints were referred directly to the LGSCO

14.2 A comprehensive report, which provides greater insight into the complaints received and the outcome, is considered by Audit Committee every 6 months. The analysis of all complaints received during 2025/26 was reported to Audit Committee in July 2026.

14.3 During Quarter 2 we received 10 compliments.

- 14.4 The total customer contact recorded via the hub customer service team for Quarter 2 was 10,316. This was 1,520 visitors, 840 emails 7,956 phone calls.

15 LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 The Local Government Act 2003 (sections 25–29) placed additional duties on Local Authorities on how they set and prioritise budgets.
- 15.2 Section 28 places a statutory duty on an authority to review its budget from time to time during the year. If the Budget Monitoring Report shows that there has been deterioration in the Authority's financial position, the Authority must take such action as it concludes necessary. The Cabinet currently reviews performance and spend against the Budget on a quarterly basis.
- 15.3 Our External Auditor Bishop Fleming makes an assessment based on the annual programme of external audit work. The focus is on ensuring there are proper arrangements in place for securing financial resilience and that the organisation has proper arrangements for challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

16 IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 16.1 Equality, Climate Change and Health and Wellbeing Impact assessments will be undertaken as appropriate as part of reviews of service delivery arrangements and implementation of new models. This is a financial and performance monitoring report, there are no proposals in this report that require an assessment.

17 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 17.1 Maintaining a sustainable balanced budget remains one of the Council's key corporate risks. Although the Quarter 2 forecast is favourable, reliance on reserves, delivery of planned savings, inflation feeding through to contract renewals and procurement, variable income streams and emerging service pressures continue to expose the Council's financial position to risk. Capital programme delivery and uncertainty surrounding Local Government Reorganisation add further pressure. The Budget Risk Matrix has been reviewed and strengthened to reflect the current assessment of budget risks and is presented alongside this report. These risks will continue to be considered through quarterly budget monitoring, with forecasts refined and management action taken where required. A further update on corporate risks will be reported to Audit Committee in November.

18 CONCLUSIONS/ACTION

- 18.1 The Quarter 2 forecast shows an overall favourable revenue variance of £696k against the approved 2026-27 budget. However, this does not resolve the underlying gap between recurring income and expenditure, and the Council continues to rely on reserves to support its spending plans. Emerging cost pressures, variable income streams and the delivery of planned savings remain key risks to the forecast and the medium-term financial position.
- 18.2 Progress continues against the Council's corporate priorities, including the delivery of major regeneration and environmental improvements. Capital programme

slippage of £10.894m is forecast to move expenditure into future years. Although this may reduce financing costs in the short term, it also delays benefits and may create additional delivery and revenue pressures.

- 18.3 The focus for the remainder of the year is to maintain budget discipline, deliver planned savings and income targets, and take timely action where pressures arise. Forecasts and capital programme delivery assumptions will continue to be reviewed through the quarterly monitoring and revised budget processes, with particular attention to reducing reliance on reserves and maintaining financial resilience during the uncertainty surrounding Local Government Reorganisation.

19 CONSULTEES

Corporate Leadership Team

Cabinet

20 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Budget setting papers Council 25th February 2026
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026-29

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

REVENUE BUDGET TOTAL REQUIREMENTS - DISTRICT COUNCIL PURPOSES

SERVICE	2025/26		2026/27			2027/28			2028/29		
	Original Estimate £	Revised Estimate £	At Nov.24 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £	At Nov.24 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £	At Nov.24 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL	2,806,520	3,053,830	3,353,840	78,190	3,432,030	3,610,370	140,010	3,750,380	3,520,300	207,650	3,727,950
COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT	6,255,000	6,583,120	7,139,980	259,620	7,399,600	7,653,970	481,180	8,135,150	7,965,550	692,860	8,658,410
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION	564,200	452,190	368,840	51,060	419,900	148,690	98,330	247,020	(170,950)	139,680	(31,270)
RESOURCES	1,945,430	1,568,830	1,142,460	29,500	1,171,960	1,133,810	69,400	1,203,210	1,119,470	105,530	1,225,000
REVENUES, BENEFITS & CUSTOMER SERVICES	1,903,770	1,901,230	1,964,180	68,630	2,032,810	1,985,200	115,760	2,100,960	1,979,130	164,180	2,143,310
STRATEGIC GROWTH	2,619,230	2,589,730	2,719,350	90,620	2,809,970	2,689,550	150,040	2,839,590	2,631,840	208,580	2,840,420
	16,094,150	16,148,930	16,688,650	577,620	17,266,270	17,221,590	1,054,720	18,276,310	17,045,340	1,518,480	18,563,820
LESS: CAPITAL ACCOUNT	627,000	388,800	342,910	3,860	346,770	236,120	6,610	242,730	386,060	9,260	395,320
INTEREST RECEIVED	(1,036,110)	(1,236,110)	(838,350)	0	(838,350)	(780,220)	0	(780,220)	(780,220)	0	(780,220)
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES	15,685,040	15,301,620	16,193,210	581,480	16,774,690	16,677,490	1,061,330	17,738,820	16,651,180	1,527,740	18,178,920
CREATION OF EARMARKED RESERVE	0	719,730			600,000			600,000			0
LESS: RESERVES	(90,360)	293,060			(404,370)			(1,441,610)			(1,017,750)
NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT	15,594,680	16,314,410			16,970,320			16,897,210			17,161,170
LESS: REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT	(178,440)	(178,440)			(3,173,940)			(3,191,290)			(3,192,290)
GRANTS ROLLED INTO RSG (included in net budget requirement)	0	0			299,000			299,000			299,000
TRANSITIONAL FUNDING (additional RSG)	0	0			(65,350)			0			0
BUSINESS RATES INCOME	(4,973,800)	(4,973,800)			(2,789,840)			(2,854,000)			(2,911,400)
ADJUSTMENT SUPPORT GRANT	0	0			(332,030)			0			0
RECOVERY GRANT	(400,190)	(400,190)			(400,190)			(400,190)			(400,190)
COLLECTION FUND (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	239,070	239,070			70,000			0			0
NEW HOMES BONUS	(312,990)	(312,990)			0			0			0
EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY GRANT	(1,021,000)	(1,740,730)			(1,420,000)			(1,200,000)			(1,000,000)
NATIONAL INSURANCE GOVERNMENT FUNDING	(92,330)	(92,330)			0			0			0
GENERAL EXPENSES -											
COUNCIL TAX INCOME	8,855,000	8,855,000			9,157,970			9,550,730			9,956,290
COUNCIL TAX LEVY		250.58			258.08			265.80			273.75
COUNCIL TAX BASE		35,338			35,485			35,932			36,370

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2026-27 - Quarter 2 Position (DRAFT)

Capital Scheme	Corporate Priority*	2025-26 Capital Programme Slippage £	2026-27 Original Budget £	2026-27 Latest Approved Budget including slippage from 2025-26 £	2026-27 Qtr 2 Actual £	Slippage to 2027-28 identified at Q2 £	Progress Notes at Q2 2026-27	Total Scheme (all years) £	Total spend (all years) £	% Complete (Full Scheme)
COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES										
Improvement to Car Parks (Replacement Parking Machines)	1,2,3	150,940	-	150,940	-	-	The tender process was completed in Q1, and the contract was signed in Q2. A project start-up meeting has been scheduled, and the project is anticipated to be completed within Q3.	594,500	443,560	75%
Stourport Riverside	3	36,440	-	36,440	-	-	Remainder of the budget will be spent in line with the Master Plan in this financial year.	150,000	113,560	76%
Brinton Park HLF Scheme	3	403,720	1,037,240	1,440,960	1,099,267	-	Major works under way. Scheme anticipated to complete in autumn 2026.	3,060,000	2,637,817	86%
Bewdley Museum - UKSPF	1,2,3	41,580	-	41,580	41,580	-	Scheme complete.	190,570	190,570	100%
Innovation Fund - Capital	2	7,080	249,250	256,330	-	-	Freighter has been delivered. Payment will be made in Q3.	431,000	174,670	41%
Community Safety CCTV Upgrade (Grant Funded)	2	910	-	910	-	-	The remaining budget is expected to be spent in Q3.	24,860	23,950	96%
Food Waste Collection (funded by Defra grant)	2	-	1,154,900	1,154,900	-	1,154,900	Weekly food waste collections for households in the district are not being introduced until the Government provides the funding needed to run the service. The position will be reviewed considering local government reorganisation and the arrangements being made by other districts in North Worcestershire, to see whether there is an affordable and value for money approach that can be adopted. Will be slipped to 2027-28 as part of the revised budget process.	1,154,900	-	0%
Adaptive Play Equipment	3	58,890	-	58,890	-	-	Tender documentation to be issued shortly via a framework. Anticipated to complete by the end of Q3.	100,000	41,110	41%
SUB TOTAL		699,560	2,441,390	3,140,950	1,140,847	1,154,900		5,705,830	3,625,237	64%
HOUSING & PLANNING										
Housing Strategy:										
Better Care Fund (BCF) - Disabled Facilities Grants	3	292,260	2,455,900	2,748,160	632,635	248,160	Scheme ongoing. Shared service has commenced, so works anticipated to increase throughout the year.	Rolling programme		
BCF- Energy Efficiency	3	25,750	403,000	428,750	49,397	228,750	Scheme ongoing. This fund supplements and provides an alternative to government capital funding where it cannot be applied or homes need additional support.	730,000	350,647	48%
BCF- Disabled Adapted Units	3	240,000	-	240,000	-	240,000	Awaiting grant of planning permission and finalisation of contract. Will be slipped to 2027-28 as part of the revised budget process.	300,000	60,000	20%
Housing Assistance - Private Sector Measures (including Decent Homes Grant)	3	10,970	179,030	190,000	3,940	115,000	Schemes ongoing with fire safety measures. Anticipate £75k spend for 2026-27 and the rest will slip to 2027-28.	2,376,120	2,190,060	92%
Castle Road Development	3	1,670	-	1,670	-	-	Scheme complete & retention accounted for in 2025-26; final account adjustments subject to approval.	3,860,210	3,858,540	100%
Stourport on Severn Property Conversion	3	690	120,000	120,690	-	60,690	Quotes received but over budget, so currently reviewing the scale of the work.	130,000	9,310	7%
Flood Relief	1,3	13,410	15,000	28,410	-	8,410	Grant approved for £10k and anticipate total expenditure of £20k for the year. Balance will slip into 2027-28.	199,000	170,590	86%
Warm Homes Local Grant	3	-	504,780	504,780	315,600	-	Scheme ongoing.	1,360,000	661,340	49%
Future Investment Evergreen Fund	1,2,3	921,210	-	921,210	-	-	Subject to business cases & due diligence.	1,363,090	441,880	32%
Acquisition of Land at Horsefair, Kidderminster	3	49,590	-	49,590	-	49,590	Start of project delayed as Registered Provider unable to commit resources at this time. Budget to slip.	50,000	410	1%
Capital Projects Fund	1,2,3	-	7,467,750	7,467,750	-	3,733,880	Subject to business cases & due diligence. 50% has been slipped to 2027-28.	8,267,750	800,000	10%
North Worcestershire Property Flood Resilience Project	3	28,220	1,166,530	1,194,750	27,670	694,750	Project underway; various grants already committed.	2,300,000	29,450	1%
Pride in Place Programme (Birchen Coppice)		-	120,000	120,000	-	70,000	No capital funding received to date.	12,470,000	0	0%
SUB TOTAL		1,583,770	12,431,990	14,015,760	1,029,242	5,449,230		33,406,170	8,572,227	26%

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2026-27 - Quarter 2 Position (DRAFT)

Capital Scheme	Corporate Priority*	2025-26 Capital Programme Slippage £	2026-27 Original Budget £	2026-27 Latest Approved Budget including slippage from 2025-26 £	2026-27 Qtr 2 Actual £	Slippage to 2027-28 identified at Q2 £	Progress Notes at Q2 2026-27	Total Scheme (all years) £	Total spend (all years) £	% Complete (Full Scheme)
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION										
Levelling Up Fund	1,2,3	84,300 CR	85,000	700	-	-	Scheme complete.	17,900,000	17,899,300	100%
Capital Portfolio Fund (unallocated)	1,2,3	-	4,050,830	4,050,830	-	4,050,830	Subject to business cases & due diligence. Slipped to 2027-28.	20,805,450	16,754,620	81%
Future High Streets Fund - The Old Court	1,2	-	-	-	-	-	Scheme complete.	17,612,060	17,612,060	100%
Future High Streets Fund - Public Realm/Connectivity	1,2	155,670	106,190	261,860	126,235	-	Contract works completed in May 2026. Final invoices and contract retention to pay.	10,133,980	9,998,355	99%
Future High Streets Fund - Creative Hub (Capital Portfolio allocation)	1,2	-	1,250,000	1,250,000	-	-	No longer required - will be removed from the Capital Programme.	1,250,000	-	0%
Corporate Property Investment Programme	1, 2, 3	-	150,000	150,000	10,581	-	Planning application submitted for Block A (Hub); currently getting tender pack ready for advertising. Air conditioning system in Block B completed.	1,050,000	10,581	1%
Bridge Street Stourport Development	1, 2, 3	-	500,000	500,000	100,456	-	Full planning application has been submitted, with determination anticipated by mid-October 2026. Procurement arrangements for early contractor involvement have also been initiated. Contractor appointment is currently forecast for early 2027, with remediation works expected to commence in February 2027. Main construction works are planned to begin in July 2027. Budget will be reprofiled as part of the revised budget process.	4,000,000	100,456	3%
SUB TOTAL		71,370	6,142,020	6,213,390	237,272	4,050,830		72,751,490	62,375,372	86%
RESOURCES										
ICT Strategy	1,2,3	77,450	540,810	618,260	111,866	-	Various projects underway. May be some slippage due to fluctuations in project delivery timetable. Will be reviewed & reprofiled as part of the revised budget process.	6,003,120	5,306,536	88%
SUB TOTAL		77,450	540,810	618,260	111,866	0		6,003,120	5,306,536	88%
VEHICLE, EQUIPMENT & SYSTEMS RENEWAL SCHEDULE										
Vehicles & Equipment & Systems Renewal Schedule	1,2,3	2,479,370	2,633,980	5,113,350	3,478,125	238,700	Procurement of refuse freighters is complete. Procurement of other vehicles & equipment is underway with varying lead times. Some vehicle slippage identified as part of the revised budget process.	Rolling programme		
SUB TOTAL		2,479,370	2,633,980	5,113,350	3,478,125	238,700				
TOTAL COMMITTED EXPENDITURE		4,911,520	24,190,190	29,101,710	5,997,352	10,893,660				

2026-27 Capital Budgets unspent at Q2 23,104,358

This matrix summarises the principal financial risks to delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, assessed by likelihood and financial impact after existing controls. The corporate risk register and budget monitoring reports provide detailed scores, controls, actions, owners and review dates.

Financial impact	Low likelihood		High likelihood
	High impact	Quadrant 3 – Maintain controls and tested contingency plans - Reserves fall below the prudent minimum, weakening financial resilience. - Lion Fields fails to secure a development partner, delaying regeneration and increasing holding or financing costs. - Shared arrangements fail to deliver planned financial or operational benefits. - Budget monitoring fails to identify pressures promptly, increasing overspend risk. - Prudential Code or borrowing non-compliance restricts borrowing or increases financing costs. - Fraud or corruption causes financial loss, regulatory action or reputational damage. - Continued use of reserves and internal borrowing weakens resilience and liquidity. - Further MMI claims create an unplanned liability. - Information governance failures result in penalties, remediation costs or reputational damage. - Workforce capacity pressures, including local government reorganisation, disrupt financial management, savings delivery or statutory duties. - Inadequate asset plans lead to deterioration or unplanned capital and maintenance costs. - Failure or distress of a key supplier disrupts services and creates replacement, insourcing or support costs.	Quadrant 4 – Immediate management action and regular member oversight - The Council cannot maintain a balanced Medium Term Financial Strategy, increasing the funding gap, reserve use and unplanned service reductions. - Inflation and pay exceed assumptions, widening the funding gap. - Inadequate cyber or business continuity controls cause disruption, financial loss and recovery costs. - Funding reform transition arrangements reduces or redistributes grant, weakening the funding baseline. - Business Rates appeals, pooling, reset or reform reduce retained income or increase volatility. - Transformation fails to deliver savings or income at the required pace or scale. - Council Tax or Business Rates collection falls below forecast, reducing income and increasing cash-flow pressure. - Business Rates growth is lower than assumed, weakening the funding position. - Council Tax base growth is lower than assumed, widening the funding gap. - Economic decline reduces income and increases service demand. - The Commercial Strategy fails to deliver planned savings or commercial income.

		• Uninsured or underinsured losses create unbudgeted costs and higher premiums. • Non-compliance with subsidy control, procurement, grant or tax requirements leads to clawback, penalties, liabilities or lost funding. • Counterparty failure or investment impairment threatens the security or liquidity of Council funds. • Severe weather, climate adaptation or emergencies create unrecovered response, recovery or asset costs. • Building safety, contaminated land or environmental liabilities require unfunded remediation or compliance expenditure. • Uninsured legal claims or enforcement result in significant legal, compensation or remediation costs. • Legislative, tax or accounting changes create unbudgeted costs or reduce financing flexibility. • Capital grants or contributions are delayed, reduced, lost or clawed back, requiring replacement funding, programme reductions or borrowing. • Failure of financial systems, specialist capacity or third-party support disrupts key financial services and statutory reporting.	• Local government reorganisation and devolution create transition costs, capacity pressures and uncertainty over assets and liabilities. • Car parking income falls below forecast, creating a recurring budget pressure. • Future LGPS valuations increase employer contribution rates, creating an ongoing revenue pressure. • Rising homelessness demand increases service and temporary accommodation costs. • Interest rates remain above assumptions, increasing borrowing and refinancing costs and service demand. • Base-rate movements reduce investment income below budget. • High or volatile energy prices increase Council and contracted-service costs. • Capital programme slippage, inflation or affordability pressures increase borrowing, delay outcomes or add revenue pressure. • Commercial, property or regeneration investments underperform, causing impairment, financing pressure or recurring shortfalls. • Collection Fund volatility creates material movements in retained income, cash flow or future budgets.
	Low impact	Quadrant 1 – Keep under periodic review • External funding or partner contributions are not secured or sustained, requiring limited reprioritisation. • The Capital Financing Requirement varies from forecast, creating manageable financing-cost changes. • Capital receipts are delayed or lower than forecast, reducing resources for planned expenditure.	Quadrant 2 – Consider proportionate management action • County Council budget proposals create recurring but limited financial or service pressures. • Fees and charges fail to keep pace with costs or demand, creating a manageable recurring shortfall.

Budget and Performance Monitoring Second Quarter 2026-27

ANALYSIS OF OUTSTANDING DEBT

Overall outstanding debt at 30 September 2026 was £2,405,699, an improvement on Quarter 2 2025-26. Housing Benefit Overpayments decreased by 10%, Sundry Debt by 5% and Property Debt by 14%. Debt more than three months overdue decreased by approximately 20%, with the largest proportional improvement arising in aged Property Debt. Recovery activity continues through benefit deductions, DWP recovery, repayment arrangements, Legal Services and, where appropriate, external debt collection.

The Council's total outstanding debt (including amounts within payment terms) stands at £2,405,699, comprising:

- Housing Benefit Overpayments: £712,611
- Sundry and Property Debt: £1,693,088

The detailed movements are explained in the relevant sections below.

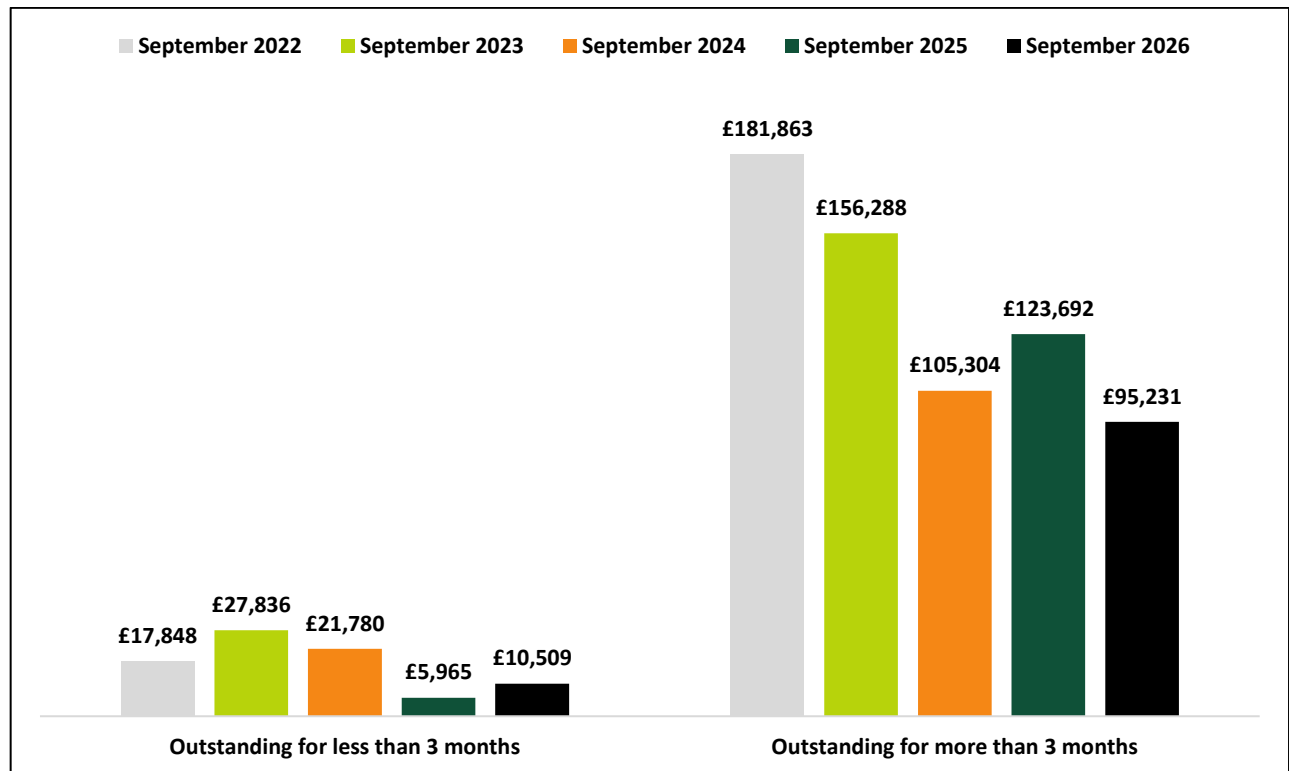
Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery

Where a customer's circumstances change and the Council is notified after the event, the customer is expected to repay any Housing Benefit that has been overpaid.

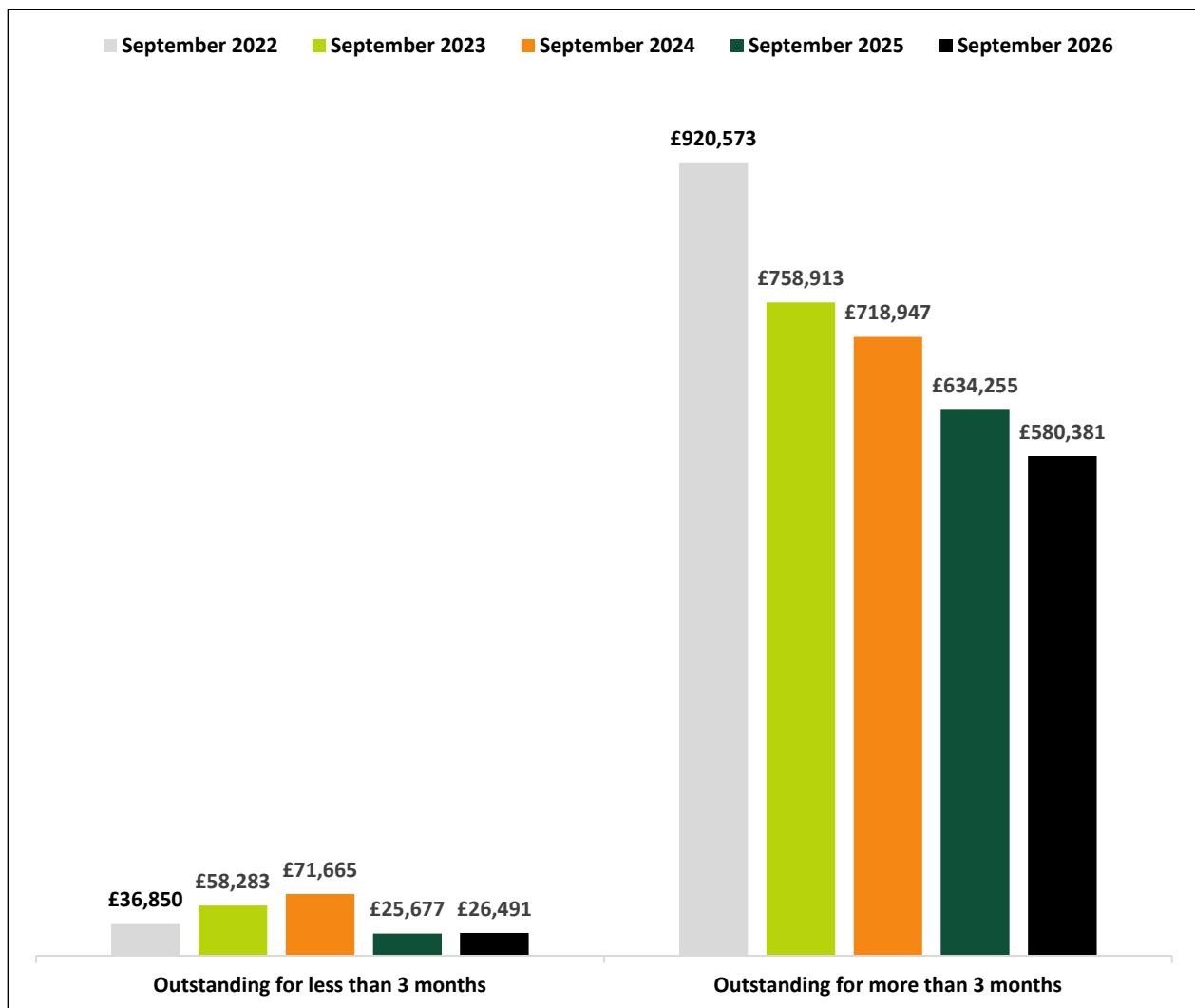
Customers who remain on Housing Benefit after receiving an overpayment have an amount deducted from their ongoing benefit. Where a change in circumstances results in a customer transferring to Universal Credit, the overpayment is recovered through a customer invoice.

The arrears position relating to Housing Benefit overpayment is shown in the next two graphs:

Recovery by On-going Benefit

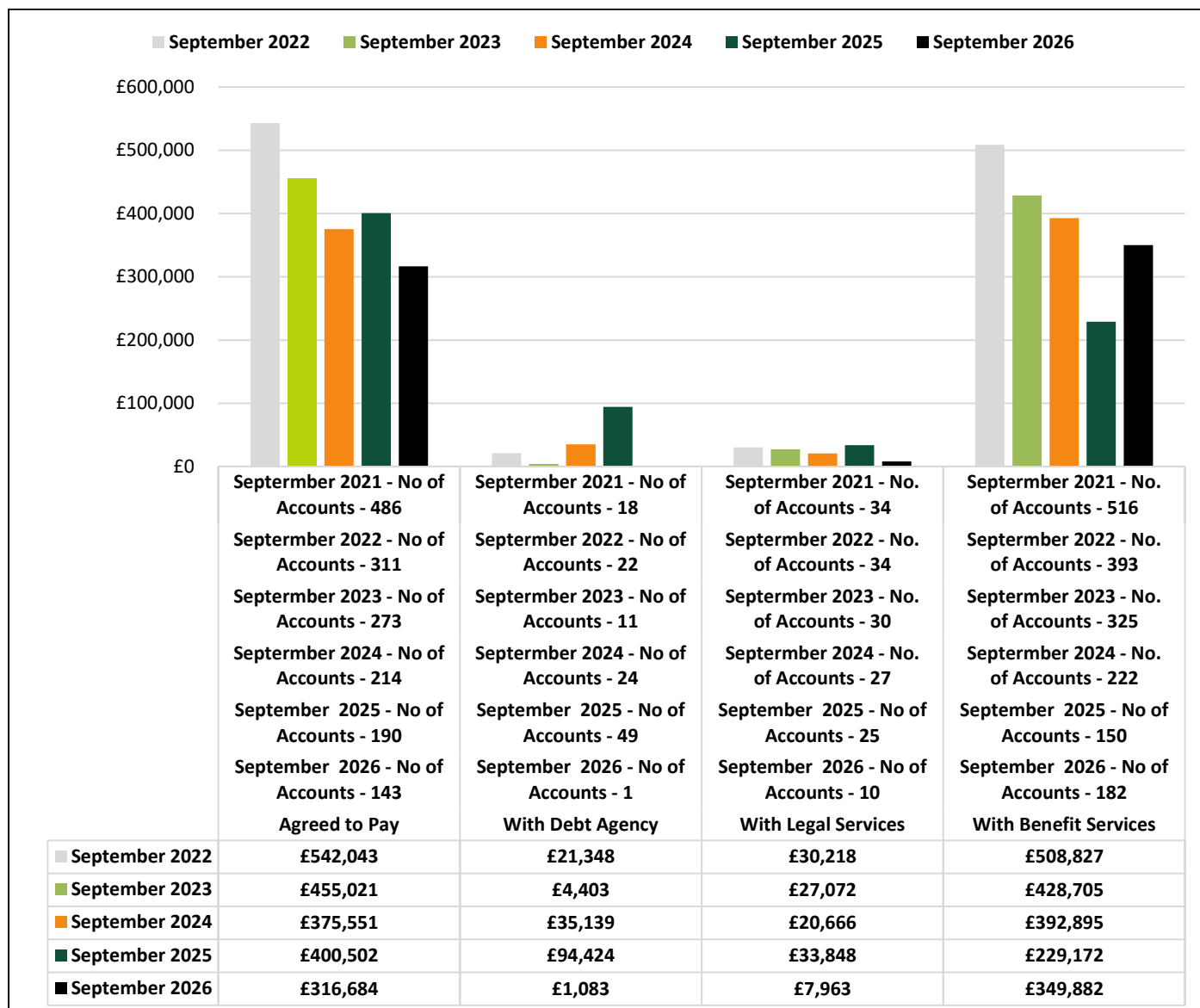


Recovery by Customer Invoice



Debts over three months old either have an agreement in place for repayment, have been referred to the Council's Legal Services, or remain with the Benefits Service for recovery. The Council refers debts to an external debt collection agency when other avenues have been exhausted. As at September 2026, no Housing Benefit debts had been recovered through the agency. The following graph shows the number of accounts, the value outstanding and how the debt will be collected:

Value and Number of Housing Benefit Overpayments over 3 months and Status



At 30 September 2026, total Housing Benefit debt was £712,611, including amounts within payment terms. This was 10% lower than the balance at the end of Quarter 2 2025-26. The number of cases subject to a repayment agreement or being handled by the Benefits or Legal Services teams decreased by 30, from 365 in 2025-26 to 335 in 2026-27. Cases referred to an external debt collection agency decreased from 49 to 1 over the same period.

The introduction of Universal Credit in November 2018 has reduced the number of customers claiming Housing Benefit, the incidence of overpayments and the scope for collection through ongoing benefit deductions. Collection rates for debts overdue by more than three months continue to improve because these debts can now be recovered through the DWP.

Sundry/ Property Debt

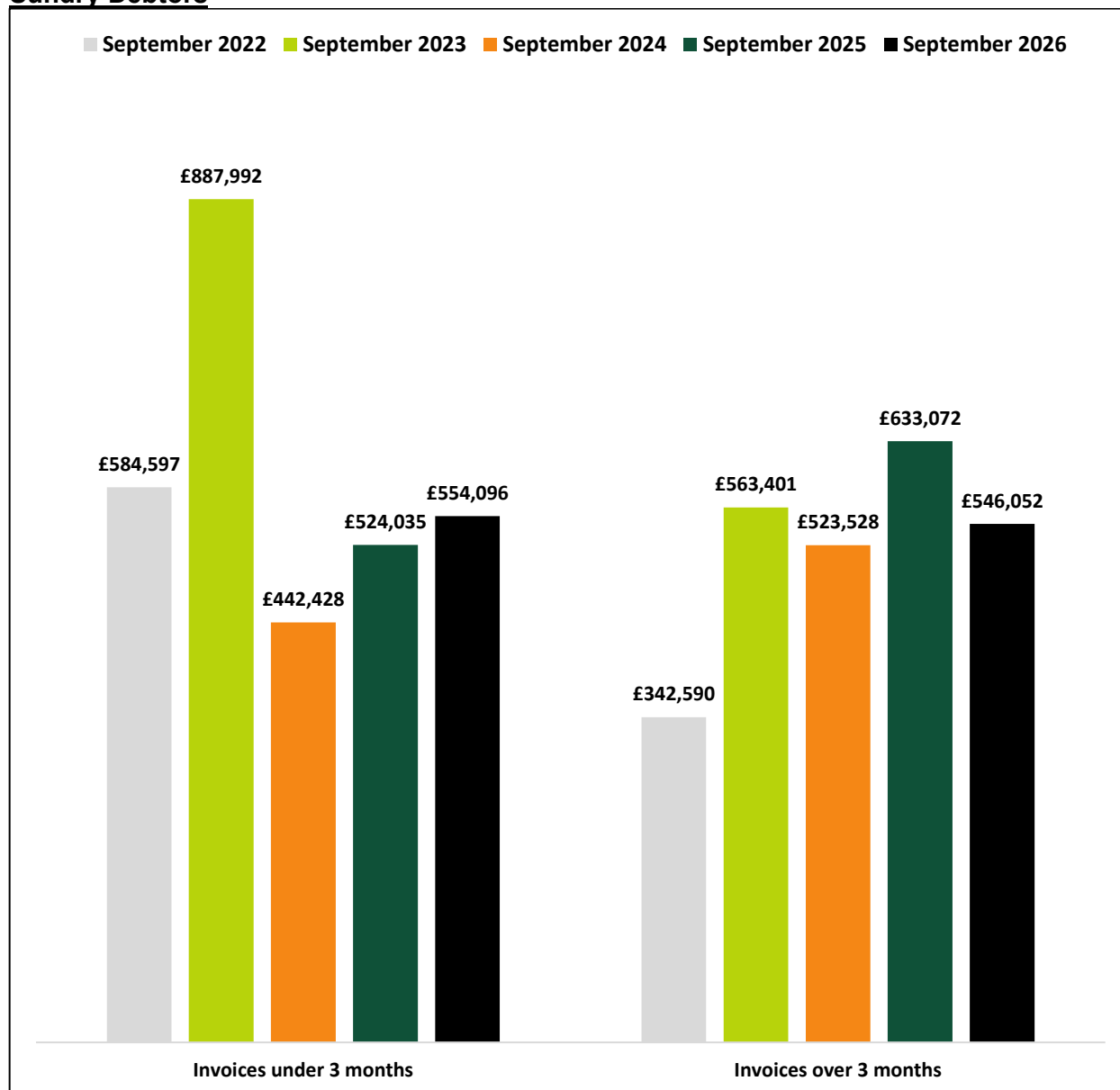
The total debt outstanding as at 30 September, including debt within payment terms, was £1,693,088, comprising Sundry Debt of £1,100,148 and Property Debt of £592,940. This represents an 8% decrease from the Quarter 2 2025-26 balance of £1,844,012, comprising Sundry Debt of £1,157,107 and Property Debt of £686,905.

Overdue debt more than three months old decreased by £175,123, from £879,261 in Quarter 2 2025-26 to £704,138 in Quarter 2 2026-27, a reduction of approximately 20%. The movement figures in the table below represent decreases between Quarter 2 2025-26 and Quarter 2 2026-27.

Invoices overdue (older than 3 months)	Quarter 2 2024	Quarter 2 2025	Quarter 2 2026	Movements
Sundry Invoices	£523,528	£633,072	£546,052	£87,020
Property Invoices	£221,357	£246,189	£158,086	£88,103
Total Invoices	£744,885	£879,261	£704,138	£175,123

The position relating to Sundry Debtor and Property Invoices are as follows:

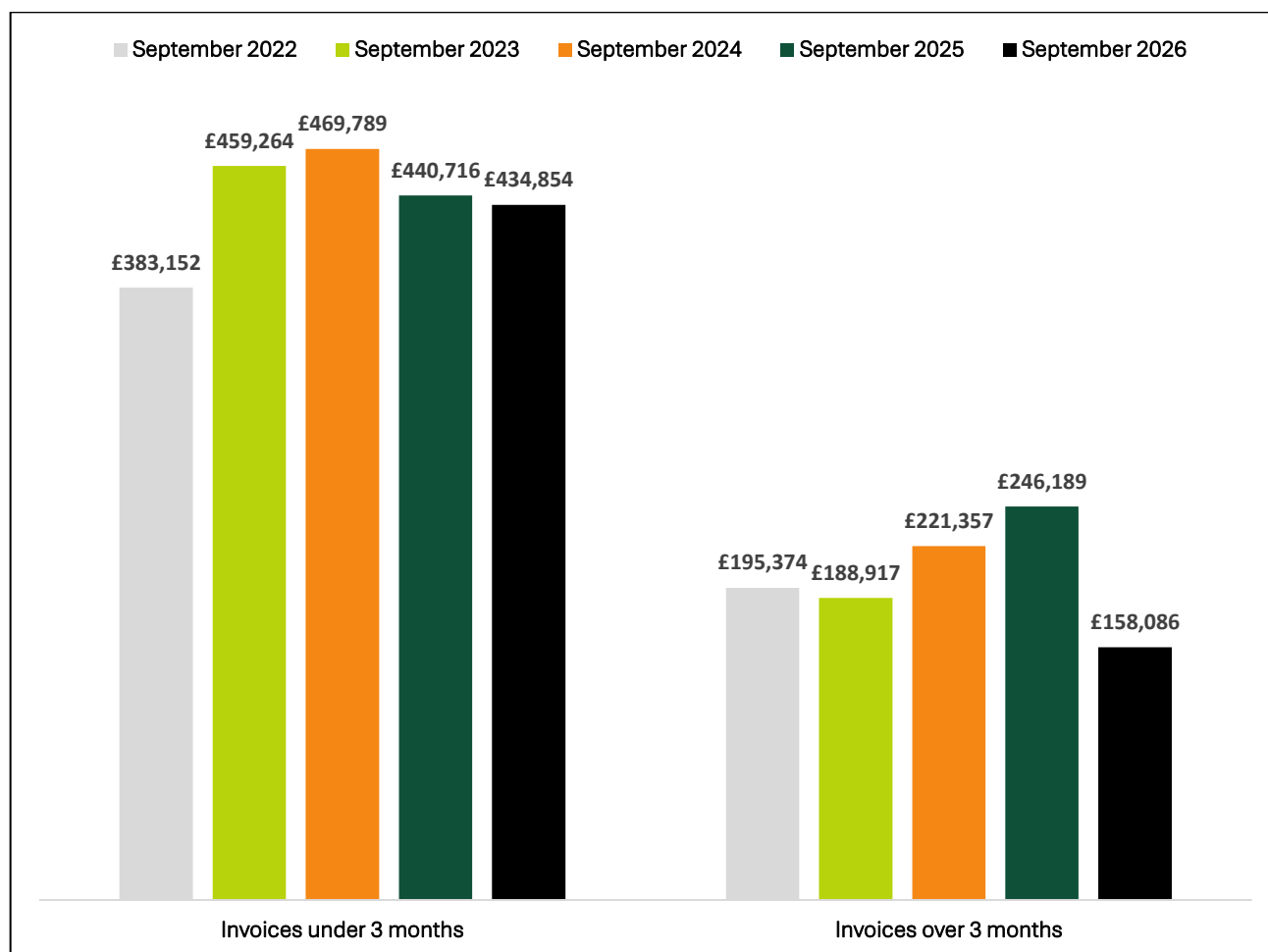
Sundry Debtors



Overall, Sundry Debt decreased by £56,959, from £1,157,107 at Quarter 2 2025-26 to £1,100,148 at Quarter 2 2026-27, a reduction of approximately 5%. This reflects bad-debt write-offs undertaken by officers.

Property Invoices and Debt

Overall, Property Debt decreased by £93,965, from £686,905 at Quarter 2 2025-26 to £592,940 at Quarter 2 2026-27, a reduction of approximately 14%. The reduction was concentrated in older balances: Property invoices more than three months overdue fell by £88,103, from £246,189 to £158,086, a decrease of approximately 36%. This indicates that most of the year-on-year improvement arose from the clearance, recovery or write-off of aged Property Debt, rather than solely from changes in invoices that remained within payment terms.



Corporate Action plan 2026-27

Economic growth and regeneration

Title	Description	Managed By	Due Date	Title	Latest Note	Progress Bar	Status Icon
B. Redevelop former Crown House site, Lion Fields and other brownfield sites we own – mainly for housing	Delivery of Lion Fields Housing scheme	Ostap Paparega	31-December-2026	Delivery of Lion Fields Housing scheme	Stage 1 tender closed and evaluation completed. Stage 2 tender issued on 31st July 2026 with a closing date of 14th October 2026	30%	
	Delivery of the former Crown House site			Delivery of Market Street site	Not yet progressed.	25%	
	Delivery of Market Street site						
C. Progress the redevelopment of Bridge Street site, Stourport	Explore options for redeveloping the site.	Ostap Paparega	31-Mar-2028	Bridge Street car park redevelopment	The project is progressing. Pre-application advice has been sought, and a planning application is expected to be submitted in early October 2026. Design works continue and are due to be completed in November 2026. Following this, contractor market testing and pricing will be undertaken.	30%	
D. Work with High Streets Task Force to develop and implement a vision for the regeneration of central Stourport	Develop and implement a vision for the regeneration of central Stourport	Ostap Paparega	31-November-2026	Implementation plan to be developed Autumn 2026	The Stourport Vision Working Group has met twice this year, with a third meeting scheduled for October. Partners are considering the draft implementation plan with a view to agreeing the delivery schedule later in the year.	70%	
E. Work with partners to improve skill levels and make sure they are the skills employers need	Approval of UKSPF Projects	Ostap Paparega	31-Mar-2027	Careers Worcestershire	Following approval from Cabinet, WFDC is supporting Careers Worcester through 2026-28. Delivery will continue from the Point of Kidderminster College. Q2 reports are due shortly; Q1 performance was 'on track'.	50%	
F. Make sure business support services are available	Finance support from WFDC to	Ostap Paparega	31-Mar-2027	BetaDen	Further delivery was planned for summer 2026 at the Old Court. A new cohort began on 8 th September and will run until the end of the year.	50%	

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Title	Description	Managed By	Due Date	Title	Latest Note	Progress Bar	Status Icon
to help businesses grow	provide business support initiatives			Worcs Growth Hub	Following Cabinet approval, WFDC has agreed to fund directly the delivery of the Growth Hub until 2028. Q1 performance was on track; the Q2 report is due shortly.	50%	

Securing financial sustainability for services communities value

Title	Description	Managed By	Due Date	Title	Latest Note	Progress Bar	Status Icon
G. Increase net income from our commercial activities	Rental reviews and actions to obtain extra income	Faye Parrett	31-Mar-2027	Rent Reviews – complete all outstanding rent reviews and ensure current and future rent reviews are completed on time	Limited progress over the Summer due to capacity issues, although data is clear about sites due a rent review and work will be prioritised based on financial gain.	20%	
				Reduce number of vacant units	Active engagement with prospective tenants continues across all sites, with several opportunities currently being explored. We are observing active churn in the industrial portfolio, which is normal for the nature of our tenants. Vacancies are monitored, and we enjoy strong demand for our units, pursuing opportunities to refill them at the earliest opportunity. The Rightmove commercial advertising platform has now been implemented and listings are live. While it is too early to assess the full impact, the platform is expected to increase market visibility and enquiries, supporting efforts to reduce vacancy levels. Very low vacancies across the industrial portfolio	20%	
				Review service charge accounts for each property and create efficiencies where possible	This work is being undertaken on an estate-by-estate basis. Wyre Forest House, Unity Park, Forest Industrial Estate, Space and Hoobrook Enterprise Centre 2025/6 financial year accounts have been reviewed and analysed. General themes are emerging. Analysis of earlier and current years' budgets is required to confirm the extent of recovery. Work remains to rationalise future reporting to ensure accountable recovery of the correct service charge at each estate. All properties managed as part of the MK2 contract have been reviewed.	60%	

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Title	Description	Managed By	Due Date	Title	Latest Note	Progress Bar	Status Icon
				Let office space and F&B units in the Piano Building	New marketing material has been produced and engagement with the agents is ongoing. A potential joint agency for the office units is being explored to widen the agency net. Active engagement with a prospective tenant continues, with heads of terms issued and several opportunities currently being explored.	10%	
				Let office space in The Old Court	SpacetoCo, an online booking and venue hire platform, has been implemented at The Old Court to pilot short-term occupancy opportunities and increase utilisation of vacant space. The marketing agent is actively engaged across the whole building, heads of terms have been issued to a prospective tenant, and active engagement with other prospective tenants continues.	40%	
H. Increase the visits to our nature reserves and make them more accessible	Delivery of the Wyre Forest Wild project.	Adam Hamilton	31-Mar-2027	Wyre Forest Wild project - to enhance local nature reserves through branding, improved visitor facilities, and sustainable commercial opportunities	Funding has been secured to continue the rollout of the new signage. One new sign is due to be installed, and six more have been ordered through a new supplier after running a quotation process.	70%	
				Development / Accessibility of Nature Reserves - to include paths, signage, transportation links, inclusive access, habitat improvement, etc.	New gates are due to be installed at Britannia Gardens to improve site security and prevent fly-grazing, along with a new interpretation panel. Discussions are taking place with SSC to create a route between their site and Burlish Meadows.	65%	
I. Complete the redevelopment of Brinton Park, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.	Deliver Brinton Park project as per National Lottery Heritage Fund plan	Kathryn Underhill	31-Mar-2027	Complete the redevelopment and open the park to the public	Work has progressed. Handover is expected in Q3.	80%	
				Launch of the park event	The event date has moved from 12th September 2026 to 31 October 2026.	75%	

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Title	Description	Managed By	Due Date	Title	Latest Note	Progress Bar	Status Icon
J. Investigate options for developers to make biodiversity contributions on alternative sites	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) unit sales – Secure the legal framework, identify the areas of land to be allocated and develop the sale and promotion of these units	Adam Hamilton	31-Mar-2026	Investigate options for developers to make biodiversity contributions on alternative sites	On hold until reorganisation	20%	
				Undertake financial assessment of these assets	Options are still being explored for the piece of land that would be put forward, linked to Burlish Meadows. This work is linked to investigating options and is on hold pending an LGR update.	40%	
				Appoint a governing body for land management	This work is linked to investigating options and is on hold pending an LGR update.	20%	
				Confirm and approve sale units and locations; align with corporate policy	Options are still being explored for the piece of land that would be put forward, linked to Burlish Meadows.	40%	
				Develop a market-ready, credible product for promotion and trade	The Director of Commercial Services has been talking to other local authorities to investigate the best way forward. Work on this has been delayed due to other pressures and consideration of the impact of LGR.	20%	

A clean, safe and green place to live, work and visit

Title	Description	Managed By	Due Date	Title	Latest Note	Progress Bar	Status Icon
K. Secure housing growth through the local plan	Support Sustainable Housing Delivery via Local Plan Implementation	Kate Bailey	31-Mar-2027	Local Plan Review and Housing Delivery	The Local Plan Review Panel has been re-established, with its first meeting at the end of May, and has met to review the initial feedback from the scoping questionnaire. The Bewdley Conservation Area Character Appraisal went out to re-consultation prior to adoption to amend its boundaries. Six new affordable housing units were delivered in Q2 and 27 units were granted planning permission.	50%	
N. Work with town councils and community groups to improve parks and open spaces.	Support localism by empowering town councils and community groups to lead improvements in parks and open spaces, ensuring developments reflect community needs and priorities	Kathryn Underhill	31-Mar-2027	Transfer of assets to Worcestershire Football Association	Heads of terms have been drafted and are being negotiated with Worcestershire FA. Approval in principle to dispose of the land was agreed by Cabinet on 09/07/2026. Notice of the proposed disposal of open space land has been given. An officer decision will be issued once negotiations are complete.	50%	
				Transfer of assets of Kidderminster Town Council	Transfers are scheduled to be completed in April 2027.	75%	
				Transfer of assets of Stourport Town Council	Transfers are scheduled to be completed within Q3 2026	75%	
				Transfer of assets of Bewdley Town Council	Transfers are scheduled to be completed within Q3 2026	75%	

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Title	Description	Managed By	Due Date	Title	Latest Note	Progress Bar	Status Icon
Q. Produce and implement a carbon reduction plan for the district and for the council	To deliver the 2026/27 climate change action plan	Kate Bailey	31-Mar-2027	Deliver the Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Action Plan	The installation of electric vehicle charge points commenced at council offices and will shortly commence in council-owned car parks. Regular meetings have been held with the Green Alliance, and officers have attended the cycle forum. A review of the Climate Change and Carbon Reduction Plan will commence in Q2 to update the strategy in early 2027	50%	
R. Help people make their homes more energy efficient	Use the Warm Homes Local Grant to assist residents in enhancing their homes' energy efficiency	Kate Bailey	31-Mar-2026	Complete a minimum of 41 properties in 2026-27	The Warm Homes funding has supported the delivery of measures into 16 properties in quarter two, and a further ten properties were assisted through the Council's Energy Efficiency funding, bringing the total to 35 Warm Homes properties and 11 through the Energy Efficiency Funding.	50%	
S. Install electric charging points in car parks in all three towns	Install Electric Vehicle Charging Points across car parks in Kidderminster, Stourport and Bewdley	Ian Miller	31-Mar-2026	All EV charging points installed	Electric vehicle charging infrastructure at Green Street Depot and Wyre Forest House remains fully operational and continues to be actively used by the Council's electric vehicle fleet and other authorised users. Progress towards the installation of public EV charging points across the district is dependent on network connection works. There continue to be delays with NGED in providing electricity connections for public car parks. It is hoped that some initial installations may be possible during Q3, although Q4 seems more likely. The viability of the required electrical connections has been confirmed across the district, and a detailed plan is now in place identifying the parking spaces that will be equipped with EV charging points.	10%	

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Corporate Plan Priority	Corporate Action	Code	Measure	2024-25	2025-26	Q1 26-27	Q2 26-27	Q3 26-27	Q4 26-27
Securing financial sustainability for services that local communities value	Monitor council tax base to increase income	LA103	Percentage of council tax collected	97.04%	96.23%	29.29%	57.30%		
		LA104	Percentage of business rates collected	96.93%	96.0%	28.37%	57.23%		
Securing financial sustainability for services that local communities value	Monitor customer contacts to improve service provision	LA116	Number of customer contacts via hub (phone, email & visit)	45,406	42,437	10,352	10,316		
		LA117	% customer contacts that are of value	82%	81%	80%	81%		
		LA112	Number of complaints received	111	139	42	55		
		LA8	Number of compliments received	89	72	11	10		
A clean, safe and green place to live, work and visit	Secure housing growth through the local plan	LA045	Number of people presenting in need of housing advice	11,762	10,405	2,428	2,241		
		LA054a	Number of new housing units approved in planning applications <i>*open market and affordable housing</i>	191	1,655	56	27		
		LA039	Number of affordable new build houses completed	199	93	73	6		
		LA106	Percentage of applicable planning applications approved that will deliver Green Infrastructure	16.66%	10.20%	100%	35.5%		

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Corporate Plan Priority	Corporate Action	Code	Measure	2024-25	2025-26	Q1 26-27	Q2 26-27	Q3 26-27	Q4 26-27
		LA115	Percentage of non-major planning applications decided within 8 weeks or with an extension of time agreement	97.52%	94.02%	80%	92.3%		
		LA118	Percentage of major planning applications decided within 13 weeks or with an extension of time agreement	100%	96%	97%	100%		
		LA120	Number of planning appeal decisions received	25	21	7	1		
		LA127	Percentage of planning appeal decisions not upheld	26.2%	43.5%	58%	0%		
		LA128	Number of biodiversity net gain units secured by planning permission	0	4.586	2.183	1.58		
		LA130	Number of open planning enforcement cases	251	276	135	182		

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Corporate Plan Priority	Corporate Action	Code	Measure	2024-25	2025-26	Q1 26-27	Q2 26-27	Q3 26-27	Q4 26-27
A clean, safe and green place to live, work and visit	Support provided to low-income households	LA102	Amount spent on hardship/welfare support	£577,827	£406,617	£21,579	£52,576		
		LE144	Number of households on council tax reduction scheme	-	7,459	7,520	7,457		
		LE145	Number of households on housing benefit	-	2,309	2,285	2,288		
		LA146	Average days to process new housing benefit claims	24.59 days	19.3 days	24.59 days	21.17 days		
		LA147	Average days to process new council tax reduction scheme claims	72.58 days	25 days	30.80 days	31.70 days		
		LA148	Average days to process housing benefit changes of circumstances	9.68 days	6 days	9.04 days	9.99 days		
		LA149	Average days to process council tax reduction scheme changes of circumstances	22.26 days	10.9 days	15.42 days	16.07 days		
A clean, safe and green place to live, work and visit	Contribute to making the district a clean, safe and green place to live, work and visit	LA150	Number of cyber security incidents detected from various sources and systems <i>including emails, endpoints and web browsing</i>	-	1,825,491	1,134,970	51,144		
Corporate Plan Priority	Corporate Action	Code	Measure	2024-25	2025-26	Q1 26-27	Q2 26-27	Q3 26-27	Q4 26-27
A clean, safe and green place to live, work and	Contribute to making the district	LA107	Number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued (total)	110	96	26	15		

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visit	a clean, safe and green place to live, work and visit	LA071	Number of Fly-tipping Incidents	832	1,023	61	111		
		LA107f	Number of Fly-tipping Prosecutions Secured	-	0	0	0		
		LA107d	FPN – Fly Tipping	3	7	2	2		
		LA107a	FPN – Littering	55	58	18	10		
		LA107c	FPN – Duty of Care	1	0	0	1		
		LA107e	FPN – Waste Carriers	9	0	0	0		
		LA107f	FPN – WTN/Duty of Care	-	-	0	0		
		LA107g	FPN – Abandoned Vehicle	-	-	3	1		
		LA107h	FPN – Breach of CPN	-	-	0	1		
		LA107i	FPN – Distribution	-	-	0	0		
		LA107j	FPN – Fly Post/Graffiti	-	-	0	0		
		LA107k	FPN – Nuisance Parking	-	-	0	0		
		LA107l	FPN – PSPO Dog Control	-	-	0	0		
		LA107m	FPN – PSPO Drinking ASB	-	-	3	0		
		LE011a LE011b	Number of Penalty Charge Notices issued						
			Off street	2,528	1,869	536	591		
			On street	3,585	3,811	955	938		
			In total	6,113	5,680	1,491	1,529		
		LE016	Number of visitors to Bewdley Museum	220,245	221,578	59,660	73,168		

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Corporate Plan Priority	Corporate Action	Code	Measure	2024-25	2025-26	Q1 26-27	Q2 26-27	Q3 26-27	Q4 26-27
A clean, safe and green place to live, work and visit	Contribute to making the district a clean, safe and green place to live, work and visit	LE032	Number of visitors to Wyre Forest Leisure Centre	596,305	597,596	151,614	148,347		
		<u>LA108</u>	Number of new trees planted	10,270	3,608	0	0		
		LA044	Number of residents who experience a positive health outcome because of a housing improvement intervention	275	252	37	41		
		LA152	Tonnes of CO2 equivalent from WFDC fleet and operations – yearly	-	916.17 tCO ₂ e	-	-		
		LA153	Number of homes and businesses receiving flood risk reduction measures	-	25	0	0		
		<u>LA154</u>	Total household waste collected monthly, kg per household.	38	37.03	56.31	52.69		
		<u>LA155</u>	Total household recycling, kg per household.	15	15.9	14.66	16.22		
		LA065	Percentage of household waste reused/recycled/composted – (annual)	35%	33%	-	-		

Explanatory note:

***LA054a & LA039 (New housing units and new builds) :** The lower figures reported this quarter reflect a reduction in the number of planning applications received for new dwellings. In addition, the *Local Plan* has been in place since 2022, and many allocated housing sites have already secured planning permission, resulting in fewer new approvals and completions being recorded during the period.

***LA108 (Tree planting) :** No tree planting activity was undertaken during Quarter 2. Tree planting is typically seasonal and is generally carried out during the autumn and winter planting season. As a result, no new trees were planted during the reporting period.

***LA107 (FPN Issued):** The number of fly-tipping incident reports received through My Wyre Forest can vary significantly. Fluctuations may be due to multiple reports of the same incident, increased public awareness and reporting, or changes in offender behaviour, such as targeting quieter locations.

***LA146-LA149 (Benefits Processing Performance):** With the exception of LA146, Q2 performance was below Q1 and continues to reflect the usual increase in workload at the start of the financial year which continued into July. However, performance recovered strongly in August and September, with sustained improvements demonstrating that service delivery returned to expected levels. While the overall quarterly position continues to be affected by the impact of July's performance, the quarter concluded with a clear and positive upward trend, providing confidence in continued improvement during Q3.

***LA071 (Fly-Tipping Incidents):** The issuing of an FPN for the offence will only ever be done if the evidence we have is irrefutable.

***LA154 & LA155 (Household Waste and Recycling):** Quarter 2 data has now been received from Worcestershire County Council and included in the results. Updated Quarter 1 figures have also been provided and the table has been revised accordingly.

Local Outcomes Framework (LOF) Q2

Purpose

The Local Outcomes Framework (LOF) has been adopted to provide a consistent set of outcome measures that allow Wyre Forest District Council to benchmark performance against CIPFA nearest neighbours and identify areas where local interventions are having a positive impact or where further improvement is required.

Quarter 2 is reporting on LOF Groups 4-12 (Multiple Disadvantage, Best Start in Life, Every Child Achieving and Thriving, Keeping Children Safe and Family Security, Health and Wellbeing, Adult Social Care, and Neighbourhoods). Measures will be reported by exception only, focusing on indicators where Wyre Forest is identified as an outlier against CIPFA nearest neighbours. The phased reporting approach ensures a manageable review of the 16 LOF groups across the year.

Groups 4-11 have not been included in the Q2 LOF report as the measures within these themes primarily relate to county-level services such as education, children's services, public health and adult social care, which are not directly delivered by the Council. As a result, relevant and meaningful data is not currently available for reporting. Group 12 (Neighbourhoods) has been included as it contains measures that are more closely aligned to the Council's responsibilities and priorities.

Note: Some indicators, such as resident satisfaction with the area, are influenced by a wide range of factors beyond the District Council's direct control, including the actions of partner organisations, wider economic conditions, and individual experiences. As a result, performance against these measures cannot be attributed solely to the Council's services and activities.

Neighbourhoods

- 1. Percentage of people who agree adults in their communities can be trusted**
- 2. Percentage of people who feel they can influence local decisions**
- 3. Percentage of people who are satisfied with community / cultural facilities in their local area**
- 4. Percentage of people who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live**
- 5. Percentage of people who agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area**
- 6. Percentage of people experiencing loneliness**
- 7. Percentage of people who have engaged in volunteering recently**
- 8. Percentage of people who reported in-person cultural engagement within the past 12-months**

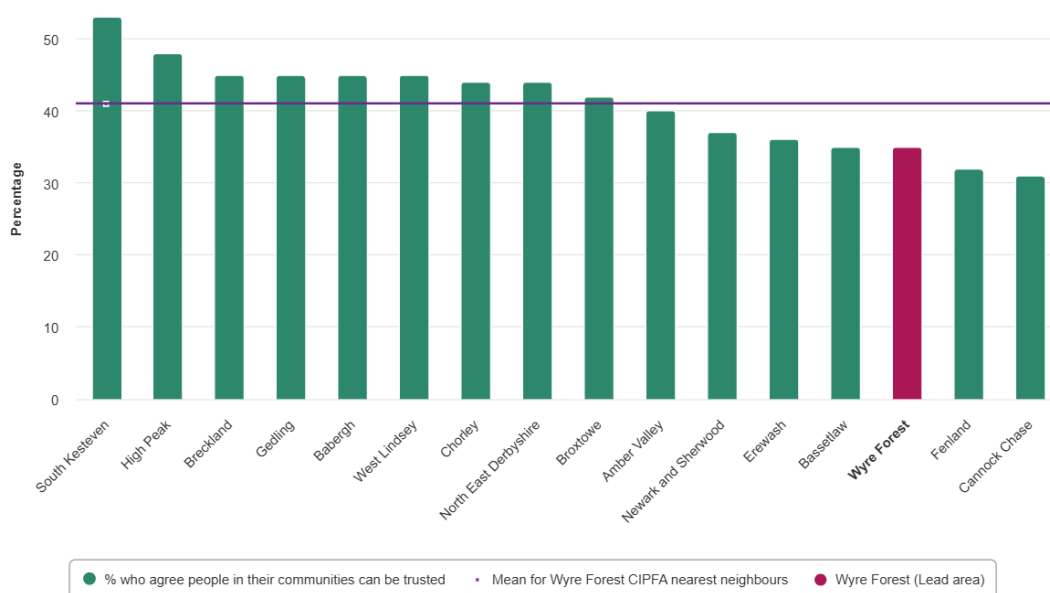
9. Anti-social behaviour [Placeholder] – no data

10. Crime in your neighbourhood [Placeholder] – no data

11. Rate of fly-tipping enforcement actions per incident

12. Access to green and blue spaces

Percentage who agree people in their communities can be trusted (2025/26) for Wyre Forest & Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours



Comments: Polarity - High value is good.

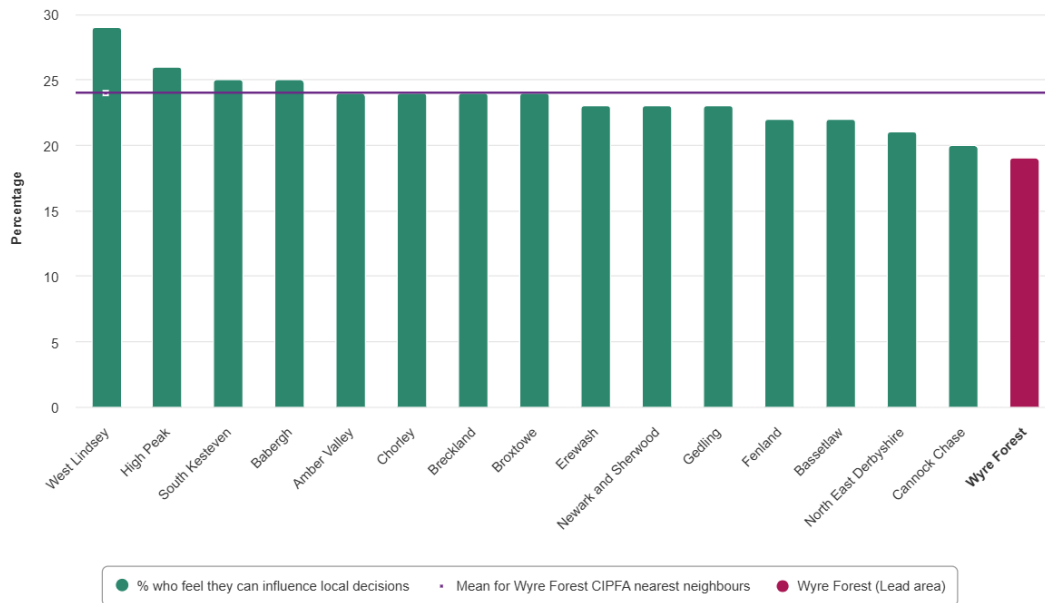
Percentage of people who agree adults in their communities can be trusted (DCMS)

In 2025/26, the percentage of adults who agree that people in their communities can be trusted in Wyre Forest was 35%, which is below the Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours mean percentage of 41%.

This is the proportion of respondents aged 16 and over in agreement that people in the neighbourhood can be trusted. Respondents who answered "don't know" and/or those with missing answers are excluded. Respondents who answered "Just moved here" are excluded.

This data is sourced from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport.

Percentage of people who feel they can influence local decisions (2025/26) for Wyre Forest & Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours



Comments: Polarity - High value is good.

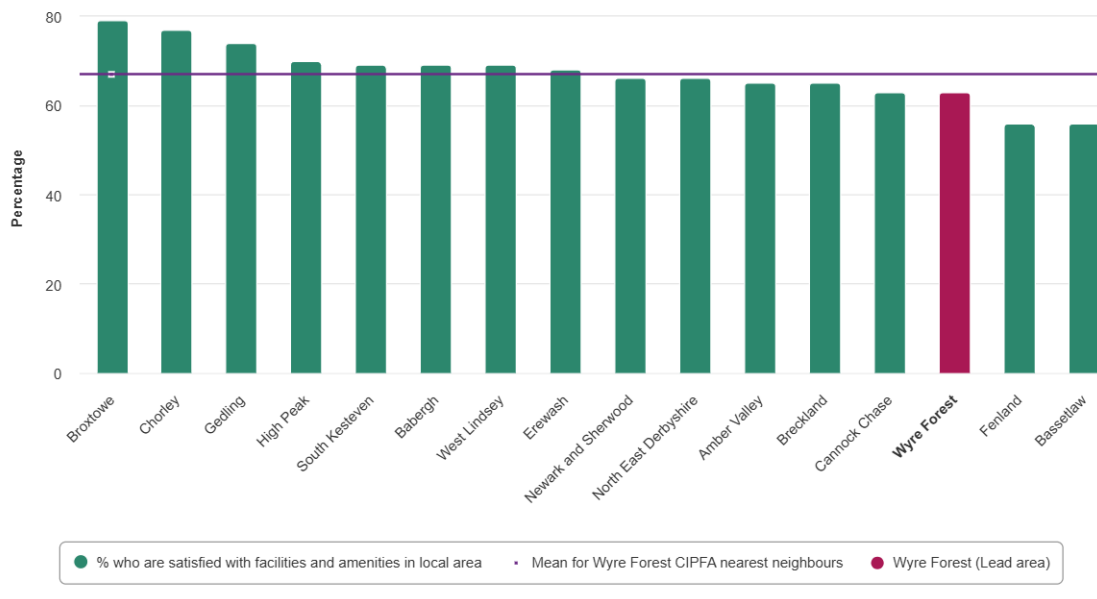
Percentage of people who feel they can influence local decisions (DCMS)

In 2025/26, the percentage of adults who feel they can influence decisions affecting the local area in Wyre Forest was 19%, which is below the Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours mean percentage of 24%.

This is the proportion of respondents aged 16 and over in agreement that you can personally influence decisions affecting the local area. Respondents who answered "don't know" and/or those with missing answers are excluded.

This data is sourced from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport.

Percentage of people who are satisfied with facilities and amenities in local area (2025/26) for Wyre Forest & Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours



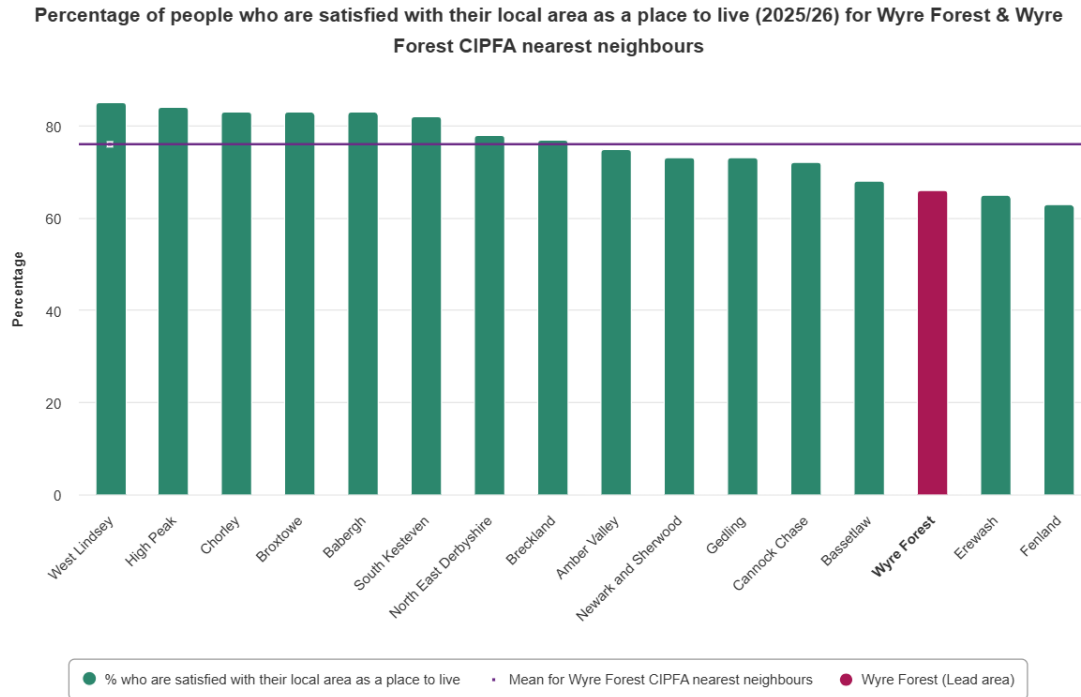
Comments: Polarity - High value is good

Percentage of people are satisfied with community / cultural facilities in their local area (DCMS)

In 2025/26, the percentage of people who are satisfied with the local services and amenities in Wyre Forest was [63%](#), which is below the Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours mean percentage of 67%.

This is the proportion of respondents aged 16 and over who are satisfied with facilities and amenities in their local area, when asked the question "Generally how satisfied are you with the facilities and amenities in your local area?". Local facilities include the following: grocery store, pub/bar, park, library, restaurant/cafe, community centre/hall, sports facilities, health centre/GP, chemist or pharmacy, post office, place of worship, and public transport links. Respondents who answered "don't know" and/or those with missing answers are excluded.

This data is sourced from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport.



Comments: Polarity - High value is good

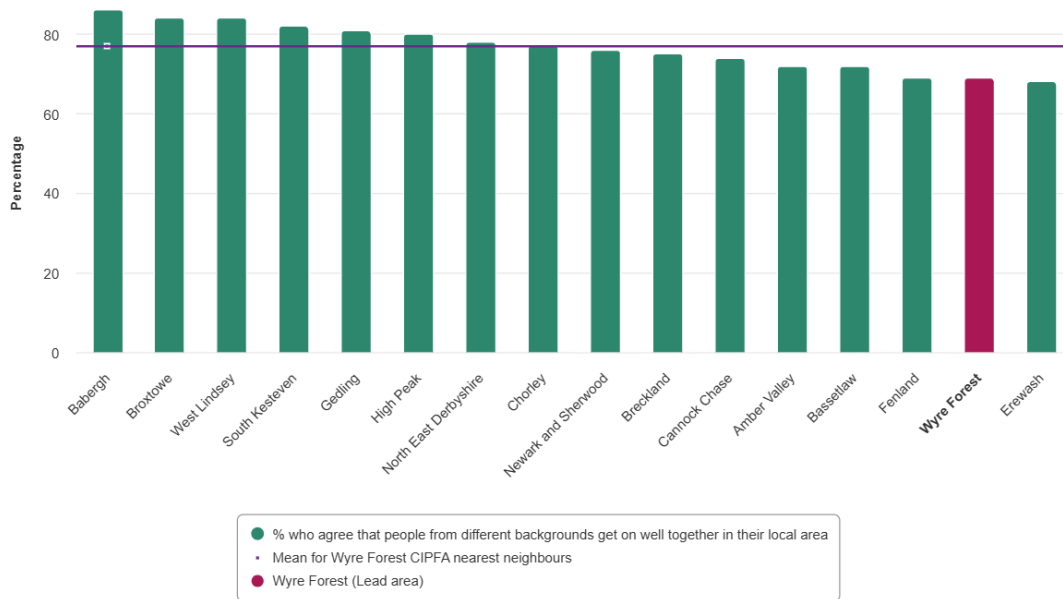
Percentage of people who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (DCMS)

In 2025/26, the percentage of adults satisfied with their local area as a place to live in Wyre Forest was 66%, which is below the Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours mean percentage of 76%.

This is the proportion of respondents aged 16 and over who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live. Respondents who answered "don't know" and/or those with missing answers are excluded.

This data is sourced from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport.

Percentage of people who agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area (2025/26) for Wyre Forest & Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours



Comments: Polarity - High value is good

Percentage of people who agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area (DCMS)

In 2025/26, the percentage of people who agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area in Wyre Forest was 69%, which is below the Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours mean percentage of 77%.

This is the proportion of respondents aged 16 and over who agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area. Respondents who answered "don't know" and/or those with missing answers are excluded.

This data is sourced from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport.

Percentage of people experiencing loneliness (2025/26) for Wyre Forest & Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours



Comments: Polarity - Low value is good

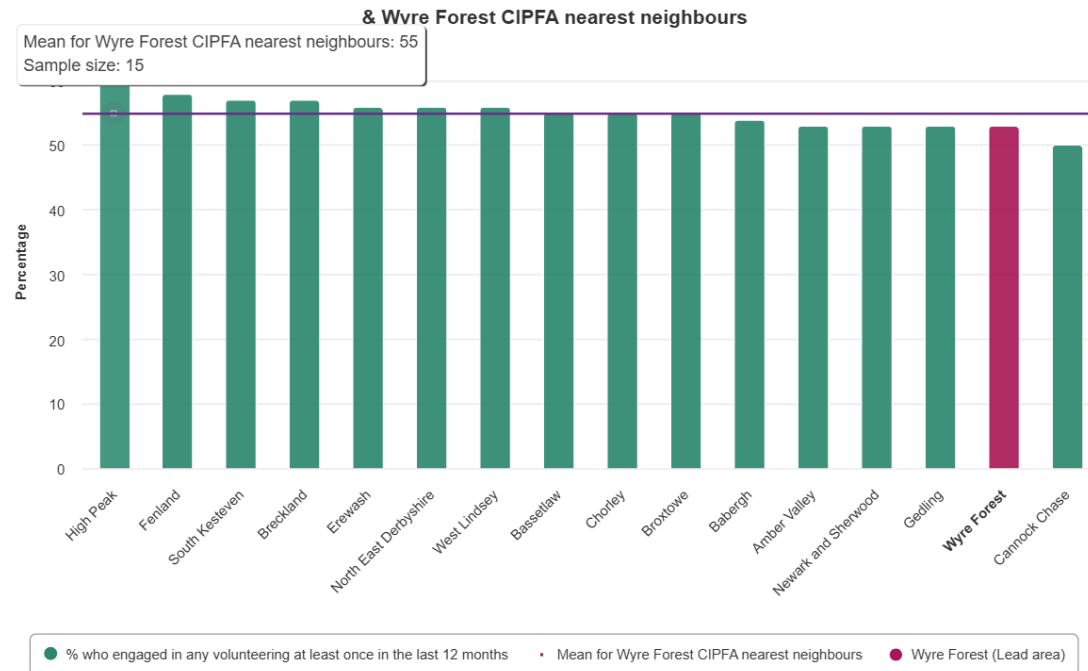
Percentage of people experiencing loneliness (DCMS)

In 2025/26, 9% of people in Wyre Forest reported experiencing loneliness, compared with a CIPFA nearest neighbour average of 6%. As a lower percentage indicates better performance, this suggests that loneliness levels in Wyre Forest are higher than the average of comparable authorities

This is the proportion of respondents aged 16 and over who answered "Often/Always" to the question How often do you feel lonely? The question was asked to measure the frequency of feelings of loneliness of adults in England. The options are Often/Always, Some of the time, Occasionally, Hardly ever and Never. Respondents who answered "don't know" and/or those with missing answers are excluded. Respondents who answered "Just moved here" are excluded.

This data is sourced from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport.

Percentage of people who engaged in any volunteering at least once in the last 12 months (2025/26) for Wyre Forest



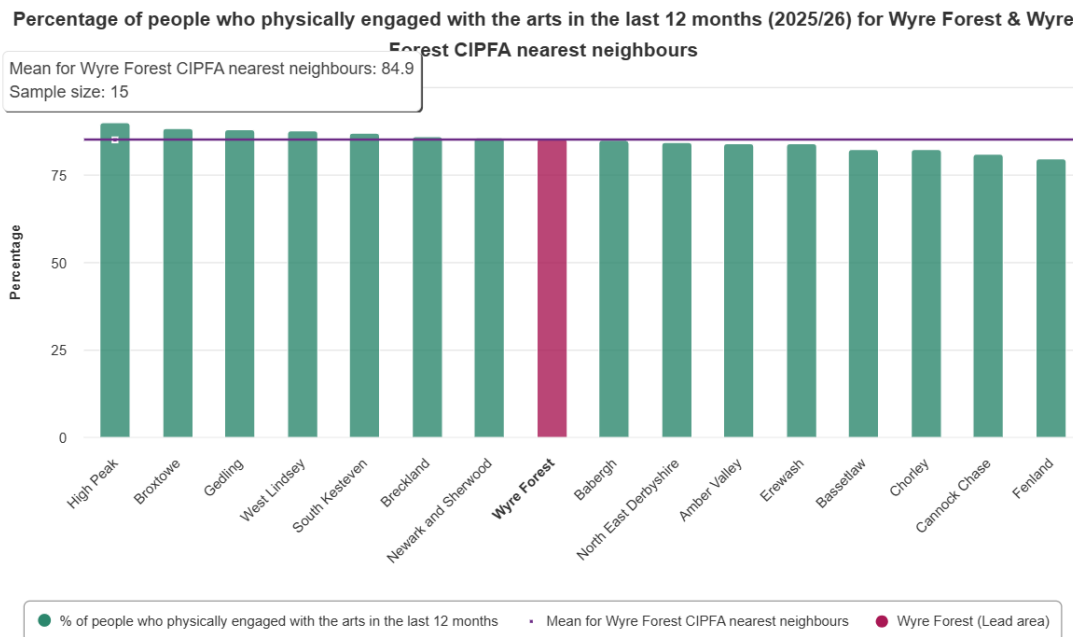
Comments: Polarity – High value is good

Percentage of people who have engaged in volunteering recently (DCMS)

In 2025/26, the percentage of people who engaged in any volunteering at least once in the last 12 months in Wyre Forest was [53%](#), which is below the Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours mean percentage of 55%.

This is the proportion of respondents aged 16 and over who engaged in any volunteering at least once in the last 12 months. Respondents who answered "don't know" and/or those with missing answers are excluded.

This data is sourced from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport.



Comments: Polarity – High value is good

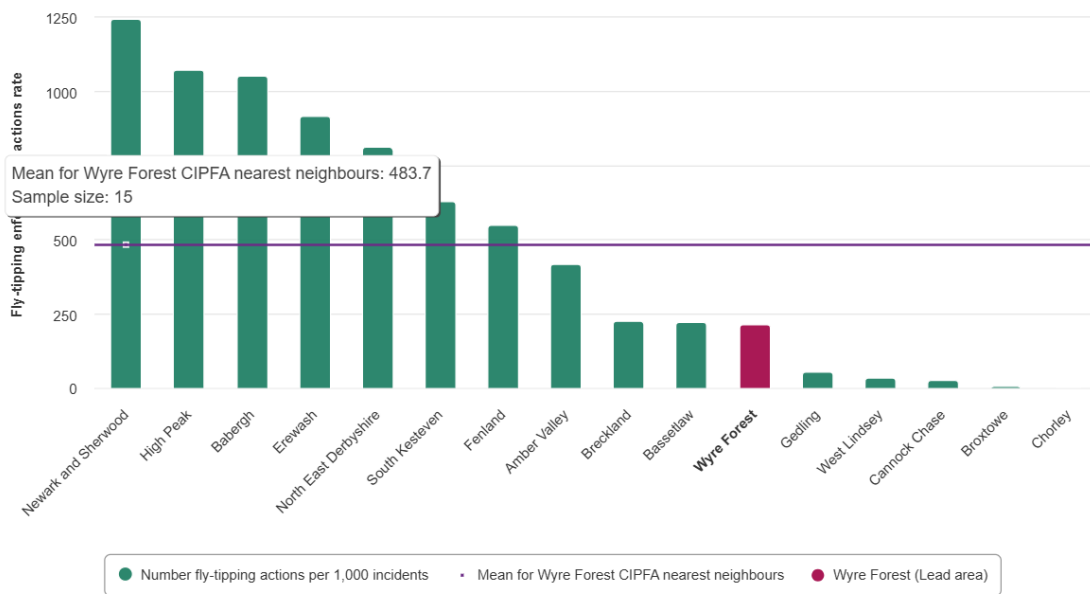
Percentage of people who reported in-person cultural engagement within the past 12-months (DCMS)

In 2025/26, the percentage of people who reported in-person cultural engagement within the past 12-months in Wyre Forest was [85.1%](#), which is above the Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours mean percentage of people who reported in-person cultural engagement of 84.9%.

This is the proportion of respondents aged 16 and over who reported having physically engaged with any arts activity in the last 12 months. This includes arts events attended or activities participated in person such as reading or attending a live comedy event. Digital engagement is not counted.

This data is sourced from the Department for Culture, Media & Sport

Number fly-tipping actions per 1,000 incidents (2024/25) for Wyre Forest & Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours



Comments: Polarity – High value is good

Rate of fly-tipping enforcement actions per incident (Defra)

In 2024/25, the number of fly tipping enforcement actions in Wyre Forest was [214.0](#) per 1000 incidents, which is below the Wyre Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours mean number of fly tipping enforcement actions of 483.7 per 1000 incidents.

This is the total number of fly-tipping enforcement actions carried out by the local authority per thousand incidents.

Fly-tipping is the illegal deposit of waste on land, contrary to Section 33(1)(a) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Local authorities and the Environment Agency both have a responsibility in respect of illegally deposited waste. This includes local authorities and the Environment Agency collecting and reporting data on fly-tipping in their area, this dataset however, only includes LA collected data.

Note: that some of the figures reported by other councils seem unusual – they are reporting more enforcement actions (over 1000) than the number of fly-tipping incidents, as the bar chart shows enforcement actions for each 1000 incidents.

This data is sourced from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Overview & Scrutiny Committee Briefing Paper

Report of: Ross Iannoccaro, Head of Operations

Date

05/11/2026

Open

Food Waste Collections and Funding Update

1. Background

- 1.1 On 11 February 2026, Cabinet decided not to implement food waste collections despite the statutory duty commencing on 31 March 2026

Cabinet's decision was subsequently endorsed by full Council at its meeting on 25 February 2026. The O&S meeting of 5 February 2026 supported the recommendation to Cabinet but asked for an update report by November.

In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 5 February 2026:

The Cabinet AGREED:

- (a) not to award a contract following the recent procurement exercise;
- (b) not to make any arrangements for weekly collections of food waste from domestic properties until the Government provides additional funding to cover the cost of the new burden;
- (c) to recommend to Council that it endorses the decisions taken by Cabinet;
- (d) the Cabinet Member and relevant Officer bring a progress report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 9 months or earlier, to keep this item on the agenda.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Council has continued to engage with DEFRA regarding the implementation of mandatory weekly food waste collections. Correspondence received from DEFRA confirms that there is currently no intention to provide transparent, ongoing new burdens funding to support the future operational costs of food waste collections. DEFRA's position is that the new burden has been "taken into account" within the Local Government Finance Settlement, rather than being supported through a separate, continuing grant mechanism.

3. Position Across Worcestershire

- 3.1 There is no consistent implementation programme being pursued ahead of local government reorganization LGR, and further setbacks are being experienced from contractual and funding constraints. The other five district councils are at different stages of implementation with four planning to commence collections of food waste during 2026-27 or at the start of the next financial year (Bromsgrove District Council, Malvern Hills District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Worcester City Council). In some cases, implementation will be in part of a district only. Wychavon District Council is planning that food waste collections should start from April 2028 when its external waste collection contract ends.

4. Wyre Forest District Council Position

- 4.1 Wyre Forest District Council's position is that it will not progress with the food waste collection service at this stage. Given the current uncertainty about the LGR timetable, it is considered more appropriate for the successor unitary authority to determine the future approach to food waste collections. At the time of preparing this report, the Government has not announced the outcome of the review of its July decision on LGR. However, if LGR were to be in April 2029, it is unlikely that a substantive decision would be taken before late summer or autumn 2028. Consequently, the earliest realistic implementation date would be during the latter part of 2029, although implementation could easily be later depending on procurement requirements, available funding and wider service priorities.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Current estimates indicate an estimated capital funding shortfall of £220k and estimated annual revenue cost of £1.2m. To assist implementation by the successor unitary authority, Wyre Forest District Council will continue to protect

the unused food waste capital reserve of £1.15m, which was provided as a grant by DEFRA. This will remain available to the unitary council to help defray a proportion of the capital costs arising from any future decision to introduce a food waste collection service.

- 5.2 WFDC is not unique in feeling short-changed by the Government approach to funding the new burden. The successor unitary council will inherit a challenging revenue position because of ongoing pressures in areas such as social services and special educational needs and is almost certain to need exceptional financial support (which allows it to borrow or use capital receipts to fund revenue expenditure) in its first year. However, the ability of a council with a budget of several hundred million pounds to absorb the cost of implementing food waste collections is likely to be greater than that of WFDC, whose net budget for 2026-27 is approximately £17m.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Given the absence of transparent, ongoing new burdens funding, the uncertainty surrounding future service delivery arrangements and the impending transition to unitary local government, it is considered that the most prudent course of action is to defer any decision on implementation. Responsibility for determining the scope, timing and funding of food waste collections should rest with the successor unitary authority when the broader strategic and financial context will be clearer.

7. Background papers

Minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, 5 February 2026
https://forms.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/docs/doc61197_20260205_o_and_s_committee_minute.pdf

Minutes from the Cabinet meeting, 11 February 2026
https://forms.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/docs/doc61268_20260211_cabinet_minute.pdf

Minutes from the Council meeting, 25 February 2026
https://forms.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/docs/doc61326_20260225_council_minute.pdf

Officer contact details

Name: Ross Iannoccaro

Title: Head of Operations

Contact number 01562 732984

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme 2026-2027**

May 2026 – (Meeting cancelled - no items to consider)

June 2026

Performance Monitoring Quarter Four 2025-26

Update to Housing Assistance Policy 2026

Housing Enforcement Policy 2026

Removal of permitted development rights for smaller houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) (confirmation of Article 4 direction)

July 2026

Shared Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2026-31

Disposal of part of Burlish Country Park

Disposal of playing pitches to Worcestershire Football Association

Budget Monitoring Fourth Quarter 2025-26 (PROVISIONAL OUTTURN)

September 2026

Budget and Performance Monitoring First Quarter 2026-27

Briefing note on the progress of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee review

Review of Public Space Protection Orders and Results of the Consultation Process

Consultation on potential changes to council tax reduction scheme for 2027-28 onwards

Nominations for Treasury Management Review Panel 2026-2027 (Chair to be appointed)

1 October 2026 (no Cabinet meeting this month)

Royal Mail representative – postponed

15 October 2026 – Additional meeting

Land disposal - Burlish Country Park

November 2026

Budget and Performance Monitoring Q2 update

Food waste collections and funding update

December 2026

Bewdley Conservation Area Character Appraisal

January 2027 (no Cabinet meeting this month)

Biodiversity Policy update

February 2027

Budget and Performance Monitoring Q3 update

March 2027 (no Cabinet meeting this month)

April 2027

Local Plan – further call for gypsy and traveller sites - update