

BOROUGH OF CHESTERFIELD

You are summoned to attend a Meeting of the **Council** of the **Borough of Chesterfield** to be held in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Rose Hill, Chesterfield S40 1LP** on **Wednesday, 19 July 2023** at **5.00 pm** for the purpose of transacting the following business:-

1. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 15 May and 17 May, 2023 (Pages 5 - 20)
2. Mayor's Communications
3. Apologies for Absence
4. Declarations of Members' and Officers' Interests relating to items on the Agenda
5. Public Questions to the Council

To receive questions from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order No. 12.

Question submitted by Kris Stone;

In April 2022 I asked a question due to my concerns about food supplies and shortages in the future. Does the Borough Council know of any updates of plans in place in case of food shortages? And does the Borough Council support the idea of Chesterfield residents growing their own food in back gardens and on allotments, as well as looking positively on and supporting those with disabilities; so that they may do the same?

6. Petitions to Council

To receive petitions submitted under Standing Order No. 13

7. Questions to the Leader

To receive questions submitted to the Leader under Standing Order No.14

8. Budget Outturn 2022/23 (Pages 21 - 40)
9. Budget Strategy (Pages 41 - 54)
10. Asset Management Strategy (Pages 55 - 92)

11. Options for replacing the Council's Fleet (Pages 93 - 106)
12. Relocation of Customer Services Centre (Pages 107 - 118)
13. Equality and Diversity Annual Report (Pages 119 - 176)
14. Scrutiny Annual Report (Pages 177 - 190)
15. Local Government Act 1972 - Exclusion of Public

To move "That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act."

Part 2 (Non Public Information)

16. Stephenson Memorial Hall (Pages 191 - 204)
17. Re-admission of the Public
18. Minutes of Committee Meetings (Pages 205 - 206)

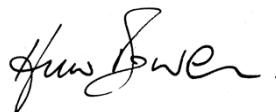
To receive for information the Minutes of the following meetings:-

- Appeals and Regulatory Committee
- Planning Committee

19. To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet of 4 April 2023 (Pages 207 - 212)
20. Questions under Standing Order No. 19

To receive questions from Councillors in accordance with Standing Order No.19.

By order of the Council,



Chief Executive

Chief Executive's Unit,
Town Hall,
Chesterfield

11 July 2023

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COUNCIL

Monday, 15th May, 2023

Present:-

Councillor Rogers (Chair)

Councillors	Bagley	Councillors	P Innes
	Baldauf-Good		Jacobs
	B Bingham		Kellman
	J Bingham		Miles
	Blakemore		Ogle
	Brady		Perkins
	Brittain		Redihough
	Brock		Sarvent
	Caulfield		Serjeant
	Culley		Snowdon
	Davies		Staton
	Dyke		Stone
	Falconer		Thompson
	Flood		Thornton
	P Gilby		Twigg
	Holmes		Wheeldon
	J Innes		Yates

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

74 **TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY, 2023**

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 22 February, 2023 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.

75 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor reflected on his term of office and was pleased to announce that he and the Mayoress had attended more than 160 engagements.

The Mayor had particularly enjoyed last May's Civic Service and Parade. It was an important tradition which he was pleased to have been able to share with his family, friends, and Chesterfield's communities.

The Mayor thanked everyone for their support and concluded by saying that it had been an honour to serve as the 381st Mayor of Chesterfield.

76 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Callan, Davenport, Hollingworth, Niblock and Ridgway.

77 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

No declarations were received.

78 VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING MAYOR AND MAYORESS

It was moved by Councillor Tricia Gilby, seconded by Councillor Glenys Falconer and resolved:-

(a) That the best thanks of the Council be accorded to Councillor Tony Rogers for his services as Mayor of the Borough for the past year, for the able manner in which he has directed the affairs of the town and for the deep interest which he has shown in all matters relating to the welfare of the Borough;

(b) That the best thanks of the Council be accorded to Mrs Sharon Rogers for the grace, charm, and dignity with which she has undertaken her duties as Mayoress.

79 PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL

No questions had been received.

80 PETITIONS TO COUNCIL

No petitions had been received.

81 BUSINESS OUTSTANDING FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 22 FEBRUARY 2023

These outstanding items of business were dealt with as part of items 20, 21, 22, 23 and 25 and the Notice of Motion in its own right at item 27. The minutes arising from consideration of these items of business are included as part of Minutes 93, 94, 95, 96, 98 and 100.

82 ELECTION OF BOROUGH COUNCILLORS - 4 MAY 2023

The Chief Executive reported that at the Borough Council elections held on 4 May, 2023 those listed in his tabled report had been elected as members of the Council for the wards stated.

83 CABINET, COMMITTEES AND OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2023/24

Pursuant to Cabinet Minute No.106 (2022/23) the Service Director - Corporate presented a report seeking approval for the implementation of changes to the council's decision-making and scrutiny structures in response to the outcomes of the Local Government Boundary Review.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Cabinet be retained in its current form with a membership of 9 councillors
2. That the role of Assistant Cabinet Member be deleted.
3. That the Leader of the Council be invited to confirm her appointments to the various Cabinet Portfolios at the Annual Business Meeting.
4. That the frequency of Cabinet be changed from every three weeks to monthly.
5. That the following changes to Committee sizes be approved:
 - Planning Committee - reduce Planning Committee places from 15 to 12 (20% reduction).

- Licensing Committee - reduce Licensing Committee places from 14 to 12 (15% reduction). Split between two groups rather than three.
 - Appeals and Regulatory Committee - reduce Appeals and Regulatory Committee places from 14 to 12 (15% reduction). Split between two groups rather than three.
6. That the Council's overview and scrutiny function be delivered by two new Scrutiny Select Committees with the division of responsibilities to be as per that documented in the report.
 7. That the revised list of outside bodies and the proposed allocation of places to each be approved.

84 **APPOINTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS 2023/24**

RESOLVED –

1. That Councillor Tricia Gilby be appointed Executive Leader of the Council for the period 2023-27.
2. That the Member level bodies of the Council for 2023/24, and the number of Members to be appointed to each to be as follows:-

Planning Committee	12
Planning Sub Committee	3
Appeals and Regulatory Committee	12
Licensing Committee	12
Employment and General Committee	6
Scrutiny Select Committee – Building a Resilient Council	10
Scrutiny Select Committee – Economic Growth and Communities	10

**Standards and Audit Committee
(Borough Council Representatives only)**

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3. That the following named Members be appointed to the Council's Member-level bodies for 2023/24:

Planning Committee

Councillors: B Bingham, J Bingham, Brady, Brittain, Callan, Caulfield, Davenport, Falconer, Miles, Ridgway, Stone and Yates.

Planning Sub-Committee

Councillors: Callan, Davenport and Stone.

Appeals and Regulatory Committee

Councillors: Bagley, B Bingham, J Bingham, Brady, Callan, Flood, McClaren, Miles, Niblock, Perkins, Redihough and Thompson.

Licensing Committee

Councillors: Brock, Culley, Flood, P Innes, Kellman, McClaren, Niblock, Perkins, Snowdon, Thompson, Thornton and Twigg.

Employment and General Committee

Councillors: Baldauf-Good, Brock, Culley, Davenport, Falconer and P Innes.

Scrutiny Select Committee – Building a Resilient Council

Councillors: Blakemore, Dyke, Hollingworth, Kellman, McClaren, Ogle, Ridgway, Snowdon, Twigg and Wheeldon.

Scrutiny Select Committee – Economic Growth and Communities

Councillors: Bagley, Dyke, Flood, Hollingworth, Jacobs, Niblock, Ogle, Twigg, Wheeldon and Yates.

4. That the following named Members be appointed to the Standards and Audit Committee (Borough Council representatives only) for 2023/24:

Councillors: Blakemore, Brock, Caulfield, Jacobs, Staton and Thornton.

5. That the following named Members be appointed to the roles of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees for 2023/24:

Planning Committee	Chair: Councillor Callan Vice-Chair: Councillor Brittain
Planning Sub Committee	Chair: Councillor Stone Vice-Chair: Councillor Callan
Appeals and Regulatory Committee	Chair: Councillor Perkins Vice-Chair: Councillor Miles
Licensing Committee	Chair: Councillor Perkins Vice-Chair: Councillor Brock
Employment and General Committee	Chair: Councillor P Innes
Scrutiny Select Committee – Building a Resilient Council	Chair: Councillor Dyke Vice-Chair: Councillor Blakemore
Scrutiny Select Committee – Economic Growth and Communities	Chair: Councillor Flood Vice-Chair: Councillor Niblock
Standards and Audit Committee (Borough Council Representatives only)	Chair: Councillor Caulfield Vice-Chair: Councillor Jacobs

85 APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND CABINET APPOINTMENTS 2023/24

RESOLVED –

1. That the Council notes the appointment by the Leader of the Council of Councillor Amanda Serjeant as the Deputy Leader of the Council for 2023/24.
2. That the Council notes the appointment by the Leader of the Council of the following Members of the Cabinet for 2023/24:

Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Growth	Councillor Tricia Gilby
Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management	Councillor Amanda Serjeant
Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning, and Environment	Councillor Martin Stone
Cabinet Member for Town Centres and Visitor Economy	Councillor Kate Sarvent
Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing	Councillor Jonathan Davies
Cabinet Member for Housing	Councillor Jean Innes
Cabinet Member for Governance	Councillor Judy Staton
Cabinet Member for Customers and Business Transformation	Councillor Gavin Baldauf-Good
Minority Member without Portfolio	Councillor Paul Holmes

86

REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2023/24

The Service Director - Corporate submitted a report seeking approval to appoint Member representatives to a range of outside bodies.

RESOLVED –

That the proposals to appoint Member representatives to the agreed list of outside bodies for 2023/24, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

87 COUNCIL'S DELEGATION SCHEME AND CONSTITUTION

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report seeking approval for the Council's scheme of delegation and constitution for the civic year 2023/24.

The constitution sets out the principal powers, duties, and procedures of the Council, including, in Part 3, to whom decision making over the Council's various functions is delegated.

RESOLVED –

That the Council's Constitution, including the scheme of delegation at Part 3 be approved for the civic year 2023/24.

88 QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER

Under Standing Order No. 14 Members asked the following questions:

Councillor Falconer asked if members could be informed of any plans the Council had to build a hotel at Chesterfield Waterside.

Councillor Gilby replied that there had been a long-standing aspiration to work with investors and developers to build a hotel at Chesterfield Waterside. The Council had also been actively engaging in discussions with possible Hotel operators. As these were commercially sensitive matters, no further details could be shared at this time.

Councillor Redihough asked about what progress had been made to procure alternative arrangements for the management of Tapton Park Golf Course.

Councillor Gilby replied that Councillor Davies would be addressing this matter as part of his portfolio of responsibilities. Cllr Gilby commented on the importance of Tapton Park Golf Course as a leisure asset for Chesterfield borough and referenced recent meetings that the Chief

Executive had convened with the current operators, Sheffield City Trust, and the members club. A process would commence shortly to look for a new operator for Tapton Park Golf Course.

Councillor Snowdon asked if the Council proposes to keep the current bonus scheme for council workers, and if so, what is the Council doing to mitigate the effect that this has on the general pay gap within council.

Councillor Gilby replied that to protect the earnings of Council staff through the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council had adjusted the current bonus scheme to one where staff were paid on the basis of their average earnings over the previous 13 weeks. The Council had started to engage with the trade unions before the Covid-19 pandemic on a move away from the current pay structure for Housing Property Services staff. These discussions had understandably been delayed. A process to re-engage the trade unions and restart the discussions was now underway.

89 SENIOR PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023-2024

The Service Director for Digital, HR and Customer Services presented a report seeking Council approval for the adoption and publication of Chesterfield Borough Council's Senior Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2023/24.

RESOLVED –

That the Senior Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2023/24 be approved by Council and published on the Council's website.

90 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2023-2027

Pursuant to Cabinet Minute No.107 (2022/23), the Strategic Health, Safety and Risk Manager submitted a report seeking approval for the adoption and implementation of the Council's Risk Management Strategy for the period 2023-2027. Council was also asked to note the latest version of the Strategic Risk Register summary.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Council approves and adopts the Council's Risk Management Strategy for the period 2023 – 2027.
2. That the Council notes the contents of the Council's Strategic Risk Register summary, a 'live' document which is regularly updated by the Council's Risk Management Group.

91 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY 2023 – 2027

Pursuant to Cabinet Minute No.108 (2022/23), the Policy Officer submitted a report seeking Council approval for the adoption and publication of Chesterfield Borough Council's Equality and Diversity Strategy for the period 2023 - 2027.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Council approves and adopts Chesterfield Borough Council's Equality and Diversity Strategy for the period 2023 - 2027.
2. That authority is delegated to the Service Director - Corporate, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Governance, to make amendments to the Council's Equality and Diversity Strategy and Action Plan in between the formal review periods should legislative, guidance and partnership changes impact on planned activity and operational effectiveness.

92 CIVIC ARRANGEMENTS 2023/24 - DEPUTY MAYOR

The Service Director – Corporate and Democratic and Elections Manager presented a report to enable the Council to confirm the arrangements for the election of Deputy Mayor for the civic year 2023/24.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Jenny Flood be invited to become Deputy Mayor of the Borough for 2023/24.

93 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the following Committees be noted:

- Appeals and Regulatory Committee of 7, 14 (full), 14, 21 (full) and 21 December, 2022, 18 and 25 January, 8 (full) and 8 February, 8 March, 19 and 26 April, 2023;
- Employment and General Committee of 30 January, 2023;
- Licensing Committee of 14 December, 2022 and 22 March, 2023;
- Planning Committee of 12 December, 2022, 9 and 30 January, 20 February, 13 March, 3 and 24 April, 2023;
- Standards and Audit Committee of 23 November, 2022, 15 March and 26 April, 2023.

94 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CABINET OF 13 DECEMBER, 2022 17 JANUARY, 2023 24 JANUARY, 2023 7 FEBRUARY, 2023 21 FEBRUARY, 2023 AND 14 MARCH, 2023

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meetings of Cabinet of 13 December, 2022, 17 January, 24 January, 7 February, 21 February and 14 March, 2023 be noted.

95 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE JOINT CABINET AND EMPLOYMENT AND GENERAL COMMITTEE OF 24 JANUARY, 2023 AND 7 FEBRUARY, 2023

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meetings of the Joint Cabinet and Employment and General Committee of 24 January and 7 February, 2023 be noted.

96 TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE OVERVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY FORUM OF 17 NOVEMBER, 2022 AND 26 JANUARY, 2023

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum of 17 November, 2022 and 26 January, 2023 be approved.

97 TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OF 23 MARCH, 2023

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee of 23 March, 2023 be approved.

98 TO RECEIVE AND ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE ENTERPRISE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OF 1 DECEMBER, 2022 AND 9 FEBRUARY, 2023

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meetings of the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee of 1 December, 2022 and 9 February, 2023 be approved.

99 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 19

There were no questions.

100 NOTICE OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 21

It was moved by Councillor Serjeant and seconded by Councillor Stuart Brittain that:

Local Labour Clause

Chesterfield Borough Council is proud that 100% of all our major planning applications have implemented local Labour Clauses. This has led to the creation of approx. 1699 jobs and 140 apprenticeships for local people. Also meet the buyer events have supported our local Chesterfield economy. However, it is not a mandatory obligation and is subject to developers' best endeavours.

We call on the Government to legislate around planning and procurement to make this a mandatory condition on all developments to ensure that local communities receive a direct benefit from development in their area.

Asks the Leader of the Council to write to Michael Gove Sec of State DHLUC to ensure that Local Communities receive a direct benefit from developments in their area by making local labour clauses a mandatory element of planning and procurement.

On being put to the vote the motion was declared carried.

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COUNCIL**Wednesday, 17th May, 2023**

Present:-

Councillor Rogers (Chair)

Councillors	Bagley	Councillors	P Innes
	Baldauf-Good		Jacobs
	B Bingham		Kellman
	J Bingham		McLaren
	Blakemore		Miles
	Brady		Niblock
	Brittain		Ogle
	Brock		Perkins
	Caulfield		Redihough
	Culley		Sarvent
	Davenport		Serjeant
	Davies		Snowdon
	Dyke		Staton
	Falconer		Stone
	Flood		Thompson
	P Gilby		Twigg
	Holmes		Wheeldon
	J Innes		Yates

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

1 TO ELECT THE MAYOR FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2023/24

It was moved by Councillor Stuart Brittain, seconded by Councillor Shirley Niblock and resolved that Councillor Mick Brady be elected Mayor of the Borough of Chesterfield for the Civic Year 2023/24.

(At this point, the Chair was vacated by Councillor Tony Rogers and occupied by the new Mayor.)

The Mayor then made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took the Oath of Allegiance.

2 PRESENTATION TO THE RETIRING MAYOR AND CONSORT

Pursuant to Minute No. 78 (2022/2023) the Mayor presented Councillor Tony Rogers with a former Mayor's badge and a record of his year of office and a former Mayoress badge to Sharon Rogers.

3 TO ELECT THE DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2023/24

It was moved by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Paul Holmes and resolved that Councillor Jenny Flood be appointed Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Chesterfield for the Civic Year 2023/24.

4 TO RECEIVE THE APPOINTMENT OF THE MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2023/24

The Mayor informed Council that he had appointed Stephen Wright to be the Mayor's Chaplain

5 TO CONFIRM THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING HELD ON 15TH MAY, 2023**RESOLVED –**

That the recommendations of the Annual Business Meeting of Council held on 15 May, 2023, at Minute No. 84 (2022/23), be noted and approved.

For publication

Budget Outturn Report 2022/23

Meeting:	Council
Date:	19 July 2023
Cabinet portfolio:	Deputy Leader Cabinet Member for Housing
Directorate:	Finance

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To report on the draft General Fund Revenue, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Outturns for 2022/23 and provide details of significant variations.
- 1.2 This report precedes the production of the Council's formal Statement of Accounts, and whilst it is not expected that any further adjustments will alter the final outturn position, it is possible that this could be the case.

2.0 Recommendations

This report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 18 July, 2023 where it was resolved that the report and its recommendations be supported and referred to Council for approval.

- 2.1 To note the draft General Fund Revenue, Capital Outturn and Housing Revenue Account positions for 2022/23.
- 2.2 To approve the use of the Budget Risk Reserve to cover the General Fund Revenue budget deficit of £292k (paragraph 4.15).
- 2.3 To approve the level of and movement in General Fund Revenue Reserves and Provisions (paragraphs 4.10 to 4.16)
- 2.4 To approve the General Fund Capital financing arrangements (**Appendix A**).

3.0 Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 This report forms a key part of formal revenue and capital monitoring against the 2022/23 budget. The information in this report will be incorporated into the published Statement of Accounts 2022/23.
- 3.2 The approval of the budget outturn, in-year movements and reserves are required by corporate financial procedures.
- 3.3 To consider the reserves position given the challenges facing the Council over the period of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

4.0 Report Details

Background General Fund Revenue

- 4.1 The Council approved the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2022/23 on 23 February 2022. The budget was constructed in accordance with the Council's budget principles and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) was balanced for the first two financial years with an expectation that the gaps in the latter two years of the MTFP would be met from savings delivered through the Council's Organisational Development programme.
- 4.2 The budget for 2022/23 was produced against the backdrop of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and some of the medium and long-term effects of the pandemic relating to the demand for Council services were difficult to project. The budget assumed that income from fees and charges and expenditure levels would return to pre-Covid levels from 2022/23, with the exception of Sports Centre income which was anticipated would take one year longer to recover.
- 4.3 In the months since the MTFP was approved, the national fiscal and economic situation has changed dramatically - these include:
 - Assumptions around the recovery of income streams following the Covid-19 pandemic have not materialised at the levels expected. With the increased pressures on the cost of living, we are seeing that behaviours and habits have changed as disposable income and secondary spend is impacted.
 - Inflation has risen dramatically since the 2022/23 budget was set. In July 2021, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation was 2% rising to 5.4% by the time the 2022/23 budget was being finalised. The MTFP assumes no allowance for general inflation, but specific contractual inflation has been included within the pressures where appropriate. In December 2022, the CPI stood at 10.5%, down from 10.7% in November. As at May 2023, CPI inflation was 8.7%; by far in excess of the Government's 2% target.
 - Many of the Council's contracts attract inflationary uplifts for the coming financial year based on inflation in the preceding September and October.

Furthermore, uplifts in prices agreed in the early part of 2022/23 will not have included the more recent inflation rises which will then factor into costs for 2023/24.

- The prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages continued to rise sharply during 2022/23 and rose by 18.4% in the year to May 2023. The annual inflation rates for this category in March and April were the highest seen in over 45 years.
- In November 2022, the Bank of England increased the bank base rate by 0.75 percentage points to 3% which at the time was the highest rate in 14 years, and warned that the UK was facing its longest recession since records began. Bank rate has increased by a further 2% since then, the latest rise on 22 June taking base rate to 5%; this was the thirteenth rise recorded since December 2021. The increase in interest rates has had an impact on the cost of borrowing.
- The cost-of-living crisis not only impacts on the Council's own expected future costs of supplies, but, also on local businesses' financial viability and the ability of our tenants and residents to pay their bills.
- The level of inflation and the increases in costs are significantly above that which the Council could have reasonably assumed in setting the budget for 2022/23 and for the medium term. The Council has been protected in 2022/23 from the significant increases seen in utility prices as its current energy contracts endure until 31 March 2023. These contracts were secured at rates significantly below the current government cap levels.
- The 2022/23 budget included the additional costs relating to the pay award for 2021/22 and the increase in the National Insurance contribution. It also included an assumption of a 2% pay award for 2022/23. In July 2022, the National Employers offered an increase of £1,925 (equivalent to between 4 and 10%) on all Green Book pay points with effect from 1 April 2022. This led to an estimated pay pressure of **£925k** above the 2% already provided for in the budget.
- The Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit have fundamentally changed the skills landscape, with many local employers struggling to attract, recruit and retain people with the right skills. This has led to skills gaps in the current workforce, skills shortages and difficulties in recruiting across all sectors. The Council has at times had to resort to utilising interim staffing resources pending the achievement of permanent recruitment to specialist roles. Savings from vacant posts have mitigated some of the pay award pressure in year.

4.4 At the end of Period 9 the forecast deficit for 2022/23 was **£470k**, reduced from **£703k** at the end of period 6.

- 4.5 It was acknowledged that the forecast deficit would have major implications for the MTFP, and it was clear that, without further management actions, any adverse variance would increase the financial gap and size of the challenge in future years.
- 4.6 The Council committed to delivering services within its approved budget and has been working collectively to agree clear, robust, and immediate management actions to reduce the adverse forecast. There was an acknowledgement that the Council may need to use a proportion of the Budget Risk Reserve to achieve a balanced outturn.

General Fund – Revenue Outturn

- 4.7 **Table 1** sets out the draft outturn variances of **£292k** for 2022/23. This overspend is driven by unprecedented and unpredicted inflationary pressures upon pay and contracts together with the long-term impacts upon service demands and income from the Covid pandemic.
- 4.8 The 2022/23 pay award is not included within the services lines for period 9 but is included within the outturn figures. This makes direct comparison of the variances between period 9 and outturn difficult.

Table 1: 2022/23 Outturn- summary of main variances		
Budget Movement	Period 9 £000	Outturn variance £000
Pavements Shopping Centre	96	136
Town Centre - Retail Units/ Corporation Street £45k and Bus Station £30k	16	102
Car Parks (Saltergate £129k, Beetwell Street £166k, Surface £346k)	400	679
Cafes (Sports Centre £79k and Market Hall £9k)	45	89
Markets (Market Hall £79k, open market £133k)	150	216
Cultural Venues	-21	-44
Industrial Units, Calow Lane and Venture House		140
Planning income	0	318
Community Safety - additional grant	0	-110
Sports Centre Increased Income	-100	-73
Linacre - one off fee recovery	0	-72

Homelessness (Bed and Breakfast)	107	-47
Refuse Contract Indexation	97	92
Recycling	0	249
ICT service costs	0	225
other net underspends and mitigations	-812	-645
Pay Award (£1,925) / within services for outturn	925	Now within services
Sub total	903	1,255
Business Rates / pool	-433	-733
Additional S31 Grant	0	-230
Total deficit	470	292

4.9 Details of the main variances are set out below:

- Pavements Shopping Centre - Rental income from the Pavements is lower than expected due to the renegotiation of leases to retain tenants and non-renewal of leases, while costs were higher than expected due to additional business rates on vacant units and an increase in agents letting fees.
- Town Centre - Empty retail units in the town centre and in Corporation Street, together with reduced income from the Coach Station contract (£28k).
- Car Parks – Income from all car parks is lower than expected by **£552k** due to the longer than expected recovery of the economy post pandemic, the ongoing economic impact on town centre footfall (the impact of cost inflation on shopping habits and higher fuel prices) and slippage on expected increases in demand arising from delays in the letting of the Elder Way retail units and completion of the Northern Gateway Enterprise Centre.
- Sports Centre Café –The cost of operating the café at Queens Park Sports Centre (QPSC) has been higher than budget estimates, particularly in relation to increased cost of supplies which have been affected by the rise in inflation and increased staffing costs due to long term sickness absence. This has been coupled with lower than expected usage for the majority of 22/23, although this increased during the final quarter of 22/23. A full review of the provision and the relationship of the café to other income generating activities at QPSC has been undertaken.
- Markets – Occupancy levels, and corresponding rental income from market stalls is forecast to be **£133k** lower than anticipated. Chesterfield's markets have not seen a recovery following the pandemic and it is not anticipated that the situation will improve as the cost-of-living crisis continues. The Market Hall has also seen increased costs and lower than expected rental and service charge income.

- Income from Venues – The MTFP assumed that income from venues would return to pre pandemic levels from 2022/23. Venues have seen small reductions in income from shows, lettings and bar and catering sales, although sales for the key pantomime season were strong.
- Industrial Units and Commercial Properties - Reduction in rental Income and service charges together with increased costs from Industrial Units particularly Venture House, Calow Lane and Staveley workshops.
- Planning Income – It was expected that 3 particular planning applications would be submitted by the end of March 2023. These would have resulted in additional income of approximately **£300k**. It is anticipated that these will now be submitted in 2023/24.
- Community Safety - additional Safer Streets grant received in 2021/22 and applied in 2022/23 to offset investment in well evidenced preventative measures.
- Sports Centres – The MTFP assumed that levels of expenditure and income would return to pre pandemic levels from 2022/23, with the exception of Sports Centres income which we anticipated would take one more year to recover. The income budget was therefore reduced by **£240k** to **£3.5m** for 2022/23. The final months of 2021/22 saw an increase in numbers using the sports centres and this has continued into 2022/23.
- Linacre one off fee and cost recover- reimbursement of the revenue costs associated with the disposal of land at Linacre.
- Homelessness (Bed and Breakfast) - Homelessness services have been under significant pressure, and this will only increase with the cost-of-living crisis and more people facing eviction. Pressures on the General Fund have arisen from the increased use of bed and breakfast temporary accommodation and the need for additional staff. Costs have been mitigated to some extent by maximising the use of external grant funding to pay for staff costs wherever possible.
- Refuse Contract - Indexation of the refuse contract is based on the prevailing rate of CPI in March and is applied from May. The CPI rate to be applied to the contract was higher than the rate included in the budget assumptions, at 7.04%, leading to additional costs of **£95k**.
- Recycling Contract – Contract is based on a cost-plus CPI indexation, which is significantly higher than when the budget was set in February 2022.

- ICT costs – This related to annual application and infrastructure contract inflation, plus inflation on other spend areas; offset in part by temporary underspending on staffing.
- The General Fund includes government grants (S31 grants) to compensate for loss of income from business rates. Grant was provided to meet the deficit in business rates income arising from the Covid-19 business rates reliefs awarded in 2021/22, where the impact of which would not be reflected in the General Fund Revenue budget until 2022/23.
- Business Rates Pool – Chesterfield is a member of the Business Rates Pool which consists of eight Derbyshire district or borough Councils, Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire Fire Authority. Instead of each borough or district Council paying 50% of their growth above the baseline over to the Government, it is kept within the pool and distributed amongst all the members on an agreed basis. The 2022/23 distribution is subject to audit, but it is expected that there will be a further **£733k** distribution to Chesterfield from the pool.

General Fund Balances, Reserves and Provisions

- 4.10 General Fund Balance – The General Fund working balance has been set at **£1.5m** and has been informed by the risk assessment undertaken as part of the budget process.
- 4.11 Earmarked Reserves – In addition to the General Fund working balance the Council maintains several other reserves. Earmarked Reserves by their very nature, are set aside and committed for specific purposes.
- 4.12 **Table 2** details the balance of earmarked reserves as at 1 April 2022 of **£18.142m** and the closing balance at 31 March 2023 of **£15.291m** (prior to the allocations within this report). These balances exclude S106 contributions and provisions.

Table 2: Reserve Balances		
Reserve	Opening Balance 1 April 2022 £'000	Closing Balance 31 March 2023 £'000
Budget Risk Reserve	2,384	2,437
Repairs and Maintenance - various	2,945	2,630
Service Improvement/ Redesign	814	706
Insurance	923	773
Business Rates Reserve	6,550	4,117
Other Earmarked Reserves	1,957	1,398
Enterprise Zone Business Rates	2,569	3,230
Total Reserves	18,142	15,291

4.13 Earmarked Reserves – these reserves are held for specific purposes. The total balance on these reserves decreased by **£2.851m** during the year, the most significant changes include:

- The Budget Risk Reserve – provides a supplement to the General Fund Balance to provide a contingency for unforeseen items. Whilst the balance at the end of the financial year 2022/23 is **£2.437m** there are commitments of £1.8m in 2023/24. The Budget Risk Reserve will need to be replenished as part of the budget process.
- Repairs and maintenance– reduction in corporate contribution together with increase cost of repairs for vehicle and plant. Increased spend on operational property repairs due to backlog from the pandemic.
- Business rates – use of **£2.433m** of reserve to meet the deficit in business rates income arising from the Covid-19 Business Rates Reliefs awarded in 2021/22, the impact of which is reflected in the General Fund Revenue account in 2022/23 due to accounting regulations. The adequacy of this reserve is under review.
- Enterprise Zone Business Rates (Economic Growth) – underspend due to rephasing of spend into future years caused by delays due to the impact of the pandemic.
- Other reserve – budgeted use of various reserves including ICT.

4.14 Provisions – Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Authority a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and a reliable estimate of the obligation can be made. The Council holds two provisions:

- Transport Company Pensions Provision – this provision has been established to cover the Council’s future liabilities for pension costs relating to employees of the former Transport Company.
- Insurance Provision – An independent review of the value and nature of the Council’s insurance provision has informed the level required.

4.15 The balance of the underspend from 2021/22 (**£440k**) was prudently transferred to the Budget Risk Reserve to mitigate the risks and pressures for 2022/23 and for future years. The General Fund deficit of **£292k** will therefore be met from this reserve.

4.16 It is important to note that many of the reserves and provisions are earmarked for specific purposes. The funds should not, therefore, be regarded as being available for general use. An additional consideration is the fact that the council receives interest from investing the reserves and provisions pending their allocation, income that is used to support the Council’s General Fund Revenue budget.

Capital Expenditure & Financing

- 4.17 The Capital Programme is aligned to the Capital Strategy and presents the Council's plan for investment related to the purchasing, building and improvement of capital assets. The Capital Programme for 2022/23 was approved as part of the budget setting process in February 2022. An update to the Programme was included in the budget monitoring report to Cabinet on 19th July 2022 and as part of the 2023/24 Capital Programme report to full Council in February 2023.
- 4.18 Actual expenditure on schemes in 2022/23 was **£5.421m** compared with the original budget estimate for the financial year of **£10.929m** (as at Feb 2022) and **£11.984m** (as at Feb 2023).
- 4.19 **Appendix A** provides details of the General Fund Capital Programme expenditure and financing arrangements at year end (2022/23).
- 4.20 The main reasons for the variances from the revised budget estimate in February 2023 (**£6.563m**) include slippage on the following schemes:
- Stephenson Memorial Hall (**£1.666m**) – re-phasing of the budget, as approved by the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), with more works due in 2023/24 and 2024/25 than originally estimated. There is no change to the expected completion date for the project.
 - Hollis Lane Link Road Phase 1 (**£1.318m**) – re-phasing of the scheme contribution to Derbyshire County Council as more works now due in 2023/24 than originally expected.
 - Staveley 21 (**£611k**) – re-phasing of the budget with more works now due in 2023/24 than originally expected.
 - Waterside Basin Square Development (**£1.399m**) – re-phasing of the budget into 2023/24.
 - Green Homes Grants (**£730k**) – a reduction in spend during 2022/23 that arose as a result of a shortage of available contractors in the sector who were able to carry out the Green Homes Grant improvements. A specialist contractor has now been procured and we are therefore able to issue grant support.
- 4.21 There were no significant overspends on any capital schemes during 2022/23.
- 4.22 The financing of the programme has been reduced accordingly particularly in relation to Capital Grants (**£3.718m**) and in the amount of borrowing required (**£2.685m**) to reflect the reduction in the capital programme spending.

Capital Receipts

- 4.23 The movement on useable capital receipts in the financial year 2022/23 is summarised in the **table 3** below. **£359k** of General Fund capital receipts were used to finance spend in 2022/23.

Table 3 - Useable Capital Receipts			
Movement in Capital Receipts	Gen Fund £'000	Housing £'000	Total £'000
Balance b/forward 1 st April	1,077	3,168	4,245
Add: Receipts in the year	1,822	6,205	8,027
Less: Applied to capital expenditure	(359)	(4,970)	(5,329)
Balance c/forward 31st March	2,540	4,403*	6,943

* The Housing balance of £4.403m relates to the retained 'one-for-one' element of RTB receipts.

Housing Revenue Account - Revenue Outturn 2022/23

- 4.24 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a statutory account which records expenditure and income relating to council dwellings and the provision of services to tenants.
- 4.25 Since the HRA budget was approved in February 2022, the national fiscal and economic situation has changed dramatically and a number of in year pressures have emerged, particularly in relation to unprecedented and unpredicted inflationary pressures around energy, fuel, contracts, building materials, interest rates (including the cost of borrowing), and pay budgets. This has led to increased costs in service delivery and an increase in demand for our services. The HRA will need to be monitored carefully to ensure that it remains sustainable over the medium term and over the period of the 30-year business plan.
- 4.26 For the financial year 2022/23 the HRA reported a reduction in the balances of **£6.912m**. This represents a movement of **£273k** compared to the forecast reduction in the balance of **£6.639m** reported at quarter 3 – period 9. The main variances are set out in **table 4** below:

Table 4 – 2022/23 summary of Outturn and variances against the Revised Estimate				
Description	Original Estimate	Forecast /Revised Estimate	Actual 2022/23	Variances against the

	2022/23			Revised Estimate
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Net rents	(37,408)	(37,027)	(36,777)	250
Non-Dwelling Rents	(950)	(946)	(924)	22
Service Charges and other income	(1,032)	(1,362)	(1,398)	(36)
Total Income	(39,390)	(39,335)	(39,099)	236
<u>Expenditure</u>				
Supervision and Management -General	8,278	7,835	7,715	(120)
Supervision and Management -Special	2,240	2,203	2,899	696
Rent, rates, taxes and other charges	248	344	349	5
Repairs and Maintenance	9,483	11,294	11,402	108
Depreciation and contribution to Major Repairs Reserve	11,801	12,131	13,065	934
Interest and Debt Management Expenses	4,602	4,476	4,530	54
Bad Debt Provision	370	370	363	(7)
Provision for the repayment of debt	1,869	1,869	1,869	0
Direct Revenue Financing	3,405	5,452	3,819	(1,633)
Total Expenditure	42,296	45,974	46,011	37
Deficit / (Surplus)	2,906	6,639	6,912	273
HRA working balance B/F	(6,339)	(13,572)	(13,572)	0
HRA working balance C/F	(3,433)	(6,933)	(6,660)	273

4.27 HRA Services Deficit for the year **£6.912m** – refers to the net position of revenue income (e.g., rents) less revenue expenditure (e.g., management costs and housing repairs expenditure). The reduced surplus is due to:

- Rents income is reduced by **£250k** due to an increase in the level of void properties.
- Supervision and Management costs have increased by a net **£576k** due to increased employee costs together with reduced income and HRA homelessness costs.
- Repairs and Maintenance budgets were increased during the year by £1.8m. Inflation has risen dramatically since the 2022/23 budget was set and the repairs and maintenance budget have been increased by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in September 2022 i.e., 10.1%. This was to reflect the increased costs of raw materials combined with supply chain issues impacting on staff productivity and the ability to cover costs. There is also a backlog of repairs work as we have emerged from the pandemic which has been factored into 2022/23. As approved as part of the Council's financial strategy (Cabinet, 10th

November 2020), in September 2020 Housing Property Services moved to a cost recovery model, where the full cost of providing the service is retained within the HRA. Many of the costs of delivering the service are fixed e.g., labour and overheads, any under recovery of these costs have been reallocated to the revenue and capital works in proportion to the spend.

- Depreciation charges have increased to reflect the increase in valuation of the housing stock – this has been transferred to the Major Repairs Reserve and used to fund the Capital Programme.
- Direct Revenue Financing - The capital budget for 2022/23 was due to be funded by capital receipts, depreciation/major repairs reserve, with the remainder funded from revenue balances. Due to the cost pressures on the revenue account, and to maintain a prudent working balance, capital expenditure funded from revenue has been reduced to **£3.819m**, which is **£1.633m** less than the revised estimate. Additional borrowing will need to be taken out to cover the gap, which will result in an increase in future interest payments. Further work will need to be undertaken to understand the impact on the 2023/24 budget and the impact on the 30-year business plan.

Housing Revenue Capital Outturn

- 4.28 **Appendix B** provides a summary of expenditure on capital schemes in 2022/23. Schemes are funded by borrowing, right to buy receipts, other capital receipts and Direct Revenue Financing.
- 4.29 During the course of the year the capital budget schemes were updated and some elements re-profiled into 2023/24.
- 4.30 Total expenditure was **£24.854m** against the revised budget of **£22.010m**. The final outturn figure was **£2.834m** (13%) over budget after the re-apportioning of the Housing Property Services overheads, and the acceleration of the property improvement schemes during the course of the year.
- 4.31 As part of the continuous review of the capital programme, scheme budgets will be re-assessed based on current progress and expected completion dates with any revisions being brought back to cabinet for approval.
- 4.32 Capital Receipts - The movement on useable capital receipts in 2022/23 is summarised in **Table 3**. The receipts received during the year (**£6.205m**) were generated from 90 right to buy sales and the sale of land at Linacre Road.

HRA Balances and 40-year Business Plan

- 4.33 The financial strategy for the HRA is to deliver a balanced and sustainable budget which is self-financing in the longer term, and which reflects both the requirements of tenants and the strategic vision and priorities of the Council.

- 4.34 The HRA is not permitted to run at an overall deficit and risks will continue to be identified and managed effectively. A minimum balance of **£3.4m** is maintained to avoid the risk of a negative balance in the event of an exceptional cost arising. The HRA balance was anticipated to fall to **£3.856m** in 2023/24, due to increased capital spend.
- 4.35 The HRA balance is in line with expectations, primarily by reducing the direct financing of the capital programme and can be maintained at or above the minimum set by Council of **£3.4m** over the period of the business plan. However, the increase in costs set out in the MTFP, lower than inflationary increases in income, increased costs from inflationary pressures and increased spending on the capital programme, will have a detrimental impact on HRA balances and reduce the ability to provide further revenue contribution to capital spending. This will necessitate the requirement for additional borrowing (if within the parameters of the business plan) or scale back spending either on service provision or within the capital programme.
- 4.36 The business plan will be kept under review as part of the ongoing revenue monitoring and will be updated when the full impact of the 2022 stock condition survey has been reviewed and understood.
- 4.37 A refreshed business plan will be reported to Cabinet as part of the budget process for 2024/25.

Implications for the current year and the Medium- term Financial Plan

- 4.38 Whilst this report focuses on the 2022/23 outturn position, it is anticipated the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic will have a significant impact on the Council's finances for a number of years. The current economic uncertainty and resulting inflationary pressures, particularly on energy and staffing costs will impact on the Council's forecast spend and will continue to be monitored throughout the year.
- 4.39 Effective budget monitoring and forecasting will be critical to understanding the budget pressures and ensuring that there are appropriate plans in place to manage and mitigate financial risks. In-year financial management processes have been enhanced and strengthened across the Council. The new process has been rolled out to budget managers in June 2023 for period 2 (May 2023). The quarter 1 forecasts will be presented to Cabinet in September 2023.

5 Alternative options

- 5.1 There are no alternative options to present as the closure of accounts is governed by statute.

6 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

- 6.1 The report in its entirety considers the financial and value for money implications of maintaining balanced General Fund Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue budgets over the medium-term whilst ensuring sufficient resources are available to enable the Council to deliver on its agreed priorities and objectives.

7 Implications for consideration – Legal

- 7.1 The Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 require the council to produce an annual Statement of Accounts prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices.

8 Implications for consideration – Human resources

- 8.1 There are no human resource implications arising from the matters considered in this report.

9 Implications for consideration – Council Plan

- 9.1 Every effort has been made throughout 2022/23 to maintain General Fund Revenue, Housing Revenue, and Capital funds at levels that have enabled the Council to continue to deliver on the priorities and objectives that it has set itself in the final year of the Council Plan 2019-2023
- 9.2 The maintenance of adequate General Fund Revenue reserves and provisions over the medium term is also essential in demonstrating delivery against the third Council Plan priority of delivering value for money services.

10 Implications for consideration – Climate Change

- 10.1 Climate change impact assessment is not required to be undertaken for the closure of accounts process. Such assessments are undertaken as part of the decision-making processes for specific spending plans.

11 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

- 11.1 A full equality and diversity impact assessment is not required to be undertaken for the closure of accounts process. Such assessments are undertaken as part of the decision-making processes for specific spending plans.

12 Implications for consideration – Risk management

- 12.1 In preparing the year end accounts, some elements are based on assumptions regarding risks and uncertainties. Any assumptions made take account of historical experience, current trends, and other relevant factors.

- 12.2 The year-end accounts are subject to an audit process conducted by independent external auditors.

Decision information

Key decision number	
Wards affected	

Document information

Report author	Contact number/email
Theresa Channell Karen Ludditt	Theresa.Channell@chesterfield.gov.uk Karen.Ludditt@chesterfield.gov.uk
Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.</i>	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix A	General Fund Capital Programme
Appendix B	Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme

APPENDIX A

GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23

	Original £'000	Revised £'000	Actual £'000	Variance Rev to Act £'000
<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE:</u>				
Home Repairs Assistance	554	300	69	(231)
Disabled Facilities Grants	2,256	1,386	1,008	(378)
Green Homes Grants	0	1,409	679	(730)
Waterside Basin Square Development	720	1,926	527	(1,399)
Northern Gateway – Public Realm	0	149	95	(54)
Northern Gateway – Enterprise Centre	0	493	263	(230)
Brushfield Recreation Ground	50	50	50	0
Stand Road Bowls Pavilion	0	0	2	2
IT Transformation Project	276	395	395	0
Tapton Terrace Flood Resilience Work	0	33	0	(33)
Staveley Town Deal – DRIIVe	3,100	200	181	(19)
Staveley Town Deal – Construction Skills Hub	65	88	0	(88)
Staveley Town Deal – Staveley 21	500	642	31	(611)
Hollis Lane Link Road – Phase 1	0	1,405	87	(1,318)
Calow Lane Industrial Units	312	0	8	8
Stephenson Memorial Hall	2,457	2,579	913	(1,666)
Revitalising the Heart of Chesterfield	359	604	648	44
UK shared Prosperity Fund	0	33	17	(16)
HS2 Station Masterplan	280	292	342	50
Vehicles (from vehicles reserve)	0	0	106	106
Grand Total	10,929	11,984	5,421	(6,563)

	Original £'000	Revised £'000	Actual £'000	Variance Rev to Act £'000
<u>CAPITAL FINANCING</u>				
Borrowing: General	1,588	4,018	1,333	(2,685)
Grants & Contributions - see below	9,341	7,312	3,594	(3,718)
Capital Receipts	0	642	359	(283)
Contributions from reserves	0	12	135	123

Cumulative surplus / (deficit) c/f	10,929	11,984	5,421	(6,563)
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	Original £'000	Revised £'000	Actual £'000	Variance Rev to Act £'000
CAPITAL GRANTS etc:				
Flood Risk Management Grant – EA	0	21	0	(21)
Disabled Facilities Grants (BCF/PCT)	2,810	1,686	1,130	(556)
Green Homes Grants	0	1,409	626	(783)
Revitalising the Heart of Chesterfield – Business Rate Growth	150	496	0	(496)
Levelling Up Fund – Stephenson Memorial Hall	2,457	2,553	891	(1,662)
Levelling Up Fund – Town Centre Transformation	209	108	648	540
Staveley Town Deal Funding	3,665	930	211	(719)
Arts Council – Stephenson Memorial Hall	0	26	22	(4)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	0	33	17	(16)
Brushfield Recreation ground – Viridor	50	50	49	(1)
Grants Total	9,341	7,312	3,594	(3,718)

APPENDIX B

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23

Capital Scheme	Original Budget 2022/23	Revised Budget 2022/23	Outturn 2022/23	Variance against the Revised Budget
	£	£	£	£
Kitchens	750,000	300,000	696,644	396,644
Bathrooms + WC	300,000	130,000	197,890	67,890
Central Heating	550,000	188,700	277,970	89,270
Rewiring, smoke detector and CO detector	500,000	55,500	92,966	37,466
Electrical testing	300,000	0	0	0
Blocks Refurbishments inc. environmental works	5,183,756	5,183,756	5,941,905	758,149
Blocks Cyclical Programme	800,000	444,000	359,587	(84,413)
Communal Lighting Replacement to blocks	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,000,453	(199,547)
Internal Soil Stacks	100,000	55,500	26,363	(29,138)
Tenant oncosts	50,000	50,000	41,558	(8,442)
Property Improvement catch-up works	3,500,000	2,200,000	2,876,635	676,635
Sheltered Refurbishment - LOWGATES	3,450,000	2,000,000	2,690,010	690,010
Property Improvement other	0	0	0	0
Externals;				0
Roof Renewals including loft insulation, S&F's, hanging tiles and metal roofs	750,000	943,500	1,421,089	477,589
DPC/Damp Works and Pointing General	500,000	100,000	176,485	76,485
Fences + gates, footpaths + drives inc. new off-street parking	750,000	50,000	127,292	77,292
Windows and Doors	400,000	75,000	106,268	31,268
Future Major Works Total	19,083,756	12,975,956	16,033,114	3,057,158
Contingent Major Repairs;				
Asbestos Removal Works	200,000	100,000	0	(100,000)
Asbestos Management / R&D Surveys	500,000	200,000	219,820	19,820
Fire Risk Works	1,500,000	1,500,000	2,553,619	1,053,619
Fire Remedials		1,220,600	0	(1,220,600)
Fire Risk Assessments	50,000	50,000	27,110	(22,890)
Compliance	100,000	100,000	146,570	46,570
Contingent Major Repairs Total	2,350,000	3,170,600	2,947,119	(223,481)
Environmental Works + Related Assets;				
Footpath Proactive Maintenance	100,000	111,000	0	(111,000)
Structural Works	200,000	100,000	230,442	130,442
Holme Hall Estate Improvements	100,000	50,000	0	(50,000)
Environmental + Related Assets Total	400,000	261,000	230,442	(30,558)

Exceptional Extensive;				
External Wall Insulation / Render programme works	250,000	0	0	0
Exceptional Extensive Total	250,000	0	0	0
Adaptations;				
Disabled Adaptations	750,000	950,000	1,685,137	735,137
Disabled Adaptations Total	750,000	950,000	1,685,137	735,137
Improvements;				
Neighbourhood Action Plan-Barrow Hill Imps	500,000	500,000	437,433	(62,567)
Common Room Refurbishment (Wimbourne etc)	50,000		0	0
Improvements Total	550,000	500,000	437,433	(62,567)
New Build;				
New Build - Site to be identified -Barrow Hill & Belmont Drive				
New Build construction - Markham Court	220,000	100,000	7,327	(92,673)
New Build construction - Middlecroft cluster	1,832,617	700,000	489,989	(210,011)
New Build construction - Aston Court	800,000	0	0	0
New Build construction - Westwood Avenue	2,210,000	0	14,032	14,032
New Build construction - Mastin Moor (Miller, Edale + Lansbury/Rose)	2,250,000	300,000	89,219	(210,781)
New Build - Brockwell Court	0	0	20,175	20,175
New Build feasibility (fees)	50,000	50,000	117,051	67,051
New Build Total	7,362,617	1,150,000	737,794	(412,206)
Miscellaneous spend;				
Property Acquisitions	2,500,000	2,552,632	2,552,632	0
Stock condition survey	200,000	200,000	200,144	144
Northgate Upgrade	250,000	250,000	29,717	(220,283)
Miscellaneous Spend Total	2,950,000	3,002,632	2,782,493	(220,139)
TOTAL	33,696,373	22,010,188	24,853,531	2,843,343

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For publication

Budget Strategy

Meeting:	Council
Date:	19 July 2023
Cabinet portfolio:	Leader of the Council
Directorate:	Finance
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the themes of a Budget Strategy to enable the Council to achieve a balanced budget for 2024/25 and over the term of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) through 2027/28.

2.0 Recommendations

This report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 18 July, 2023 where it was resolved that the report and its recommendations be supported and referred to Council for approval.

- 2.1 To note the financial operating context and the current MTFP gaps.
- 2.2 To approve the Budget Strategy themes (**paragraphs 4.24 to 4.45**).
- 2.3 To approve the movement of **£1m** of reserves from the Business Rates Reserve to the Budget Risk Reserve in 2023/24 (**paragraph 4.51**).

3.0 Reasons for recommendations

- 3.1 To respond to the scale of the challenging financial environment within which the Council is currently operating and enable the Council to continue to deliver against the vision and priorities set out within the Council Plan for the period 2023/24 through 2026/27.

4.0 Report Details

Background

- 4.1 Like all local authorities, Chesterfield Borough Council continues to face significant financial challenges. The sustained period of austerity since 2010, the ongoing risks and uncertainties over future funding arrangements, the budgetary impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and a sustained period of exceptionally high inflation, have all impacted on the Council's financial position.
- 4.2 In response to these challenges, the Council has already made significant savings over many years and taken steps to manage demand and deliver services in the most economic, efficient, and effective way. It is against this context that the Council must now develop its approach to balancing the 2024/25 budget, and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This report covers the General Fund revenue budget, which is one part of a suite of budget reports which together make up the MTFP.
- 4.3 The financial impact of Covid-19 and the cost-of-living crisis on Council services has been and continues to be significant, resulting in new cost pressures and reductions in income, particularly in areas such as car parking, markets and town centre retail units. Income remains significantly below pre-pandemic levels and may never fully recover.
- 4.4 It is also of significant concern that details of how the Government intends to fund local authorities, post the 2023/24 financial year, remain uncertain. The provisional settlement is only for one-year 2023/24 (with some guiding principles and additional amounts identified for 2024/25) which makes medium term financial planning highly unpredictable. Recent Treasury announcements suggest that future growth will be limited, and that further savings are likely to be required although, without knowledge of detailed departmental spending plans, it is difficult to predict how significant these will be.
- 4.5 The report sets out the current assumptions which underpin the General Fund revenue element of the MTFP, the priority work that needs to be undertaken over the coming months, and a strategic framework for delivering the savings that will be needed to deliver a balanced budget for 2024/25 and over the medium-term.

Policy & Financial Planning Framework

- 4.6 The Council Plan draws upon our extensive 'State of the Borough' evidence base and communications, consultation and engagement activities, and defines the Council's key priorities, objectives, and commitments over the four-year period 2023/24 through 2026/27. The following strategic principles have therefore been embedded within the MTFP to align the Council's

revenue and capital spending proposals with the priorities, objectives and commitments set out within the Council Plan. It is imperative that the MTFP:

- Covers the whole of the Council's finances, including the capital strategy, treasury management and housing revenue account.
- Ensures that the Council's medium- & long-term financial health is built on solid foundations.
- Ensures that an adequate level of reserves is maintained to cover off the risks that the Council faces.
- Ensures that the Council sets a balanced & sustainable budget over the medium term, which is policy led and aligned with the Council Plan.
- Provides the financial parameters for service & budget planning.
- Ensures that resources are directed towards the highest priorities and away from lesser ones.
- Provides the Council with the flexibility to address new policy requirements, or significant changes to existing policies, within the overall envelope of available financial resources.
- Ensures that resources are invested efficiently and effectively and on a sustainable basis.
- Ensures that the Council monitors and manages its financial resources effectively, spending limits are not exceeded, and income is achieved.
- Maintains an ongoing focus on securing efficiencies across the Council and closing our budget gaps.
- Clearly delineates accountability and ownership of budgets and for the delivery of savings proposals.

2023/24 Budget and MTFP

- 4.7 The Council approved the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2023/24 on 23 February 2023. The budget was constructed in accordance with the Council's budget principles and the 2023/24 budget was balanced with the use of **£1.000m** from the budget risk reserve. This was to enable the Council to take a more strategic approach to reviewing priorities and managing the gaps over the medium term.
- 4.8 The use of reserves in this way is in line with the Government's expectations. DLUHC encouraged "*local authorities to consider how they can use their reserves to maintain services in the face of immediate inflationary pressures.*" The Government also outlined that it would consult with "*trusted partners*" including the Local Government Association, on releasing data on reserves held by councils.
- 4.9 Whilst the Local Government Finance Act 1992 required the Council to set a legal budget and Council Tax precept for the coming financial year i.e., 2023/24, the Council was not in a position to set a balanced MTFP over the 4-year period. There are significant gaps in the MTFP of **£2.535m** in 2024/25 rising to **£3.408m** in 2026/27.

- 4.10 Whilst there is no legal requirement to set a balanced MTFP, this is considered good practice. However, the most recent Autumn Statement and anticipated government funding still leaves the overall resource equation uncertain with the reforms to local government funding delayed further until at least 2025/26.
- 4.11 Given the size and scale of the financial challenge referenced in paragraph 4.9, it was recognised that the 2024/25 budget setting process would require an early focus to allow maximum time for the development and delivery of future budget savings.

Environmental volatility, uncertainty and budget assumptions

- 4.12 The latest budget assumptions within the MTFP are set out below:
- A starting budget gap as reported in the February 2023 MTFP of **£2.535m** in 2024/25 rising to **£3.408m** 2026/27, driven largely by pay and non-pay inflation, service demand pressures and income shortfalls.
 - Council Tax increase of **1.99%** in 2024/25 and future financial years and a 0.5% growth assumption in all financial years.
 - Business Rates – No assumed growth after the 2023/24 financial year.
 - Total new 2023/24 income and saving proposals of **£1.035m** in 2023/24. The ongoing impact of these will reduce to **£981k** in 2026/27.
 - Additional income of **£316k** from fees and charges increases in 2023/24.
 - Provision of a general inflation contingency of **£550k** in 2023/24 rising to **£650k** for the remainder of the MTFP to cover contract inflationary pressures in particular from the waste contracts.
 - Assumed service pressures of **£1.412m** in 2023/24 rising to **£1.536m** in 2026/27 – predominately driven by reduced income of **£507k** and increased costs of **£905k**.
 - Energy/utilities increases of **£976k** in 2023/24 only; the future scale of energy/utilities increases will be determined by the in-year retendering of energy/utilities contracts.
 - Assumed pay inflation of **4.00%** in 2023/24 and **2%** for all future years of the MTFP. A **£250k** vacancy rate has been applied to salary budgets.
- 4.13 Government funding assumptions are based on the Local Government Financial Settlement announced in February 2023. To prioritise certainty and stability for 2023/24 the Government opted for another one year rather than a multiyear settlement. This was the fifth one-year settlement for councils and continues to hamper the ability of councils to undertake effective financial planning and ensure financial sustainability.

- 4.14 The Council received a net increase of circa **£1.000m** in settlement funding over and above that assumed in the budget assumptions in the February 2022 General Fund revenue budget and MTFP report to full Council.
- 4.15 The latest Financial Settlement did provide some direction on what the funding position for local authorities may look like in 2024/25, stating that: the core settlement will continue in a similar manner for 2024/25. The major grants will continue as set out in 2023/24 with some assurance that funding levels uplifted by inflation in 2024/25.
- 4.16 However, the introduction of the expected fair funding reforms, which will look at redistribution of government funding to areas of need, still do not have a confirmed implementation date. This could result in the Council receiving a reduced level of funding from government in the medium to long-term. The impact of this will remain unknown until further information is provided. This means that funding levels over the medium term continue to remain speculative beyond the next financial year.

Updating our Budget Assumptions and Pressures

- 4.17 It is extremely difficult to estimate how future inflation and other global events will impact on local authorities. However, we are required by law to set a balanced budget and we must build our MTFP and budget strategy with the best information that is available and in the full knowledge of the risks and uncertainties involved.
- 4.18 There are a number of key factors that will influence and shape the next phase of the budget process. The Provisional Local Government Settlement expected in December 2023 should provide greater certainty around funding levels. At this stage it is not possible to fully determine the financial impact on the Council's budget gaps.
- 4.19 Further work will be undertaken to check and challenge budget assumptions and identify emerging and new service pressures for 2024/25, and over the term of the MTFP, in light of new information and the volatile environment in which the Council is operating. This work is important to enable the budget gaps to be updated and ensure that the size and scale of the gaps represent out best estimate of the level of savings that will need to be delivered.

Efficient and Robust Budget Management and Control

- 4.20 Effective budget monitoring and forecasting will be critical to understanding emerging budget pressures and ensuring that appropriate plans are implemented to manage and mitigate in-year financial risks. In-year financial management processes have been enhanced and strengthened across the Council. The new processes have been rolled out to budget managers in June 2023 for period 2 (May 2023). The quarter 1 budget monitoring position and year-end forecasts will be presented to Cabinet in September 2023.

- 4.21 Budget holders are responsible for ensuring that services are delivered within budget and for taking early management actions to resolve emerging financial issues. They are also responsible for ensuring external income is maximised for their service and seeking out new opportunities to generate income.
- 4.22 Where financial pressures are identified that cannot be mitigated through in-year management actions, these will need to be identified and addressed as part of the Council's budget-setting activities over the medium term.
- 4.23 There will also need to be a focus on continuous improvement and a plan of action towards meeting the CIPFA Financial Management Standard. Processes and procedures will be refined to improve the quality of data, and gain a deeper understanding of the operational activity, costs and income that are driving the financial performance of all service areas. This enhanced data set will enable more effective review and challenge in the overall management and control of the Council's short- and medium-term finances.

Strategic Approach to delivering a balanced MTFP - Draft Budget Themes

- 4.24 As it currently stands, the Council will need to drive out savings of at least **£2.5m** at pace. A prudent, responsible, and sustainable approach is required which secures savings in the short- and medium-term to reduce and remove the use of reserves, stabilising the Council's financial position and establishing affordability of Council services.
- 4.25 A detailed approach to addressing the budget gap will be worked through over the coming months. All budget work needs process and method, and it is proposed that this is structured around a number of inter-related budget themes. The themes have been designed to support the development of proposals that will enable a balanced budget to be achieved and provide the supporting information that will be needed for the Council to take decisions about how to deliver the priorities and outcomes in the Council Plan within the available resources. The themes are:
- Identifying General Efficiencies
 - Increasing Income and Establishing Stronger Commercial Operating Principles
 - Transforming how we Deliver Services
 - Reducing Service Offers / Stop Doing – Statutory and Non-Statutory Services
 - Rightsizing the Organisation
 - Asset Rationalisation and Effective Asset Management

- 4.26 Given the considerable size of the budget gap all services, corporate and front line, will need to consider how they develop proposals in relation to each of the themes.

Identifying General Efficiencies

- 4.27 All budget holders have been asked to review the budgets for their service areas in light of the now known outturn positions for 2022/23 and to identify pay and non-pay savings that will have little or no impact on service delivery. Examples will include removing long standing vacant posts, rationalising processes, revisiting procurement practices, optimising external grant sources and reducing supplies and services spending. It is also proposed that 'targets' are allocated to all service areas.

Increasing Income and Establishing Stronger Commercial Operating Principles

- 4.28 The current economic climate and the prevailing high rates of inflation mean that the costs of delivering services are increasing, making it more important than ever that all services are delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible, embedding commercial operating principles to how budgets are set and managed. It is imperative that all budget holders are focused on minimising costs and waste and maximising appropriate income opportunities. This includes the need to ensure that fees and charges are regularly reviewed to ensure that wherever possible the costs of service delivery are recovered, and that there is no cross subsidy from other service areas. This is particularly important for areas of discretionary spend, where the council does not have a statutory responsibility to deliver the service.
- 4.29 The 2023/24 budget and MTFP are constructed on the basis that additional income will be generated from the fees and charges increases that have already been approved. However, the process for reviewing the level of income achieved against forecasted income will need to revisit the original assumptions behind the fees and charges increases and take account of emerging factors including the prevailing economic conditions.
- 4.30 The Council's fees and charges policy will be reviewed following a deep dive into all key income generating areas. A corporate approach to effective management of fees and charges will ensure the Council maximises commercial opportunities to generate income from the delivery of chargeable services. Consideration will also be given to what opportunities there are for new income generation from statutory and non-statutory services.
- 4.31 It is recognised that there are a range of different factors to consider in setting fees and charges including legislative requirements and constraints, the full cost of delivering services, benchmarking with other local authorities and potential impacts upon other policy objectives.
- 4.32 As a minimum a full cost recovery model should be adopted, though there will also need to be due regard paid to the Council's concessionary policy, to

include the recovery of both controllable costs and overheads. The revised fees and charges policy will explore options for increasing rates on a more frequent basis to ensure that cost pressures are recovered.

Transforming how we Deliver Services.

- 4.33 This theme will focus on how all services are delivered, service standards and the outcomes that are to be achieved, informed by updated strategies. A modern service offer will need to be developed taking advantage of the latest digital capability to enable new ways of working, enhance service performance and drive cultural change, taking forward the learning and opportunities that have arisen both through the period of the pandemic and over the past 18 months.
- 4.34 A refreshed approach will be needed to how the Council engages with its customers and transitions to data and insight led decision-making. A priority focus must be the introduction of lean and efficient processes that prevent low level need developing into substantial demand for services, helping people find the services they need as efficiently as possible, and ensuring services are designed with a view of to improving outcomes and minimising costs.
- 4.35 Further work will be undertaken on digital transformation to understand the opportunities that exist to reduce manual, repetitive tasks by introducing automation to speed up processes, reduce errors and risk, and create financial efficiencies.

Reducing Service Offers / Stop Doing – Statutory and Non-Statutory Services.

- 4.36 This theme will look at the options available for reducing service delivery levels and standards, both statutory and non-statutory services, or stopping services, where they are discretionary. This will be the theme where the hardest decisions will have to be made, as it may mean that existing Council Plan priorities, objectives and commitments can no longer be met in full or in part. To inform decision-making there will be a need for a collective depth of understanding of which Council services are discretionary and which are statutory, and in relation to the latter options presented as to the level of service delivery standards that the Council is able or chooses to sustain.
- 4.37 The focus should be on the effective and efficient delivery of all services and to ensure that they are delivering value for money. This can be done by the use of benchmarking and understanding the cost drivers to reduce the overall cost of the service. Decisions can then be made to consider alternative delivery models and/or service reductions.

Right-sizing the Organisation

- 4.38 Employee pay is one of the biggest financial cost drivers in the Council's financial plans, with budgets in excess of **£21m** in 2023/24. Each 1% pay award increases costs by over **£200k** and the recent pay award which was

equivalent to an average 5.6% increase, has contributed to the significant budget gaps now evident in the MTFP.

- 4.39 In view of the significant financial pressure the Council is under, it is expected that there will need to be a reduction in the Council's workforce. There are a number of vacant posts already in the system and a review of these is underway. These vacancies are being held for a number of reasons, for example, pending a restructure and difficulty in recruiting to certain posts, and some have been held vacant for a period of time. This review will help us to understand if any of the vacant posts can be easily removed from the establishment.
- 4.40 The removal of vacant posts alone will not provide the level of ongoing savings that are required and as a result, the Council's Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) and Voluntary Redundancy (VR) procedures have been reviewed and updated to support the need to reduce headcount. A report will be considered by Joint Cabinet and Employment and General Committee on 18 July 2023, with recommendations to approve a new VR/ VER policy and the launch of a new scheme to be offered to all employees.
- 4.41 The Council has offered employees the opportunity to request VR or VER for several years. The existing scheme was first introduced in 2016, with an initial request from the Council to ask for volunteers to leave the organisation during a fixed period. The scheme has subsequently remained available for employees to request that their role is considered for VR or VER on an ad hoc basis. However, it is now proposed that a fixed window for a new VR / VER scheme is opened between 27 July and 15 September 2023.
- 4.42 The Council is keen to engage with employees to understand those who may be interested in seeking VR / VER. This also provides the opportunity to consider whether cashable savings proposals relating to other budget themes e.g., stopping a service, might be more readily achieved by releasing employees on voluntary terms from the Council's employment.

Asset Rationalisation and Effective Asset Management

- 4.43 Council will consider a revised Asset Management Strategy at its meeting on 19 July 2023. The Strategy provides an overview of the Council's current land and property assets, considers the key drivers and opportunities, and sets out a vision, policies and strategic objectives to direct how the Council manages its land and property assets over the next four years.
- 4.44 The Strategy provides opportunities for the Council to review both its operational and non-operational estate and rationalise wherever possible. This will result in reduced operating expenses e.g., energy use, business rates etc., lower repair and maintenance costs, and opportunities to generate capital or revenue through sale or lease arrangements. The overarching principle is that all Council assets should support a strategic need or offer a net financial return.

4.45 The revised Strategy includes the following strategic objectives:

- Developing and delivering our Corporate Landlord approach
- Investing in decarbonisation whilst keeping our assets safe and well maintained
- Delivering a land and property rationalisation programme
- Maximising income and overall value from the existing commercial estate
- Using our land and property to maximise inclusive growth opportunities across the borough.

Financial Resilience and Reserves

4.46 Reserves are an important part of the Council's financial strategy and are held to create long-term financial stability. They enable the Council to manage change and are a key element of its financial standing and resilience. The Council's key sources of funding face an uncertain future and the Council therefore holds earmarked and unearmarked reserves and a working balance to mitigate future financial risks.

4.47 The General Fund Working Balance has been set at **£1.5m** and is informed by a detailed risk assessment undertaken as part of the annual budget setting process. The on-going financial risks set out in this report suggest it imprudent to consider reducing this amount.

4.48 In addition to the General Fund Working Balance the Council maintains several other reserves. Earmarked reserves, by their very nature, are set aside and committed for specific purposes, such as property repairs and vehicle & plant replacements.

4.49 The Council has also previously established a Budget Risk Reserve, as a supplement to the General Fund Working Balance, to provide a further contingency for unforeseen items. The General Fund Draft Outturn 2021/22 was presented to Cabinet in June 2022 and recommended that £440k of the 2021/22 surplus be prudently transferred to the Budget Risk Reserve to mitigate the forecast risks and pressures emerging for 2022/23 and 2023/24. Given the size and scale of the financial challenges the Council is facing, the Council resolved in February 2023 to utilise **£1.000m** of the Budget Risk Reserve to support the General Fund revenue budget for 2023/24. This was to afford the Council time to take a more strategic approach to reviewing its priorities and agreeing a new Council Plan, and to developing a new Budget Strategy to deliver a balanced budget for 2024/25 and over the medium-term. A further **£292m** of the Budget Risk Reserve has been used to cover the overspend in 2022/23.

4.50 As part of the 2023/24 budget setting process an assessment of the adequacy of reserves was undertaken. The assessment of reserves is

important in the context of the sustained cuts in Government funding affecting local authorities, the significant risks and uncertainties that the Council faces in this post-pandemic era and recent decisions to apply some of the Council's reserves. It is important to acknowledge that reserves are 'one off' funds and are therefore suitable for funding 'one off' or unexpected costs. The use of reserves to fund ongoing expenditure or to cover failures to achieve budgeted savings is never advised, except in emergencies and/or to enable transition to new ways of working. Whilst the use of reserves to date has been deemed to be affordable, they are now at a level whereby any significant further use would leave the Council exposed and potentially unable to manage both known and unknown risks.

- 4.51 A full review of reserves is underway, and a refreshed Reserves Policy will be considered as part of the MTFP in February 2024, with a view to strengthening the Budget Risk Reserve. In advance of the full review, the adequacy of the Business Rates Reserve has been assessed. The Business Rates Reserve was set up to help smooth the potential impact of Business Rates volatility in future financial years particularly in preparation for the potential impact of the fair funding review, which was originally expected in 2024/25. There is already evidence that overprovision exists within this reserve and therefore it is recommended that **£1m** of the Business Rates Reserve be repurposed to replenish the Budget Risk Reserve in 2023/24.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- 4.52 Like all local authorities, The Council's financial position over the coming years is challenging. The sustained period of austerity since 2010, the ongoing risks and uncertainties over future funding arrangements, the budgetary impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and a sustained period of exceptionally high inflation, have all impacted on the Council's financial position. This new economic reality has brought and is expected to bring significant financial challenges to the Council over the medium term.
- 4.53 In response to these challenges, the Council has already made significant savings over many years and taken steps to manage demand and deliver services in the most economic, efficient, and effective way. It is against this context that the Council must now develop its approach to balancing the 2024/25 budget, and the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
- 4.54 Closing the budget gaps for 2024/25 and over the medium-term cannot be achieved through efficiency savings alone; the magnitude of the cost reductions needed to address the gaps is significant and it is therefore inevitable that service delivery will be impacted. The Budget Strategy sets out a strategic framework and a range of thematic interventions to enable the Council to make prudent steps towards balancing its budgets whilst simultaneously suitable sustaining sufficient resources, as far as practicable,

to deliver the Council Plan. Given the size of the budget gap by 2025/26, it is likely that a combination of interventions will be needed.

- 4.53 Further work will continue to be undertaken to check and challenge budget assumptions and to quantify and qualify new service pressures for 2024/25 and over the term of the MTFP, taking account of new information and the volatile environment in which, the Council is operating. This work is important to enable the current budget gaps to be updated and ensure that the size and scale of the gaps represent the best estimate of the level of savings that will need to be delivered.
- 4.54 The period 3 (June 2023) budget monitoring report will be reported to Cabinet in September 2023. This is an important report, as it will set out any further financial pressures that are emerging in the current financial year and their potential ongoing impact on the MTFP e.g., it is expected that the current economic uncertainty and resulting inflationary pressures, particularly on energy and staffing costs will impact on the Council's forecast in-year spend.
- 4.55 Internal officer working groups have been set up to lead and manage delivery of the MTFP, to oversee Workforce Planning including implementation of the VR / VER scheme, to take forward Digital Transformation, and to develop a detailed action plan to give effect to the Asset Management Strategy. These working groups will be supported by the individual actions of budget holders who have tasked with working up savings and income proposals having due regard to the budget themes set out in this report.

5.0 **Alternative options**

- 5.1 There are no real alternative options to the Council having a sound and comprehensive Budget Strategy that optimises its ability to address the multiple risks, uncertainties and challenges that it currently faces. These are set out in the body of the report. The Council's ability to set a balanced budget is not helped by the Government's inability to offer Councils no more than single-year settlements. 2024/25 will be the sixth year of single-year settlements for councils, which hampers the Council's ability to undertake effective financial planning and ensure financial sustainability.
- 5.2 The budget themes set out in this report provide a range of options for addressing the current budget gaps. Specific interventions will need to be developed under each of the themes to enable the Council to make timely decisions.

6.0 **Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money**

- 6.1 The report in its entirety deals with financial and value for money implications.

7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal

7.1 It is a statutory requirement under Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for the Council to produce a balanced budget each financial year. Before setting the level of the Council Tax the Council must have agreed a balanced budget, differentiated by services, which is sufficient to meet estimated revenue expenditure, levies, contingencies, any deficit estimate brought forward from previous financial years, and any amounts required to be transferred between funds. The Council Tax itself must be sufficient to cover the difference between the agreed budget less government grants credited to the income and expenditure account, and any other expenditure which must be met from the Collection Fund, less any surplus (or plus any deficit) brought forward from previous financial years.

8.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources

8.1 There are no human resource implications to consider in this report.

9.0 Implications for consideration – Council Plan

9.1 In preparing the budget estimates for the coming financial year and updating the MTFP, detailed consideration has been given to the need for the Council's finances to be at appropriate levels to enable the Council to deliver in full on the priorities, objectives, and commitments that it has set itself within the new Council Plan.

9.2 The preparation of sustainable and balanced budgets over the medium term is also a key activity in contributing to delivery of the third Council Plan priority 'delivering value for money services'.

10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate Change

10.1 Climate Change is a key consideration in the development of the MTFP. Climate Change Impact Assessments are undertaken for specific spending options and activities and form a key part of informed decision making. The MTFP also makes a significant positive climate change commitment through the allocation of mainstream funding to provide the staffing resources and project funds required to support delivery of the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

11.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 Equality and diversity is a key consideration in the development of the MTFP. Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken for specific spending options and activities and form a key part of informed decision making.

12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

12.1 There are a number of significant risks inherent in any budget forecasting exercise and these risks increase as the period covered increases. A critical

element to achieving long term financial sustainability is to ensure savings proposals included within the budget are delivered. As we move into the development of savings and income generation proposals, budget holders will be required to properly quantify and qualify all risks associated with the delivery and implementation of proposals to avoid underachievement. Detailed implementation plans will be required for each proposal.

Decision information

Key decision number	
Wards affected	

Document information

Report author	Contact number/email
Theresa Channell	Theresa.channell@chesterfield.gov.uk
Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.</i>	
Appendices to the report	
None	

For publication

Chesterfield Borough Council Asset Management Strategy

Meeting:	Council
Date:	19 July 2023
Cabinet portfolio:	Deputy leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management
Directorate:	Economic Growth
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To seek Council approval for the adoption of the Councils Asset Management Strategy 2023 – 2027, to ensure the Council is managing its assets safely, effectively and efficiently and to enable the Council to make the best use of its land and property, to support the Councils aims and priorities, as set out in the Council Plan.

2.0 Recommendations

This report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 18 July, 2023 where it was resolved that the report and its recommendations be supported and referred to Council for approval.

- 2.1 To approve the adoption of the Chesterfield Borough Council Asset Management Strategy 2023 to 2027.
- 2.2 To note that future delivery plans, with any additional budget requirements to implement the strategy, will be brought to future Cabinet and Council meetings, as appropriate.
- 2.3 To give delegated authority to the Service Director – Economic Growth, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet member for finance and asset management, to make minor amendments to the final version of the Asset Management Strategy prior to completion.

3.0 Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 It is important for the council to have a long-term asset management strategy that sets out the vision, asset management policies and strategic objectives to

guide the overall management of the councils land and property assets, in line with the vision and priorities of the Council.

4.0 Report details

Context

- 4.1 Chesterfield Borough Council is committed to making sure that its land and property assets work to benefit the wider borough, as well as enabling the council to deliver its services as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- 4.2 The Council Plan sets out its vision to 'Putting our Communities first', together with three priorities:
 - Making Chesterfield a thriving borough
 - Improving quality of life for local people
 - Building a resilient council
- 4.3 The commitment to our communities to maximise social value, deliver inclusive growth, provide good quality housing and attractive green spaces, and achieve net-zero carbon by 2050, can all be driven forward through the way in which the Council uses its assets for the benefit of the borough.
- 4.4 A review of the Council's asset management strategy has been progressing for some time, particularly since the return of the property and technical services from the Arvato/ Kier contract in August 2020.
- 4.5 It has taken some time to develop the approach, largely due to the need to prioritise resources on supporting tenants through the pandemic, the focus on progressing the stock condition surveys and incorporating net zero carbon assessments, and a number of significant property related regeneration projects that continued to be delivered through the pandemic.

Overview of Asset Management Strategy

4.6 The strategy includes an overview of the council's current land and assets and in consideration of the drivers and opportunities, the strategy sets out a vision, asset management policies and strategic objectives which seek to capture the focus for land and property management over the next four years. The detail is set out in the documents in Appendix 1. Key elements are highlighted below, including the headline outputs and outcomes, under each of the strategic objectives, that the delivery of the strategy will seek to achieve by 2027.

4.7 Vision:

To actively manage and rationalise our land and property assets in line with the vision and priorities set out within the Council plan, ensuring that our assets are safe, efficient, fit for purpose, sustainable and provide value for money for the communities of Chesterfield.

4.8 Strategic objectives, outputs and outcomes:

- **Developing and delivering our Corporate Landlord approach**

By 2027 we will have:

- Established effective governance arrangements, under a corporate landlord model, to support effective decision making.
- Reshaped services across the council to support the implementation of a corporate landlord approach, with appropriate resources for successful delivery.
- A range of appropriate policies and procedures in place to guide decision making and the development of work programmes.
- A new ICT software system to effectively manage and analyse asset data to support decision making.
- Regular reporting of statutory compliance performance across the estate.

- **Investing in decarbonisation whilst keeping our assets safe and well maintained**

By 2027 we will have:

- Completed a stock condition and net-zero carbon assessment on all of our assets, and established an on-going five year rolling programme
- Made significant progress in decarbonising our assets, towards the council's net-zero target for 2030.
- An established and sufficiently resourced medium to long term planned maintenance programme.

- An appropriately funded planned maintenance and reactive repairs service.
 - An established corporate landlord approach to premise management with clear responsibilities for the corporate property team and premise managers.
- **Delivering a land and property rationalisation programme**
By 2027 we will have:
 - Completed a full land and property rationalisation programme and established an annual review programme to review our assets every five years.
 - Completed a four-year disposals programme and achieved a significant level of capital receipts, that have primarily been re-invested in the council's land and property portfolio
 - Established an on-going disposals and acquisitions programme to ensure the estate continues to provide value for money for the Council and support its vision and priorities.
- **Maximising income and overall value from the existing commercial estate**
By 2027 we will have:
 - Completed a review of the commercial portfolio, seeking to maximise income from land holdings
 - Implemented a new ICT software system to enable the effective management of the financial transactions required to recover rental and service charge income.
- **Using our land and property to maximise inclusive growth opportunities across the borough**
By 2027 we will have:
 - Worked to support the delivery of the growth and housing strategies of the council; seeking to deliver the council vision and priorities.
 - Identified opportunities to expand the council's commercial portfolio and income generating ability, including green growth opportunities.

4.9 The strategy highlights the significant resourcing challenges to progressing its delivery. This covers both the staff resource, and the significant revenue and capital asset investments that are likely to be required over the four-year period of the plan. This is set against the backdrop of an extremely challenging financial position for this Council, and all local authorities in the aftermath of the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis and the pressures that inflation has brought.

- 4.10 Whilst it is more regular practise for the Council to approve costed strategies, to provide clarity on what outputs and outcomes can be delivered over the length of the strategy, this has not been possible at this time.
- 4.12 A delivery plan is in development, which will identify the resources needed to deliver the strategic objectives. This plan will be brought back to Cabinet and Council for approval in line with the constitution.
- 4.13 Key priorities that are being progressed at present, in line with the strategic objectives, include the stock condition and net zero carbon assessments, the progression of appropriate asset disposals, a focus on maximising income from the commercial estate, supporting the delivery of a number of major growth projects and the development of a corporate landlord policy. The latter will seek to set out appropriate governance arrangements and define the activities to be delivered through that policy, which will then support a re-definition of the way in which land and property is managed across the council.

5.0 Alternative options

- 5.1 The council could carry on without an overall asset management strategy, but this would not maximise the benefit of the land and property assets of the council to the borough, as there would be a risk of delivering a piece meal and silo' d approach to the treatment of assets.
- 5.2 The council could delay the adoption of the strategy until there is a full understanding of the delivery plan actions and the resource requirements. Whilst this would provide a more holistic approach, there is significant work to complete to crystallise some of the resource requirements, and it was felt it would be more productive to present a strategy that provides a clear direction of travel and provide a framework for the more detailed delivery plan.

6.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

- 6.1 The Councils land and property assets form a key element of the medium-term financial plan; from the role that is played in providing operational buildings from which services operate, to the significant amount of income that is raised from the commercial portfolio, which supports service provision across the council.
- 6.2 It is critical that we are able to demonstrate, within the medium-term financial plan, that we can afford the estate that we have, and that we are maximising its potential in supporting the Council plan and the medium-term financial plan.

- 6.3 The revenue and capital funding requirements for keeping our buildings well maintained and fit for purpose are significant and must be factored into the council's costs when developing the budgets.
- 6.4 Many of the regeneration and growth programmes that are key to making Chesterfield a thriving borough, make use of the councils existing land and property assets, or have implications for the current estate.
- 6.5 The asset management policy included within the draft strategy provides a clear approach to the use of any capital receipts, setting out that the approach will be, 'to reinvest capital receipts, secured through the disposals programme, into the land and property estate to fund maintenance, decarbonisation and investment activity to support the delivery of the asset management vision'.

7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal

- 7.1 The legal responsibilities for asset management are wide-ranging, from statutory compliance and health and safety requirements in safely operating land and buildings, through to landlord and tenant requirements, and those that regulate disposals and acquisitions.

8.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources

- 8.1 There are no HR implications directly related to this report, but the strategy does recognise that in order to achieve the outputs and outcomes changes will need to be made to the way in which the council delivers its asset management functions, which will lead to a future report that will set out the HR implications at that time.

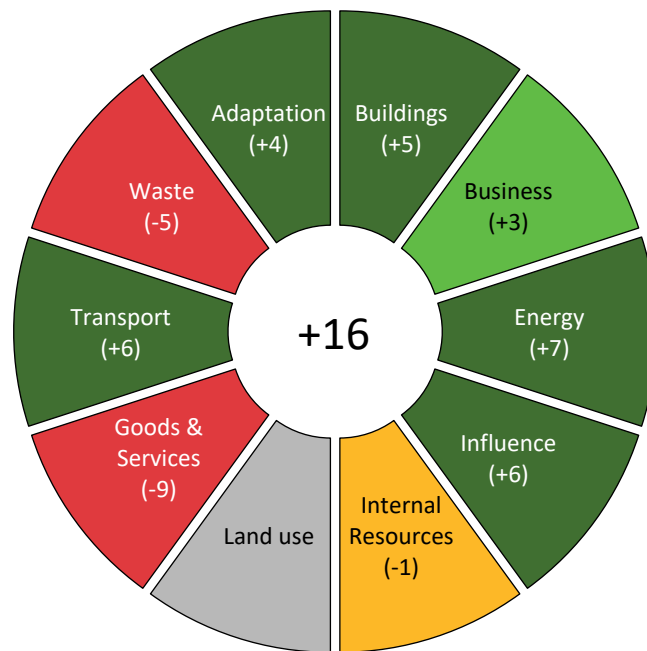
9.0 Implications for consideration – Council plan

- 9.1 The Council's commitments to our communities to maximise social value, deliver inclusive growth, good quality housing, attractive green spaces and achieve net-zero carbon by 2050, are clearly set out in the Council plan and can all be driven forward through the way in which the Council uses its assets for the benefit of the borough.

10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate change

- 10.1 There is a clear commitment in the climate change strategy and this draft asset management strategy to decarbonise the council's land and property estate by the 2030 target. In addition there is a recognition that the council can use its assets to support the achievement of the wider 2050 target, and contribute positively to support green growth opportunities across the borough.

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Chesterfield Borough Council has committed to being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030 (6 years and 5 months away).

10.2 The climate impact assessment tool shows that there are positive climate benefits that will be achieved through the delivery of this asset management strategy. However, it also highlights that in order to achieve those benefits there will be negative impacts in terms of the waste materials that will be produced as buildings are altered to reduce carbon footprints, and also with the additional services the council will need to retain to complete that work.

11.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 A preliminary equalities impact assessment, EIA, for the draft Asset Management Strategy has been completed and is shown in Appendix 2. At this stage it is not necessary to complete a full EIA, but once projects are progressed that seek to rationalise the estate, there will be a need to consider the equalities impacts of those proposals.

12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

12.1 The table below sets out a number of risks and the proposed mitigations.

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Failure to allocate resources to deliver the strategy	H	M	Work through the development of the medium term financial plan to identify revenue resources and	H	L

			progress the asset disposals programme at pace to achieve capital receipts that can support the changes that are needed		
Non-compliance with statutory legislative and health and safety requirements	H	M	Priority is given to these areas of work, but improvements are planned to provide a system of overall assurance for the Council	H	L

Decision information

Key decision number	<i>All key decisions must be in the Forward Plan at least 28 days in advance. There are constitutional consequences if an item is not in the Forward Plan when it should have been. Contact Democratic Services if in doubt.</i>
Wards affected	All

Document information

Report author	
Christine Durrant, Executive Director	
Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.</i>	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Draft Chesterfield Borough Council Asset Management Strategy
Appendix 2	Preliminary Equality Impact Assessment

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APPENDIX 1

DRAFT

Chesterfield Borough Council
Asset Management Strategy

2023 to 2027

July 2023



Foreword

Chesterfield Borough Council is committed to ensuring that its land and property assets work to the benefit of the borough, as well as enabling the council to deliver its services as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The Council Plan sets out our vision 'Putting our Communities first', together with three priorities:

- Making Chesterfield a thriving borough
- Improving quality of life for local people
- Building a resilient council

The commitment to our communities to maximise social value, deliver inclusive growth, provide good quality housing and attractive green spaces and achieve net-zero carbon by 2050, can all be driven forward through the way in which the council uses its assets for the benefit of the borough.

This asset management strategy will set the framework for how we manage our property portfolio effectively over the next four years. It will guide our strategic property decisions to ensure we manage our property portfolio efficiently and sustainably so it will remain fit for the future and support the way future decisions are made concerning disposal, acquisition and the use of property assets to maximise overall benefits across the borough.

Over the next few months, members and officers will seek to develop a costed and achievable delivery plan, using this asset management strategy to guide the priority activities. Whilst that plan is being developed, activities will focus on progressing the stock condition and net-zero carbon assessments, progressing appropriate asset disposals, maximising income from the commercial estate, supporting the delivery of a number of major growth projects and the development of a corporate landlord policy. The latter will seek to set out appropriate governance arrangements and define the activities to be delivered through that policy, which will then support a re-definition of the way in which land and property is managed across the council.

There will be challenges to the delivery of the strategy as the council seeks to tackle the wider financial constraints that are being placed upon it, however having a strategy that can maximise the use of land and property to support this position will be critical.

Councillor Amanda Serjeant

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management

July 2023



Executive summary

This strategy seeks to provide a clear direction of travel for the successful and effective management of the council's non-housing assets over the next four years. It provides an overview of the council's land and property assets and sets the context and drivers that will affect the way in which the assets are managed.

The main elements of the strategy are:

Vision – overall aim for the strategy

To actively manage and rationalise our land and property assets in line with the vision and priorities set out within the Council plan, ensuring that our assets are safe, efficient, fit for purpose, sustainable and provide value for money for the communities of Chesterfield.

Asset management policies

- Corporate landlord – to adopt a corporate landlord approach to the management of our land and property, including providing a clear governance structure for performance, programme management and decision making; clear policies and procedures, reporting and monitoring arrangements; and putting in place resources to deliver a corporate landlord approach across the council
- Compliance and property maintenance – to keep our properties safe, dry and secure through the implementation of an appropriately resourced, well-managed, rigorous compliance regime and a repairs and renewals programme with evidence-led maintenance plans, which are based on an appropriate balance of investment between planned and reactive maintenance
- Commitment to net zero carbon emissions - to seek to protect the environment by adapting and managing our estate to meet the council's climate commitment to net zero by 2030, in line with the council's climate change strategy and including the consideration of initiatives that support green growth
- Land and property rationalisation – to drive efficiencies through regular asset management reviews of our land and property assets, ensuring they are managed efficiently, provide the right space, in the right place and on the best terms
- Disposals and acquisitions – to dispose of, or acquire land and property as part of the delivery of the outcomes from the rationalisation programme, in line with the council's overall vision and priorities set out in the Council Plan, with particular focus on maximising social value, inclusive growth and the contribution to net-zero commitments



- Use of capital receipts - to reinvest capital receipts, secured through the disposals programme, into the land and property estate to fund maintenance, decarbonisation and investment activity to support the delivery of the asset management vision
- Commercial estate management – to maximise income generation and overall social value from the existing land and property portfolio through proactive estate management recognising the importance of delivering value for money to support council service delivery and the medium-term financial plan
- Supporting growth and housing strategies – to use our assets to support development opportunities and maximise inclusive growth in the borough, as part of the delivery of the council’s growth and housing strategies
- Innovation and technology – to promote a culture of innovation that optimises the use of technology to support new ways of working across the Council

Strategic objectives – to provide direction for activities from 2023 to 2027

- Developing and delivering our Corporate Landlord approach
- Investing in decarbonisation whilst keeping our assets safe and well maintained
- Delivering a land and property rationalisation programme
- Maximising income and overall value from the existing commercial estate
- Using our land and property to maximise inclusive growth opportunities across the borough

The strategy sets out the challenges around resourcing in the current financial climate, and with the expectation that additional resources, that have not yet been identified, will be required to deliver this strategy.

A delivery plan is being developed, in line with a corporate landlord policy and the re-definition of the delivery of land and property management functions across the council. This work will identify any additional resourcing requirements and Council will be asked for the appropriate approvals. Current activities are focussed across each of the strategic objectives.

Key outputs and outcomes are articulated in more detail in section five, all targeted at achieving the overall vision.



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Chesterfield Borough Council has a large real estate portfolio which includes commercial land and property, social housing, and the council's own operational estate. Much of the portfolio is efficient and effective, providing value for money for Chesterfield residents and businesses.
- 1.2 This Asset Management Strategy, AMS, provides an overview of our non-housing land and property assets and sets out the council's approach to strategic management of these land and building assets. Housing revenue account, HRA, assets are noted within the plan, but the detailed management arrangements for these assets will be included within the development of the long term HRA business plan.
- 1.3 This document sets out an overall vision, policies and objectives to guide the key activities needed to successfully manage, maintain and develop our assets, over the next four years, in line with the council's overall vision and priorities. It should be recognised that many land and property decisions can take longer than four years to come to fruition, but it is important to set out the activities to be prioritised over a shorter time period.
- 1.4 The strategy has been developed in consultation with elected members and officers from across the council and in the context of the Council Plan and other key policies and strategies, including the growth strategy, housing strategy, parks and open spaces strategy and climate change strategy. It will also provide a key input to our financial and service planning and support delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Plan, MTFP, whilst ensuring compliance with our capital and investment strategies.
- 1.5 This new strategy builds on our previous achievements and will ensure that the council is agile, innovative and forward thinking in the management of its property assets. Over the term of this strategy, it is the council's ambition to review and rationalize the use of all assets to ensure that the real estate portfolio is well managed and maintained and that it continues to positively support the council's financial position and deliver the council's priorities for service delivery, including delivery of our climate change objectives.
- 1.6 The strategy also prioritises the need to ensure that assets are managed and maintained in line with statutory compliance and health and safety legislation and are fit for purpose to deliver the council's responsibilities in terms of its statutory and front-line services. The net zero carbon commitment will guide the direction of the planned maintenance programme in a drive to de-carbonise the current estate, linking in with the opportunities for securing external government support for particular projects.



2.0 Context

Overview of land and property assets

- 2.1 The Council has over 60 operational buildings, covering administrative buildings and depot facilities, as well as those providing services directly for the benefit of the public. There are over 720 individual commercial rental opportunities, set across factories and workshops, office accommodation, retail and leisure, and agricultural land. Across the parks, open spaces, play and sports areas there are over 200 distinct assets, including 28 allotments.
- 2.2 The value of these assets, as they are reflected in the council's accounts, is estimated at £138m. Including the value of the housing revenue account assets at £423m, takes the total value of the Councils assets to over £550m.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 sets out the current breakdown of the overview set out above. This appendix also includes details of the properties held within the housing revenue account.
- 2.4 Over the period of its previous asset management strategy and in pursuit of the delivery of its Council Plan priorities, Chesterfield Borough Council has extended and strengthened its property portfolio, building a new Leisure Centre at Chesterfield's Queens Park, together with 3G football pitches, a multi-story car park at Saltergate, the adjacent new Northern Gateway Enterprise Centre and a six story office development at Waterside. There has also been significant delivery of new social housing provision at several sites across the borough. In addition, investment in parks and open spaces have resulted in improvements to play facilities. These assets have helped to improve service provision within communities.
- 2.5 In July 2021 the council also acquired The Pavements shopping centre in Chesterfield town centre. This was a strategic acquisition for the council, which was appropriate from a value for money perspective, but also gives the council control of a significant proportion of the town, which in the long term will help to facilitate a Southern Gateway regeneration project to the overall benefit of the borough.
- 2.6 Commercial property lettings have largely performed strongly, both across the Borough and within Chesterfield Town Centre. The Council has delivered top quartile performance in the management of its commercial property portfolio, generating annual revenues of £4.1million. During the pandemic the council supported its tenants through a range of initiatives to assist with financial pressures. Having such a large real estate portfolio has helped Chesterfield Borough Council to counter ongoing economic uncertainty and reduced public funding.



- 2.7 Essential repairs and maintenance have been undertaken across the property estate to ensure that it continues to provide safe and appropriate accommodations. The council is currently progressing a significant £20m project to refurbish the Stephenson Memorial Hall, which houses the Pomegranate Theatre and the Museum, and the adjacent public realm on Corporation Street.
- 2.8 The introduction of agile working for employees across the Council has resulted in better utilization of the Council's operational estate. This generated vacant accommodation space at Chesterfield Town Hall which has been leased to voluntary sector organisations and to Derbyshire County Council, supporting a reduced public sector footprint within the town. A project is also starting to move the Customer services centre and operational teams from the Revenues hall in the town centre, into the Town Hall. This will maximise the use of the town hall accommodation and deliver cost savings, as well as being able to consider the reuse, lease or sale of the Revenues Hall.

Operational/ service-based properties

- 2.9 The Council's operational property portfolio comprises of office and operational buildings which are situated in the community, such as Chesterfield Town Hall, the Customer Service Centre, Queens Park Leisure Centre and Healthy Living Centre, outdoor markets and the Market Hall, theatres, museums and car parks, alongside more complex operational sites such as Stonegravel depot.
- 2.10 Chesterfield Borough Council's operational property portfolio has undergone a degree of rationalisation over recent years, but there remain further opportunities to make better use of our operational buildings. Paragraph 2.8 above, sets out the progress in relation to the customer service centre moving into the Town hall. A car parking study is currently underway that considers the future requirements for car parking, the opportunities for investment in green technologies within the car parks to contribute to reducing carbon, as well as regeneration opportunities if there is surplus car parking capacity.

Non-operational/ commercially focussed properties

- 2.11 The council's commercial property portfolio consists of income producing assets, such as business parks, office space, industrial estates, shopping centres and retail property, together with other commercial buildings and operational space located within the Borough of Chesterfield which is let to tenants.
- 2.12 Office space includes the council's Enterprise Centres, which provide managed work space for a range of businesses from start up to larger

businesses; part of the service offer is also to provide business support activities for those businesses to help them grow and establish themselves within the borough.

- 2.13 This property portfolio generates income levels of £4.1million per annum and is valued at over £38.8million, providing a 10.5% return. The recent acquisition of the Pavements Shopping Centre provides significant opportunities to re-purpose the centre and strengthen our commercial property income.

Commercial land

- 2.14 The council holds a significant amount of land which typically is let for agricultural or equestrian/grazing purposes. It generates a small rental income and releases the council from ongoing maintenance and running cost liabilities. The council will continue to pursue opportunities to enable some of this land to be developed through regeneration activity and deliver capital receipts.

Parks and Open Spaces and Play Portfolio

- 2.15 The council has nearly 280 parks, sports, recreation and play areas in addition to 29 allotments and 8 woodland areas – totalling nearly 510 hectares. There has been over £8.5 million investment over the last ten years (70% from external funding) in the council's parks and open spaces. Masterplans and management plans are in place for the main parks with four having Green Flag awards. In addition, over the last 10 years £1.542 million has been spent on improvements to play areas.
- 2.16 The recently approved parks, open spaces and play strategies set out the importance of continually reviewing the quality and quantity of park, open space and play provision, including the consideration of rationalisation opportunities to make best use of the space and potentially raise funds for capital improvement schemes to the retained stock.

Existing asset management arrangements

- 2.17 The current asset management arrangements are focused on the corporate property and technical services team having key responsibilities for statutory compliance, reactive repairs and planned maintenance works across the land and property estate and managing the significant commercial property portfolio. Significant legal advice and support is provided to this team by the property, procurement and contracts law team and the economic development team.



- 2.18 In addition, there are a range of facilities management activities that are completed by service premise managers. They are responsible for the day-to-day statutory compliance requirements and ensuring health and safety compliance within operational areas. Soft facilities management, such as cleaning, caretaking and catering, are provided through either the service teams themselves, or arrangements with other bespoke teams across the council.
- 2.19 A number of key areas of compliance are currently lead and coordinated within the corporate health and safety team, including asbestos management and fire risk assessments. There is also a key link between the corporate health and safety team and premise managers in terms of the property related health and safety requirements to keeping a building safe.
- 2.20 The majority of property repairs and maintenance budgets are pooled into one central fund, managed by the facilities maintenance team, which is an effective approach to managing properties and finances. The council is seeking to extend this central coordination approach through the development of a corporate landlord approach to the management of its land and property. The aim being to drive closer collaboration across services to achieve improved governance in the strategic management of its assets and greater assurance of health and safety compliance around day-to-day premise management. To support this approach significant investment in new IT software and technological solutions will be needed.
- 2.21 Since the council brought back in-house the property and technical services teams in 2020, there is an opportunity to further embed a corporate landlord approach into how we develop and re-shape these service teams going forward. The aim being for the service to provide a professional, ambitious and dynamic property service, working with services across the council and in partnership with our customers, building occupiers, suppliers and partners to optimise asset performance and income in the delivery of our property services and enabling a corporate landlord approach to be supported across the council.



3.0 Key drivers, opportunities and challenges

Council Plan

3.1 The council's real estate portfolio is a major resource and is integral to the delivery of many services across Chesterfield. It is vital that these assets contribute to the council's vision and priorities, as set out in the Council Plan for 2023 to 2027.

3.2 The councils overall vision is 'Putting our Communities first'; with three priorities to:

- Making Chesterfield a thriving borough
- Improving quality of life for local people
- Building a resilient council

3.3 The development and delivery of this strategy is set out within the 'building a resilient council' priority, with;

Our aspiration: to embrace new ways of working and maximise potential from our assets, partnership and respond to key challenges:

- We will: progress in our target to become a carbon neutral Council by 2030, by delivering our Climate Change Strategy and action plan, focusing on the delivery of low carbon services through decarbonisation of our operational buildings, maximising opportunities for clean energy generation, fleet management, supplies and services and our policies.
- We will: implement the new Asset Management Strategy and action plan, ensuring the alignment of our asset base to the service needs of a modern, agile Council.
- We will: seek new property-based income opportunities to support our financial resilience, aligned to our core objectives and climate commitments.
- We will: seek the most effective and efficient way of delivering our services and be well placed to take advantage of social, cultural, environmental and technological change.
- We will: collaborate and work in partnership with different parts of the public sector, business community and community and voluntary sector to deliver better outcomes for our borough.



Medium Term Financial Plan

- 3.4 The Council's land and property assets form a key element of the council's medium-term financial plan; from the role that is played in providing operational buildings from which our services are run, to the significant amount of commercial income that is raised from our portfolio which supports services provision across the council.
- 3.5 The revenue and capital funding requirements for keeping our buildings well maintained and fit for purpose are significant and must be factored into the Council's costs when developing the budgets.
- 3.6 Many of the regeneration and growth programmes that are key to making Chesterfield a thriving borough, make use of the council's existing land and property assets, or have implications for the current estate.
- 3.7 It is critical that we are able to demonstrate, within the medium-term financial plan, that we can afford the estate that we have, and that we are maximising its potential in supporting the Council plan and the medium-term financial plan.

Growth and Housing Strategies

- 3.8 Chesterfield's Growth Strategy 2023-2027 provides a framework for regeneration and growth within the Borough. The current Housing Strategy is due to be refreshed during 2023, but the commitment to supporting the delivery of a range of good quality housing to suit the needs of the community will remain a key strand of the strategy. The vision, objectives and key actions set out within this Asset Management Strategy have been developed to support delivery of the growth and housing strategies.
- 3.9 The overall aim for the growth strategy is 'To make Chesterfield a thriving borough, delivering environmentally sustainable growth that benefits local people.' The strategy sets out three core principles that underpin the objectives; higher-value growth; inclusive growth and environmentally sustainable. There are five strategic objectives, two of which are most prominent when considering the role of the council's land and property in supporting this agenda:
- Build a competitive place infrastructure that accelerates employment and housing growth.
 - Strengthen the distinctive character and vibrancy of our town centres.

- 3.10 The council current housing strategy for 2019 to 2023 has the following aim and objectives. A new strategy is currently being developed, which will built on the successes from the current strategy and be set in the context of the new Council Plan.

Aim:

‘To enhance Chesterfield’s housing offer so that people of all ages of life can find, and live in a quality home they can afford’

Objectives:

- Delivery - ensuring that increased new housing provision meets the needs of current and future residents of Chesterfield to provide homes for every stage of life
- Quality—to utilise internal and external resources to ensure that as many homes as possible in all tenures are of decent quality
- People – Ensuring that the needs of all groups to be able to access and sustain housing appropriate for their needs in Chesterfield

Parks and open spaces and play strategies

- 3.11 The Parks and open spaces and play strategies were approved by the Council in February 2022; with a five-year delivery plan being approved by Cabinet in March 2023.
- 3.12 The strategies set out our vision and aspirations for our parks, open spaces and play areas, ensuring that we provide good quality green spaces for our communities to enjoy for many years to come.
- 3.13 The land and property related to the delivery of these services are key assets for the Council, and its important the service delivery teams and the property and technical services teams work closely together in managing these assets for the future. In some instances that will be to invest more in open spaces, and in others it will be to recognise that an area is no longer contributing to that service and we should look for an alternative use.
- 3.14 It is clear that any asset rationalisation programme should reflect the objectives set out in the parks, open spaces and play strategies, as work is progressed to review all of the Council’s assets.

Climate Change Strategy

- 3.15 The councils new Climate Change Strategy for 2023 to 2027 and annual Delivery plan were approved by Council in February 2023. The strategy built

on the previous action plan and sets out a series of key themes that for the council and partners to focus on over the next 7 years, to 2030.

3.16 The strategy sets out the drive to net zero carbon for our buildings as a key priority to support the council in achieving its net zero target for 2030.

3.17 Within the delivery plan and set out under the key theme of building and energy use, relevant actions include:

- **Action BE.01: Stock condition survey:**
A review of all commercial and operational council properties to include an assessment of the work to decarbonise each building and identify potential opportunities for energy generation etc. The development of a comprehensive report that ensures CBC understands the opportunities and potential costs to decarbonise our buildings portfolio. This action will support the development of the climate ready buildings delivery strand in future years including a commitment to using capital receipts from building sales to support climate adaptation. Data from this action will also support and inform external funding bids.
- **Action BE.02: Asset decarbonisation skills and expertise**
As part of the Property and Technical Services reshape, develop / acquire asset decarbonisation specialist skills and expertise to lead on future building decarbonisation work. Alongside BE.01 enables the detailed development and delivery of the asset decarbonisation elements of the Asset Management Plan in future years. Strengthens CBC ability to access external funding for decarbonisation activity and energy generation opportunities

3.18 These actions are also incorporated in the asset management delivery plan that sits alongside this strategy.

Corporate landlord approach

3.19 The council is keen to develop its property function to more fully adopt a corporate landlord approach; the aim being to improve the overall governance, including decision making, around the strategic use of the councils assets and to provide assurance on the safe and compliant operation of the assets by building occupiers and users. A corporate landlord policy, which will be considered by Council Cabinet, will set out the framework to be adopted, and rolled out across the council as part of the asset management strategy delivery plan.



- 3.20 The main concept of a corporate landlord approach is that the ownership of an asset and the responsibility for its management and maintenance is transferred from the service departments to the corporate landlord, a function held by the corporate property team.
- 3.21 In broad terms the service departments become corporate tenants and make use of the property or land in delivering a service. There are specific responsibilities that fall to both landlord and tenant, depending on the nature of the asset and the service being delivered.
- 3.22 The landlord's function is to ensure the service is adequately accommodated and to maintain and manage the property asset. Depending on the type of service operating from a building, there could be different tenant responsibilities around operational facilities management compliance requirements. This approach enables the service departments to focus on planning and delivery of the service, to the agreed service standards, rather than being responsible for the full range of property related functions as well.
- 3.23 The corporate landlord's responsibility also extends to the acquisition, development and disposal of land and property. This means the landlord would be responsible for asset review, feasibility and options appraisal across all service departments.

General legislative and compliance requirements

Building Safety Act

- 3.24 The Building Safety Act, 2022, aims to achieve better safety systems and regulation for all corporate and residential buildings. The Act has put in place a more stringent regulatory framework to implement a stronger focus around building safety for developers and landlords.
- 3.25 The regulator will have 3 key purposes:
- 1) To oversee the safety and standard of all buildings
 - 2) Directly assure the safety of higher-risk buildings
 - 3) Improve the competence of people responsible for managing and overseeing building work
- 3.26 The current understanding is that the councils properties are unlikely to fall within this further regulation, due to the nature of the property assets, however this will be kept under review.



Minimum energy efficiency standards, MEES regulations

- 3.27 The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 established a minimum level of energy efficiency for rented property in England and Wales. Since 1 April 2018, landlords of non-domestic rented properties have only been permitted to grant a new tenancy, or to extend or renew an existing tenancy, if their property has at least an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) E. It has been indicated that these requirements will tighten again in the near future, with a proposal that commercial properties must have an EPC rating of C or higher by 1 April 2027, and B or better by 2030.

One Public Estate

- 3.28 Increasingly, in the delivery of frontline and support services, economies can be achieved by working with partners from the public, private or voluntary sector.
- 3.29 Chesterfield Borough Council is a member of the Derbyshire One Public Estate partnership, supporting joint working across public sector organisations to release land and property and boost economic growth, regeneration and integrated public services. The council has already embarked on a programme of partnership initiatives that will deliver improved value for money and will continue to support partnership working.

4.0 Vision, policies and strategic objectives

Our Vision

- 4.1 The vision below aims to encompass the overall outcomes that this asset management strategy is aiming to achieve.

To actively manage and rationalise our land and property assets in line with the vision and priorities set out within the Council plan, ensuring that our assets are efficient, fit for purpose, sustainable and provide value for money for the communities of Chesterfield.

Asset management policies

- 4.2 The following core asset management policies set out the underlying principles that we will use in managing our assets to deliver the vision:
- Corporate landlord – to adopt a corporate landlord approach to the management of our land and property, including providing a clear governance structure for performance, programme management and decision making; clear policies and procedures, reporting and monitoring arrangements; and putting in place resources to deliver a corporate landlord approach across the council
 - Compliance and property maintenance – to keep our properties safe, dry and secure through the implementation of an appropriately resourced, well-managed, rigorous compliance regime and a repairs and renewals programme with evidence-led maintenance plans, which are based on an appropriate balance of investment between planned and reactive maintenance
 - Commitment to net zero carbon emissions - to seek to protect the environment by adapting and managing our estate to meet the councils climate commitment to net zero by 2030, in line with the council's climate change strategy and including the consideration of initiatives that support green growth
 - Land and property rationalisation – to drive efficiencies through regular asset management reviews of our land and property assets, ensuring they are managed efficiently, provide the right space, in the right place and on the best terms
 - Disposals and acquisitions – to dispose of, or acquire land and property as part of the delivery of the outcomes from the rationalisation programme, in line with the council's overall vision and priorities set out in the Council



Plan, with particular focus on maximising social value, inclusive growth and the contribution to net-zero commitments

- Use of capital receipts - to reinvest capital receipts, secured through the disposals programme, into the land and property estate to fund maintenance, decarbonisation and investment activity to support the delivery of the asset management vision
- Commercial estate management – to maximise income generation and overall social value from the existing land and property portfolio through proactive estate management recognising the importance of delivering value for money to support council service delivery and the medium-term financial plan
- Supporting growth and housing strategies – to use our assets to support development opportunities and maximise inclusive growth in the borough, as part of the delivery of the council’s growth and housing strategies
- Innovation and technology – to promote a culture of innovation that optimises the use of technology to support new ways of working across the Council

Strategic objectives for 2023 to 2027

4.3 The following five strategic objectives have been developed to focus the asset management activity across the Council, over the next four years.

- Developing and delivering our Corporate Landlord approach
- Investing in decarbonisation whilst keeping our assets safe and well maintained
- Delivering a land and property rationalisation programme
- Maximising income and overall value from the existing commercial estate
- Using our land and property to maximise inclusive growth opportunities across the borough

Developing and delivering our Corporate Landlord approach

4.4 Providing a clear direction on the management of the Council’s assets through strong governance and assurance arrangements is critical to achieving the vision of this strategy.

4.5 To support the approach there must be appropriate levels of staff resources in place, particularly in the corporate property team, investment in the implementation of new ICT software systems to provide accurate, comprehensive and robust asset and compliance data, and clear operational



policies, processes and procedures to support option development and decision making.

Investing in decarbonisation whilst keeping our assets safe and well-maintained

- 4.6 Ensuring properties are safe, dry and secure through the implementation of a well-managed, rigorous compliance regime and facilities management and maintenance activities is a fundamental requirement of any corporate landlord.
- 4.7 A key piece of work to be completed is an updated stock condition survey for each of the council's assets, this will include a net zero carbon assessment too. This work is underway, but a detailed programme and delivery is still to be achieved.
- 4.8 The outcome from the stock condition surveys and net zero carbon assessments will be used to develop affordable maintenance plans in response to building condition and actions required to achieve more sustainable properties contributing to the council's ambition to achieve net zero carbon by 2030. This work will also input into the asset rationalisation programme, to ensure the council can make informed decisions on the properties that it retains.
- 4.9 Determining the affordability and financing of the maintenance plans and net-carbon projects programme will be integral to the development of the MTFP, with capital receipts generated from a disposal programme being key to affordability.

Delivering a land and property rationalisation programme

- 4.10 This includes carrying out strategic asset reviews to ensure the estate provides the right space, in the right place and on the best terms; together with the stock condition surveys and net zero carbon assessments this will enable decisions to be made about the future of assets. This will include maintaining an effective accommodation strategy for operational assets, progressing a programme of asset disposals and making strategic acquisitions where appropriate.
- 4.11 A number of assets have already been identified as surplus to the councils operational and commercial requirements, and a programme of asset disposal is underway, seeking to generate significant value over the next 5 years to invest in the councils priorities.



Maximising income and overall value from the existing commercial estate

- 4.12 The current portfolio achieves a significant income for the council, and this needs to be maintained and enhanced through proactive portfolio management, maximising the available letting space, supporting tenants, promoting the service and seeking to use technology to better manage data and income information.
- 4.13 A new ICT software system is to be introduced over the next 12-18 months to replace the existing end-of-life system and to support a more dynamic approach to property management.

Using our land and property to maximise inclusive growth opportunities across the borough

- 4.14 This objective is focused on supporting the delivery of the growth and housing strategies to accelerate development, regeneration and growth across the borough. As well as supporting third party developments, opportunities should be explored to expand the council's commercial portfolio and income generating ability.

5.0 Resourcing, outputs and outcomes

Resourcing

- 5.1 This strategy is aiming at re-establishing the direction of travel for the management of the council's land and property, following the return of the service from the Arvato/ Kier outsourced contract in August 2020.
- 5.2 There are significant resourcing challenges to progressing the delivery of this strategy. This covers both the staff resource, and the significant revenue and capital asset investments that are likely to be required over the four-year period of the plan. This is set against the backdrop of an extremely challenging financial position for this Council, and all local authorities in the aftermath of the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, and the pressures that inflation has brought.
- 5.3 Whilst it is more regular practise for the Council to approve costed strategies, to provide clarity on what outputs and outcomes can be delivered over the length of the strategy, this has not been possible at this time. The outputs and outcomes in this strategy are focussed on the ambitions that the council has to ensure the use of the council's assets can be maximised for its communities, over the next four years.

- 5.4 A delivery plan is in development, which will identify the resources needed to deliver the strategic objectives. This plan will be brought back to Cabinet and Council for approval in line with the constitution.

Outputs and outcomes

- 5.5 Key outputs and outcomes are set out in Table 1 against each of the strategic objectives. These will be revised as appropriate, as the resourcing plans are developed.

Table 1: Asset management strategy outputs and outcomes to be achieved by 2027

Strategic objectives	Outputs and outcomes – we will have.....
Developing our Corporate Landlord approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established effective governance arrangements, under a corporate landlord model, to support effective decision making. • Reshaped services across the council to support the implementation of a corporate landlord approach, with appropriate resources for successful delivery. • A range of appropriate policies and procedures in place to guide decision making and the development of work programmes. • A new ICT software system to effectively manage and analyse asset data to support decision making. • Regular reporting of statutory compliance performance across the estate.
Investing in decarbonisation whilst keeping our assets safe and well maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed a stock condition and net-zero carbon assessment on all of our assets, and established an on-going five year rolling programme • Made significant progress in decarbonising our assets, towards the council's net-zero target for 2030. • An established and sufficiently resourced medium to long term planned maintenance programme. • An appropriately funded planned maintenance and reactive repairs service. • An established corporate landlord approach to premise management with clear responsibilities for the corporate property team and premise managers.
Delivering a land and property rationalisation programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed a full land and property rationalisation programme and established an annual review programme to review our assets every five years. • Completed a four-year disposals programme and achieved a significant level of capital receipts, that



	<p>have primarily been re-invested in the council's land and property portfolio</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Established an on-going disposals and acquisitions programme to ensure the estate continues to provide value for money for the Council and support its vision and priorities.
Maximising income and overall value from the existing commercial estate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed a review of the commercial portfolio, seeking to maximise income from land holdings• Implemented a new ICT software system to enable the effective management of the financial transactions required to recover rental and service charge income.
Using our land and property to maximise inclusive growth opportunities across the borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worked to support the delivery of the growth and housing strategies of the council; seeking to deliver the council vision and priorities.• Identified opportunities to expand the council's commercial portfolio and income generating ability, including green growth opportunities.

6.0 Delivery plan, monitoring and review

6.1 A delivery plan is under development which will set out the activities that will be progressed, under each of the objectives, to work towards the achievement of the overall vision. Key priorities that are being progressed at present include the stock condition and net zero carbon assessments, the progression of appropriate asset disposals, a focus on maximising income from the commercial estate, supporting the delivery of a number of major growth projects and the development of a corporate landlord policy. The latter will seek to set out appropriate governance arrangements and define the activities to be delivered through that policy, which will then support a re-definition of the way in which land and property is managed across the council.

6.2 Through the corporate landlord governance arrangements, the delivery plan will be monitored regularly and kept under review. This will enable a flexible approach to be taken as information emerges from the various work streams, and the plan will be updated accordingly.

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Chesterfield Borough Council Equality Impact Assessment – Preliminary Assessment Form

<i>Title of the policy, project, service, function or strategy:</i>		Asset Management Strategy 2023-2027
<i>Service Area:</i>	Economic Growth	
<i>Section:</i>		
<i>Lead Officer:</i>	Christine Durrant, Executive Director	
<i>Date of assessment:</i>	22/6/2023	
<i>Is the policy, project, service, function or strategy:</i>		
<i>Existing</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Changed</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<i>New / Proposed</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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Section 1 – Clear aims and objectives

1. What is the aim of the policy, project, service, function or strategy?

The aim of the Asset Management Strategy 2023 – 2027 is to ensure the Council is managing its land and property assets safely, effectively and efficiently and to enable the Council to make the best use of its land and property, to support the Councils aims and priorities, as set out in the Council Plan. The strategy seeks to provide a clear direction of travel for the successful and effective management of the councils assets over the next 4 years. It provides an overview of the councils land and property assets and sets the context and drivers that will affect the way in which the assets are managed.

2. Who is intended to benefit from the policy and how?

Agile Council: The implementation of the new Asset Management Strategy and action plan will ensure the alignment of our asset base to the service needs of a modern, agile Council. Maintaining building standards at an appropriate level will ensure that staff have appropriate accommodation from which they can deliver their service, when needed.

Financial resilience: New property-based income opportunities will be sought out to support our financial resilience, aligned to our core objectives and climate commitments. This will benefit the residents of the Borough, by ensuring a balanced budget is delivered which in turn helps ensure the quality of services delivered continues.

Service users: We will seek the most effective and efficient way of delivering our services and be well placed to take advantage of social, cultural, environmental and technological diversity and change. Linking to the Equality and Diversity Strategy (2023-2027), access to buildings and the provision of inclusive services will be considered on an individual case by case basis, with reasonable adjustments undertaken where necessary.

Partners: We will collaborate and work in partnership with different parts of the public sector, business community and community and voluntary sector to deliver better outcomes for our borough.

The Community: Chesterfield's Growth Strategy 2023-2027 provides a framework for regeneration and growth within the Borough. The current Housing Strategy is due to be refreshed during 2023/24, but the commitment to supporting the delivery of a range of good quality housing to suit the needs of the community will remain a key strand of the strategy. The vision, objectives and key actions set out within this Asset Management Strategy have been developed to support delivery of the Growth and Housing strategies.

3. What outcomes do you want to achieve?

The asset management strategy will set the framework for how we manage our property portfolio effectively over the next four years. It will guide our strategic property decisions to ensure we manage our property portfolio efficiently and sustainably so it will remain fit for the future and support the way future decisions are made concerning disposal, acquisition and the use of property assets to maximise overall benefits across the borough.

Section 2 – What is the impact?

4. Summary of anticipated impacts. *Please tick at least one option per protected characteristic. Think about barriers people may experience in accessing services, how the policy is likely to affect the promotion of equality, knowledge of customer experiences to date. You may need to think about sub-groups within categories eg. older people, younger people, people with hearing impairment etc.*

	Potentially positive impact	Potentially negative impact	No disproportionate impact
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Disability and long term conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Gender and gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Pregnant women and people on parental leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Religion and belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√

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Section 3 – Recommendations and monitoring

If you have answered that the policy, project, service, function or strategy could potentially have a negative impact on any of the above characteristics then a full EIA will be required.

5. Should a full EIA be completed for this policy, project, service, function or strategy?

Yes No

Please explain the reasons for this decision:

There are no disproportionate impacts identified within the overall Strategy at this point. Once individual rationalisation projects are started individual Equality Impact Assessments will be conducted for each.

Section 6 – Knowledge management and publication

Please note the draft EIA should be reviewed by the appropriate Service Manager and the Policy Service **before** WBR, Lead Member, Cabinet, Council reports are produced.

Reviewed by Head of Service/Service Manager	Name:	Christine Durrant
	Date:	27/6/2023
Reviewed by Policy Service	Name:	Allison Potter
	Date:	22/6/2023
Final version of the EIA sent to Policy Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Decision information sent to Policy Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	

For publication

Title of report: Options for replacing the Council's fleet

Meeting:	Council
Date:	19 th July 2023
Cabinet portfolios:	Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning and Environment Cabinet Member for Housing
Directorates:	Housing Leisure, Culture and Community Wellbeing
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of the report

This report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 18 July, 2023 where it was resolved that the report and its recommendations be supported and referred to Council for approval.

- 1.1 The majority of the Council's fleet is ageing, and the current lease is due to expire in early 2024 with no option to extend. New fleet arrangements must therefore now be agreed by Cabinet and Council to ensure we can continue to deliver key housing and environmental services to our residents.
- 1.2 The Council's Climate Change Strategy target is for the Council to be carbon neutral by the year 2030, and decarbonisation of the Council's fleet is a key component to achieving this target, due to emissions from petrol and diesel vehicles.
- 1.3 The Climate Change Strategy is the key driver for the recommended approach, and the purpose of this report is to describe the proposed journey towards a carbon neutral fleet.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Council approves the principle of replacing the current fleet with a new lease for 34 electric vehicles, and using short term hire for the Council's remaining vehicle requirements, as part of a phased approach to decarbonising the fleet before 2030.
- 2.2 That Council delegates responsibility for the associated procurement activity and budget decision making to the Service Director – Housing, in conjunction with the Service Director – Finance, the Deputy Leader, the Cabinet Member

for Housing and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning and Environment.

- 2.3 That Council further delegates responsibility for entering into the associated legal contracts to the Service Director - Housing in conjunction with the Service Director – Finance and the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.4 That Council recommends that the additional costs of taking forward the preferred option are incorporated into the Council's General Fund revenue and Housing Revenue Account budgets for the financial year 2024/25.
- 2.5 That Council receives an annual updating report on the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of implementation of the preferred option.

3.0 Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 The recommended way forward ensures that in the short term we increase the number of electric vehicles to the maximum level possible based on the current charging infrastructure, and then take a phased approach to increasing the number of electric vehicles as charging capacity increases, over the next five years.
- 3.2 The majority of the current fleet is ageing and by replacing it with new vehicles this will reduce breakdown and repair costs.
- 3.3 The use of short-term hire provides flexibility to allow us to trial different product types as and when the market for electric and other zero carbon options improves, and also allows us to reduce the overall number of vehicles as and when vehicle requirements change as a result of service efficiency measures.
- 3.4 This phased approach has benefits from a fleet management perspective as it spreads the work required over several years as opposed to condensing it into a single exercise.
- 3.5 Similarly, by taking on new electric vehicle leases as part of a phased approach, the impact on the Council's budget will be spread over a longer period of time, avoiding a single 'big hit' cost.
- 3.6 There are some disadvantages, including the need for more expensive, steel van racking, and the fact that instead of the installation of permanent corporate vehicle livery we will need to use temporary magnetic signage. However, these are outweighed by the advantages set out above.

4.0 Report details

Number of vehicles required

- 4.1 We currently have 208 vehicles comprising 149 leased, 5 owned, and 54 on short term hire. This figure excludes the following vehicles:
- 3 X road sweepers, 3 X Land Rovers, 2 X mini pickups, 1 X jetter vehicle and other grounds maintenance machinery (such as road legal ride on lawnmowers etc) as these are treated as plant.
 - 1 X tenant participation vehicle as this is owned and used as a mobile office for Housing services.
 - 1 X Ford Galaxy – this is the old mayoral vehicle and is used as a pool vehicle across the Council.
 - 1 X Mayoral vehicle – this was procured in 2022 and is an electric Citroen E-C4.
- 4.2 Currently, of the 208 fleet vehicles, 165 are used by Housing services and paid for from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the remaining 43 are paid for from the General Fund.
- 4.3 An initial review of existing working practices has been undertaken with regards to fleet rationalisation and to align with current service requirements, and the assumed total need going forward is for 198 vehicles.

Achieving the 2030 Climate Change Target

- 4.4 The aim is to move the fleet to electric vehicles. We have already trialled a range of electric vehicles and currently have five fully electric vehicles. We have committed funding to increase the number of charging points at the depot from four to 18 (the maximum that can be currently supported by the local grid), meaning we can now increase the number of fully electric vehicles within the fleet to 34.
- 4.5 We anticipate the overall replacement programme to be as follows:

Activity	Year
Lease 34 electric vehicles and fulfil all other service requirements with short term hire	2024
Replace all 'medium' sized vans (currently 45) with electric vehicles	2026/27
Replace all 'large' sized vans and tippers (currently 119) with electric vehicles*.	2027/28
*If the 'large' vehicles are still not fit for purpose then explore the option to use HVO fuel on the assumption that HVO will become more widely available on forecourts over time.	
Replace the 34 electric vehicles once the 2024 lease expires with a new fleet of electric vehicles	2029

- 4.6 We will continue to trial different vehicle types, as short-term hire will allow this flexibility, and learn from other organisations. As time progresses, more

zero carbon options will become available on the market, as will solutions to address some of the current challenges associated with electric vehicles (for example payload and charging range limitations).

- 4.7 In addition to electrifying the fleet we will also explore the option of replacing diesel with Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), which could prove a better option for some of the larger vehicles which may be harder to replace with an electric solution.
- 4.8 We will also be seeking to increase efficiencies in vehicle usage to reduce overall fuel consumption and emissions, as part of the Housing Services Transformation Programme.

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 A high-level option appraisal has been undertaken and the costs associated with each of the options identified and modelled. The annual costs, and initial outlay associated with each option, are set out in the Table at paragraph 5.6.
- 5.2 Consideration was given to purchasing the majority of the vehicles that the Council currently leases, with a view to selling them on at the end of their natural life and procuring electric replacements. This option also included a new lease for 34 electric vehicles and a short-term hire option for the remaining vehicles – Option 1. This option is potentially the most cost efficient, giving an annual saving of around £220k when compared to the preferred option and so reducing the pressure on both the HRA and General Fund Revenue budgets. However, there are risks to retaining the current fleet.
- 5.3 The main risk is that by leaving electrification until close to 2030, supply chain issues may affect the Council's ability to achieve its Climate Change Strategy target. Additionally, as many of the vehicles are already 6 years old and increasingly unreliable, service delivery to the council's tenants would be impacted due to regular breakdowns which would lead to extra costs and reduce the anticipated savings. An allowance of £20k had been factored into the cost of this option to reflect the extra repairs though whether this sum is sufficient is very difficult to predict.
- 5.4 Consideration was also given to entering into a new lease for all vehicles (including 34 electric vehicles) to replace the current fleet - Option 2, and to purchasing new vehicles (again including 34 electric) to replace the current fleet – Option 3. As well as being expensive, these options would again run the risk of the Council not achieving the 2030 target. Furthermore, there are currently no suitable electric solutions for some of our vehicle types.
- 5.5 Finally, consideration was given to deferring replacement so that the grid / charging capacity could be implemented first, thus allowing us to replace the

entire fleet with electric vehicles. This is not possible as the current lease cannot be extended to allow for this delay.

5.6 Table comparing costs of alternative options considered:

Table 1: Comparisons of alternative options				
OPTION 1 - Replace majority of the fleet with short term hire vehicles and a new lease for 34 electric vehicles.				
OPTION 1	Average Annual figure	2023/24 Budget	2024/25 Initial Outlay	Ongoing Annual cost from 2024/25
TOTAL HRA	£1,310,458	£1,090,130	£61,260	£1,298,206
TOTAL GF	£454,926	£458,570	£27,900	£449,347
TOTAL Overall	£1,765,384	£1,548,700	£89,160	£1,747,553
OPTION 2 - Replace whole fleet with a new lease (34 electric vehicles)				
OPTION 2	Average Annual figure	2023/24 Budget	2024/25 Initial Outlay	Ongoing Annual cost from 2024/25
TOTAL HRA	£1,472,772	£1,090,130	£336,000	£1,405,572
TOTAL GF	£528,479	£458,570	£79,800	£512,519
TOTAL Overall	£2,001,251	£1,548,700	£415,800	£1,918,091
OPTION 3 - Replace whole fleet by purchasing new vehicles (34 electric vehicles)				
OPTION 3	Average Annual figure	2023/24 Budget	2024/25 Initial Outlay	Ongoing Annual cost from 2024/25
TOTAL HRA	£1,531,086	£1,090,130	£336,000	£1,483,086
TOTAL GF	£508,102	£458,570	£79,800	£496,702

TOTAL Overall	£2,039,188	£1,548,700	£415,800	£1,979,788
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Preferred Option - Replace majority of the fleet with short term hire vehicles				
Preferred option	Average Annual figure	2023/24 Budget	2024/25 Initial Outlay	Ongoing Annual cost from 2024/25
TOTAL HRA	£1,450,901	£1,090,130	£260,640	£1,398,773
TOTAL GF	£535,421	£458,570	£66,300	£522,161
TOTAL Overall	£1,986,322	£1,548,700	£326,940	£1,920,934

6.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

- 6.1 Each service has budgets allocated for vehicles to cover lease, running and maintenance costs. The total budget for 2023/24 is **£1.549m** (Note that this figure excludes the vehicles listed in para 4.1) and this is split between the HRA **£1.090m** and the General Fund **£459k**.
- 6.2 The average annual cost of the preferred option is estimated to be **£1.986m** in 2023/24 (this is a full year effect). It should be noted that this is not the lowest cost option as stated in paragraph 5.2 above and is **£438k** per annum over the current total budget for 2023/24 (HRA **£361k** and General Fund **£77k**).
- 6.3 The additional General Fund revenue cost will be met from the Vehicle and Plant Reserve for the first two financial years and then built into the Medium-Term Financial Plan. The HRA is under considerable pressure at the present time as a result of a range of in-year financial challenges including the rent cap of 7% for 2023/24 and ongoing inflationary pressures on pay and materials. It is therefore proposed to address the additional costs of running with the preferred option through the annual HRA budget and business planning process.
- 6.4 The figures quoted in the table at paragraph 5.6 are indicative and based on the best information currently available. As such, they are subject to variation depending on the procurement frameworks used, vehicle types etc. It is possible that we will obtain cheaper short term hire rates if the Council commits to hiring the vehicles over longer periods e.g., two years.
- 6.5 Providing value for money for our tenants and residents remains a priority for the Council, not just when budget setting but when making every decision, with this being even more pertinent at the present time as the cost of living crisis continues to bite. Whilst consideration has been given to creating the

maximum flexibility to enable the Council to take advantage of advances in technology and for more efficient electric / zero carbon options to become available, the preferred option should not be seen as the long-term solution. Every opportunity will be taken to reduce the overall cost of the Council's fleet, to include further rationalisation of vehicles wherever possible through systematic reviews of current work practices.

6.6 It is therefore recommended that a further review of the preferred option should be undertaken within a maximum period of 12 months when further information will be available on such matters as charging infrastructure and the associated depot investment costs, and the fleet requirements of a redesigned Housing Property Services function.

6.7 The council's officers will also explore the possibility of accessing grants such as the OZEV Workplace Grant Discount to help finance electrification of the Council's fleet.

7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal

7.1 Officers from the council's Procurement and Legal services will be fully engaged in all procurement and contract processes, to ensure full compliance with relevant statutory provisions and value for money imperatives.

8. Implications for consideration – Human resources

8.1 A continual review of fleet numbers is carried out in order to minimise the overall fleet costs. This is an ongoing process and further analysis will be carried out to incorporate future requirements based on the outcomes of upcoming service re-design exercises.

8.2 Currently the majority of the Housing Property Services workforce take their vehicles home and while this practice will be discontinued in relation to the first phase of 34 electric vehicles, the Council will need to develop various HR policies and procedures as part of the wider Housing Services Transformation Programme.

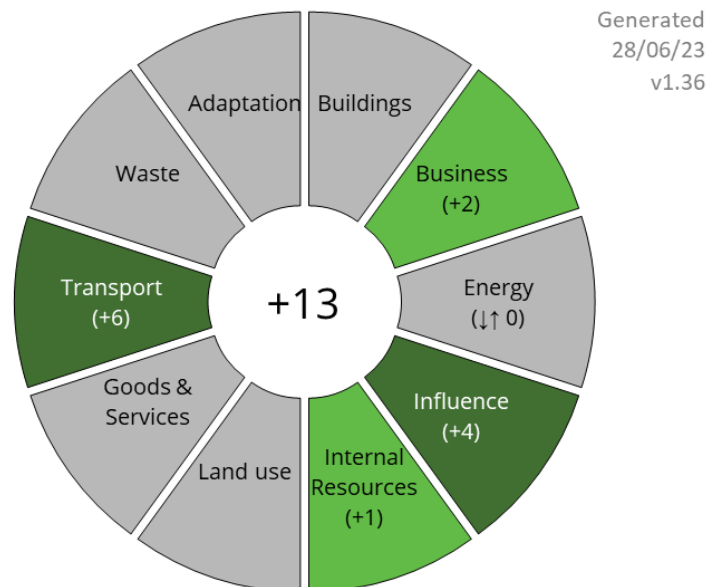
8.3 In time, it is anticipated that an additional member of staff will be required to deal with fleet administration and to support all processes associated with electrifying the fleet.

9.0 Implications for consideration – Council plan

9.1 The Council Plan sets out the aspiration for Chesterfield Borough Council to be a carbon neutral council by 2030, and decarbonising the fleet is a key component in achieving this target.

10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate change

10.1 Road fuel use by Council operatives resulted in estimated emissions of 575 tonnes of CO₂ during 2022/23. This is a substantial proportion of the Council's emissions (23%) and represents one of the biggest challenges to the Council's ambition to become carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030.



Chesterfield Borough Council has committed to being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030 (6 years and 6 months away).

10.2 As shown in the CCIA above, the climate impact of the preferred option is essentially positive. Implementation will require additional staff time to fully develop the option further and require an increased commitment to electricity purchasing. However, this is countered by the significant reductions that will be achieved in overall council emissions and road fuel consumption.

11. Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 A preliminary Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed (Appendix 1).

11.2 There are no direct impacts as a result of the Council's move to the preferred option, however there will be a need to ensure the individual needs of vehicle users are considered through individual assessments.

12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
No vehicles at the end of the current lease contract – inability for Council services to carry out required service delivery	High	Likely	The preferred option will ensure new vehicles are in place at the end of the lease period	High	Low
Breakdown of ageing vehicles	Med	High	The preferred option will ensure new vehicles are in place at the end of the lease period thus mitigating the risk of breakdowns	Med	Low
Failure to meet 2030 target resulting in requirement to offset emissions and associated financial penalties.	Med	Med	The possibility will be explored of using HVO as an alternative fuel which produces significantly lower emissions. The offset cost is lower than petrol and diesel costs	Med	Low
Budget – Fleet related costs constantly vary and there is no certainty on the future costs involved in electrifying the fleet	Med	Med	All manufacturers are heavily investing in new technologies and upscaling production which should in turn lower overall costs	Med	Med

Decision information

Key decision number	<i>All key decisions must be in the Forward Plan at least 28 days in advance. There are constitutional consequences if an item is not in the Forward Plan when it should have been. Contact Democratic Services if in doubt.</i>
Wards affected	All Wards

Document information

Report author	
Jon Campbell, Central Services Manager, Housing Directorate Jane Davies, Service Director - Housing	
Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
Climate Change Strategy: climate-change-strategy-2023-2030.pdf (chesterfield.gov.uk)	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Equalities Impact Assessment

Chesterfield Borough Council Equality Impact Assessment – Preliminary Assessment Form

<i>Title of the policy, project, service, function or strategy:</i>	Fleet options appraisal	
<i>Service Area:</i>	Housing	
<i>Section:</i>	Housing	
<i>Lead Officer:</i>	Jon Campbell	
<i>Date of assessment:</i>	June 2023	
<i>Is the policy, project, service, function or strategy:</i>		
<i>Existing</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Changed</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<i>New / Proposed</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

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Section 1 – Clear aims and objectives

1. What is the aim of the policy, project, service, function or strategy?

The majority of the Council's fleet is ageing, and the current lease is due to expire in early 2024 with no option to extend. New fleet arrangements must therefore now be agreed by Cabinet and Council to ensure we can continue to deliver key housing and environmental services to our residents by having an operational fleet fit for purpose.

The Climate Change Strategy is the key driver for the recommended approach, that Cabinet approves the principle of replacing the current fleet with a new lease for 34 electric vehicles, and using short term hire for the Council's remaining vehicle requirements, as part of a phased approach to decarbonising the fleet before 2030.

2. Who is intended to benefit from the policy and how?

Employees who drive Council vehicles with improvements including driver comfort and improved health and safety.

A phased approach has benefits from a fleet management perspective as it spreads the work required over several years as opposed to condensing it into a single exercise. In addition, by taking on new electric vehicle leases as part of a phased approach, the impact on the Council's budget will be spread out over a longer period of time, avoiding a single 'big hit' cost.

3. What outcomes do you want to achieve?

Full consideration regarding the replacement of the Council's fleet, ensuring it is fit for the Council's needs and follows the proposed journey towards a carbon neutral fleet.

Section 2 – What is the impact?

4. Summary of anticipated impacts. *Please tick at least one option per protected characteristic. Think about barriers people may experience in accessing services, how the policy is likely to affect the promotion of equality, knowledge of customer experiences to date. You may need to think about sub-groups within categories eg. older people, younger people, people with hearing impairment etc.*

	Potentially positive impact	Potentially negative impact	No disproportionate impact
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Disability and long term conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Gender and gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Marriage and civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Pregnant women and people on parental leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
Religion and belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√

Section 3 – Recommendations and monitoring

If you have answered that the policy, project, service, function or strategy could potentially have a negative impact on any of the above characteristics then a full EIA will be required.

5. Should a full EIA be completed for this policy, project, service, function or strategy?

Yes

No

Please explain the reasons for this decision:

No disproportionate impacts have been identified at this stage, however we will need to ensure the individual needs of vehicle users are taken into account and this will be addressed through individual assessments.

Further engagement will be carried out with the workforce with regards to vehicles which are on short term hire as well as the replacement of electric vehicles.

There is a potential impact with the future use of vehicles with regards to Council staff taking these vehicles home. Further Equalities Impact Assessments may be required as the project progresses.

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Section 6 – Knowledge management and publication

Please note the draft EIA should be reviewed by the appropriate Service Manager and the Policy Service **before** WBR, Lead Member, Cabinet, Council reports are produced.

Reviewed by Head of Service/Service Manager	Name:	
	Date:	
Reviewed by Policy Service	Name:	Allison Potter
	Date:	27/6/2023
Final version of the EIA sent to Policy Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Decision information sent to Policy Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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For publication

Title of report: Relocation of Services from 85 New Square

Meeting:	Council
Date:	19 July 2023
Cabinet portfolio:	Customers and Business Transformation
Directorate:	Digital, HR and Customer Services
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 This report asks Elected Members to consider approving the relocation of the Council's public facing Customer Service Centre to Chesterfield Town Hall, together with the relocation of the operational services which are also based at 85 New Square (known as the Revenues Hall) during the financial year 2023 -24.
- 1.2 If the proposal is accepted, annual revenue savings of up to £132k will be achieved through a reduction in the running costs of the operational estate.

2.0 Recommendations

This report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 18 July, 2023 where it was resolved that the report and its recommendations be supported and referred to Council for approval.

- 2.1 Members approve that the Council's Customer Service Centre and the operational services based at 85 New Square are relocated into Chesterfield Town Hall during the 2023 – 24 financial year.
- 2.2 Members approve that funding of £157k is incorporated into the Council's capital programme so that appropriate customer facilities can be provisioned at the Town Hall.

- 2.3 Members note that minor painting, decoration, and property repairs will be undertaken on the 2nd and 3rd floor of the Town Hall, as part of the routine maintenance programme for the building. This work will be funded through the Property Repairs Fund (PRF).
- 2.4 Members approve that 85 New Square is marked as surplus for operational requirements.
- 2.5 Members approve that delegated authority is given to the Service Director for Economic Growth, working in conjunction with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management, to undertake marketing for sale or lease of 85 New Square, ensuring that an appropriate buyer is secured whose plans align to the Council's Town Centre Master Plan.

3.0 Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 Relocation of the Customer Service Centre will enable the Council to continue to maximise the use of its operational assets whilst also reducing liability for ongoing maintenance and operational running costs. It will enable the council to continue to modernise service delivery, providing access to a greater number of public services from Chesterfield Town Hall.

4.0 Report details

- 4.1 Recent increases in the costs of energy, goods and services have placed a significant pressure on Local Authority budgets and as a result, officers have been undertaking systematic reviews of our operational property estate to identify where property running costs and maintenance costs can be reduced and where office space can be maximised.
- 4.2 Chesterfield Borough Council has already worked with other public and voluntary sector organisations to lease space at Chesterfield Town Hall. This action has helped to generate much needed income for the Council and has improved access to services for our residents. However, following the introduction of new technologies and an acceleration of agile working, productivity and efficiency increases have been achieved and this has enabled further opportunities to release additional desk space within Chesterfield Town Hall. A feasibility study has therefore been undertaken to determine whether financial savings can be achieved by relocating more of the Council's operational services into the Town Hall.

85 New Square.

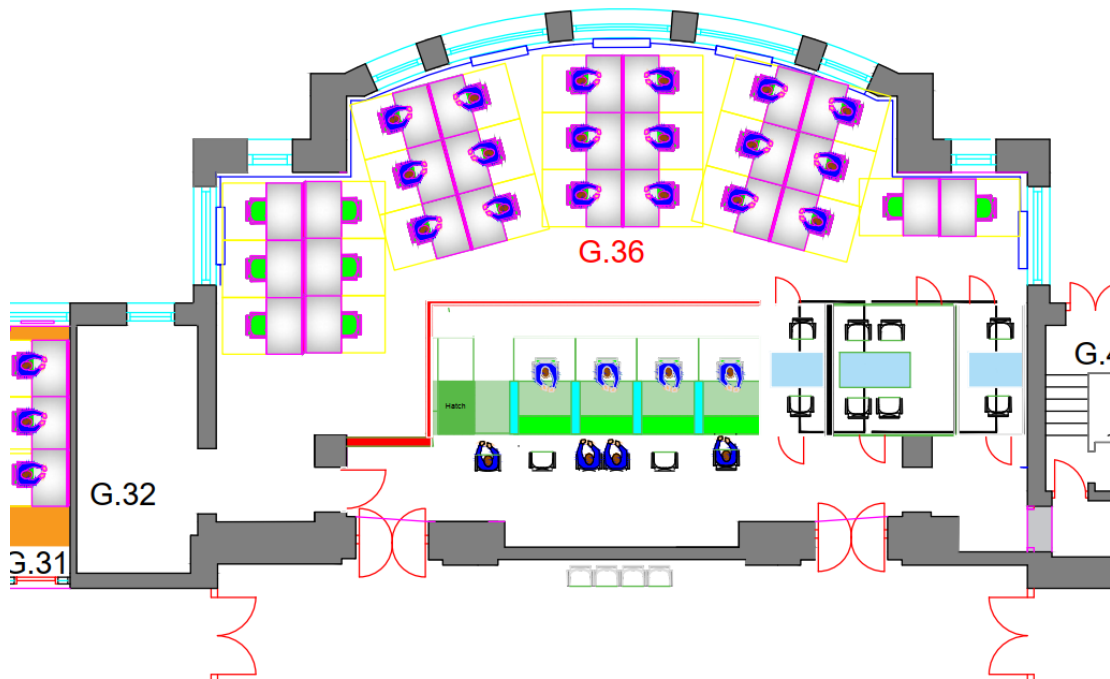
- 4.3 85 New Square houses teams who administer a wide variety of council services, including Revenues and Benefits, Licensing, Housing and Cashiering functions. The feasibility study has demonstrated that it is possible for these teams to be successfully relocated to Chesterfield Town Hall, enabling the available operational space to be fully utilised.
- 4.4 The Council's public facing Customer Service Centre is also located at 85 New Square. It was provisioned in 2013 and its creation improved access to services for our residents and businesses. However, some ten years on, residents and businesses still try to access services from Chesterfield Town Hall, as the building is well known as the primary base for the Council. Relocating the Customer Service Centre to the ground floor of Chesterfield Town Hall could help to simplify public access arrangements and build on the services already housed at the Town Hall, including the Register Office, Coroners Court, and several Voluntary Sector Organisations.
- 4.5 85 New Square requires significant repairs and maintenance work to be completed in the next five years. This work is required to meet building safety standards and enables the replacement of deteriorating equipment and addresses general wear and tear. It is estimated that the Council will be required to spend £790k over the next five years to address these needs.
- 4.6 Relocation of all services from 85 New Square is expected to achieve ongoing revenue savings of £81k per annum, rising to £132k per annum if the building were to be sold or rented.
- 4.7 When considering both the ongoing maintenance liabilities for this building, and the ongoing revenue savings which could be achieved by reducing our operational estate, councillors are asked to approve that 85 New Square is deemed surplus to operational requirements and that alternative uses for the site are sought.
- 4.8 The Council could retain the building and lease it as office space, thereby creating an income producing property but there is an abundance of vacant office space in the current climate and the layout of the existing building, together with ongoing maintenance liabilities, may provide a challenge to lease. Should an opportunity arise with interest from an organisation seeking a building with an older style of office accommodation, then this should not be overlooked. However, it is recommended that the Council considers disposal of the property by way of marketing the premises. This will remove the ongoing maintenance liabilities of the building and will release a much-needed capital receipt. Conversion or redevelopment of the building could be considered depending on what exposure to the market delivers.

- 4.9 Officers within the Council's Planning Service have provided a statement relating to the development potential of the site. Highlights include:
- i. The property is not recommended for retail use.
 - ii. The site would support a range of potential future uses, including offices, health, food and drink, leisure and education uses.
 - iii. Conversion to residential use or similar specialist use such as care or independent living would be appropriate to this location.
 - iv. The central location and proximity of facilities and services and public transport would make it particularly suitable for residential accommodation.
 - v. Conversions of commercial space to residential use in town centres can raise issues around parking and lack of amenity space. However, it is noted that in this case the property does include some dedicated parking space and is adjacent to green space in the form of Shentall Gardens.
- 4.10 Delegated authority is sought for the Council's Service Director - Economic Growth, working in conjunction with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management, to market the building and agree a sale which ensures that the future use of the site meets the requirements of the Council's Town Centre Master Plan.
- 4.11 Some infrastructure changes will be required to facilitate alternative uses, including disconnection of the building from the district heating system which is powered by the Market Hall, and relocation of CCTV and dark fibre links which currently support some ICT and CCTV infrastructure to the market area.

Relocation of Services to Chesterfield Town Hall

- 4.12 It is proposed that public access to the Customer Service Centre is provisioned on the ground floor of Chesterfield Town Hall, to the rear of the main reception area. The proposed floor plan for the Customer Service Centre layout is set out in Diagram 1 below.

Diagram 1



- 4.13 Costs totalling £157k will be incurred when relocating the public facing Customer Services facilities. It is proposed to reuse as much furniture as possible, whilst also maximising desk space within the 2nd and 3rd floors of the Town Hall. Detailed enabling costs are provided in section 6.0 of this report.
- 4.14 It is not proposed to move the cash payment machines which are located within the existing Customer Service Centre. Residents will still be able to pay cash for council services using pay point facilities in local shops or by using the post office network. There are five locations in Chesterfield Town Centre which can be used to pay cash for Council services.
- 4.15 Some teams already located within Chesterfield Town Hall will need to be relocated to ensure that office space can be maximised.
- 4.16 Planned building maintenance and redecoration on the 2nd and 3rd floors of the Town Hall will be undertaken prior to relocation of additional staff, so that we are able to minimise disruption to service delivery and to the workforce.
- 4.17 Subject to approval of this proposal, work will be undertaken to provision the Customer Service Centre and suitable office space at Chesterfield Town Hall, with the aim of relocation of services during the Autumn, 2023.

5.0 Alternative options

- 5.1 When completing the feasibility study, several alternative options were considered, including relocating the public facing Customer Service provision

into alternative sites such as the Market Hall or Pavements Shopping Centre, but these were not financially viable options.

5.2 Consideration has also been given to paring back face-to-face public access facilities, providing a simple reception service, and encouraging residents and businesses to use alternative access channels such as telephony and online. However, this option has not been progressed, as the Council wishes to continue to provide a choice for residents in the way they access services.

6.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

6.1 The 2023/24 budgeted operating costs for the CSC total £186k as set out in Table 1 below. Annual revenue savings of up to £132k can be achieved following disposal of the asset.

6.2 In addition, relocation of the Customer Service Centre will release the council from maintenance liabilities for the property, estimated to total £790k over the next five years.

6.3 The Council will still need to cover some running costs at 85 New Square until the premise is sold or leased. £51k per annum has been budgeted to cover ongoing utilities, insurance, business rates, and minor maintenance and servicing.

6.4 Enabling costs which will facilitate this relocation are set out in Table 2 below. It is recommended that £157k of the costs required to support this work are included in the Council’s Capital Programme, to be funded from earmarked capital receipts which have been set aside to fund transformational projects.

6.5 A further £147k of enabling costs have been categorised as revenue expenditure and these will be met from the Property Repairs Fund.

6.6 The sale of 85 New Square would generate a General Fund capital receipt which would contribute towards the funding of the capital programme.

Table 1 – Revenue Operating Costs

Operating costs	Year 1	Ongoing	Post Asset release
Estimated increase to Town Hall operational running costs (electricity, water, sewage, refuse)	£58,900	£58,900	£58,900

collection and supplies & recharge costs)			
Uniform for call centre staff	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500
Ongoing CSC costs (utilities and insurance etc)	£14,000	£14,000	£0.00
Empty business rates – 3 months free then 100% costs apply	£27,458	£36,610	£0.00
Avoided costs for pay machines	£0.00	- £6000	- £6000
TOTAL POTENTIAL COSTS at TH	£101,858	£105,010	£54,400
CURRENT CSC OPERATING COSTS	£186,180	£186,180	£186,180
POTENTIAL NET SAVING	£84,322 (*pro rata based on date of implementation)	£81,170	£131,780

Table 2 – Enabling Costs.

Enabling Costs	CAPITAL	Property Repairs Fund
Furniture	£35,500	
Installation of office pods in Customer Service Centre	£40,000	
Screening between the CSC and Contact Centre	£20,000	
Refit of appointment desks in Customer Service Centre	£12,000	
Sound proofing in cashiers service area	£6,000	
Sound baffling in Customer Service Centre	£6,000	
CCTV in Customer Service Centre	£7,500	
2 nd Floor kitchen	£15,000	
Plaster repairs to 2 nd and 3 rd floor		£15,000
Painting to 2 nd and 3 rd floor		£48,000
Carpeting 2 nd and 3 rd floor		£41,000
Management of contractors		£24,000
Blinds to floors 2, 3 and 4		£19,000
Contingency	£15,000	
TOTAL POTENTIAL COSTS	£157,000	£147,000

7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal

- 7.1 Relocation of the services and facilities at 85 New Square will not create any legal consequences. Residents will continue to be able to access statutory and discretionary services.

- 7.2 Procurement of the goods and services which are required to facilitate this work will comply with procurement legislation.
- 7.3 The Council has a legal requirement to maintain the health and safety of its workforce. Relocation of the services located within 85 New Square will ensure that building safety and employee health and safety requirements can be achieved in the most cost-effective way.

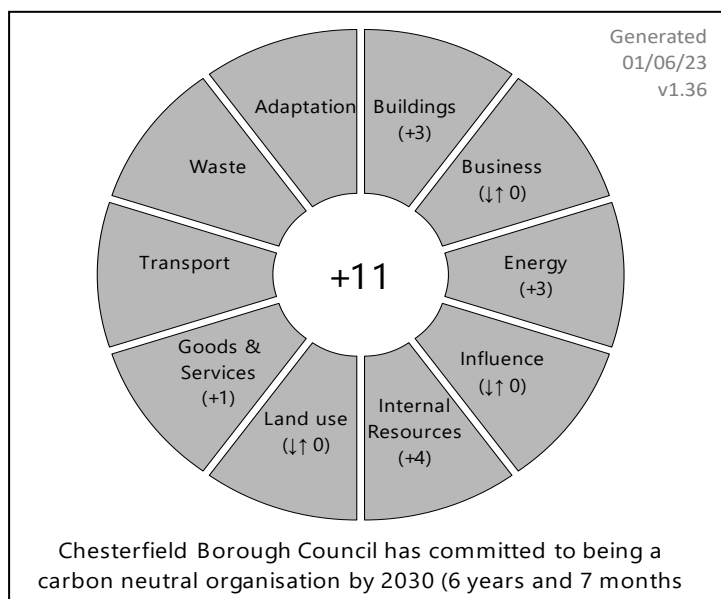
8.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources

- 8.1 This project will result in many of the employees located at Chesterfield Town Hall and 85 New Square being asked to move location. For some teams, there will need to be additional support provided to successfully enable the transition to agile working principles. Provision of support will be overseen by the Service Director for Digital, HR and Customer Services, supported by HR Business Partners and the Organisational Development Transformational Programme Manager.
- 8.2 Our employees have historically coped well with office moves and the relocation from 85 New Square is expected to offer an improved working environment for employees.
- 8.3 Free car parking facilities available at 85 New Square will be removed following sale or lease of the building. Employees will still be able to benefit from the Council's car parking scheme.
- 8.4 It is intended that Housing Property Services will co-ordinate the build works which are required to support the relocation of services. The Council's Organisational Development Transformation Programme Manager will take responsibility for the client activities required in this programme of work.
- 8.5 The project will be managed under CDM 2015 and will be F10 notifiable, with client, designer and principal contractor relationships and responsibilities clearly defined. All roles will be fulfilled by council employees.

9.0 Implications for consideration – Council plan

- 9.1 This proposal supports the council's ambition to be financially sustainable. Technology changes, together with new ways of working have enabled the council with an opportunity to provide residents and businesses with access to services at a reduced cost. It will also ensure that the number of operational assets are sufficient for a modern and agile Council.

10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate change



10.1 This proposal supports the council’s ambition to become a carbon neutral organisation. It will reduce energy use and will continue to facilitate agile working reducing the need for employees to travel. The proposal also looks to reuse materials where possible, reducing the need to buy goods and services.

11.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 An equality impact assessment has been completed. It is not expected that there will be any adverse implications for residents and businesses from the proposals. All services which are currently available at the Customer Service Centre will be available at the relocated site in Chesterfield Town Hall, except for the ability to pay in cash for services. Residents and businesses can pay by cash in nearby retailers or local post offices, however.

12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

12.1 A detailed risk register is in place to support this proposal. Key high-level risks are detailed below.

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Disruption of services during the relocation	High	Medium	Detailed implementation plans are in place.	High	Low

			Employees can deliver services from other locations.		
Delays in build works may reduce savings during the 2023 – 24 financial year.	High	High	Detailed implementation plans are in place. Procurement and commissioning of services are being co-ordinated	High	Medium
Negative impact to employee morale as we implement new ways of working	High	Medium	Communication plan developed. HR Business partner support is in place	High	Low

Decision information

Key decision number	
Wards affected	All wards

Document information

Report author
<i>Rachel O'Neil, Service Director – Digital, HR and Customer Services Karen Brown – Transformation Programme Manager</i>
Background documents
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.
<i>This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.</i>
Appendices to the report

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For publication

Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2022 - 2023 (GV430)

Meeting:	Council
Date:	19 th July 2023
Cabinet portfolio:	Governance
Directorate:	Corporate
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To present the Council's Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2022/23 for consideration.

2.0 Recommendations

This report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 18 July, 2023 where it was resolved that the report and its recommendations be supported and referred to Council for approval.

- 2.1 That Council approves the Equality and Diversity Annual Report.
- 2.2 That the Equality and Diversity Annual Report is published on the Council's website and circulated to partners.

3.0 Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 Equalities legislation and good practice require public bodies to publish annual equalities reports. The report should summarise equalities progress during the last year, and future plans.

4.0 Report details

- 4.1 The Equality and Diversity Annual Report is attached at Appendix 1. The report, which has been developed in consultation with the Equality and Diversity Forum, includes improvements and achievements over the last year, including:
- i. Progress in delivering the corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy (2019-2023).
 - ii. The continued success of the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum; acting as a critical friend to the council, hosting guest speakers

at meetings to provide education and raise awareness of equality and diversity issues and hosting four events during the year as per the Council Plan.

- iii. Increased focus on partnership working with a range of organisations to maximise the positive impacts we can achieve in our local communities.
- iv. A summary of the equality impact assessments undertaken during 2022/23 around Council policies, strategies and plans.
- v. Progress updates on Equality and Diversity issues throughout the year.
- vi. The report also helps the Council to show some of the steps being taken to meet the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty.

5.0 Alternative options

- 5.1 The alternative approach would be to not publish the Annual Report, however this would make it difficult to demonstrate the Council's progress in delivering Equalities outcomes.

6.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

- 6.1 No additional resources are requested in the annual report.

7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal

- 7.1 The annual report provides an opportunity for the council to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty, including delivery of its Equality Objectives. It is required that all relevant documents and reports are published.

8.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources

- 8.1 Equality and Diversity training continues to be included as part of mandatory induction training for all staff.

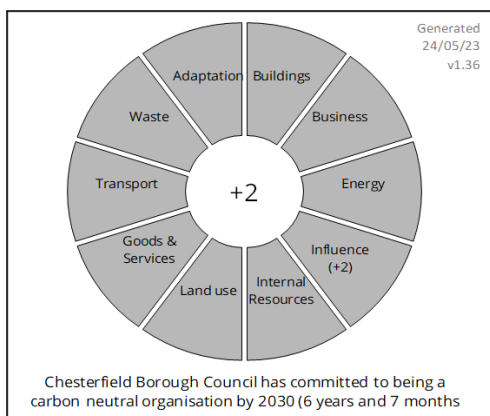
9.0 Implications for consideration – Council Plan

- 9.1 The activities within the Annual Report are linked to the priority of 'Improving the Quality of Life for Local People' - Improving community cohesion, raise awareness of equality issues and celebrate our diverse communities through the delivery of a minimum of four events each year with the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum.
- 9.2 In addition to the Forum's activities, the report also brings together a range of activities delivered across the Council's services which support the promotion of equalities and inclusive services.

10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate Change

10.1 Continuing with a blended approach to online and face to face events and activities will support the climate change agenda.

10.2



11.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 The annual report provides the community and relevant organisations with an update of the Council’s progress in delivering equalities outcomes.

12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

12.1 This work concerns the implementation of statutory and good practice performance requirements. It is required that all relevant documents and reports are published.

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Reputational and legislative risk of not publishing the Annual Report which demonstrates compliance with Equality Annual Report.	M	L	Publish the Annual Report on the Council’s website and distribute via partner mailing lists.	L	L

Decision information

Key decision number	1176
Wards affected	All wards

Document information

Report author	
Allison Potter, Policy Officer, Corporate	
Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2022/23



Chesterfield Borough Council

**Equality and
Diversity Annual
Report
2022 – 23**



Chesterfield Borough Council is committed to being accessible to all residents and visitors.

If you need this document in a different format like large print, easy read, British Sign Language, braille or translating into another language please contact us:

 **01246 936793**

 **policyteam@chesterfield.gov.uk**



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1.0 Introduction

Welcome to Chesterfield Borough Council's Equalities Annual Report for 2022/23. This report highlights some of the work we have been doing over the last year to promote and celebrate equality and diversity within our services and out in the wider community. It also looks to the future and includes our planned activities and focus areas for the next year, including the agreed actions for the next four years within our Equality and Diversity Strategy 2023/27.

Equalities legislation and good practice require public bodies to publish annual equalities reports. The report, which has been developed in consultation with the Equality and Diversity Forum, includes improvements and achievements over the last year, including:

Progress in delivering the corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy (2019-2023).

The continued success of the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum; acting as a critical friend to the council, hosting guest speakers at meetings to provide education and raise awareness of equality and diversity issues and hosting four events during the year as per the Council Plan.

Increased focus on partnership working with a range of organisations to maximise the positive impacts we can achieve in our local communities.

A summary of the equality impact assessments undertaken during 2022/23 around Council policies, strategies and plans.

Progress updates on Equality and Diversity issues throughout the year.

The report also helps the Council to show some of the steps being taken to meet the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty.

2.0 Equality and Diversity Strategy

The Equality and Diversity Policy and Strategy provide a framework for the Council to continue to ensure that the services we provide are fair and meet the needs of the local community, and that we discharge and progress our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

2.1 Action Plan Progress

In addition to reporting on our progress in implementing the strategy and action plan through these annual reports, progress is also monitored via the corporate performance management framework. The Equality and Diversity Forum also have a role in scrutinising our performance in delivering the strategy.

Below is a table which details progress during 2022/23 for the activities which contributed to the action plan outcomes for the four-year Strategy 2019-2023:

Objective 1: Ensuring a fair approach to the Council’s decision making, and that service changes address the needs of our communities in an equitable way, taking account of the needs of people with protected characteristics.	
Fair decision making	Update
<p>1. Continuing to embed the Council’s commitment to equalities in its service planning and delivery by delivering a robust Equality Impact Assessment process, and upholding the importance of this during financially challenging times.</p>	<p>Equality considerations are a mandatory section of the Council’s reports used in all decision making. EIAs are published alongside the reports via ModGov, with the Policy and Partnerships team providing guidance and expertise to ensure equalities issues are fully considered when the Council makes decisions. We continue to use a preliminary screening assessment, which is supplemented by a full assessment where appropriate.</p>
<p>2. Providing employees with training and development opportunities so that they have the skills, abilities and confidence to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to diversity and discrimination, both within the workplace and when delivering services. Delivering ongoing equality and diversity refresher training as required with services and a range of additional awareness raising modules on locally relevant themes.</p>	<p>Working with the Equality and Diversity Forum, the Policy and Partnerships team have provided equality and diversity awareness training which is available for staff to attend (for example Neurodiversity training, a cultural awareness day and the Holocaust Memorial Day event) Induction and refresher training for staff continues to be provided online via Aspire learning, with bespoke sessions for specific services provided where there is a need.</p>
<p>3. Encouraging involvement from all communities in the shaping, development, delivery and monitoring of local services, continuing to monitor use and satisfaction with our services to identify access/accessibility issues / satisfaction with our services from different groups.</p>	<p>The Policy and Partnerships team continue to work closely with the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum which acts as a critical friend for CBC (e.g. reviewing the Equality and Diversity Strategy for 2023-27 and choosing locally relevant themes for training).</p> <p>Regular engagement and consultation activity supported by the Policy and Partnerships team throughout the year helps the shaping of local</p>



	<p>services (e.g. LGBT+ project, annual Leisure survey). Documentation for the website is now being accessibility checked before being published.</p> <p>We have refreshed our community engagement standards during 2023 to continue to demonstrate our commitment to inclusive engagement, and our corporate equalities monitoring approach ensures that we are able to look for trends in access and satisfaction with our services from people who share protected characteristics, and identify any potential issues.</p>
<p>4. Empowering local communities and organisations by publishing equality and diversity information and outcomes so that they feel they can understand the reasons for Council decisions and challenge them if they feel it necessary.</p>	<p>Regulatory Public Sector Equality Duty data is published on line and can be found here: https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-here/people-and-families/equality-and-diversity/equality-and-diversity-data.aspx</p>
<p>Understanding our communities</p>	
<p>5. Support the planning and delivery of the local arrangements for the 2021 Census.</p>	<p>The 2021 Census was successfully delivered. Output from the Census is now being received from the ONS on a phased basis. Work on analysing the data will follow during the next year.</p>
<p>6. Maintain the State of the Borough report in line with latest available information, including Census 2021 data as available.</p>	<p>The State of Borough for 2023 is now available on the CBC website. This includes the latest data from the 2021 Census, however further updates will be made as more data becomes available</p>
<p>7. Ensuring that translation and interpretation made available by Chesterfield Borough Council meets the needs of local communities by reviewing and revising our current arrangements.</p>	<p>Procedures are in place to support translation needs. Census data will be analysed and our translation / interpretation available will be adjusted accordingly.</p>

<p>Objective 2: Supporting equitable access to high quality services that recognise the needs of different customers</p>	
<p>Supporting access to services</p>	<p>Update</p>
<p>1. Supporting and facilitating the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum to act as a critical friend, improving and championing access to the Council's services for all.</p>	<p>The Equality and Diversity Forum have met regularly and have worked together with Chesterfield Borough Council and acted as a critical friend when discussing current issues and projects and agreeing relevant topics for discussion at meetings and training events. The forum has worked with the Policy and Partnerships Team to plan activities for the year to meet the Council Plan objective. The forum has also been involved in reviewing / considering new</p>



	initiatives (e.g. Equality and Diversity Strategy 2023-27).
2. Making sure that our communities are able to access our bespoke health and wellbeing offer in our Theatres, parks and leisure centres, for example, by facilitating the Theatres Access Group, providing targeted activities such as autism friendly swim sessions, encouraging groups who share protected characteristics to use our parks for events, maintaining our Green Flag status for five parks, and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing especially in targeted and hard to reach sectors of the community.	Our Health and Wellbeing Officer continues to support the provision of this service; the cultural access group continues to work effectively and targeted swimming sessions are being run. Our Green Flag status for five parks has been retained. Our corporate Concessions Policy supports equity of access to our discretionary services for people who might otherwise struggle to access them.
3. Retaining our Customer Service Excellence accreditation	The Customer Services Excellence accreditation was achieved in 2021 and our teams continue to maintain customer service provision to meet that high standard.
4. Continuing to take an active role in Dementia Friendly Chesterfield	Dementia friendly walks and films continue to be a regular offer and are well supported by the community. The Council's Health and Wellbeing Officer has chaired this group over the last year.
Accessibility of information	
5. Review the corporate accessibility statement to ensure that it is reflective of and accessible to our local communities.	Some Census 2021 data has now been received. It will now be analysed and translation / interpretation available will be adjusted accordingly.
6. Developing the council's website, intranet and microsites to make them accessible to all our internal and external customers. This will include improving the quality and usability of our online information, to comply with EU Web Accessibility Directive, and to improve the user experience for customers with additional needs (such as visual, reading or motor impairments). We will also include subtitles on all videos published online, such as on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and on the council website including self service areas.	We are committed to providing accessible content across our digital channels, in line with the EU Web Accessibility Directive. A website accessibility statement was published on 23 September 2020 in accordance with this directive. In January 2022 we passed an accessibility audit that was carried out on chesterfield.gov.uk by the Government Digital Service (GDS), on behalf of the Cabinet Office. We add subtitles to all our videos using the functionality in YouTube; subtitles are carried forward wherever the video is displayed such as on Facebook, Twitter, or embedded in web pages on the council website.

Objective 3: Encourage mutual understanding and respect between our communities.

Raising awareness	Update
1. Raising awareness of local equality issues and celebrating our diverse communities through the delivery of a minimum of four events each year	The Equality and Diversity Forum have successfully delivered four events during 2022/23; Neurodiversity training, Cultural



through Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum on a range of locally relevant equality themes.	Awareness Day, Holocaust Memorial Day and International Women’s Day.
Supporting vulnerable people	
2. Managing the Syrian vulnerable persons resettlement and associated programmes for CBC.	CBC continues to play a key role in the UK Resettlement Scheme Partnership regional meetings, supporting and coordinating local approaches to a number of schemes including: the Syrian vulnerable persons resettlement, Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), Afghan Citizens’ Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), Homes for Ukraine and asylum dispersal. We also take part in the newly established county-wide Resettlement, Cohesion and Integration Board.
3. Completing the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult self-assessment and action plan working with Derbyshire safeguarding Boards	CBC continues to play a key role in the Derbyshire District Safeguarding Leads meetings, where best practice sharing and joint working takes place, particularly in the development of policy and training approaches.
4. Delivering community safety priorities through the Community Safety Partnership using this forum to help tackle issues facing our communities through creating a common vision and sense of belonging developing strong, positive relationships between people from different backgrounds and ensuring joint community engagement and tension monitoring plans are in place where appropriate.	The Policy and Partnerships team have worked extensively with the Community Safety Partnership to ensure that equality and diversity is at the forefront of their strategies, policies, procedures, and practices – for example in the development of the new Anti-social behaviour strategy. The Community Safety Partnership continues to deliver and commission a range of activities including diversionary activities in the local community, aligned with the Health and Wellbeing Partnership’s own programme. A set of principles have also been developed and adopted by Chesterfield’s strategic partnerships to support cross partnership working and a unified approach.
5. Continue to work with partners to tackle homelessness – dealing with over 900 cases per year	A new Derbyshire wide Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy was approved by Cabinet in November 2022. This strategy will co-ordinate a range of activity across the county and locally in chesterfield bringing together a wide network of key partners and stakeholders

Objective 4: To maintain a modern and diverse workforce that is reflective of the local community and feels valued and treated fairly

Employee wellbeing	Update
1. Responding effectively to the gender pay gap reporting requirements including action planning.	The most recent gender pay gap report can be found here: https://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/living-



	here/people-and-families/equality-and-diversity/gender-pay-gap.aspx
2. Seek employee feedback through the annual employee survey and develop and deliver annual action plans to address issues and trends identified.	The employee survey has been postponed until 2023/24 whilst the Council's new VIP (Valuing Individuals and their Performance) framework was being developed.
Recruitment	
3. Maintain and build on the Council's Investors in People status	Gold standard achieved reflects the culture of trust, collaboration, and strong values that we have all created here at Chesterfield Borough Council. In October 2021 the Council also received the Silver Award in the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Award.
4. Transform the recruitment web portal to attract a diverse range of candidates, using best practice from other councils	In 2021 we reviewed and updated the recruitment web portal. Firstly to make sure it was in an accessible format for applicants and secondly to refine all of our documents held on the site. HR worked alongside the Communications and Marketing team to update all of the materials using a variety of methods (as much as COVID lockdowns allowed) and it went live in June 2021. The process has been made more straightforward as CVs are now accepted for many roles advertised by the Council.
5. Maximise opportunities for engagement with businesses and schools, promoting careers and apprenticeships in local government	Monitored in the Council Plan, apprenticeships and careers continue to be promoted. A group of young "ambassadors" has been created in Staveley who are supporting the project team to communicate with young people in the Staveley area throughout the lifetime of the Staveley Town Deal. This helps to provide young people with an insight into democratic approach to local decision making.

Objective 5: To make sure that local people who share protected characteristics are able to access opportunities in employment and growth.

Inclusive approach to growth	Update
1. Supporting 5000 children to prepare for future job opportunities through the HS2 and you initiative.	This initiative was superseded by the Science Technology Engineering and Maths engagement programme with schools. Another cohort of the Future Makers Project has been delivered engaging 12 students with careers related mentoring. In addition we have delivered the 'careers made in chesterfield programme' this year that has delivered construction related careers programme which has worked hard to increase awareness of careers and opportunities within the sector through the delivery of 'Careers Made in Chesterfield'.



	<p>The innovative pilot has seen 20 professionals from 11 local businesses deliver a careers workshop programme to 110 year 10 students from Parkside School.</p> <p>44% of the students who have completed the programme have expressed high interest in working in the construction sector, rising from just 20% at the start of the programme. 10 quality work placements have been secured for students taking part in the programme and these will take place in July 23</p>
<p>2. Providing the Young Person’s Market, where stalls are available free of charge for anyone aged between 5 and 25 years old.</p>	<p>The Young Persons’ Market is a national initiative being run across England and has been successfully run in Chesterfield for the last 6 years with 4 markets held each year.</p>
<p>Apprenticeships</p>	
<p>3. Help to develop the careers of over 90 apprentices across the Council by ensuring that we provide opportunities for people to develop qualifications, vocational skills and increase employability</p>	<p>Over the last five year we exceeded our target with 107 people completing their apprenticeships (currently 10 undertaking their qualifications).</p>
<p>4. Enable 350 apprenticeships via the apprentice town initiative by working alongside and supporting apprentice providers.</p>	<p>Since the Apprenticeship Reforms in 2017 and as a result of the covid pandemic, there has been a steep fall in the number of apprenticeship starts falling from 1460 in 2017 to 660 in 2021; a picture that is reflected nationally. In the last year there have been signs of recovery with apprenticeship starts in chesterfield rising by 18% in the last year to 780 in 2022.</p> <p>Apprenticeship vacancies remain buoyant and we have continued to deliver Apprentice Town Activity to raise awareness of Apprenticeships and increase the visibility of vacancies available. The Apprentice Town Web pages have continued to be updated to highlight local case studies, vacancies and support available to residents and employers – The web pages have also been supported with a social media programme. The web pages have received 18,394 page views between April 2022 and March 2023, which is a 17.79% increase from the previous year. To address rising vacancies and declining applications, in June 2022, we introduced the Apprentice Town ‘Vacancy Widget’ which has seen 4338 views since its launch in June 2022. The vacancy widget pulls all apprenticeship vacancies advertised within 10 miles of Chesterfield into a central location on the Apprentice Town Website. The widget has also been offered to schools to embed on the careers sections of their websites – an offer taken up by Parkside School.</p>



	<p>CBC don't directly deliver apprenticeships but do employ apprentices and currently have 26 apprentices on programme within the council and since 2019 have directly supported 67 apprentices. Through Local Labour activity we ask all major planning applications to submit a skills and employment plan that sets out a strategy for promoting employment, training and supply chain opportunities locally – including apprenticeships. Since 2019 local labour activity has enabled 179 apprenticeships either directly or through the supply</p>
<p>5. Work in partnership with Chesterfield college to explore opportunities for joint working (e.g. catering placements, trade staff supporting tutors and assessors)</p>	<p>We have continued to work in partnership with Chesterfield College, particularly in respect of project development for a number of skills capital projects including Drive. We work closely with the College, along with other training provider partners to align 'local labour activity' – For example, a programme of work experience was a range for college students during the construction of the One Waterside Place, the Glassyard development with Morgan Sindall on the new Jewson Building. Students have been involved in other construction related careers activity including site visits and the women in construction mentoring programme which is now in its 3rd year and continues to be supported by the College.</p> <p>As part of the construction skills hub project, we are currently working with level 3 graphic design students at Chesterfield College to develop branding and a logo for the construction skills hub.</p> <p>In addition, we work closely with Chesterfield College and other providers to support inward investment and key account management enquiries and in the last year have facilitated to Pinelog who have relocated from Derbyshire Dales to Chesterfield and required support in relation to expanding and upskilling their workforce and NIBE, a Chesterfield based businesses who requires support with recruitment and training to support expansion plans.</p>

<p>Objective 6: Supporting independence at home for our tenants, local residents and vulnerable people.</p>	<p>Update</p>
<p>1. Support independence at home for vulnerable people through our Careline and Neighbourhoods service, and delivering Disabled Facilities Grants.</p>	<p>74 Disabled Facilities Grants were completed in 2022/23.</p>



	Careline have continued to operate providing an essential falls service and support for our customers.
2. Maintain independent living through the continued support of vulnerable people - Invest in over 1350 major improvements in our council homes including new kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems, windows and rewiring, ensuring that 100% of our Council homes meet the decent homes standard	We continue to strive to maintain independent living for vulnerable people through Careline and tenancy sustainment services. 100% of our homes meet the decent homes standard.

2.2 Equality and Diversity Strategy 2023 - 2027

Our new Strategy for 2023 – 2027 was approved at our full council meeting on 15th May 2023. Our objectives and proposed actions for the next four years are as follows:

Objective 1: Ensuring a fair approach to the Council’s decision making, and that service changes address the needs of our communities in an equitable way, taking account of the needs of people with protected characteristics.

Fair decision making

- 1.** Continuing to embed the Council’s commitment to equalities in its service planning, design and delivery by delivering a robust equality impact assessment process capturing challenges and opportunities at the very beginning, ensuring barriers are considered and



<p>mitigated where possible. and upholding the importance of this during financially challenging times. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>2. Providing employees and members with training and development opportunities so that they have the skills, abilities and confidence to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to diversity and discrimination, both within the workplace and when delivering services. Delivering ongoing equality and diversity refresher training as required with services and a range of additional awareness raising modules on locally relevant themes. <i>(Lead service: Learning and Development / Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>3. Encouraging involvement from all communities in the shaping, development, delivery and monitoring of local services, continuing to monitor use and satisfaction with our services to identify access/accessibility issues / satisfaction with our services from different groups. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>4. Empowering local communities and organisations by publishing equality and diversity information and outcomes so that they feel they can understand the reasons for Council decisions and challenge them if they feel it necessary. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>Understanding, listening to, and working with our communities</p>
<p>5. Reviewing the output from the 2021 Census to gain up to date and consistent demographic information for CBC and the wider community, enabling us to consider the protected groups in all we do and to support the Equality Impact Assessment process. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>6. Maintain the State of the Borough report in line with latest available information, including Census 2021 data when this becomes available. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>7. Ensuring that translation and interpretation made available by Chesterfield Borough Council meets the needs of local communities by reviewing and revising our current arrangements. Once Census 2021 data is received, it will be analysed and translation / interpretation available will be adjusted accordingly. In addition, procedures are now in place to respond to the translation needs of refugees and asylum seekers, this may mean that additional languages need translation services moving forward. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>8. Continue to listen to residents and service users through consultations and feedback to improve the evidence base that informs service delivery. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>9. Continue further investigations regarding Climate Change and local risks for vulnerable groups. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>10. Progress an action plan from the LGBT+ project report findings, working closely with key service managers to improve the service experiences for our LGBT+ community. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>11. Maintain and update the Equality and Diversity Corporate Monitoring Form in line with current standards and guidelines. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>

<p>Objective 2: Supporting equitable access to high quality services that recognise the needs of different customers</p>
<p>Supporting access to services</p>



<p>12. Supporting and facilitating the Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum and its subgroups (Cultural Access Group and Dementia Friendly Chesterfield) to act as a critical friend, improving and championing access to the Council’s services for all. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>13. Making sure that our communities are able to access our bespoke health and wellbeing offer in our Theatres, (for example by facilitating the Cultural Access Group), parks and leisure centres, (for example, by providing targeted activities such as autism friendly swim sessions and accessible exercise equipment) , encouraging groups who share protected characteristics to use our parks for events, maintaining our Green Flag status for 5 parks, and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing especially in targeted and hard to reach sectors of the community. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>14. Concessions policy – ensuring a consistent approach to how we charge for discretionary services while retaining the flexibility needed to achieve the Council’s social and legal obligations. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>Sharing and presenting information in appropriate and accessible formats</p>
<p>15. Review the corporate accessibility statement to ensure that it is reflective of and accessible to our local communities. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>16. Developing the council’s website, intranet and microsites to make them accessible to all our internal and external customers. This will include improving the quality and usability of our online information, to comply with EU Web Accessibility Directive, and to improve the user experience for customers with additional needs (such as visual, reading or motor impairments). We will also include subtitles on all videos published online, such as on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and on the council website including self service areas. <i>(Lead service: ICT, Communications)</i></p>

<p>Objective 3: Encourage mutual understanding and respect between our communities.</p>
<p>Raising awareness</p>
<p>17. Raising awareness and understanding across communities of local equality issues and celebrating our diversity through the delivery of a minimum of four events each year through Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum on a range of locally relevant equality themes. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>
<p>Developing joint partnership approaches and activity including the use of intelligence to tackle inequalities, promote equalities and good community relations that have a positive impact and help to support vulnerable people</p>
<p>18. To engage and be a key partner in the Derbyshire Resettlement, Cohesion and Integration Board to ensure a robust response is in place to address Hate Crime including prevention, and the provision of specialist support and provide strategic direction to the effective resettlement of Refugees the provision of support for Asylum Seekers and Integration projects to minimise any community tensions that may arise. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership, Housing,)</i></p>
<p>19. Continue to work with Derbyshire Safeguarding Boards to ensure the safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults, contributing to care leaver offer provisions and modern slavery / human trafficking response. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i></p>



20. Delivering community safety priorities through the Community Safety Partnership using this forum to help tackle issues facing our communities through creating a common vision and sense of belonging developing strong, positive relationships between people from different backgrounds and ensuring joint community engagement and tension monitoring plans are in place where appropriate.
(Lead service: Housing)

21. Continue to work with partners to tackle homelessness – dealing with over 900 cases per year.
(Lead service: Housing)

22. Health and Wellbeing Partnership activities, including financial inclusion activities, fuel poverty, supporting mental health and social connectedness.
(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)

Objective 4: To strive to maintain a modern and diverse workforce that is reflective of the local community and feels valued and treated fairly

Employee wellbeing

23. Responding effectively to the gender pay gap reporting requirements including action planning.
(Lead service: Policy and Partnership, HR)

24. Seek employee feedback through the annual employee survey and develop and deliver annual action plans to address issues and trends identified.
(Lead service: HR and Policy and Partnership)

25. Providing Leadership and Organisational commitment to actively promote equalities at all levels, ensuring that there is confidence in working together to deliver the best possible services for residents.
(Lead service: Policy and Partnership, HR)

26. Progressing with our Ways of Working post-Covid, ensuring that we are innovative and agile, that our workforce policies are accessible and inclusive and that we have refreshed values and behaviours to underpin what we do.
(Lead service: HR)

27. Developing our workforce development programme that takes account of different needs and also promotes equalities, diversity and inclusion as being at the heart of what we do.
(Lead service: HR)

Recruitment

28. Maintain the Council’s Investors in People Gold Award status.
(Lead service: HR)

29. Transform the recruitment web portal to attract a diverse range of candidates, using best practice from other councils.
(Lead service: HR)

30. Maximise opportunities for engagement with businesses and schools, promoting careers and apprenticeships in local government.
(Lead service: HR, Policy and Partnership, Economic Growth)

Objective 5: To make sure that local people who share protected characteristics are able to access opportunities in employment and growth.



Inclusive approach to growth
31. Providing the Young Person's Market, where stalls are available free of charge for anyone aged between 5 and 25 years old. <i>(Lead service: Town Centre Management)</i>
32. Social Investment Community and Wellbeing activity supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund including digital skills and work readiness activity. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>
33. Social Value Developing our Social Value Policy and incorporating outcomes and measures to promote equality in the local community. <i>(Lead service: Policy and Partnership)</i>
34. Development and delivery of the Council's Growth Strategy, particularly the 'inclusive growth' theme. <i>(Lead service: Economic Growth)</i>
Apprenticeships
35. Help to develop the careers of over 90 apprentices across the Council by ensuring that we provide opportunities for people to develop qualifications, vocational skills and increase employability. <i>(Lead service: HR)</i>
36. Promote and support an uplift in apprenticeships across the Borough. <i>(Lead service: Economic Growth)</i>
37. Work in partnership with Chesterfield College and Derby University to explore opportunities for joint working (e.g. catering placements, trade staff supporting tutors and assessors) <i>(Lead service: HR, Economic Growth)</i>

Objective 6: Supporting independence at home for our tenants, local residents and vulnerable people.
38. Support independence at home for vulnerable people through our Careline and Housing Services, and delivering Disabled Facilities Grants. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i>
39. Maintain independent living through the ongoing investment in the quality of council homes including adaptation as required to support vulnerable people. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i>
40. Look for opportunities to secure Government and external funding to deliver improvements to properties within the private sector to enable vulnerable residents to live as safely and independently as possible. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i>
41. Continue to support independence at home for vulnerable people by inspecting private rented properties, dealing with landlord where there are reports of disrepair and signposting to other agencies when required. <i>(Lead service: Housing)</i>

3.0 Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum

The Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum has continued to reach wide audiences, with meetings and activities continuing both online and in person. The Forum has continued to work together to share ideas and best practice, be a 'critical friend', and raise awareness in the community of equality and diversity. One of the most important contributions of the Forum is the successful engagement with the wider community, and at the beginning of this year, the Forum held a workshop looking at demographics and locally relevant topics to develop a plan of activities and events for the year. This resulted in a year of excellent educational and awareness raising activities led by the Forum.

A message from Sarah Roy, Chair of Chesterfield Equality and Diversity Forum



I'm delighted to be continuing to chair the Equality and Diversity Forum once again this year. Many of the challenges of the previous couple of years have been overcome and it really has felt like things are back to normal once again, whatever normal is! It's been brilliant to see all the forum members in person once again and to gather in groups to celebrate the ongoing development of our diverse town and commemorate landmark dates in our equality calendar.

Thank you to all of our members, for coming together year after year to uphold the purpose of the forum and send the message that this town is a welcoming one with so much to offer both residents and visitors. When we look back at some of our activities and achievements over the last year, it's easy to see why I am so proud to be part of the Forum.

In September, we welcomed colleagues from Derbyshire Autism Services and Autistic UK to the Town Hall for a training session to raise awareness of Neurodiversity and the Autistic experience. The training was very well attended as well as thought-provoking. Feedback from participants was excellent. Events such as this are always filled very fast and so we hope that we will be able to deliver something similar again in the future for those who had to miss out. Our December forum meeting was busy, with three presentations, including one from CBC Housing department about homelessness and rough sleepers in the borough. It focused on private sector evictions which had led to most of the homeless situations locally and an update on their partnership working with



other agencies to provide more support as well as their contribution to the development of a Derbyshire-wide homelessness and rough sleepers strategy. In mid-January, we held a Cultural Awareness Day, presented by the Asian Association of Chesterfield and North Derbyshire. We heard about their culture and the contributions they make to the local community, as well as discussing misconceptions and myth busting. Some fun group activities followed a special lunch prepared by Saffron Kitchen.

Later in January, our Holocaust Memorial Day event for 2023 featured Aida Salkic Haughton MBE, who is a survivor of the genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Aida is a valued and very active member of the charity Remembering Srebrenica and her first-hand testimony as a survivor of the Bosnian genocide and ethnic cleansing has shown to be a powerful tool for tackling hatred and building stronger communities.

At our February meeting we welcomed a presentation and demonstration of equipment available for hearing-impaired people by Hearing Help. Team members gave an overview regarding the service that Hearing Help provides and demonstrated their range of listeners, loop systems and other aids that are available free of charge for Derbyshire residents.

Finally, we marked International Women's Day on the 8th March by welcoming guest speakers from community groups Standing Tall and WORTH who shared their journeys of recovery and how they were empowered to continue their lives beyond domestic abuse. This was followed by our guest speaker, Sarah Wray, who led a mindfulness session.

All of our meetings and events this year, with the exception of HMD, were held in person. If you would like further details of our future meetings or activities, please get in touch.

3.1 Equality and Diversity Forum meetings and engagement

A key aim of the Forum is to raise awareness of equalities and issues affecting local people. The Forum has over 200 members that receive regular information about the meetings, events and equalities news. Some of the participants represent a community group, or statutory organisation, while others are there as individuals from the community with an interest in promotion of equality and diversity.



During 2022/23 there were high levels of engagement at the meetings with a variety of issues being considered including: LGBT+ activity update, Islamophobia pledge, DCC Equality and Diversity training for volunteers, Ashgate Hospice support for local groups and local homelessness issues. During February, the Forum had an initial workshop looking at local data to plan equality and diversity events, training and activities for 2023-2024.

3.2 Equality and Diversity Forum events and activities

In addition to the meetings, the Equality and Diversity Forum have continued to organise, host and support a number of events throughout the year on a range of equality themes that are relevant to the community, and drawing in additional funding to maximise the impact we can all make in the community and to pool our limited resources.

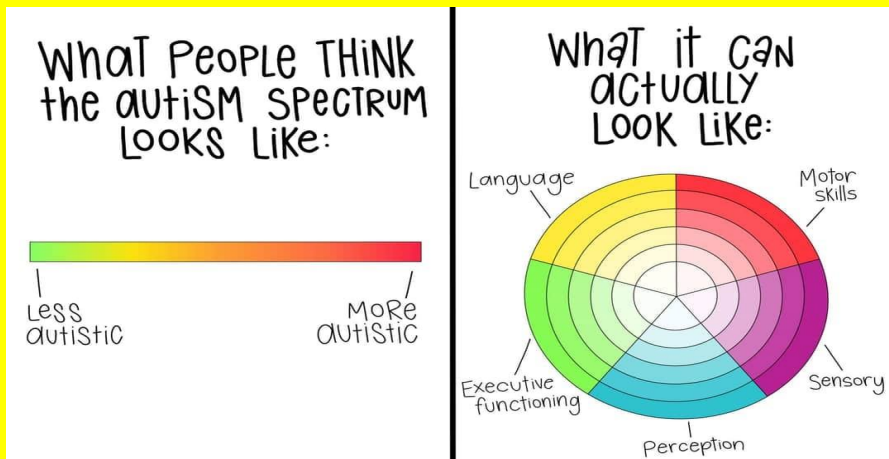
We would like to thank all those who have given up their time to support and help plan the following events that have taken place over the past year. Events during 2022/23 included:



Neurodiversity Awareness Training

In September 2022 we welcomed Derbyshire Autism Services to the Town Hall.

Chris Pienaar and Michael Hall from Derbyshire Autism Services, and Helen Robson from Autistic UK joined us to discuss the Neurodiversity paradigm and the Autistic experience. Some of the topics discussed included coping and displayed behaviours as well as some top tips for reducing anxiety and creating the right environment.



40 people attended the event and feedback regarding the presenter's knowledge was excellent. Comments included:

Presentation was clear and knowledgeable.

First-hand experiences from presenters was very insightful.

Very useful for adapting our own behaviours and approaches.



ASIAN ASSOCIATION
Chesterfield & N Derbyshire

Cultural Awareness Day

In January we were joined by the Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Asian Association who talked about their culture and contributions they make to the local community, as well as discussing some misconceptions and myth busting. There was also an opportunity to learn some traditional dance steps and how to drape and fold a sari. We were also joined by Saffron Kitchen who provided a delicious traditional lunch for everyone.



Feedback and comments included:

I thought the event was very interesting, it was interactive and the food was lovely - thank you.

It was a really lovely experience with lots of knowledge shared. The activities were both interesting to learn about and fun. Of course, the food was delicious too! I liked that the session was fun as well as educational - focused on the positivity.



Holocaust Memorial Day 2023

The Holocaust Memorial Day activities continue to be very well supported by our local community, drawing in large audiences. The theme set by the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust for 2023 was 'Ordinary People'. This year, many people came together to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, to help those in need and to build a better future.

Our guest speaker this year was Aida Salkic Haughton MBE, from the charity Remembering Srebrenica, who is a survivor of the genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Aida's first-hand testimony as a survivor of the Bosnian genocide and ethnic cleansing is a powerful tool for tackling hatred and building stronger communities.

Aida used news footage and photographs to share her story as well as raising awareness around ethnic cleansing, genocide and the lessons that should be learned from genocide.

The online event ended with a Q and A session touching on locally relevant issues and themes.

Feedback was invited after the event and out of those who responded, 100% said that the event was interesting and engaging and that the speaker was very knowledgeable. Comments included:

Huge thank you to Aida for sharing her testimony, it was truly empowering and educational and highlights the importance of the work being done and what more we could do.

A well-advertised, thoughtful and sensitive approach, presented by a survivor of genocide and social cleansing, 'real', touching, inspirational.



Our HMD Memorial Book was presented both at the Customer Services Centre and online for comments this year. The entries are detailed below:



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY 27/1

Messages left in our Holocaust Memorial Day Book of Remembrance 2023

To the families of the 359 people who have been injured / killed, I send you my condolences.

Ordinary people can be extra-ordinary and act to stop oppression now.

It is crucial that future generations continue to remember and commemorate the victims of the Holocaust, the world's darkest moment. Let our horror at the murdering and suffering of the Jewish people and many other victims of the Holocaust strengthen our resolve to prevent such evil ever stalking our earth again.

The atrocities you suffered should never be forgotten and never be allowed to be repeated.

It is important that we continue to remember and pay tribute to the people who have died in all genocides.

Lets hope that genocide one day becomes a thing of the past.

Today let our thoughts and prayers be with victims and survivors on Holocaust memorial day. We must remember the mass atrocities, honour the memory of those no longer with us and provide comfort and support to survivors who bravely share their story with us each day, so that generations can follow the work towards #neveragain.

We must never forget what happened to those who came before us and learn lessons from the past. It's our responsibility to create a safer, better future.

They will not be forgotten from our hearts for what they did for us and the life we have today.



International Women's Day



International Women's Day 2023

For International Women's Day in March 2023, we shined a spotlight on some local inspiring women.

We welcomed guest speakers from community groups Standing Tall Support and WORTH who shared incredible journeys of recovery and how they have been empowered to live beyond domestic abuse.



We also welcomed inspirational speaker Sharon Bull from Compassionate Voices CIC who shared how she lived with mental health issues for 30 years and how she has now transformed her life.



Sarah Wray from Live Well Consultancy also joined the event to share some strategies to enhance our well-being.



The day was attended by more than 35 participants who provided some excellent feedback including:

The authenticity and honesty of the speakers, sharing their vulnerability but also the strength to change their life for the better

The safe space that was generated - a comfortable space for discussion and interactivity. The speakers were very moving, and I felt grateful they were able to share their stories with us.

We enjoyed the opportunity to see presentations of local organisations and to share in their inspirational stories.

I'd like to come to more events like this, its a great opportunity to connect and feel part of a community coming together.

4.0 Promoting equality and diversity through our services.

Throughout the year, a range of activities and developments take place within the Council's services which contribute towards our commitment to embrace diversity and treat everyone fairly.

4.1 Sport and leisure

The service has been able to provide a range of activities which were well received by our customers as follows;

- Children's swimming lessons have record numbers of children actively engaged on our programme ensuring this life skill is being delivered to a large number of local children, with our autism sessions continuing to prove popular.
- Attendance to other children's courses, e.g. gymnastics and trampolining has been really strong enabling more children to engage in their chosen activities.
- Enabling programmes such as 50+ sessions continue to be delivered providing a range of physical activity options and opportunities.

Gym membership continues to grow enabling large numbers of customers to routinely engage in their chosen forms of physical activity.

The Exercise by Referral programme continues to provide access to hundreds of people in need of support and ensures that those who are vulnerable can access physical activity in a supportive and safe environment.

Other specific activities, e.g. The Light-hearted group, which accommodates people who have recovered from coronary illness and outswimming cancer programmes have been successful through enabling access to physical activity. In addition, a mixed activity group has been established allowing individuals to attend a wide range of supervised activities at QPSC, with both Queens Park Sports Centre and the Healthy Living Centre running Dancing with Dementia sessions.

We participate in the Walk Derbyshire initiative helping to make every day walking the norm for our residents, whether that be walking to the shops, school, work or walking for pleasure in the local community. We have maintained our "Walk With Us" program of group walks giving residents the chance to take safe, simple exercise outdoors and enjoy the benefits to both their physical and mental health. Our largest group at Holmebrook Valley Park celebrated 10 years of weekly walks in all but the worst of weathers!



We have continued to support local organisations and voluntary sector groups with training and advice to help them build walking into their regular activities by setting up their own walking groups. This year many of these organisations were also offering “warm spaces” to residents, with hot drinks, food, advice and support also available and the walking groups have been a useful way to engage with residents. With our support, successful groups have now been established in Staveley, Holme Hall and Brimington and walking is being used by a team of youth link workers as a valuable way to engage with young people.

We repeated a very successful Inclusive Activity Day in Queen’s Park and Queen’s Park Sports Centre, working alongside a local organisation which offers support to people with learning difficulties, which more than 60 people attended. Activities included adapted karate, dance, tennis, football, adapted cycling and chair-based exercise. Following the success of this event and the feedback we received from partner organisations we have established a weekly inclusive activity session at QPSC where participants can try dance and racquet sports with a view to offering a range of activities at the sessions in the future.

The CBC Community Lifestyles Officer continues an outreach program offering healthy lifestyle and physical activity advice and guidance to community and health-related groups, such as Community Respiratory Rehabilitation groups and cancer support groups.

The CBC Community Lifestyles Officer is also supporting the Walk Derbyshire project and Active Neighbourhoods Walking consortium. The vision of Walk Derbyshire is to make every day walking the norm for all residents of Derbyshire. It is intended that a systems approach to walking will create a culture of walking across the county, with a focus on areas with the highest levels of inactivity and deprivation. Holme Hall has been identified as a pilot area for the project and the consortium are working to identify new community connections through groups, organisations and services that are involved in work in the Holme Hall community. Through this work they will intentionally seek the views of marginalized and underrepresented residents whose voice might not have already been heard. Through the year we have supported initiatives to promote positive mental health, such as Mental Health Awareness Week and ThinkFest. We participate in the County-wide "Happy to Chat" scheme where many of our benches in parks and green spaces and in the town and village centres (and more recently in warm indoor spaces) are earmarked to encourage people to sit and chat to fellow residents and hopefully feel less lonely or isolated.

We have organised several community support events through the year, both Borough-wide and in local areas, offering residents an opportunity to engage with



organisations and advice services, particularly those offering help with financial issues, debt advice, energy support and health and wellbeing advice. To enable families with children to get maximum benefit from these events we also provide diversionary activities for children so that parents and carers can spend valuable time with the support agencies without distraction.

We continue to co-ordinate a Dementia Friendly Chesterfield forum and hold a very successful program of Dementia Screenings at the Winding Wheel theatre.

4.2 Parks and open spaces

Chesterfield's parks continue to provide excellent facilities for the community and visitors. We are proud to hold 5 Green Flags which recognise the best parks and green spaces across the country with one of the key considerations being accessibility. We continue to invest in our smaller local parks aiming to make them as accessible as possible. 2022 saw the opening of a new dementia friendly garden complete with sensory plants and the inclusion of some inspired poetry. Parks provide outlets to play sport (football, petanque, cricket, walking football, bowls and pickleball) and informal recreation and include maintained play areas, several of which have had recent makeovers and new facilities.

A growing number of people are holding events on our parks. For the annual walking festival, we offer easy circular walks for the less able, or as an introduction to walking with one being specifically 'accessible'. In the late summer of 2022, the council repeated the inclusive activity day which was held in the Queen's Park and the sports centre. This attracted around 70 people from a variety of day centres across the borough. We regularly engage with organisations such as Macintyre and Our Vision Our Future and these groups have attended sessions in the park such as outdoor yoga, bulb planting, orienteering and bird box building. An external partner delivers an inclusive 'Pedals in Queen's Park' which is attended by the Freedom Centre.

We aim to instil ownership and pride at a young age by engaging infant and junior school groups, along with many community groups, with bulb planting at their local parks. This has helped contribute towards the 16,000 spring bulbs planted in 2022 by 300 children to make Chesterfield a brighter borough.

4.3 Chesterfield Pride 2022

Chesterfield Borough Council were proud to once again be the headline sponsor for Chesterfield Pride 2022. After the successful partnership in 2021 the council teamed up with the organisers of Chesterfield Pride again to back the annual family-friendly event which supports and celebrates members of the LGBTQ+ community. As well as live acts on two stages, there was entertainment for all the family along with stalls promoting local services available for the community.



4.3 Housing

During 2022 the Housing Service carried out a reshape of its Housing management and Statutory Housing Services. One of the main drivers for this reshape was to create a more proactive housing service that can meet the needs of all its customers. The recruitment to the roles took place during 2022 and the reshaped Housing Service was launched in January 2023. Three 'meet the teams' events were held venues across Chesterfield providing an opportunity for tenants to speak to staff from new area teams who will be working in their communities. The new service has been designed to meet the diverse needs of our tenants, with increased opportunities for engagement, contact and support through home tenancy visits and more staff in frontline roles.

4.4 Tenancy support

Between April 2022 and March 2023, the tenancy support team have supported 364 tenants. Our specialist team works with our most vulnerable tenants. This includes those who have:

- Physical and mental health needs.
- Learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Had to move away urgently because of an abusive situation.
- The team provide support with:
- Claiming the correct benefits and accessing grants for things like furniture and carpets.
- Money and debt management.
- Accessing and signposting to other specialist agencies. For example, domestic Abuse, mental health, adult care.
- Aids and adaptations.
- Improving health and wellbeing.
- Of the tenants who were supported by the Tenancy Support team, 89% maintained their tenancies a year after support started.

4.5 Independent living schemes

Since 2017, we have refurbished all our independent living schemes to provide modern independent living flats with attractive, accessible communal spaces for socialising. Work to modernise the 41 independent living flats at Mallard Court and

Leander Court in Staveley was finished during 2022/23. Each flat has a new kitchen, level access shower room and integrated Careline equipment.

4.6 Investment and improvements to council homes

During the past year we have continued to invest in new build properties, as well as making improvements to our housing stock including fitting new kitchens, bathrooms, boilers and improving energy efficiency. The Capital Programme also invests in adapting properties to ensure they meet tenant needs.

During 2023/23 151 major adaptations to council were completed at a cost of £884,661. Installations include level access showers and ramps. In addition, 245 minor adaptations including grab rails and stair rails were completed costing £66,192.

4.7 Private Sector Housing team

The Council's housing service also includes work on delivering adaptations increasing standards of private properties in the Borough.

In 2022-23 we approved 104 disabled facilities grants for home adaptations and spent £938,645 on disabled facilities grants and loans.

In addition to adaptations completed during the past year, our private sector housing team also:

- Lent £67,000 to vulnerable homeowners to carry out urgent repairs and maintenance to improve their home environment.
- Helped 90 households under our gas safe scheme to service and repair boilers.
- Continued to be part of the 'Healthy Home' programme with Derbyshire County Council, supporting households who are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home, including those with a long-term health condition.

4.8 Careline and independent living service

Over the past year, Careline have continued to provide a 24/7 alarm monitoring and response service, providing peace of mind and a rapid response to falls and requests for assistance. The service has received 84,069 alarm calls and attended 3,947 callouts.

Careline work in partnership with Derbyshire County Council, the NHS and East Midlands Ambulance Service on a pilot project to help reduce pressure on the ambulance service locally. Trained Careline staff attend to take basic medical observations of patients triaged by EMAS via a Local Access Point team.



The service is continuing to roll out its investment in digital equipment and explore options for innovative uses of technology to promote independence and support hospital discharge.

The Independent Living service has continued to support older people to live safely and independently at home. Following the Pandemic where contact was mainly telephone based, needs-led visits have resumed. During the past year, 646 referral and positives outcomes have been achieved in relation to:

- Improving independence and quality of life.
- Improving health and wellbeing.
- Referring to, and working alongside, Adult Care and NHS services to help prevent hospital admissions, falls and deterioration in health.
- Property adaptations and improving the home environment.
- Reducing social isolation and increasing opportunities for meaningful activity.

The team also supported customers to manage money and debt effectively by accessing specialist services, grants and loans and providing support to access benefits. Referrals made by the team to Chesterfield Borough Council's Benefit Team resulted in nearly £76k of additional benefits for customers between April 2022 and February 2023.

4.9 Homelessness

The Homelessness Team continued their work to rehouse and support vulnerable people in the borough. Cost of living pressures, increasing number of evictions and limited options for alternative accommodation, have resulted in high demand for homelessness services.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, 1,612 homelessness cases were opened. 299 of these cases resulted in Chesterfield Borough Council accepting a duty to prevent or relieve homelessness. Homelessness was successfully prevented or relieved in 69% of cases.

To ensure that people at risk of homelessness have as many options as possible to alleviate and reduce their risk of homelessness the Council also:

Fund a post at Derbyshire Law Centre to support homelessness prevention.



Jointly commissioned the 'Call B4U Serve' service to help prevent homelessness in the private rented sector.

Funded a homelessness hub provided by Pathways, a joint initiative provided by three local councils. The hub provides personalised packages of support for individuals including housing advice and health care.

Funded two homelessness support workers through the charity P3 to help prevent homelessness and assist those with mental ill health.

4.10 Repairs and Maintenance

Every property we manage is someone's home and we have continued to focus on providing a tailored service to meet the needs of our tenants. Our repairs and maintenance teams continue to support tenants, including those who are elderly and vulnerable to manage repairs and stay safe in their homes. Resolving heating issues has been prioritised to ensure tenants can heat their homes effectively.

5.0 Apprenticeships town and improving our economy

During 2022/23 we have continued to deliver activity outlined in the Skills Action Plan and the economic recovery plan. This includes working with Chesterfield College and other partners to continue to develop Chesterfield as an Apprentice Town. CBC have its own successful apprenticeships scheme that currently supports 26 apprenticeships. However, we want to support all young people in our communities to gain employment, further education and to develop their skills. In 2021/22 1570 individuals were participating in apprenticeships in Chesterfield with 73% participating in apprenticeships at level 3 or above and over 30% being at higher or degree level. So far in Q1 and Q2 of the academic year 2022/23 there have been 370 new apprenticeship starts for Chesterfield, over 70% of which were at level 3 or above and over 27% at higher or degree level.

Apprenticeships once again featured in the 7th annual Employability and Skills Conference which took place at the Winding Wheel 8th February 2023. The conference was attended by 108 people including business delegates, operational staff, and school students, and provided a platform for speakers from Chesterfield



College, Devonshire Group and Brookfield Community School. The conference also featured a specialist panel that was chaired by a level 5 apprentice who is currently studying at Chesterfield College and working at Tarmac. The panel included Toby Perkins MP, D2N2 Careers Hub, Dronfield Henry Fanshawe School and employers Rosewood Wealth Management and Tarmac, to highlight what we can do in Chesterfield to address rising youth unemployment and to make apprenticeships more accessible to young people.

The conference also featured a new pilot programme, 'Careers Made In Chesterfield'. The pilot has seen businesses from the Chesterfield Property and Construction forum showcase the sector and raise awareness of the broad range of opportunities available.

The pilot has seen 20 employers across 11 businesses from the sector come together to engage with an entire year group – 110 Year 10 students at Parkside school.

The aim of the initiative has been to deliver a progressive programme of activity across an academic year, starting with an information and speed networking session with multiple employers to provide an overview of the sector and range of opportunities and careers available.

Throughout the pilot, the Year 10 students of Parkside were asked to rank their interest in construction careers on a scale of 1-10 (1-3 being not interested, 4-6 being interested and 7-10 being very interested.) Prior to the pilot beginning, 21 students ranked their interest in construction careers as 'very interested'.

After the first speed networking workshop was carried out, the number of students who took a high interest in construction careers grew to 26.

The second workshop that was delivered in the Spring term, delivered an interactive hands-on activity-based workshop that replicated experiences at work.

Following the second interactive activity-based session, 45 students indicated a high interest in construction careers with 25 students due to undertake work experience placements in July 2023 with the employer organisations who have supported the workshop sessions as well as employers from the wider sector.

Throughout the pilot, only 2 students did not find construction careers at all interesting.

The initiative has been designed to build confidence and inform choice and deliver a model where students can build their knowledge and relationships with employers across the programme over a sustained period of time. The pilot will conclude in

the summer term where up to 25 students are expected to undertake work experience.

The annual MADE in Chesterfield festival was held during November 2022. MADE in Chesterfield is supported by manufacturing and construction business who seek to inspire the next generation into the industry through a series of workplace tours and activities for school and college students. In 2022, 13 school visits took place across 5 different schools and also 8 industry employers in Chesterfield, with a total of 156 individuals supported. As part of the visit, the students were given a tour of the office space, an explanation of roles from a member of each department and a meeting with an apprentice currently with the company.

Recognising the rise in vacancies and recruitment challenges being faced by employers, Chesterfield Borough Council have continued to work in partnership with Job Centre Plus Chesterfield to facilitate three further Market recruitment events in March 22, October 22 and March 23. The events provided members of the public and job centre plus customers with direct access to employment and training opportunities. Employers, apprenticeship and employability providers made use of the market stalls to promote vacancies. At the October event, the Market Hall Assembly Rooms were utilised to provide a health and wellbeing event. 20 organisations attended the March 2022 event, with a total 510 vacancies being advertised. Following increased interest and focus on employability skills providers and networking opportunities, a total of 24 organisations booked on to the October 2022 event advertising over 350 vacancies, leading to 48 positive referrals and 21 immediate job starts, with Marks and Spencer playing a part in contributing to that number. In addition, health and wellbeing support was made available within the Market Hall Assembly Rooms, supported by 24 health and wellbeing organisations booked on to the event with 113 people engaged, leading to a total of 13 people supported. Following the success of the market events in 2022, an additional event was held in March 2023, 44 organisations booked onto the event on the Market place, advertising 382 vacancies with 42 positive referrals and 14 immediate starts. 33 jobs seekers were referred to the event by JCP with over 250 job seekers engaged with the jobs/services advertised on the day.

Ensuring that local people and businesses have the right skills to access current and future opportunities is a key objective underpinning the Skills Action plan and one that contributes to the Councils priority to make Chesterfield a thriving Borough. We are continuing to progress two key skills capital projects through the Staveley Town Deal, including DRIIVE (Derbyshire Rail Industry Innovation Vehicle), a modern innovation centre encompassing research and development, training and commercial office and workshop space at Barrow Hill and a Construction Skills hub in Staveley



that will see the creation of an on-site construction training facility that will help students gain practical skills and experience with direct access to sector employers.

Local labour clauses have continued to be agreed on 100% of eligible developments and from Q1-Q3 of 2022/23 so far 606 local jobs and 38 apprentices have been provided and over £31.9 Million of contracts awarded to local supply chain businesses as well as creating a number of other social value outputs including careers support, school visits, partnerships with FE colleges and work experience.

The Council is still actively supporting the delivery of key regeneration schemes (Peak and Waterside) and is actively engaged in the direct delivery of the Northern Gateway Scheme which has now seen the completion of Saltergate MSCP, the Enterprise Centre And public realm works to Elderway. To date, since opening, the Waterside development has created 88 jobs and it is estimated that 120 jobs have been created at the Northern Gateway Enterprise Centre in which 24 of the 32 rooms have been let since it opened in July 2022.

6.0 Equalities training for our staff

We offer the three mandatory equalities training modules in an online format, covering the Equality Act 2010, equality and diversity in Chesterfield's communities, and a guide to reasonable adjustments. Prevent training has also been added to the mandatory modules for all employees.

Feedback from employees shows that these modules have been effective, with an average of 99% of participating employees stating that the modules either met or exceeded their expectations. In addition, a number of comments were made by employees who completed the modules about how they would apply their learning including:

There are more things to consider when making a decision than we first realise and I need more knowledge on things like cultural differences and religious beliefs.

I now understand more about the Council's specific responsibilities and will look to adhere to these going forward.

I will remain vigilant on equality issues.

I can now ensure that I act in a positive and fair way to everyone.

Understanding that many disabilities are not clearly visible but are equally important and can have a huge impact on a person's life.

I will be able to use this in my work life and my everyday life too.

6.1 Mental Health First Aid

We now have 38 qualified MHFAs across all areas of the council. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is an internationally recognised training course which teaches people



how to spot the symptoms and signs of mental ill health and provide help on a first aid basis. In the same way as learning physical first aid, MHFA teaches people how to recognise crucial warning signs of mental ill health and feel confident to guide someone to appropriate support.

MHFA training encourages people to talk more freely about mental health, reduce stigma and create a more positive culture.

6.2 Mentoring programme

Twenty employees have undertaken mentoring training and are available as mentors. There are also now 2 people in HR who are fully trained coaches/mentors and CBC is a member of the East Midlands Coaching and Mentoring Group. This means we can access outside mentors if required.

6.3 Lone-working – Specialist Training

Following the tragic murder of two MPs recently, specialist lone working training is now being offered to all elected members.



7.0 Working in partnership to promote equality and celebrate diversity.

The Council recognises the importance of working in partnership with a range of organisations to maximise the positive impacts we can achieve in our local communities. We continue to play a key role in our local partnerships, many of which have a real impact on our equalities work and the protected groups in our communities including:

Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership and sub-groups, and the Derbyshire Health and Wellbeing Board
Chesterfield Local Place Alliance
Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership
Chesterfield Childrens Locality Partnership
Derbyshire Districts Safeguarding Leads
UK Resettlement Partnership (regional)
Derbyshire Community Response Forum
Derbyshire Armed Forces Covenant
Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authorities Energy Partnership
Vision Derbyshire
Derbyshire Homelessness Officers Group
Derbyshire MAPPA Strategic Management Board
Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Financial Inclusion Group
Derbyshire Housing Strategy Group
Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service
Social Housing Providers
Apprentice Town (Chesterfield)
Destination Chesterfield
Derbyshire Economic Partnership
Derbyshire Skills Forum
Visit Peak District and Derbyshire
D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership
South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
Staveley Town Deal
Chesterfield Waterside
(Development of the Derbyshire Integrated Care System)

7.1 Chesterfield system framework

A key aim of Chesterfield strategic partnerships is to support and promote community wellbeing; creating healthy, safer and stronger communities. Across the



borough we have created a range of partnerships to coordinate our efforts to maximise outcomes. Key aspects that underpin the approach to how we work in partnership are:

- Understanding the Chesterfield system framework
- Commitment to partnership principles

To work as collaboratively as possible, it is important that all organisations understand how the Chesterfield system framework is set up and how different partnerships relate to each other. If we can gain a collective understanding of this framework, working out how to get things done should become easier; and this will help to improve outcomes for individuals and the borough.

It should be recognised that there are many sub-groups and independent task and finish groups that feed into these community voice and strategic partnership groupings that are not shown on the plan; the connectivity that these other groups and individual partners provide as they work within the partnerships is a key element of achieving successful delivery of overall outcomes.

The framework is not fixed and other partnership groups may be established as the system evolves to support our overall aims; there are discussions being carried out with a view that a skills partnership group might be established.

7.2 Chesterfield strategic partnership principles

- Create strong communication channels and clear messages.
- Value joined up working across partners and agencies, from private, voluntary and community sectors through to statutory bodies.
- Recognise the voluntary and community sector as an equal partner and promote and adopt policies that support this approach.
- Be data and insight led in developing solutions; listen to people and communities, as well as using technical data.
- Focus on supporting the most vulnerable in our communities with solutions to tackle increases in material insecurity, mental health difficulties and social isolation.
- Shift resources to ensure that all partners can support our community resilience.
- Be brave enough to stick to our principles of equity and partnership even when outside forces make it difficult.
- Ensure that our governance is proportional to the issue, to avoid barriers to involvement.
- Commit to working as part of a system, working towards overall outcomes, not just organisational goals.
- Empower employees to work for the system (the greater good), rather than just for their organisation.



- Individuals should feel empowered to really listen to people, the people with lived experiences, in order to make changes and provide person-centred support.

7.3 UK Shared Prosperity Fund

During 2022/23, Chesterfield Borough Council was awarded £2.693 million from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The money will be spent over the next three financial years (running until 2024/25) on a range of projects which will benefit local residents and businesses, and to help raise Chesterfield's profile as a visitor destination.

The council was selected as a lead authority to benefit from the national funding pot, after our ambitious three-year investment plan – setting out a range of initiatives to improve life for local people – was approved by Government in December 2022.

It is being used to fund a range of projects, which will have a positive impact on our local communities including:

- Improvements to local parks, greens spaces and outdoor sports facilities to provide residents with even better access to quality outdoor facilities across the borough.
- Help for local businesses to reduce their carbon footprint, contributing towards the council's goal of creating a net zero borough by 2050.
- Grants to help community and voluntary groups fund grassroots projects and to support volunteering opportunities and strengthen our local communities.
- Funding to support entertainment in Chesterfield town centre and across the borough, including speciality markets.
- Investment in anti-social behaviour initiatives, which will help to tackle the root causes of nuisance behaviour, in line with the council's new anti-social behaviour strategy.
- Continued support to help local businesses start and grow, and to boost opportunities for local people to learn new skills.
- Investment in tourism and marketing campaigns to support Chesterfield's appeal as a destination for visitors.

7.4 Armed forces community

Chesterfield Borough Council holds a Silver Award for its support to the Armed Forces. The council was given the award through the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) which encourages employers to implement human resources policies that support members of council staff who are also part of the Armed Forces community while inspiring others to do the same.

We have a number of policies, procedures and practices that aim to support members of the Armed Forces community employed by the council and also the wider Armed Forces community living in Chesterfield, these include:

- Changed leave policies to support staff to carry out their duties including up to ten days per year for reservist duties.
- Access to employee assistance and occupational health schemes to support employees' physical and mental health.
- A generous career break policy which can be used to support mobilisation.
- A clear support plan for members of the Armed Forces returning from mobilisation and a clear cross-council understanding of their rights.
- Chesterfield's Armed Forces cadet units are given pride of place at our key annual ceremonies including Armistice Day, Remembrance Sunday and the Mayor's annual parade.
- We are partners in the Veterans Hub (Chesterfield) led by the Department for Work and Pensions, which includes regular events at the Town Hall
- The council is a registered employer with both the Career Transition Partnership and Forces Families Jobs.

8.0 Health and Wellbeing Partnership activities

Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership continues to be an effective partnership using a place-based approach, actively working and commissioning activities in the local community to support and promote health and wellbeing. The themed sub-groups continued to focus on financial inclusion, mental health and physical activity, with geographical sub-groups focussing in particular in areas of deprivation in the borough.

During the last year, the partnership has been organising wider team meetings to bring together colleagues from a range of organisations to collectively share experiences, best practise, and identify opportunities for collaborative working.

The Get2Gether events continue to be a success, taking place around various locations in the Borough to raise awareness of local services and community groups, offer advice and support, and to provide opportunities for local people to volunteer and take an active role in their local community.

The main partnership and the sub-groups also offer grant schemes which local community groups can apply to in order to support projects aligned with the partnership's priorities, e.g. mental health and isolation. This is in addition to, but



also compliments the UKSPF Community Grants Fund which was established at the end of the year.

9.0 Sport and Leisure

The Outswimming Cancer sessions, held at Queen's Park Sports Centre, have supported around 50 people over the last two years, and continues to go from strength to strength.

Led by Lesley Rechert, a swimming teacher at Queen's Park Sports Centre, the initiative continues to provide swimming sessions, free of charge, for people living with and beyond cancer in Chesterfield or the surrounding areas.

The project grew from an initial six people to an average attendance of 12 during the two years, with 18 people attending the project's final session last year. We have supported around 50 people over the course of two years, with 47 swim sessions, with an age range from 20s to 85. It has also supported people with a range of different cancer types including bowel, lung, breast, neck, throat and prostate cancer.

10.0 Arts and culture accessibility

The Cultural Venues Access Group continues to meet to improve access at the Council's Theatres. We continue to provide performances with audio description, signed performances and touch tour to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

We provide a varied programme of arts for health activities during the year including films for people with Dementia.

The Access Group continues to be a key consultee on the extensive improvement works at the Stephenson Memorial Hall and has been actively involved in working with colleagues to ensure that the refurbishments make the venue as accessible as possible. Improvements include a lift providing access to all floors, accessible routes to the theatre stalls and Changing Places toilet.

11.0 LGBT+ Project

The first part of our LGBT+ project captured customer insight and perceptions about our services, identified barriers which the community face in accessing any services and highlighted possible areas for improvement.

A report including findings and recommended actions to improve inclusiveness has been produced by Derbyshire LGBT+, discussed by the Equality and Diversity Forum and an action plan produced. During 2023 we hope to be able to begin to implement



these actions. Some of the key recommendations identified and proposed actions include:

- Review and refresh current staff training (new starters, service specific, refresher training and mandatory training) by working with LGBT+ representatives to tailor a best approach, using specific examples and real life scenarios as discussion points.
- Create a process of reporting incidents and how we can learn from them.
- Design and display posters in key service areas e.g. leisure centres, to give consistent advice for all service users.
- More regular social media items.

12.0 Press Releases and Communications

Throughout 2022/23 the CBC Communications and Marketing Team have continued to promote equality and diversity events and news items via our social media platforms. Some examples (and links) are below:

- Council partners with Chesterfield Pride for 2022 LGBTQ+ celebration (1 June)



- Sign up to Swim Against Loneliness this July (21 June)
- Engaging with our communities on anti-social behaviour (11 July)
- [Charities benefit from Mayor's Appeal](#) (14 July):



- [Queen's Park hosts an Inclusive Activity Day](#) (13 September)
- [Overwhelming success at Outswimming Cancer sessions](#) (20 September)
- Get together to discover groups and activities in the Staveley area (20 September)
- [Join us for a Dementia Friendly Chesterfield event](#) (23 September)
- Recruitment Event returns to Chesterfield Market (30 September) – we had a selection of charities/support agencies in the market hall for this event.
- Creating modern, sociable homes to boost independent living opportunities (17 October)
- [Council calls for urgent action to help families struggling with the cost of living](#) (20 October)
- [Warm spaces](#) (2 November)
- [Extra support for your mental wellbeing](#) (8 November)



- [Further funding available to help residents service gas appliances](#) (21 November)
- [Domestic abuse: how teams across Derbyshire are helping](#) (21 December)
- Attend the Asian Association Cultural Awareness Event (22 December)
- Donate to our food bank collection (5 January)
- [Celebrating 10 years of walking at Holmebrook Valley Park](#) (13 January):



- [Sign up to attend our Holocaust Memorial Day event](#) (16 January)
- [Chesterfield's communities and economy set to benefit from £2.6 million investment](#) (24 January)
- [Celebrate International Women's Day with us](#) (15 February)
- [Chesterfield in Lockdown – A community exhibition](#) (22 February):



- [£100m to be invested in council housing across Chesterfield](#) (23 February)

13.0 Equality impact assessments

The Council is committed to demonstrating that all relevant equality issues have been considered before changes are made to policies, projects, services, functions and strategies, or when new ones are created. Chesterfield Borough Council does this through its robust Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

The EIA process enables us to look at our work in depth to see what impact it has on different equality groups, and to mitigate against any potentially negative impacts that are identified. Staff received training in the completion of EIAs ensuring that the process is embedded across all council services.

During 2022/23 the Council undertook around 18 Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) for a variety of changes to policies, strategies and projects. These have taken into consideration: best practice, demographic information and employee and customer feedback and other engagement activities. The EIAs were published with the relevant reports to the Council's Cabinet. Through the EIA process, we have been able to address any negative impacts on sections of the community promote equality by identifying and acting on opportunities to implement positive impacts for groups where possible.

Examples of EIAs completed this year include the Staveley Town Deal project, homelessness strategy and new leisure equipment for our leisure centres.

14.0 Gender pay gap report 2022

At Chesterfield Borough Council we value diversity and inclusion and believe that it strongly contributes to the quality of our services. We are committed to being an equal opportunities employer and aim to treat all employees and job applicants fairly, regardless of their gender (including gender reassignment), age, race, sexuality, full or part-time status, marital status and disability. We believe it is important to attract and retain a workforce that reflects the customers and communities we serve.

We welcome the gender pay gap reporting requirements for a number of reasons including:

- It will help to confirm to our existing and prospective employees that we are committed to building a diverse and inclusive workplace, that provides equal opportunity to all employees irrespective of gender
- It will help us to monitor pay and career progression more closely and to ensure that all employees, irrespective of gender are supported to reach their full potential
- It is an opportunity to review our data and consider any issues we need to address and we can capture our journey over the next few years in our gender pay gap reporting and review our progress

14.1 What is the gender pay gap?

The gender pay gap is concerned with differences in the average earnings of men and women over a standard time period, regardless of their role or seniority. The



law requires any organisation with more than 250 employees to publish its gender pay gap information annually based on a snapshot date. For the public sector the snapshot date is 31 March.

Gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay. The law says that men and women must be paid the same for doing the same or equivalent work. We use job evaluation techniques to evaluate each role and not the post holder to ensure that all roles are fairly remunerated in comparison to other roles. It makes no reference to gender or any other personal

characteristics of any existing or potential job holders. We are therefore confident that our gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work, rather it is a result of the roles in which men and women work within the organisation and the salaries these roles attract.

14.2 Our gender pay gap data.

Gender pay reporting legislation requires employers with 250 or more employees to measure how large the pay gap is between their male and female employees. The measurement must be taken each year - on 31 March for public sector organisations and 5 April for other employers - and must be made public.

As at 31st March 2022 Chesterfield Borough Council employed 1105 people. The gender split of our workforce is 50.6% female and 49.4% male, however, this isn't an equal split across our services. The majority of Chesterfield Borough Council services are provided in-house including services which many authorities have either contracted out such as building cleaning or moved to alternative models such as arms-length organisations for example managing Council housing and associated repairs and maintenance (OSD). These services tend to have a large gender imbalance, for instance, building cleaning employs a large number of female part-time staff whereas the majority of higher-paid trades staff and associated professions working in housing repairs and maintenance (OSD) are male. These services have a disproportionate impact on our gender pay gap data.

Our gender pay gap figures for 2022 are:

Gender pay gap measure	31 March 2022
Average gender pay gap as a mean average	10.1%
Average gender pay gap as a median average	12.6%
Average bonus gender pay gap as a mean average	0.0%
Average bonus gender pay gap as a median average	0.0%



Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment	22.9%
Proportion of females receiving a bonus payment	0.0%

Quartile	Male	Female
Upper quartile	63%	37%
Upper middle quartile	49%	51%
Lower middle quartile	48%	52%
Lower quartile	38%	62%

The Chesterfield Borough Council’s mean gender pay gap for 2022 is 10.1% in favour of males and the median gender pay gap is 12.6% also in favour of males. These figures are significantly affected by the Council’s decision to retain in-house delivery for the majority of our services and the transfer in of staff from outsourced services during the year. The balance of male to female in the top quartile has decreased to 63% male and 37% female.

To understand the gender, pay gap it is essential to understand certain key facts about the distribution of grades, genders and working patterns in each of the four quartiles. Further information and our full gender pay gap reports are available [here](#).

14.3 How we are addressing the pay gap

We aim to recruit from the widest possible talent pool. We have updated our recruitment policy and procedures and trained all our recruiting managers to ensure that language in job adverts is neutral, that they understand the importance of interviewing people with gender balanced panels in order to avoid unconscious bias and can develop a recruitment experience that enables candidates to showcase their knowledge, experience and skills across their whole life experience.

We use job evaluation techniques to evaluate each role to ensure that all roles are fairly remunerated in comparison to other roles and also pay at least the Living Wage Foundations living wage level to all our employees which has a positive disproportional impact on female employees who make up a larger proportion of the workforce in services for example building cleaning that benefit from the living wage.

Once we have the right people, we want them to stay. To support this we have developed a range of flexible working opportunities including part-time, job-share, compressed hours, and so on. We have also updated and promoted our policies and procedures regarding maternity, paternity and adoption leave and have updated our shared parental leave policy and offering career breaks.

We devote significant time and resources to helping our employees progress in their careers and accessing quality learning and development opportunities. This includes regular development conversations with line managers, a formal personal development review meeting every six months and service level succession planning activities. There are also opportunities to learn from women who have progressed into the highest levels of organisations, this is a key consideration for our management conferences, managers seminars and international women's day activities.

We use apprenticeships to enhance the skills, knowledge and experience of our existing employees and to give opportunities to a diverse range of new employees – this includes working with partners to increase engagement with ethnic minority groups. We recognise however that offering new apprenticeship opportunities which are attractive to women may in the short negatively impact our gender pay gap as these roles attract a lower salary, but this is about investing in a pipeline of talent and creating career pathways for apprentices to progress and meet their potential. We carefully consider how to support female staff and apprentices to take the next steps in their career, and identify and reduce any barriers to gender equality. Over time this will reduce the gender gap and quartile distribution.

15.0 Looking forward to 2023/24

We will continue to work with partners to promote and support equality and diversity with our communities and within our organisation. We will need to adapt as we continue towards community and economic recovery post pandemic but here is a sample of some of the activities we would like to take forward in 2023/24:

- Continuing to work in partnership with communities to organise a range of equality and diversity themed awareness activities and events, through the Equality and Diversity Forum.
- Continuing to embed the Council's commitment to equalities in its service planning and delivery of major projects (e.g. Staveley Town Deal and Chesterfield Levelling Up Project) by delivering a robust Equality Impact Assessment process and upholding the importance of this during financially challenging times.



- Providing employees with training and development opportunities so that they have the skills, abilities and confidence to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to diversity and discrimination, both within the workplace, when delivering services and, ultimately, in their everyday lives. Delivering ongoing equality and diversity refresher training as required with services and a range of additional awareness raising modules on locally relevant themes.
- Working in partnership to deliver our ambitious UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) intervention plan, which includes projects across the following themes: Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business, and People and Skills
- Work with the Communications team to develop a unified approach to promotion of health and wellbeing and equalities events and activities, and key messages.
- Continue to meet our statutory duties including Gender pay gap and Public Sector Equality Duty reporting and working on the objectives detailed in our updated Equality and Diversity Strategy, 2023 - 2027.
- Having refreshed the State of the Borough document with data from the 2021 Census, we will continue to share and utilise up to date and consistent demographic information within CBC and the wider community, enabling us to consider the protected groups in all we do and to support the Equality Impact Assessment process.
- Continuing to work both formally and informally in partnership with local groups, including the Equality and Diversity Forum working more closely with the Cultural Access Group and Dementia Friendly Chesterfield to share knowledge, experiences and resources.
- Continue to develop the Local Democracy campaign, working with younger people to develop their knowledge of the democratic process.



16.0 Further information

If you have any comments on our Equalities Annual Report or would like to request further information or copies of any of the documents highlighted in the report, please contact:

Allison Potter

Policy Officer

Tel: 01246 959644

E-mail: allison.potter@chesterfield.gov.uk

For publication

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23

Meeting:	Council
Date:	19.07.23
Cabinet portfolio:	Governance Scrutiny Chairs
Directorate:	Corporate
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of the report

1.1 To present to council the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report which details the work of the council's overview and scrutiny committees, and development of the overview and scrutiny function during 2022/23.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23 be noted.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation

3.1 To enable council oversight of the work and operation of its statutory overview and scrutiny function, the function's effectiveness and contribution to the work of the council.

4.0 Report details

4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report is produced and presented to the Council each year. This is the council's 18th scrutiny annual report for submission to Council, following approval by the two Scrutiny Select Committees.

4.2 The provision of a scrutiny annual report is considered to be good practice and is a requirement of the Council's Code of Corporate Governance which is adopted to ensure effective operation of the council's functions.

- 4.3 The annual report, attached at Appendix 1, sets out the work, achievements and impact of the council's overview and scrutiny function during 2022/23. This includes:
- An overview of the overview and scrutiny function
 - Information on the working of overview and scrutiny during the year
 - Promoting the role and raising the profile of overview and scrutiny
 - Providing an outline of the changes being made for 2023/24.

5.0 Alternative options

- 5.1 The alternative option is not to produce an annual report. This is not recommended for the purposes outlined in paragraph 4.2. The importance of the annual report was also highlighted in the statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny in local and combined authorities released in 2019.

6.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

- 6.1 The Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum (future Scrutiny Select Committee – Resilient Council) undertake budget scrutiny for the council and is involved in the early stages of budget preparation in order to review and challenge the budget forecast outturn. Budget and value for money is a key area for questioning across all scrutiny topics.

7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal

- 7.1 Overview and scrutiny is a legal requirement for local authorities under the Local Government Act 2000. The scrutiny function ensures that there is accountability to the public and that the needs and concerns of the community are reflected in executive decision making. The annual report helps to raise the profile of the work of scrutiny amongst the council and its communities.

8.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources

- 8.1 Support for the scrutiny function is provided within the Democratic and Elections Service. Scrutiny has the power to call senior officers and cabinet members to attend meetings and provide evidence, this is done in consultation with senior officers and cabinet members through discussions at pre-agenda meetings.

9.0 Implications for consideration – Council plan

- 9.1 The overview and scrutiny function supports the delivery of the council plan and delivery plans by aligning the scrutiny work programme to the key activities identified for delivery within the year. Scrutiny also receives regular reports on council plan performance and provides a valuable check and balance opportunity to support the council in achieving its targets.

10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate change

10.1 Climate change has been a key area of interest for overview and scrutiny as scrutiny members are keen to support the council in achieving the goals set out in the Climate Change Action Plan.

11.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 Overview and scrutiny members bring experiences and skills from a wide range of different backgrounds, this enables our overview and scrutiny function to reflect and represent the needs of all our communities.

12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

12.1 Risk management is a key area for questioning across all scrutiny topics.

Decision information

Key decision number	N/A
Wards affected	All

Document information

Report author
Donna Reddish – Service Director Corporate
Background documents
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.
None
Appendices to the report
Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23

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Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At Chesterfield Borough Council, our Overview and Scrutiny function continues to be an active and integral part of the council's governance arrangements. During 2022/23, our scrutiny members have acted as a critical friend to the development and implementation of key council policies, engaged in the development of consultation exercises and communications campaigns and provided robust challenge to current policy, plans and practices. This work has supported the council's vision of always putting our communities first.
- 1.2 During the year different approaches to scrutiny engagement have been utilised including reports, presentations with question and answer sessions, focus groups and working groups. This has enabled scrutiny to take an in depth look at a specific policy areas, plans and data sets and provided a variety of opportunities for all scrutiny members to contribute to the discussions and add value and challenge to key activity.
- 1.3 The council's three overview and scrutiny committees in 2022/23 - Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum, the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee, have had yet another busy year during 2022/23 and this is captured within the report.
- 1.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Chairs for 2022/23 former councillor Lisa Collins and Cllr Jenny Flood would like to take this opportunity to thank all the officers and members who have been involved in supporting and assisting in the overview and scrutiny process over the past year.

2.0 Pre-decision scrutiny

- 2.1 The council's approach is to support and enable good pre-decision scrutiny. Pre-decision scrutiny provides opportunities for scrutiny members to fully challenge and inform important decisions before they are made. It has a number of benefits for the council and communities including:
 - Early and proactive involvement is likely to produce a better informed, better quality, more robust decision making
 - It provides opportunities for wider member involvement in decision making, followed by greater ownership and support for decisions
 - The need to suspend decisions already made through use of call-in mechanisms are less likely which can be a challenge due to implementation timescales and risks

2.2 Pre-decision scrutiny requires time and varied opportunities for overview and scrutiny members to get involved early and often happens at a much earlier stage than issues appearing on the Council's Forward Plan of key decisions. The approach set out in 1.2 has helped increase engagement at a much earlier stage and add greater value to the development of policies and plans and also helped to identify potential check and challenge areas pre and post decision making.

3.0 The Forward Plan

3.1 A standing item for noting on each scrutiny committee agenda is the council's Forward Plan. The Forward Plan is a document that contains details of the key, private and, where possible, non-key decisions the Cabinet, cabinet members or officers are likely to make over a four-month period. It is a legal requirement to make public the details of key or private decisions 28 days' in advance of the decision.

3.2 As well as being an important document for the public, the Forward Plan helps to provide overview and scrutiny with the opportunity to monitor the executive decision-making programme and undertake pre-decision scrutiny. Scrutiny members have been encouraged to have early conversations with the scrutiny chairs when an item appears on the forward plan that they feel requires scrutiny involvement.

3.2 Scrutiny members value the forward plan as a key tool in planning their work and recognise that, in order to carry out pre-decision scrutiny, items should be added in a timely manner.

4.0 Overview and Scrutiny 'Call-in'

4.1 Scrutiny law allows for an overview and scrutiny committees to investigate, make reports and recommendations on Cabinet decisions that have been agreed but not yet put into action. Legislation allows for action on these decisions to be suspended pending a scrutiny inquiry. This process is referred to as scrutiny 'Call-in'. Following any scrutiny call-in inquiry, the scrutiny committee may request Cabinet reconsider its decision on the basis of the further evidence gathered.

4.2 During 2022/23 no 'call-ins' were made.

5.0 Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum activities and achievements

5.1 Throughout 2022/23 the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum undertook both pre-decision and post-decision scrutiny, receiving reports and influencing decisions on the policies, strategies, plans and services outlined below.

5.2 People Plan

Chesterfield borough council developed its workforce strategy – known as the People Plan 2019 – 2023 in December 2019. Scrutiny had previously engaged in the development of the plan and was now undertaking a check and challenge review of progress. A key part of these activities included a look back on how the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted employees and services delivered and what could be learned for the future. This included the importance of key schemes such as the Employee Assistance Scheme and Mental Health First Aiders programme.

Scrutiny members also considered the latest findings from Investor's in People – where Chesterfield Borough Council was awarded the Gold standard and also some of the emerging pressures points for future years including hybrid working, reward and recognition and recruitment challenges. This session helped to inform the early stages in development of the next iteration of the plan.

5.3 Arvato and Kier Transition Plan – Lessons Learned

Scrutiny members had previously helped to shape the Arvato and Kier transition plan which enabled the return of key Council services from public private partnership provision to direct Council provision. This scrutiny meeting considered the evaluation and lessons learned following the transition and helped to provide focus for key areas to consider for further monitoring and any future similar projects.

5.4 ICT and Digital Improvement Programme

Scrutiny have been a key stakeholder in the ICT and Digital Improvement Programme since its development in 2018. The key strands of people, digital, applications and enabling technology have benefitted from early pre-decision scrutiny as well as post decision check and challenge during the delivery of the programme.

At this check and challenge session, scrutiny members took a deep dive into the savings forecast and delivered alongside the benefits to both Chesterfield Borough Council and our customers. The progress on the MyChesterfield digital account and plans for further future development also formed a key part of the discussion with members expressing views around potential barriers to access but also around opportunities for future service expansion.

5.5 Cost of living

This is a issue raised by scrutiny members during the year. At the pre-agenda meeting in September, the scrutiny chairs had discussed the increasing concerns about the cost-of-living crisis and impact this was having on residents. A piece of work was commissioned internally that summarised the current support available through government schemes, the council, partner agencies and organisations to address the cost-of living crisis. The report also informed a discussion about where support should be targeted, how the availability of support is communicated and to consider what questions scrutiny could ask when looking at future scrutiny topics.

The discussion helped to build up the Council's and other partners response including the cost of living web resources, information sheets for members, businesses, employees etc. and the warm hub programme and mapping.

5.6 Climate Change

Throughout 2022/23 scrutiny performed a valuable check and challenge role which helped to drive performance and maintain progress on the 2020 – 2023 Climate Change Action Plan. In addition this year, scrutiny also supported the development of the consultation which helped to shape the Climate Change Strategy 2023 – 2030 and held workshops to feed into the consultation and strategy development. This engagement helped to strengthen and widen the consultation and associated communication plan as well as adding valuable insight from scrutiny members experiences of working with residents and local groups.

5.7 Council Plan

Like with Climate Change, scrutiny perform an important check and challenge role throughout the life of the plan but in 2022/23 they helped to support the development of the new plan. The topic areas and key concerns raised during scrutiny committee meetings etc. were used as part of the evidence gathering and later down the line a presentation with the opportunity for comment and questions took place at an overview and performance scrutiny forum meeting as key themes for the new Council Plan 2023 – 2027 were taking shape.

5.7 Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

Following the Covid-19 pandemic scrutiny members requested an update on how emergency planning and business continuity functions worked both at Chesterfield

Borough Council and at the wider local resilience forum level. An in-depth presentation was given, with the opportunity to ask questions regarding particular areas of interest such as the new Protect Duty (Martin's Law) and how that could shape future activity.

6.0 Community, Customers and Organisational Scrutiny Committee

6.1 In 2022/23 the Community, Customers and Organisational Scrutiny Committee focused on pre-decision scrutiny and helping to shape a number of key plans and activities both internally and into external and partnership spaces.

6.2 Local Government Boundary Review Communications Plan

In 2021/22 the Local Government Boundary Commission concluded a review of electoral arrangements for Chesterfield Borough Council which would see wide ranging changes including a reduction in councillor numbers from 48 to 40, a reduction in wards from 19 to 16 and widespread boundary and name changes for wards. These changes take place from the May 2023 elections.

This is a really good example of early engagement helping to shape practice. In July 2022 scrutiny considered the challenges and opportunities around communicating to the electorate the changes around electoral boundaries following the Local Government Boundary Review Commission Review. Key consideration was given to the financial and legal limits with the communications plan and an analysis of the draft plan for effectiveness, climate change and equality and diversity impacts. A range of suggestions were made to enhance the communications plan to improve the reach in terms of all the electorate but also for harder to engage groups.

6.3 Outside bodies nominations

Another area identified as requiring some focus following the boundary commission review included nominations for outside bodies. Scrutiny helped to categorise the bodies e.g. sector support agencies, consultative committees, partnerships etc. so that it is easier for officers, members and the public to understand why we engage with certain activities and not others. Scrutiny also helped to scope an officer review of all outside

bodies which helped the Council to streamline and update the list in advance of the May 2023 election.

6.4 Member Induction Programme

Alongside the Member Development Group, Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee members were able to help shape the new member induction programme to be implemented after the May 2023 election. Members used their first hand knowledge to help prioritise the learning and development sessions, identify gaps and additional support required to enable full participation. The new induction has been a true collaboration between officers and members and will hopefully increase engagement levels.

6.5 Crime and Disorder

The Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee also acts as the Council's crime and disorder panel – scrutinising a range Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership delivery activity. A key focus during 2022/23 was the development of a new integrated approach to reducing anti-social behaviour and also reducing violence within our night-time economy. This included pre-decision scrutiny around the new Anti-social behaviour strategy and action plan to ensure that its potential for improved outcomes was maximised before it went into the formal decision making space.

7.0 Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

7.1 In 2022/23 the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee undertook both pre-decision and post-decision scrutiny, receiving reports and influencing decisions on the policies, strategies, plans and services outlined below.

7.2 Skills action plan refresh

The progress on the current Skills Action Plan was discussed in a check and challenge session to help drive current performance. Following this session a workshop was held where scrutiny members engaged with two key questions:

1. What should be the key priorities in the refreshed Skills Action Plan?
2. What is the role of the council in delivery of skills & employment activity and where can we add most value?

This early engagement helped to identify other key stakeholders, information required and a range of opportunities to be considered during the development of the next skills action plan.

7.3 Private Sector Housing consultation

Scrutiny members considered a number of new policies which will help to shape and improve private sector housing conditions. These included new policy and requirements around energy performance certificates, houses of multiple occupation licensing and conditions and park homes requirements. Discussion and questions helped shape the final versions of the policies before final decision.

7.4 Council Housing improvements

A check and challenge session was held around a range of Council housing issues including the delivery of the decent homes standard, the turnaround on vacant residential properties and the impact of Covid-19 on the backlog of repairs and maintenance. Scrutiny members took a deep dive into key data and the mitigation plans developed to improve upon current performance.

7.5 Recycling communications plan

An area of concern identified by Enterprise and Wellbeing scrutiny committee members was how the Council could improve recycling rates. A draft communications plan was considered with members making suggestions to make the plan more impactful for local communities and help to drive up recycling rates.

7.6 Measuring the success of town centre projects

Scrutiny members received a presentation which gave an update on key improvement projects for Chesterfield Town Centre. The discussion focused on how to measure success of the projects and how to demonstrate their impact. As these are long-term projects in many cases, this will be an area of future check and challenge for scrutiny members.

8.0 Learning and Development

8.1 Scrutiny plays an important role in identifying and delivering learning and development for members. Development needs that are identified through scrutiny committees or project groups are fed into the member development group so that they can form part of

a rolling training programme covering all members. In addition, a programme of member briefing sessions has been established to provide topical advice and updates to help members carry out their responsibilities effectively.

9.0 East Midlands Councils’ Regional Scrutiny Network

9.1 The East Midlands Councils’ Regional Scrutiny Network is a forum for learning, sharing, promoting, supporting and developing the scrutiny function across the region. The Council plays a proactive role in supporting and contributing to the work of the network which meets on a quarterly basis. Chesterfield Borough Council has continued to engage and utilise the collaboration and shared learning available.

- 9.2 Key exploration and development areas for 2022/23 included:
- Different approaches to scrutiny of Council budget setting processes
 - Training needs for scrutiny members
 - Utilising performance data effectively
 - Call in arrangements

10.0 Changes for 2023/24

10.1 Since the development of the three committee scrutiny model in 2015 there have been significant changes around council responsibilities, structures and partnerships. With the reduction in Council size due to the Local Government Boundary Review, 32 scrutiny places is considered to be unsustainable, however overview and scrutiny is an important check and challenge point within the Council. Overview and Scrutiny meetings have traditionally taken place in the evening (unlike other committees) so provide an opportunity for elected members who have caring commitments or work commitments during the day to still engage effectively in committee responsibilities. It is therefore important that there are a significant number of committee places allocated to this work.

10.2 From May 2023, the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees has been reduced from three to two. The overall number of overview and scrutiny places has decreased from 32, but the actual number of members engaged has increased, helping to increase overview and scrutiny oversight and provide much needed evening committee places.

10.3 The new committees are:

Scrutiny Select Committee – Resilient Council	Scrutiny Select Committee – Economic Growth and Communities
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<p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governance and decision making• Council Plan and performance management• Finance including Medium Term Financial Plan, Treasury Management, tax, income streams and capital programmes and Housing Revenue Account• Customer services• Human resources including people plan and learning and development• Information technology, data and information assurance and access• Health and safety• Risk Management• Emergency planning and business continuity• Asset Management• Communications• Call In and petitions related to the above	<p>Responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic growth and planning• Visitor economy• Skills• Health, wellbeing and cultural offer• Housing• Services to vulnerable people including Careline• Revenues and benefits services• Community Safety including Crime and Disorder Panel• Climate Change• Call In and petitions related to the above
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COUNCIL MEETING – 19 JULY 2023 **MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

These Minutes are of Committee meetings taken under delegated powers since the last meeting of Council. The Minutes are for information only.

Please click on the links below to view the Minutes you want to read.

Appeals and Regulatory Committee	24 May , 7 June , 14 June
Planning Committee	22 May , 12 June , 3 July , 5 July

If you require paper copies of the Minutes please contact:

Emily Taylor

Democratic Services, Town Hall, Chesterfield, S40 1LP

Tel: 01246 345236 email: democratic.services@chesterfield.gov.uk

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CABINET

Tuesday, 4th April, 2023

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

Councillors	Blank	Councillors	Ludlow
	D Collins		Mannion-Brunt
	Holmes		Sarvent
	J Innes		Serjeant
	P Innes		

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

113 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

No declarations of interest were received.

114 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

115 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 14 March 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

116 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan for the four month period May, 2023 to August, 2023 was reported for information.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

117 **CABINET, COMMITTEES AND OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2023/24**

The Service Director – Corporate presented a report to Cabinet recommending the implementation of changes to the council’s Cabinet, Committees and Overview and Scrutiny arrangements to reflect the outcome of the Local Government Boundary Review, and the recommended reduction in Council size from 48 members to 40, from May 2023.

A reduction in the number of Cabinet members was not recommended, however it was recommended that the role of Assistant Cabinet Member be deleted to reflect the change in Council size. It was also recommended that Cabinet portfolio responsibilities be reviewed ahead of the council’s Annual Business Meeting to reflect service developments since the last election and to equalise the distribution of duties.

It was also proposed to change the frequency of Cabinet meetings to a monthly cycle to be proceeded by meetings of Joint Cabinet and Employment and General Committee, with additional Cabinet meetings to be scheduled as necessary in January and February to reflect the volume of business at that time of the financial year. The ability to convene additional Cabinet meetings due to urgency and business need would remain.

Full details of the council’s other Committees and recommended reductions in the numbers of members serving on the Committees were contained in the Service Director’s report.

It was recommended that the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees be reduced from three to two. The overall number of overview and scrutiny places would decrease from 32, but there was an opportunity to increase the actual number of members engaged from 16 to 20 which would help to engage more members in the work of the council. A draft division of responsibilities between the two new Scrutiny Select Committees was attached at Appendix 1 of the Service Director’s report.

A review had also been undertaken of member appointments to outside bodies. Some of the bodies were no longer operating whilst questions had

been raised about the relevance of others in relation to the council's Council Plan priorities. An updated list of outside bodies and recommended member appointments to each was attached at Appendix 2 of the Service Director's report.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That following the borough election 2023, the Leader of the Council reviews Cabinet and Cabinet Portfolios. This should include the consideration of ceasing the Assistant Cabinet Member roles.
2. That the Leader of the Council appoints members to the Cabinet and advises Full Council of the appointments.
3. That a change in Cabinet frequency from every three weeks to monthly be recommended to Full Council.
4. That the following changes to Committee sizes be recommended to Full Council;
 - Planning Committee places be reduced from 15 to 12 (20% reduction)
 - Licensing Committee places be reduced from 14 to 12 (15% reduction), split between two groups as opposed to three
 - Appeals and Regulatory Committee places be reduced from 14 to 12 (15% reduction), split between two groups as opposed to three
5. That the adoption of a two Scrutiny Select Committee model and the division of responsibilities between the two Committees be recommended to Full Council.
6. That the revised list and allocation of places to outside bodies be recommended to Full Council.

118 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Internal Audit Consortium Manager presented a report to Cabinet reviewing the council's compliance against the Code of Corporate Governance for the financial year 2022/23 and recommending for approval to the council's Standards and Audit Committee the Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23.

It was noted as good practice for local authorities to regularly review their finances, operations and governance arrangements against the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's / Society of Local Authority Chief Executive's Code of Corporate Governance.

The Annual Governance Statement built on the annual review undertaken and should be an open and honest self-assessment of the council's performance across all of its activities concluding in a clear statement of the actions being taken or required to address areas of concern.

The annual review, which was attached at Appendix 1 to the officer's report, showed that there had been substantial compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance during the financial year 2022/23.

The review had however also surfaced areas of concern, which had been reflected upon and used to produce the council's Annual Governance Statement for 2022/23, which was attached at Appendix 2 of the officer's report.

Following final consideration at the council's Standards and Audit Committee the Annual Governance Statement should be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

***RESOLVED –**

1. That the following documents be referred to the Standards and Audit Committee;
 - The Annual Review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance for 2022/23 (Appendix 1 of the officer's report)
 - The Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 (Appendix 2 of the officer's report)

2. That the Standards and Audit Committee;
 - Consider the documents in Appendices 1 and 2 of the officer's report
 - Approve the Annual Governance Statement subject to any amendments considered appropriate
 - Recommend that the Annual Governance Statement be signed by the Leader and Chief Executive

3. That a review of the Code of Corporate Governance be undertaken in 12 months' time.
4. That progress on the significant issues and future challenges identified in the Annual Governance Statement be monitored by the Corporate Leadership Team.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS

1. To enable Cabinet and the Standards and Audit Committee to monitor the council's compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance.
2. To comply with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
3. To support the maintenance of sound risk management, governance, and control arrangements within the Council.

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