



Budget Scrutiny

Accessible Housing & Resources

9 January 2023



Agenda

- Overview of the Portfolio
- Portfolio Priorities
- Revenue Budget 2022/23
- Revenue Forecast Q2 Cabinet
- Revenue Budget Savings since April 2020
- Proposed Changes to the Revenue Budget
- Overall Proposed Revenue Budget 2023-2024
- Challenges, Risks and Opportunities
- Top 5 Contracts
- Fees and Charges
- Capital Budget and Forecast 2022-23
- Proposed Capital Programme 2023- 2027
- Questions
- Appendices

Overview of the Portfolio

Cabinet Members: John Chilver and Tim Butcher (Deputy)

The Resources Portfolio spans a number of services and teams whose core purpose are to provide:

- Support Services
- Property & Assets
- Service & Business Improvement
- Legal & Democratic Services

The Portfolio delivers the Corporate Plan commitments in relation to:

- Delivering excellent customer service
- Support Services which ensure the Council is financially fit, efficient and responsive to change,
- Retention, recruitment and development of talented and committed staff to provide the best services for our local residents and businesses
- Managing our assets to create long term benefits and additional income, reducing our dependency on the taxpayer.

Overview of the Portfolio

Resources Sarah Murphy Brookman				DCE Sarah Ashmead		PGS Ian Thompson	
Finance Service Director David Skinner	HR&OD Service Director Sarah Keyes	IT Services Service Director Tony Ellis	Business Ops Service Director Lloyd Jeffries	Service Improvement Interim Service Director Matt Everitt	Legal and Dem Services Service Director Nick Graham	Property & Assets Service Director John Reed	
<p>Finance strategy (including medium term financial plans)</p> <p>Financial reporting, including financial accounts and other statutory returns</p> <p>Financial systems</p> <p>Strategic procurement and supplier relationship management</p> <p>Pensions administration and investments</p> <p>Treasury management</p> <p>Supporting directorates and portfolios are finance business partnering</p>	<p>Budget monitoring and financial support for major projects</p> <p>Supporting operational and customer facing activities</p> <p>Revenues and Benefits</p> <p>Direct payments</p> <p>Financial assessments for Adult Social Care</p> <p>Schools finance support</p>	<p>Payroll</p> <p>Human Resource Operations</p> <p>Resourcing</p> <p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Organisational Development</p> <p>Learning & Development</p> <p>HR Policy & Reward</p> <p>HR Consultancy</p> <p>HR Systems</p>	<p>IT Strategy</p> <p>IT Service Desk and Deskside Support</p> <p>Cyber Security</p> <p>Applications Management and System Integrations</p> <p>Network Management</p> <p>Hosting and Infrastructure Management</p> <p>Telephony and Collaboration</p> <p>Information Assets and Digital Development</p> <p>Joint working with partners e.g. BHCT and NHS Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning</p>	<p>Customer Service</p> <p>Council Access Points.</p> <p>Business Support.</p> <p>Business Development</p> <p>Blue Badge Service.</p> <p>Independent Mobility assessments.</p> <p>Blue Badge enforcement.</p> <p>Welfare Benefits Service.</p> <p>Customer Improvement.</p> <p>Customer insight and customer analysts.</p>	<p>Service Improvement</p> <p>Business Intelligence</p> <p>Partnerships, Policy & Communications Service Director Roger Goodes</p> <p>Website and Digital Strategy</p>	<p>Legal Services</p> <p>Democratic Services</p> <p>Elections</p> <p>Electoral Registration</p> <p>Member Allowance</p> <p>Strategic Insurance</p> <p>Business Assurance (Internal Audit, Risk Management, Fraud)</p> <p>Information Management</p>	<p>Delivery of Accessible Housing</p> <p>Property transformation and regeneration projects</p> <p>Major projects, Development & Investment</p> <p>Capital programmes delivery of schools programme</p> <p>Oversight of our companies</p> <p>Management of the agricultural estate & strategic asset management</p> <p>Health & safety, Soft facilities management, planned and reactive maintenance.</p>

Portfolio Priorities (1 of 2)

Accessible Housing

- Development of accessible housing, including on surplus public sector land, and requirements on private developments to include affordable housing for local people and key workers.
- Maintain virtual elimination of rough sleeping across Buckinghamshire through integrated public health & wellbeing approach.
- Continue to address housing need by working with partners and stakeholders.

Service Improvement

- Co-ordinate all unitary savings to be delivered including Better Buckinghamshire Service Reviews, contracts and asset optimisation (£18 million in total by 2025/26).

Customer Experience

- Implement a 'Customer First' culture that is prioritised through the entire organisation to deliver an improved Customer Experience.
- Implementation of the Master Data Management (MDM) solution and a Customer Relationship Management system (CRM).

Property & Assets

- Delivery of capital projects and programmes – including regeneration, schools, sport, leisure projects and the One Public Estate Programme.
- Active management of the council's estate to maximise opportunities from our property holdings and provide a safe suitable workplace for staff in our operational estate.

Portfolio Priorities (2 of 2)

Support Services

- Continue the development of Buckinghamshire Council website to improve content and accessibility.
- Continue to maintain a high standard of Legal and Democratic advice and support to the Council.
- Consolidate our support services onto single systems and applications, supported by single teams with single sets of processes.
- Deliver the ICT One programme which provides a secure and resilient single network, single identity and domain with single applications and integrations.
- Maximise the effectiveness of SAP IT system and core HR and Finance systems through process improvement and data cleanse in support of our Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) strategy.
- Support the attraction and development of a skilled and motivated workforce with effective leadership to deliver services.
- Maintain strong Financial management of £1.2bn gross budget
- Maintain oversight and shareholder management of the councils companies.

Income

- Increasing income to protect front line services by:
 - maximising opportunities for property asset optimisation, investment and income
 - delivering an active asset management programme including a substantial rental income stream and capital receipts
 - reviewing potential for a housing development programme.
 - maximising on fees & charges across all council services as part of the MTFP process.
 - developing a viable Traded Services Strategy that delivers high quality, good value services to customers that covers its costs at the gross contribution level

Portfolio Key Data



Support for **147** councillors



605,238 customer contacts received **



367,300 calls answered into the Customer Service Centre (CSC) **



796,292 web page views of the Buckinghamshire Council home page **



3482 individual pages on the Buckinghamshire Council website *



4,021 open legal cases *



1,763 Council properties



267 committee meetings supported **



6,642 full Land Charge Searches and **8,381** Personal Searches **



£475m Council Tax
£178m Business Rates



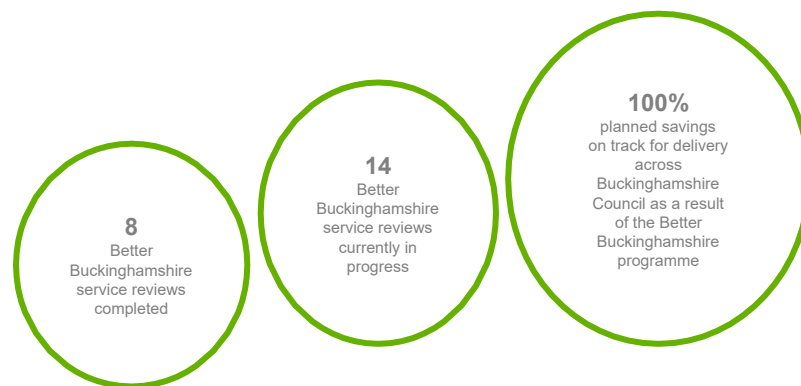
3rd largest tax base in Country
(**249,000** properties) *



569,520 Council Tax, **45,812** Business Rate bills and reminders, issued each year **



c£80.6m Housing Benefit payments
12,023 Housing Benefit recipients *

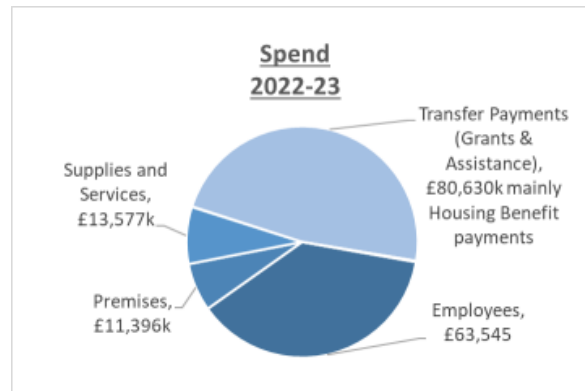
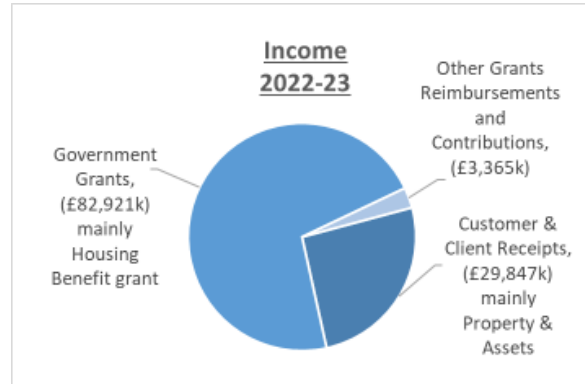


* Statistics from internal monitoring systems (data from Nov 2022)

**Statistics from internal monitoring systems (based on rolling year to 30th Nov 2022)

2022-23 Revenue Budget

		Income £000	Expense £000	Net Budget
Business Operations	Business Development	(100)	408	308
	Business Operations	(269)	7,114	6,845
	Customer Services	-	3,929	3,929
Business Operations Total		(369)	11,451	11,082
Digital	Digital		616	616
Digital Total			616	616
Finance	Finance	(3,092)	11,672	8,580
	Revenues & Benefits	(86,211)	86,318	107
Finance Total		(89,303)	97,990	8,687
Human Resources & Organisational Development	Human Resources & Organisational Development	(405)	5,086	4,681
Human Resources & Organisational Development Total		(405)	5,086	4,681
ICT	ICT	(101)	13,936	13,835
ICT Total		(101)	13,936	13,835
Legal & Democratic Services	Business Assurance and Insurance Services	(128)	2,587	2,459
	Democratic Services & Elected Members	(27)	5,224	5,197
	Information Management	(5)	1,193	1,188
	Legal Services	(1,308)	7,110	5,802
Legal & Democratic Services Total		(1,468)	16,114	14,646
Property & Assets	Commercial Property & Agricultural Estate	(11,803)	857	(10,946)
	Property Maintenance & Strategic Asset Management	(12,660)	20,123	7,463
Property & Assets Total		(24,463)	20,980	(3,483)
Resources	Management and Business Management	35	494	529
Resources Total		35	494	529
Service Improvement	Service Improvement	(61)	3,524	3,463
Service Improvement Total		(61)	3,524	3,463
Grand Total		(116,134)	170,190	54,057



The largest item of Income and Spend across the portfolio relates to Housing Benefit which the Council administers on behalf of the Department for Work & Pensions

2022-23 Revenue Forecast Outturn at Q2 (1 of 2)

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance	Change in Variance
Q2 Revenue Monitoring	£000	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	186,240	187,690	1,450	500
Income	(130,990)	(130,370)	620	100
Total For Portfolio	55,250	57,320	2,070	600

Note: Q2 Revenue forecast budget includes one-off budgets e.g. pay awards, and is higher than the base budget for 2022/23

At Q2 the Portfolio is forecasting an adverse variance of £2.1m. The main variances are described below:

- £0.3m adverse variance in Finance, being income shortfall on Council Tax/Business Rates Court costs recovered, pressure arising from optimistic legacy income budget plus reduction in caseloads processed during Phase 2 of the single Revenues & Benefits system implementation. Expected income of £0.25m for the last 6 months of the year has been identified as a risk. Movement from Q1 adverse £0.05m.
- £1.12m adverse variance in Legal & Democratic Services. Legal Services £0.9m adverse variance primarily being due to increased demand from statutory services. Business Assurance £0.45m adverse variance due to increased insurance premiums and outsourced audit and fraud activity to cover vacant posts. Democratic Services £0.23m favourable variance due to staff vacancies and reduction in Member running costs. Movement from Q1 adverse £1.12m.

2022-23 Revenue Forecast Outturn at Q2 (2 of 2)

- £1.1m adverse variance in Property & Assets from projected increases in Energy Prices due to inflation. Movement from Q1 £0.4m favourable following the Government's price cap announcement.
- £0.3m favourable variance within Resources Directorate & Business Management, being accelerated Better Buckinghamshire / Contract harmonisation savings, currently used to offset income shortfall on Revenues & Benefits Council Tax/Business Rates Court costs recovered. These savings have been identified in advance of full-service reviews, and a further saving of £0.5m is to be set aside in a reserve to partly fund an ERP solution in future years. Movement from Q1 favourable £0.04m.
- Service Improvement £0.14m favourable variance, arising from staff vacancies and staff redeployed to support the Homes for Ukraine Visa Scheme. Movement from Q1 favourable £0.14m.

2020 -23 Revenue Budget savings and additional income (1 of 2)

	Savings	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000
MTFP	ICT digital programme	-132	0	0
	Customer Services	-125	-125	0
	Resources Directorate - Staffing review	0	-107	0
	Resources Directorate - Home working savings	0	-84	0
	Deputy Chief Executive - Home working savings	0	-13	0
	Democratic Services	-55	-25	0
	Property Services – Efficiency Review delivered	0	0	-125
Contract Harmonisation	Resources	-280	0	0
	DCE	-30	-40	0
	ICT Single Network	0	0	-750
Better Buckinghamshire	Legal & Democratic Services	-170	-333	0
	Revenue and Benefits - single system. Delay in implementation and savings of £206k, with corporate contingency smoothing the savings in year. Savings to be delivered in 2023/24.	0	0	-155
	Customer services - insourcing of legacy Capita staff/contract in Wycombe	0	0	-266
Total Savings since Unitary		-792	-727	-1,296
Additional Income				
MTFP	Property Services – additional income achieved	-734	-394	-1,337

2020-23 Revenue Budget savings and additional income (2 of 2)

	Total Non cashable savings/ Cost pressures absorbed	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000
Non cashable savings/ Cost pressures absorbed	HR & OD: Voluntary Redundancy exercise in 2020/21 to bring costs within budgets (full year costs realised in 2021/22)	0	-400	0
	Customer Services	-500	0	0
	ICT - Cyber pressures	-135	-170	0
	Service Now (Customer interface system) - development costs		-78	0
	Revenue and Benefits - single system implementation: Loss of Court cost income and clearing backlog of cases from system closure	0	-140	-444
Total Non cashable savings/ Cost pressures absorbed		-635	-788	-444

2023-24 Proposed changes to the Revenue Budget (1 of 2)

Accessible Housing & Resources (* denotes items that are roll forward of changes from existing MTFP)		Change 2023-24 £000's
Business Operations		
Income	Review of the support and charges to schools for the Schools Information Management System (SIMS) to include current levels of inflation	(58)
Savings	External contract savings within the Resilience Service - cease IT systems contract for Business Continuity Management replace with in-house alternative.	(15)
	Insource Blue Badge enforcement - cease external contract	(30)
	Relocate Council Access Point and sites to libraries.	(60)
	Review of Business Support Operations	(35)
Digital		
Savings	Contract saving - Digital Team	(50)
Finance		
Income	Full cost recovery review for Pensions Service	(100)
	Review of Revenues & Benefits Court Costs income	500
	Review income opportunities for Finance Deputies	(70)
	Review of fees and charges in Finance	(11)
Savings	*Efficiency savings in Revenues and Benefits (Better Buckinghamshire programme)	(364)
Grant funded expenditure	*Change in Housing Benefit Payments and Grant Income	(7,694)
	Change in Local Audit Fees Grant - to meet new requirements	125
Grant Income	*Change in Housing Benefit Payments and Grant Income	7,694
Growth	Increased Audit fees - cost of increased duties	450
Human Resources & Organisational Development		
Income	Review of fees and charges in HR	(76)
ICT		
Savings	*External contract savings - final phase of single ICT network saving (Better Buckinghamshire Programme)	(250)

2023-24 Proposed changes to the Revenue Budget (2 of 2)

Accessible Housing & Resources (* denotes items that are roll forward of changes from existing MTFP)		Change 2023-24 £000's
Legal & Democratic Services		
Savings	Efficiency savings in Democratic Services	(75)
Growth	Increase in Insurance premiums	900
	Increase in Legal Services operating costs - demand from statutory services	1,150
Property & Assets		
Income	*New Rental income opportunities	(2,163)
	Reduce subsidy of community sports facilities - review opportunities for self-funding facilities	(45)
Savings	Efficiency savings in Facilities Management for Council Offices	(17)
	*Efficiency savings in Property Services - Service review	(90)
Growth	*Creation of Sinking Fund for Strategic Assets (2.5% of income) Top up existing fund	38
Inflation	Increase in Cleaning & Security costs	89
	Increase in Energy costs - across Council properties	2,390
Special Items	One Public Estate feasibility studies (funded from reserves)	458
	Technical accounting adjustment - derecognise finance lease now classified as operating leases	878
Reserves	One Public Estate feasibility studies (reserve funding)	(458)
Resources		
Savings	*External contract savings across Resources Directorate (Better Buckinghamshire Programme)	(160)
Service Improvement		
Savings	*Additional Efficiency savings within Service Improvement (Better Buckinghamshire programme)	(150)

2023-24 Overall Proposed Revenue Budget

		2023-24			Change Type	Total £000
		Income £000	Expense £000	Net Budget		
Business Operations	Business Development	(100)	408	308	Grant funded expenditure	(7,569)
	Business Operations	(269)	6,916	6,647	Grant Income	7,694
	Customer Services	-	3,929	3,929	Growth	2,538
Business Operations Total		(369)	11,253	10,884	Income	(2,023)
Digital	Digital		566	566	Inflation	2,479
Digital Total			566	566	Savings	(1,296)
Finance	Finance	(3,273)	12,247	8,974	Special Items	1,336
	Revenues & Benefits	(78,017)	78,259	243	Reserves	(458)
Finance Total		(81,290)	90,507	9,217	Grand Total	2,701
Human Resources & Organisational Development	Human Resources & Organisational Development	(481)	5,086	4,605		
Human Resources & Organisational Development Total		(481)	5,086	4,605		
ICT	ICT	(101)	13,686	13,585		
ICT Total		(101)	13,686	13,585		
Legal & Democratic Services	Business Assurance and Insurance Services	(128)	3,487	3,359		
	Democratic Services & Elected Members	(27)	5,149	5,122		
	Information Management	(5)	1,193	1,188		
	Legal Services	(1,308)	8,260	6,952		
Legal & Democratic Services Total		(1,468)	18,089	16,621		
Property & Assets	Commercial Property & Agricultural Estate	(13,050)	857	(12,193)		
	Property Maintenance & Strategic Asset Management	(12,660)	22,450	9,790		
Property & Assets Total		(25,710)	23,306	(2,403)		
Resources	Management and Business Management	35	334	369		
Resources Total		35	334	369		
Service Improvement	Service Improvement	(61)	3,374	3,313		
Service Improvement Total		(61)	3,374	3,313		
Grand Total		(109,443)	166,201	56,758		

Portfolio Challenges, Risks & Opportunities

Commercial Property & Agricultural Estate

- Challenge and risk from Economic uncertainty in delivery of new rental income opportunities and capital receipts.

Property Maintenance & Strategic Asset Management

- Challenge to deliver property rationalisation savings in current MTFP and expected savings in total of £2.4m by 2025/26

Finance, HR/OD, ICT, Business Operations

- Challenge to deliver on BAU while supporting the rest of the Council through transformation and change and undergoing own service transformation.

Top 5 Contracts

Supplier Name	Details	Start Date	End Date	Service Area	Annual Contract Value £000's
Pertemps Recruitment Partnership Ltd	Temporary Staffing contract (Pertemps) Pay as Used - costs charged out to Directorates	01/09/2022	31/08/2025	HR/OD	22,000
Bytes Software Services	Microsoft Licensing and Cloud Services	01/12/2019	30/11/2023	ICT	1,500
Busy Bee Cleaning Services Ltd	Cleaning contract covering the majority of offices & Corporate Estate (inc. Adult Learning centres	01/08/2020	31/07/2023	Property & Assets	770
CFH Docmail LTD	Electoral Print Contract	01/05/2022	30/04/2025	Democratic Services	459
IDOX Software Ltd	Provision of Data and Applications Solutions	01/04/2022	31/03/2027	ICT	309

Fees and Charges

Each year, as part of the MTFP, we review the schedule of Fees and Charges.

The majority of Fees & Charges are amended by an inflationary increase – For 2023/24 this will be a 6% increase on 2022/23 rates for traded services with schools.

Services include:

- **Business Services to Academies, Schools and Other:**
 - HR &OD e.g. payroll, recruitment, Employees Relations Advice, Safeguarding/DBS, Occupational Health.
 - ICT – Networking, Technical Support, Additional Remote Backup Service.
 - Schools Information Management System (SIMS).
 - Schools Admin and Bursar services.

- Schools Health & Safety and Schools Property Maintenance.

- Local Land Charges - fees revised to reflect market demands

- Business Insight for Schools (e.g. Comparative data on Exam results, bench marking, demographic/deprivation data, Free Schools meals eligibility checker).

- Electoral Register statutory set fee, no change (e.g. copies of registers).

2022-23 Capital Budget and Forecast Outturn Q2

Service / Project	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
Delivery of Technology Strategy	296	819	66	884	528	17	545	-340
Social Care Systems	0	200	0	200	145	0	145	-55
Buckinghamshire Network	415	2,026	0	2,026	1,749	0	1,749	-276
Device Refresh & Windows 10	147	57	0	57	174	0	174	117
ICT Total	858	3,101	66	3,167	2,596	17	2,613	-554
Agricultural Estate	79	500	0	500	420	0	420	-80
Conversion Old Wycombe Library	55	308	0	308	100	0	100	-208
Corporate Investment Portfolio	63	1,399	500	1,899	310	200	510	-1,389
Enhancement of Strategic Assets	3	200	0	200	100	0	100	-100
Property Management Programme	-34	1,201	0	1,201	1,201	0	1,201	0
Rowley Farm	8	0	25	25	0	25	25	0
Property & Assets Total	173	3,609	525	4,134	2,131	225	2,356	-1,778
Grand Total	1,032	6,710	591	7,301	4,727	242	4,969	-2,332

Accessible Housing and Resources Capital: Budget £7.3m, Var £2.3m

a) ICT Capital programme main variances are as follows:

- £0.34m Delivery of Technology Strategy, mainly £0.24m underspend on EDRMS, based on the decision to continue with existing solution OTCS following discovery work, with unspent budget profiled to 2025/26 when options for replacement technologies will be reconsidered; slippage on Datacentres £0.05m and on unreleased budgets £0.05m.
- Buckinghamshire Network project £0.28m of budget to be transferred to fund revenue reserve for software licences.

b) Property & Assets capital projects are forecasting a variance of £1.8m, of which £1.5m is from slippage on the following projects: construction project delays on roof works at Vale Retail Park (due to tender delays), the Rowley Farm barn refurbishment (due to planning delays), a delay in the agreement on the specification for Orchard House project (still in negotiation), and slippage on how much maintenance is required on Friar's Square this year (less than previously expected). A further £0.2m is a likely underspend on the final retention amounts due for Old Wycombe Library conversion project; once confirmed in Q3, this underspend can be released back to the Capital Programme.

2023-24 to 2026-27 Proposed Capital Programme

Service Area	Project Group / Project	2023/24 £000's	2024/25 £000's	2025/26 £000's	2026/27 £000's	MTFP Total £000's
ICT	ICT					
	Delivery of Technology Strategy - rolling programme	250	250	250	250	1,000
	Laptops & Windows 10 refresh	1,000	3,000			4,000
	Mobile Phone Refresh	250	300	100	100	750
	Members ICT Refresh	-	-	150	-	150
ICT Total		1,500	3,550	500	350	5,900
Property & Assets	Property & Assets					
	Agricultural Estate - maintenance budget e.g. farm buildings	225	-	-	-	225
	Corporate Investment Portfolio - properties across the County to generate income/preserve the value of the asset.	6,814	1,449	-	-	8,263
	Council Own Sites - Housing Development - subject to future review	1,000	1,000	1,000	-	3,000
	Enhancement of Strategic Assets (legal and other costs)	386	-	-	-	386
	Improvements to Capswood 1 & 2	215	-	-	-	215
	Property Management Programme - rolling annual maintenance programme for main offices and corporate landlord	1,125	1,075	1,225	-	3,425
	Rowley Farm - costs of works to secure Rowley Farm property (listed) and prevent further deterioration.	548	-	-	-	548
Property & Assets Total		10,313	3,524	2,225	-	16,061
Total Expenditure		11,813	7,074	2,725	350	21,961



Questions



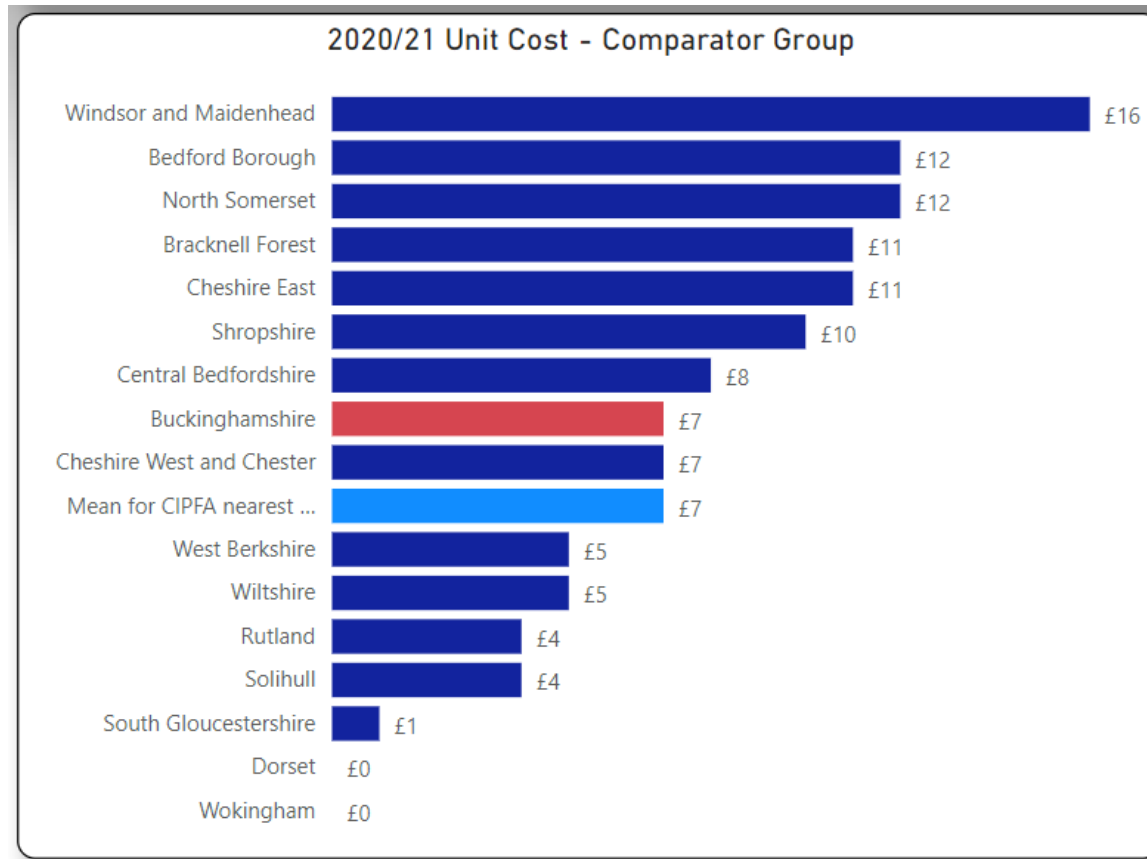
Appendix 1 Benchmarking Revenue and Benefits

Council Tax and Housing Benefits: Total expenditure on council tax benefits and housing benefits administration per head

Calculation Methodology

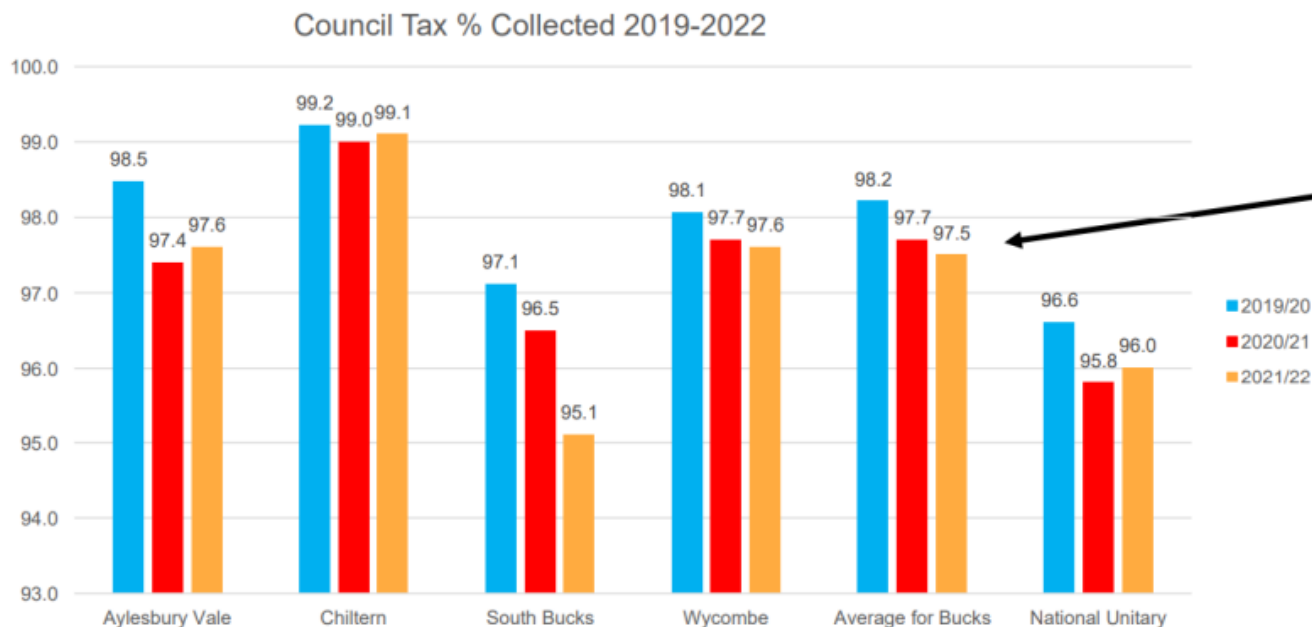
The value was calculated by the Local Government Association, the calculation performed is: Total expenditure - Housing benefits administration (R04) and Council tax support administration (R06)/ Total resident population * 1000

Buckinghamshire CIPFA nearest neighbours



Appendix 2 Council Tax Collection Comparison

- Buckinghamshire consistently has performed above the national unitary average
- COVID has reduced collection rates nationally between 1% and 4% since 2020
- Buckinghamshire is also above the national Shire District average
- However, collection rates remain well below the rates in 2019/20 both nationally (0.9%) and in Buckinghamshire (0.7%)



Shire District in 21/22 nationally was 97.2%