



# Resources Directorate

Growing together, Shaping tomorrow



## Service Plan 2024-25

Executive Director: Resources

Stuart McKellar

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# Our Directorate

## What we do

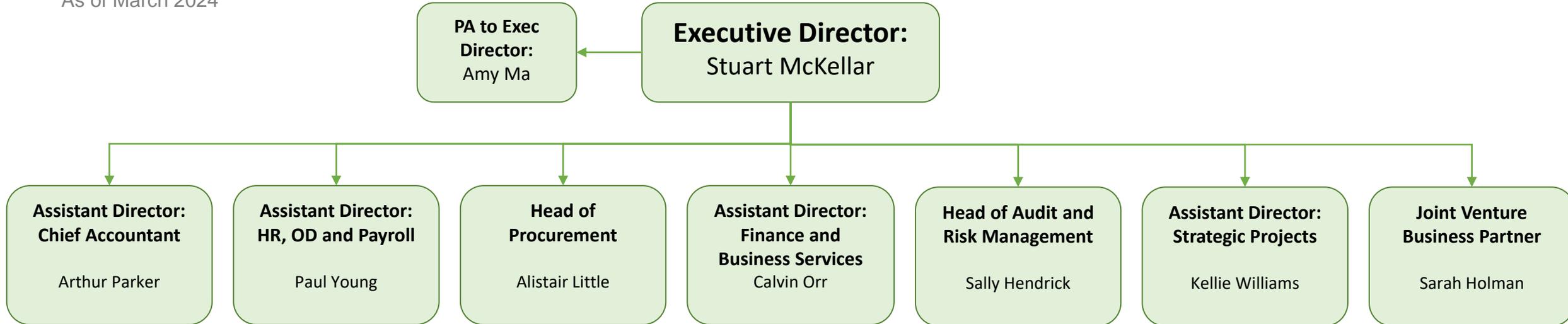
Develop and deliver clear financial and people strategies. Facilitate delivery of the Council Plan objectives, enabling other service areas to deliver their priorities effectively and efficiently

## We'll do this by

Providing a wide range of services, shaped by the needs of our external and internal customers. We will ensure that the council's finances are effectively managed, providing timely, constructive financial and commercial advice, monitoring and strategies. We will help create a sustainable, high performing workforce, supported by excellent managers and leaders. We will support the recovery of services that are underperforming or at high risk of doing so.

## Who we are

As of March 2024



# Our Services

## HR, OD and Payroll

- HR and Contracted Services
- Organisational Development
- Learning and Development
- Payroll Services
- Business Change Programme: Retention and Recruitment

## Finance and Business Services

- Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable
- Council Tax and Business Rates
- Systems Support
- Banking Treasury and Capital
- Cashiers

## Joint Venture Business Partner

- Delivery of agreed development sits
- Future redevelopment opportunities

## Strategic Projects

- Business Change Programme: Corporate Improvement

## Procurement

- Procurement Advice and Support
- Contract Register
- Strategic Procurement Group
- Contract Advice

## Accounting

- Strategic Accountancy
- Finance and Business Partners
- Accountancy Support Hub
- Schools Funding
- Revenue Budget and Final Accounts

## Audit and Risk Management

- Internal Audit
- Insurance
- Risk Management

# Our Service Plan

## Context

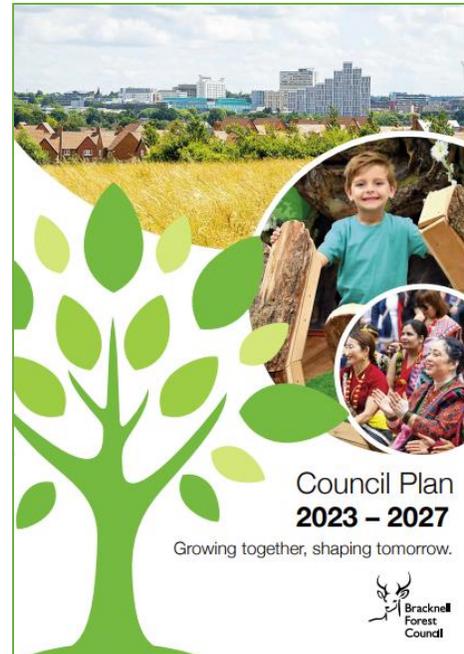
This service plan describes how our directorate is working towards the delivery of the Council Plan goals. It presents the first year of strategic activity. Our strategic actions focus on achieving the goals within the three priorities of the plan and activity on how we will be an ambitious, resilient and sustainable organisation.

Throughout the plan there are cross-cutting principles that will underpin the work that is delivered. More information about these strategies can be found online:

- [Equality Scheme](#)
- [Bracknell Forest Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- [Climate Change Strategy](#)

The full Council Plan is also available online:

[Council Plan 2023 - 2027](#)



Growing together, shaping tomorrow



**Borough priorities:**

**Engaged and healthy communities**

**Thriving and connected economy**

**Green and sustainable environment**

**Ambitious, resilient and sustainable organisation**

**Value · Residents · Climate · Quality · Partnership · Workforce**

# Our Service Plan

## Service Context

The Resources Directorate combines internal support functions with an external customer focus on local tax collection, recovery of other sums due for Council services and payments to suppliers. Through leading the Council's engagement with the Bracknell Forest Cambium Partnership, it also helps deliver Council priorities to secure more affordable homes and make Bracknell a thriving town centre.

Recruitment of qualified staff is proving difficult and presents a risk to service delivery, particularly for the Corporate Procurement and Internal Audit functions. This will make implementation of the new Procurement Act requirements especially difficult.

Recognising this, attempts are being made to work closely on this with neighbouring authorities, which has been the approach taken to deliver large parts of the Internal Audit programme in recent years.

Alongside these necessary short-term measures, the Council's prioritisation of recruitment and retention initiatives will increase organisational demands on the HR and OD team. Recruitment of additional staff will provide additional capacity and potentially different perspectives to make Bracknell Forest a first choice for candidates in a competitive labour market.

Financial pressures on the Council continue to grow each year. While Bracknell Forest is not at risk of a financial breakdown in the foreseeable future, the need for tight financial controls has never been greater. A focus on driving and tracking delivery of savings through the Business Change programme will be key. Safety Valve has changed the dynamics of the organisation by requiring a new strategy to fund business change support costs by disposing of capital assets rather than using reserves.

With the Bracknell Forest Cambium Partnership reaching the end of its initial business plan period, its next phase will include assessing other potential development opportunities to progress beyond the first "category A" sites. The timing fits well with adoption of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan and masterplans being brought forward for the Southern Gateway site, including the former High Street car park. With signs that inflationary pressures are declining and a hope that interest rates will fall during the year, market conditions look set to be more positive than they have been for some time.

## Key Drivers for Service

Key plans and strategies that support the operational and strategic direction of the directorate include:

- Workforce and OD Strategy
- Medium Term Financial Plan
- Joint Venture Business Plan
- Business Change programme

# Resources: Budget Position

## Revenue Budget

The Resources directorate has a gross expenditure cash budget of £8.301m with -£1.349m of income, making a planned net spend of £6.952m. The gross budget includes £5.630m for staffing

## Savings

The 2024-25 budgets include savings of £0.241m.

The key themes adopted in making the savings were:

- Staffing restructures and bringing services in-house £0.206m
- Reduction in overall training budget through a review of essential and mandatory training offered £0.025m
- Reduction in various supplies and services budgets £0.010m

## Capital Budget

The 2024-25 capital programme does not include any schemes for the Resources Directorate.

## Pressures

The budget includes pressures of £0.464m.

These pressures can be analysed into the following broad categories

- Payments to households in receipt of Council Tax Support £0.245m
- Above inflation increase to various contract costs £0.058m
- Cost of specialist support £0.136m
- Income pressures £0.025m

## Financial Risks

The Resources directorate have identified the followings budgets that can pose a risk to the Council's overall position:

Service Area	Budget £000	Comments
Internal Audit	26	Due to recruitment difficulties the Council may need to commit to purchasing additional audit days from external providers

# Resources: Workforce Position

## Staffing position

For the department, there is an overall headcount of 99 staff in post made up from 94 employees, 3 casuals and 2 temporary agency staff.

## Pressures

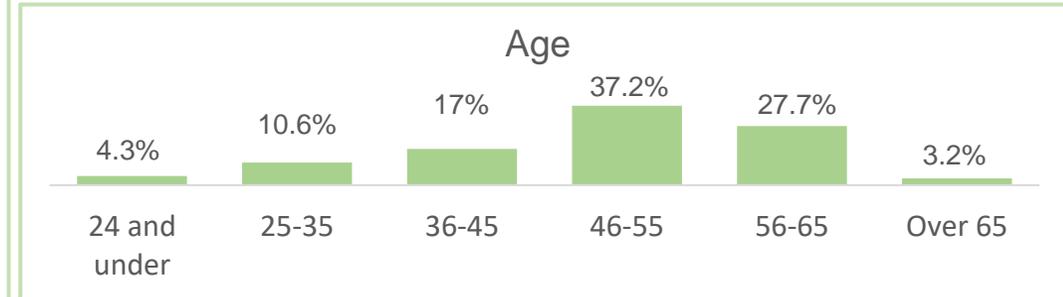
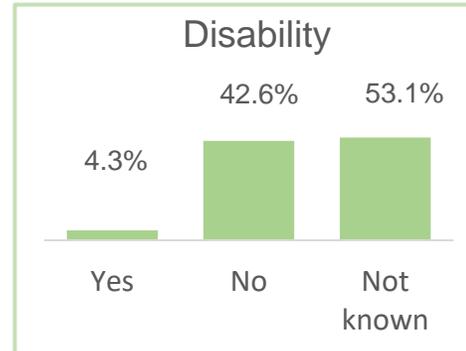
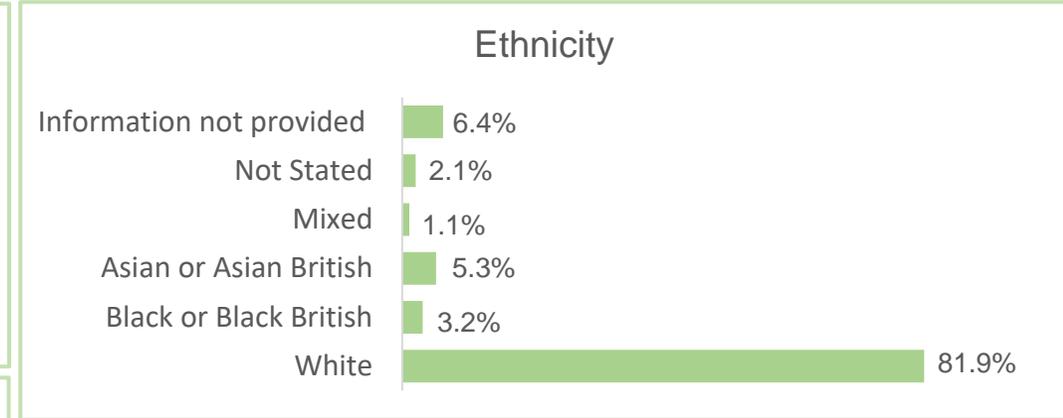
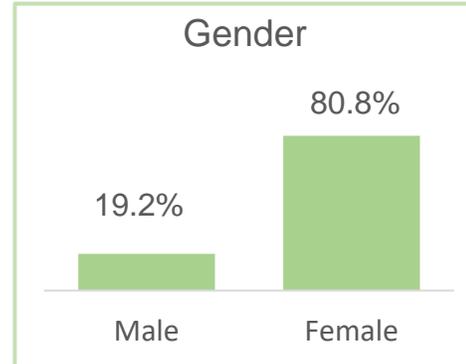
Staff voluntary turnover as of 1 January 2024 was 8.5%.

The estimated annual average sickness rate per employee is 5.22 days.

## Workforce Risks

The Resources directorate has identified several aspects of workforce management that are at risk of causing staffing pressures for the plan period and could therefore affect the delivery of the actions set out in the service plan.

## Workforce demographics as of January 2024



Risk	Comments
Hard to Recruit Posts	Audit, Procurement



# Priority one: Engaged and healthy communities

Engaged and healthy communities

Thriving and connected economy

Green and sustainable environment

Ambitious and resilient organisation

***“To help create opportunities where people can succeed, be happy and feel safe.”***

## Council Plan goals:

1. Children have quality education and opportunities to fulfil their potential.
2. Every child is safe as they grow up, where support puts family first.
3. Residents can access appropriate care, suitable for a changing population.
4. The diverse and growing population is healthy and active.
5. Community development and spaces encourage a cohesive and engaged community.
6. Residents have a safe and affordable place to live.

**Annual actions** set out specific activity to be undertaken in the next year. They complement and build on existing strategies. These include, but are not limited to, the council’s Equality scheme, Health and Wellbeing strategy and Climate Strategy.

Ref.	Goal	Annual actions (1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025)	Due date	Lead officer	Link to other strategies/underpinning principles
COM.1.13	1	Deliver the first year of activities for the safety valve programme, including completing the remaining actions from the Written Statement of Action (WSOA).	31 March 2025	Assistant Director: Strategic Projects	SEND strategy Safety Valve
COM.5.11	5	Support the setup of new facilities and services, specifically in 2024/25 for the Bridgewell facility.	31 March 2025	Head of Corporate Procurement	Health and Wellbeing Strategy
COM.6.08	6	Complete the sales launch for the redevelopment of Market Street Site by Joint Venture with 48% affordable housing.	31 March 2025	Joint Venture Business Partner	
COM.6.09	6	Start on site for the redevelopment of surplus land at the depot.	31 March 2025	Joint Venture Business Partner	
COM.6.10	6	Complete initial site development plan for redevelopment of land at High Street Car park.	31 March 2025	Joint Venture Business Partner	Local Plan



# Priority two: Thriving and connected economy

Engaged and healthy communities

Thriving and connected economy

Green and sustainable environment

Ambitious and resilient organisation

***“Upskilling residents will open more opportunities to work within the borough, strengthening our economy.”***

## Council Plan goals:

1. Resident skills are enhanced, meeting local employment needs.
2. Bracknell town centre continues to thrive and be a destination of choice.
3. Town, village and neighbourhood centres are thriving hubs for community activity.
4. Businesses have the space, environment, and support to adapt and grow.

**Annual actions** set out specific activity to be undertaken in the next year. They complement and build on existing strategies. These include, but are not limited to, the council’s Equality scheme, Health and Wellbeing strategy and Climate Strategy.

Ref.	Goal	Annual actions (1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025)	Due date	Lead officer	Link to other strategies/underpinning principles
ECN.1.04	1	Support young people in Bracknell Forest through careers events covering job opportunities in local government.	31 March 2025	Assistant Director: HR, OD and Payroll	Workforce Strategy
ECN.2.05	2	Implement the Joint Venture Business Plan and provide an annual review to Council.	31 March 2025	Joint Venture Business Partner	
ECN.4.05	4	Advise the Bracknell Improvement District (BID) on undertaking the ballot for a second BID term and support with robust billing, collection and reporting arrangements.	31 March 2025	Revenue Services Manager	Economic Development strategy



# Priority two: Thriving and connected economy

Engaged and healthy communities

Thriving and connected economy

Green and sustainable environment

Ambitious and resilient organisation

**Key results** are identified in the Council Plan to measure progress being made towards our goals. They are outcome focused for residents and will often require many partners, organisations and the community to influence the outcome.

**Contextual indicators** are also outcome focused and reflect the wider community. These will include indicators where a performance related target is not appropriate but offers information relevant to the delivery of services and Council Plan goals.

Ref.	Goal	Indicators (context forecasts/estimates)	Baseline	Year 1 2024/25	Year 2 2025/26	Year 3 2026/27	Lead officer
2.2.1.KR	2	Net additional dwellings within Bracknell Town Parish	243	567	157	284	Assistant Director: Finance and Business Services



# Priority three: Green and sustainable environment

Engaged and healthy communities

Thriving and connected economy

Green and sustainable environment

Ambitious and resilient organisation

***“To further encourage all residents to make the most of our brilliant local environment, whilst ensuring that it is sustainable for the future.”***

## Council Plan goals:

1. There is collective action to address and adapt to the climate and biodiversity emergency.
2. Our green spaces and parks foster sustainability, biodiversity, and wellbeing.
3. Local transport networks provide choice in travel.

**Annual actions** set out specific activity to be undertaken in the next year. They complement and build on existing strategies. These include, but are not limited to, the council’s Equality scheme, Health and Wellbeing strategy and Climate Strategy.

Ref.	Goal	Annual actions (1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025)	Due date	Lead officer	Link to other strategies/underpinning principles
ENV.1.08	1	Review the current approaches to climate change, social value and alternative funding routes, e.g. green bonds, social impact bonds etc, and explore potential for holistic policy approach.	31 March 2025	Executive Director: Resources	Business Change Health and Wellbeing Strategy Climate Change Strategy
ENV.1.09	1	Identify opportunities to reduce staff car usage and promote green travel initiatives.	31 March 2025	Assistant Director: HR, OD and Payroll	Climate Change Strategy



# Internal priority: Ambitious, resilient & sustainable organisation

Engaged and healthy communities

Thriving and connected economy

Green and sustainable environment

Ambitious and resilient organisation

***“The Council Plan sets out a fourth priority to be an ambitious, resilient and sustainable organisation. This will enable us to achieve our goals.”***

## Council Plan goals:

1. We deliver quality services, seeking ways to improve.
2. We prioritise finances effectively, delivering value for money.
3. We lead in reducing our carbon footprint.
4. We work directly and jointly with residents.
5. Our workforce is stable, connected, skilled and motivated.
6. Our partnerships maximise resources and skills.

**Annual actions** set out specific activity to be undertaken in the next year. They complement and build on existing strategies. These include, but are not limited to, the council’s Equality scheme, Health and Wellbeing strategy and Climate Strategy.

Ref.	Goal	Annual actions (1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025)	Due date	Lead officer	Link to other strategies/underpinning principles
ORG.2.07	2	Ensure spending is within the approved budget for this year, monitored through monthly reporting to DMTs and CMT.	31 March 2025	Assistant Director: Chief Accountant	Medium Term Financial Strategy
ORG.2.08	2	Work with senior management and the Business Change team to ensure annual Business Change financial targets are achieved in agreed timescales.	31 March 2025	Executive Director: Resources	Medium Term Financial Strategy
ORG.3.02	3	Lead the Climate Change culture change project to successfully deliver its year 1 activities and benefits.	31 March 2025	Executive Director: Resources	Business Change Climate Change Strategy
ORG.5.02	5	Improve workforce permanency reducing the need for agency workers.	31 March 2025	Assistant Director: HR, OD and Payroll	Workforce Strategy Business Change
ORG.6.02	6	Development of a new Social Value Policy in compliance with legislation.	30 September 2024	Head of Corporate Procurement	Health and Wellbeing Strategy Climate Change Strategy



# Internal priority: Ambitious, resilient & sustainable organisation

Engaged and healthy communities

Thriving and connected economy

Green and sustainable environment

Ambitious and resilient organisation

**Performance indicators** are specific metrics that have a performance related target. These provides information to review service performance in the context of the Council Plan goals.

Ref.	Goal	Indicators (performance targets)	Baseline	Year 1 2024/25	Year 2 2025/26	Year 3 2026/27	Lead officer
4.2.1.PI	2	Value of savings from Business Change Programme	New	£600,000	£500,000	£700,000	Executive Director: Resources
4.2.2.PI	2	Council tax collection rate	98%	98%	98%	98%	Assistant Director: Finance and Business Services
4.2.3.PI	2	Business Rates collection rate	98%	98%	98%	98%	Assistant Director: Finance and Business Services
4.2.4.PI	2	Debt outstanding as a percentage of gross debt	6.1%	7%	7%	7%	Executive Director: Resources
4.2.5.PI	2	Total debt as a percentage of core spending	215%	220%	223%	226%	Executive Director: Resources
4.5.1.PI	5	Percentage of Bracknell Forest Council staff who are undertaking apprenticeships (excl. schools)	2.5%	4.8%	5.5%	6.2%	Assistant Director: HR, OD and Payroll
4.5.2.PI	5	Turnover rate Bracknell Forest Council staff (excl. schools)	14.5%	13.5%	12.7%	12%	Assistant Director: HR, OD and Payroll
4.5.3.PI	5	Vacancy rate Bracknell Forest Council staff (excl. schools)	13.9%	12.9%	12.1%	11.4%	Assistant Director: HR, OD and Payroll
4.5.4.PI	5	Percentage of agency workers council wide (excl. schools)	6.1%	4.5%	3.5%	2.8%	Assistant Director: HR, OD and Payroll
4.5.5.PI	5	Percentage of posts filled with agency	33%	30%	27%	24%	Assistant Director: HR, OD and Payroll



# Internal priority: Ambitious, resilient & sustainable organisation

Engaged and healthy communities

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Green and sustainable environment

Ambitious and resilient organisation

**Contextual indicators** are also outcome focused and reflect the wider community. These will include indicators where a performance related target is not appropriate but offers information relevant to the delivery of services and Council Plan goals.

Ref.	Goal	Indicators (context forecasts/estimates)	Baseline	Year 1 2024/25	Year 2 2025/26	Year 3 2026/27	Lead officer
4.5.1.CI	5	Percentage of women in the top 5% of staff earners	50%	55%	60%	62%	Assistant Director: HR, OD & Payroll
4.5.2.CI	5	Percentage of BME in the top 5% of staff earners	12.9%	15%	18%	20%	Assistant Director: HR, OD & Payroll
4.5.3.CI	5	Percentage of disabled staff in the top 5% of staff	7.5%	9%	13%	13%	Assistant Director: HR, OD & Payroll
4.5.4.CI	5	Percentage of employees with a disability	4%	10%	13%	13%	Assistant Director: HR, OD & Payroll
4.5.5.CI	5	Percentage of employees from a BME background	9.1%	11.8%	14%	15%	Assistant Director: HR, OD & Payroll
4.5.6.CI	5	Gender pay gap	13.7%	10%	9%	8%	Assistant Director: HR, OD & Payroll

# Supporting projects

**Supporting projects reflect strategically important projects that may not otherwise be captured in the Council Plan. This can reflect new, emerging priorities that were not part of the original Council Plan.**

**Annual actions** set out specific activity to be undertaken in the next year. They complement and build on existing strategies. These include, but are not limited to, the council's Equality scheme, Health and Wellbeing strategy and Climate Strategy.

Ref.	Annual actions (1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025)	Due date	Lead officer	Link to other strategies/ underpinning principles
SP.02	Development of new Council processes, procedures and Contract Standing Orders to reflect new Procurement Act 2023 and supporting regulations.	31 December 2024	Head of Corporate Procurement	