

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

2024/25 BUDGET BOOK



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1. Introduction to the 2024/25 Budget Book

The 2024/25 budget for Reading Borough Council was agreed by Council on 27th February 2024 and forms part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which currently goes up to 2026/27.

Reading is a unitary authority and accounts for its expenditure in three categories:

- **General Fund Revenue Account** – this includes day to day spending on all services. It is funded by the council taxpayer, government grant and other sources of income;
- **Housing Revenue Account** – this is a ring-fenced budget for expenditure on the Council's Housing stock and is funded by council tenants' rents.
- **Capital** – this is the expenditure incurred to make improvements to the Council's assets or for the purchase or creation of new assets. The Council has two capital programmes, one for the General Fund and one for the Housing Revenue Account. Capital is funded by grants, contributions from developers, capital receipts (the sale of capital assets), revenue and prudential borrowing.

For 2024/25, the Council has a net revenue budget of £167.886m, a General Fund Capital Programme of £190.519m, Housing Revenue Account budget of £54.106m and HRA Capital Programme of £142.612m.

The General Fund Revenue budget comprises expenditure on Council Services: Communities & Adult Social Care, Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services; Resources and Chief Executive Services, in addition to Corporate Budgets and Children's Services, which are provided by Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC), a Local Authority Company wholly owned by Reading Borough Council.

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

The underpinning rationale of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is to deliver a balanced and affordable budget that ensures the Council's finances are sustainable over the medium and longer term and not reliant on the unsustainable use of one-off reserves or funding. The Strategy is informed by the Council's Vision: "to help Reading realise its potential and to ensure that everyone who lives and works here can share the benefits of its success", as well as its Corporate Plan themes:

- Healthy Environment
- Thriving Communities
- Inclusive Economy

The MTFS 2024/25 to 2026/27 provides for a balanced budget in 2024/25 with an overall £3.084m assumed draw on reserves. Further savings to close the budget gap in 2025/26 and beyond will need to be identified as part of the future budget setting process.

This will require significant service transformation to drive increased efficiency savings and income generation in order that service reductions can be minimised. In particular it assumes:

- a) Council Tax increases of 2.99% plus an Adult Social Care precept of 2.0% for each year 2024/25-2026/27;
- b) Delivery of £8.465m of efficiencies and increased income across the period;
- c) A net draw from earmarked reserves totalling £3.084m in 2024/25;

- d) A housing rent increase for 2024/25 of 7.7% in line with approved government policy of CPI + 1%;
- e) General Fund capital investment of £190.519m and Housing Revenue Account capital investment of £142.612m over the 5 year period 2024/25 to 2028/29;
- f) £1.587m of transformation funding for 2024/25 to support delivery of efficiency savings assumed within the MTFS, taking the total transformation funding to £21.729m across the whole life of the Delivery Fund.

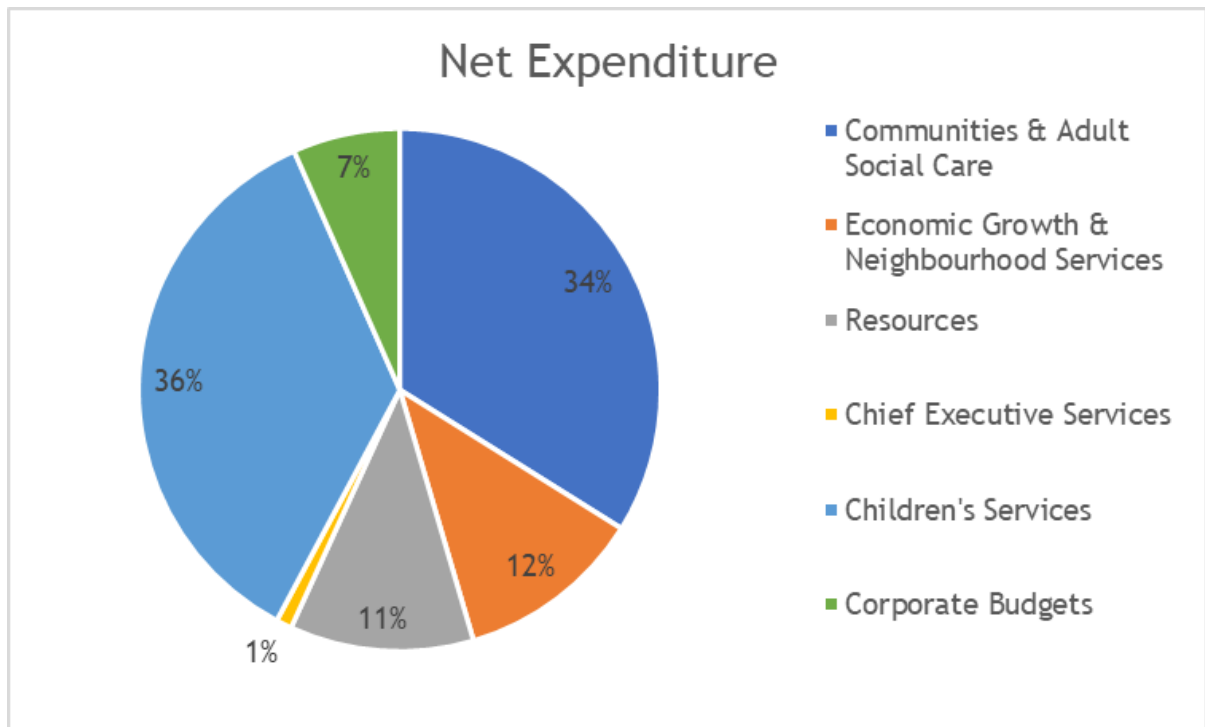
2. General Fund Revenue Budget

This budget includes all day to day expenditure on services except for those funded by the Housing Revenue Account. The Medium Term Financial Plan set by the Council is summarised in the table below:

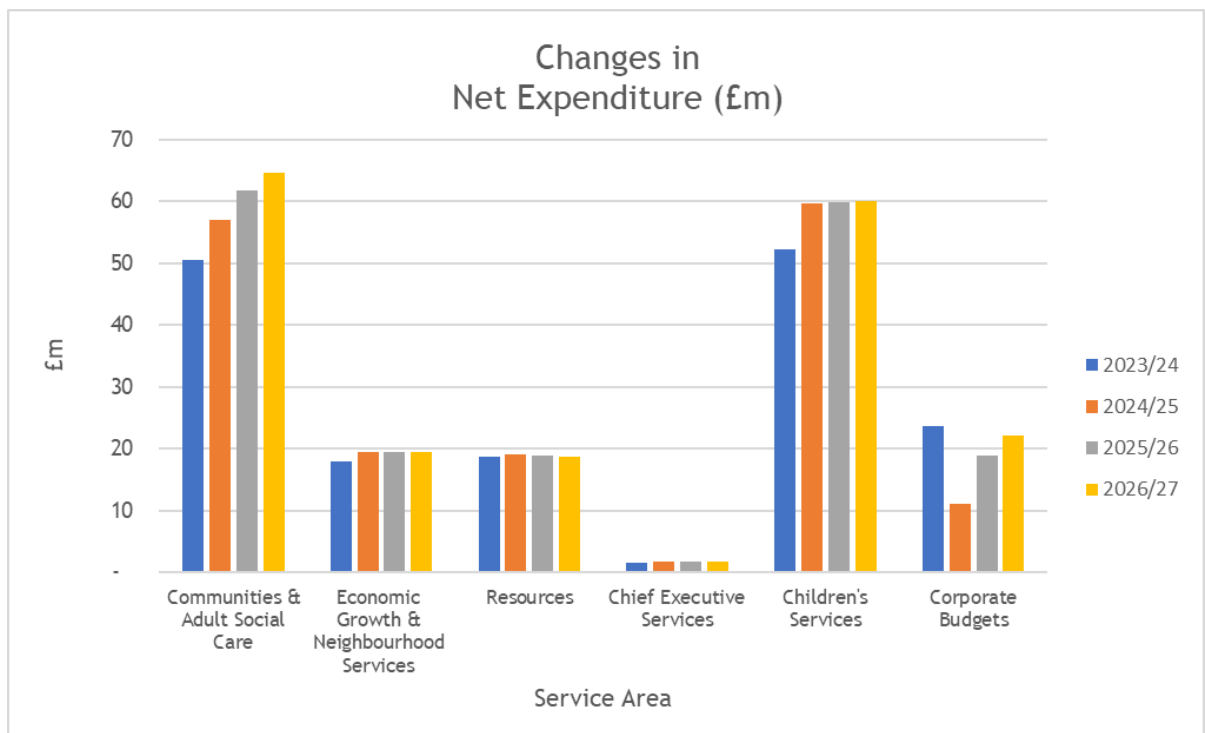
Summary of General Fund Budget 2024/25 to 2026/27

Directorate/Service	Approved Budget 2024/25 £'000	Proposed Budget 2025/26 £'000	Proposed Budget 2026/27 £'000
Communities & Adult Social Care	56,887	61,765	64,602
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	19,404	19,470	19,381
Resources	19,135	18,855	18,751
Chief Executive Services	1,631	1,631	1,630
Children's Services	59,682	59,881	59,961
Capital Financing Costs	18,426	19,081	20,113
Movement to / (from) Reserves	(3,084)	(220)	(220)
Other Corporate Budgets	(4,195)	(28)	2,213
Net Budget Requirement	167,886	180,435	186,431
Financed By:			
Council Tax Income	(118,884)	(126,384)	(134,018)
Business Rates Local Share	(32,045)	(43,542)	(44,239)
Section 31 Grant (Business Rates Retention Scheme)	(16,031)	0	0
New Homes Bonus	(1,255)	(638)	(638)
Revenue Support Grant	(2,652)	(2,652)	(2,652)
Other Government Grants	(1,193)	(1,193)	(1,193)
One-off Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit	4,174	0	0
Total Funding	(167,886)	(174,409)	(182,740)
Over/(Under) Budget	0	6,026	3,691

The Chart below set out the relative proportions of the net budget spent in each of the key service areas for 2024/25.



The following chart shows how the net expenditure budget varies over the period of the MTFs. The first two years of the chart are in line with the Member approved budget. The latter two years are best estimates contained within the MTFs which will be reviewed in future years and may change.



Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account is a ring-fenced account which deals with all day to day expenditure associated with the housing stock in the ownership of the Council. The main income is housing rents, and all expenditure related to council housing (such as dealing with lettings; collecting rent; managing, maintaining and repairing the stock) is charged to this account. The HRA budget must avoid a deficit on reserves over the 30-year HRA Business Plan.

The Council retains its own Housing stock of circa 7,000 properties (1,300 managed under a PFI contract), including over 300 sheltered housing units. The Service comprises housing allocations; housing management services to tenants; housing support services; and income recovery and debt advisory services working in partnership to offer personal budgeting support, assistance into employment and access to other services as required. The Service additionally provides housing management and income recovery services to the Adult Social Care residential property portfolio and to properties held by Homes for Reading, a wholly owned company of the Council. A year round Greener, Warmer, Safer Homes scheme under the 'Winterwatch' brand tackling fuel poverty and home safety in vulnerable households is funded through the HRA and public health.

For 2024/25 the Housing Revenue Account budget is £54.106m.

Summary of Housing Revenue Account Budget 2024/25 to 2026/27

	Approved Budget 2024/25 £'000	Proposed Budget 2025/26 £'000	Proposed Budget 2026/27 £'000
Income	(51,524)	(52,443)	(54,205)
Expenditure	54,106	55,293	57,008
Net (Surplus) / Deficit	2,582	2,850	2,803
Opening HRA Balances	(32,395)	(29,813)	(26,963)
Net (Surplus) / Deficit	2,582	2,850	2,803
Closing HRA Balances	(29,813)	(26,963)	(24,160)

Capital Programme

Capital is money the Council spends on improving its assets. This can include purchasing new assets, such as land and buildings, but also refurbishing and improving existing ones. Capital expenditure is funded through capital income sources such as grants, borrowing, capital receipts and S106 or Community Infrastructure Levy money.

The Capital Programme is the authority's plan of capital expenditure and investment for future years, including details on the funding of the schemes. The Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2028/29 was approved as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy in February 2024.

Summary of Capital Expenditure and Financing 2024/25 to 2028/29

	2024/25 Estimate £'000s	2025/26 Estimate £'000s	2026/27 Estimate £'000s	2027/28 Estimate £'000s	2028/29 Estimate £'000s
General Fund	95,232	52,644	22,861	9,966	9,816
Housing Revenue Account	47,760	54,370	18,088	11,894	10,500
Total	142,992	107,014	40,949	21,860	20,316
Funded By:					
Capital Receipts	(2,176)	(1,608)	(376)	0	0
Capital Grants & Other Contributions	(73,157)	(43,274)	(17,833)	(5,673)	(5,673)
Capital Reserves (HRA)	(18,182)	(16,037)	(16,187)	(11,894)	(10,500)
Revenue Contributions	(1,258)	0	0	0	0
Net Borrowing Requirement	48,219	46,095	6,553	4,293	4,143

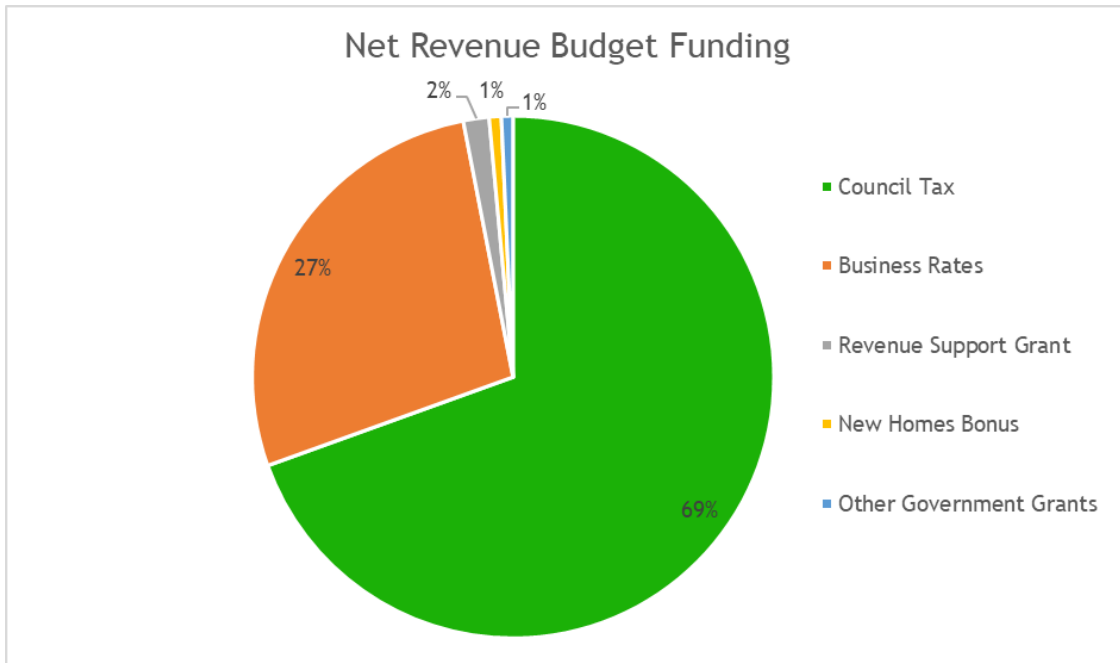
Highlights of the Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2028/29 are:

- £15.305m on remodelling provision at the Hexagon Theatre following a successful bid to the Levelling Up Fund;
- £11.976m to relocate the Reading Library to the Civic Offices following a successful bid to the Levelling Up Fund;
- £13.610m on a Bus Service Improvement Programme;
- £9.207m on the re-provisioning of social care facilities;
- £20.085m Investment in the Council's local highways infrastructure (including Bridges) addressing feedback from the residents' survey;
- £14.000m on South Reading MRT (Phases 5&6);
- £3.172m on schemes to help reduce Reading's carbon footprint.

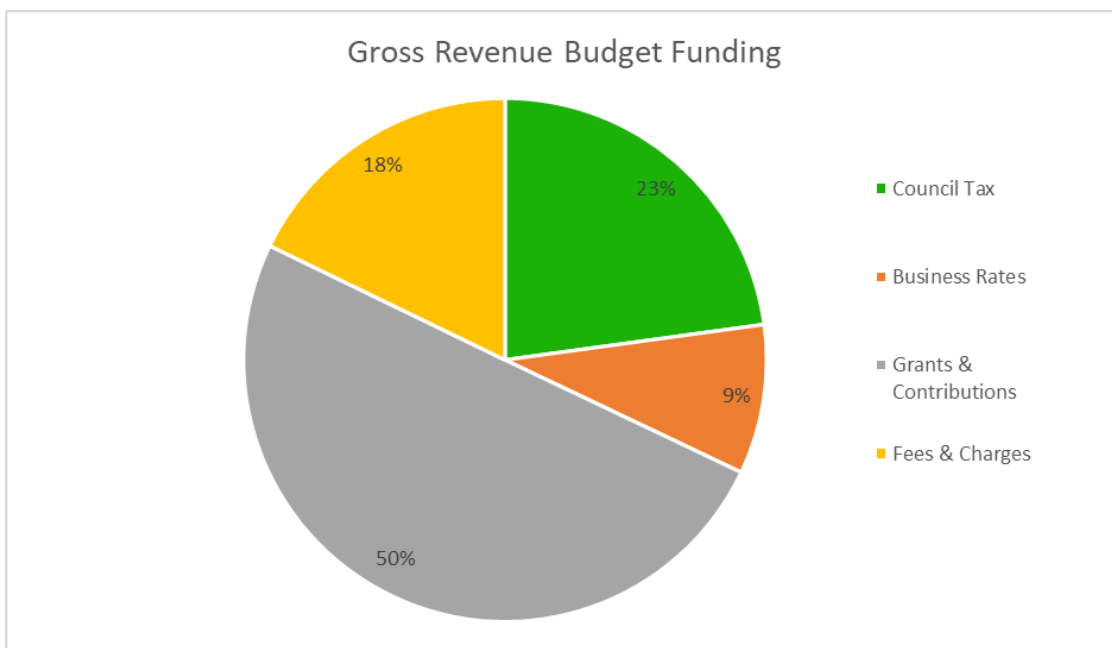
2.1. How the General Fund Budget is Funded

The General Fund Revenue budget is funded through government grants, a proportion of the Business Rates income that is collected, charges to users of services and Council Tax.

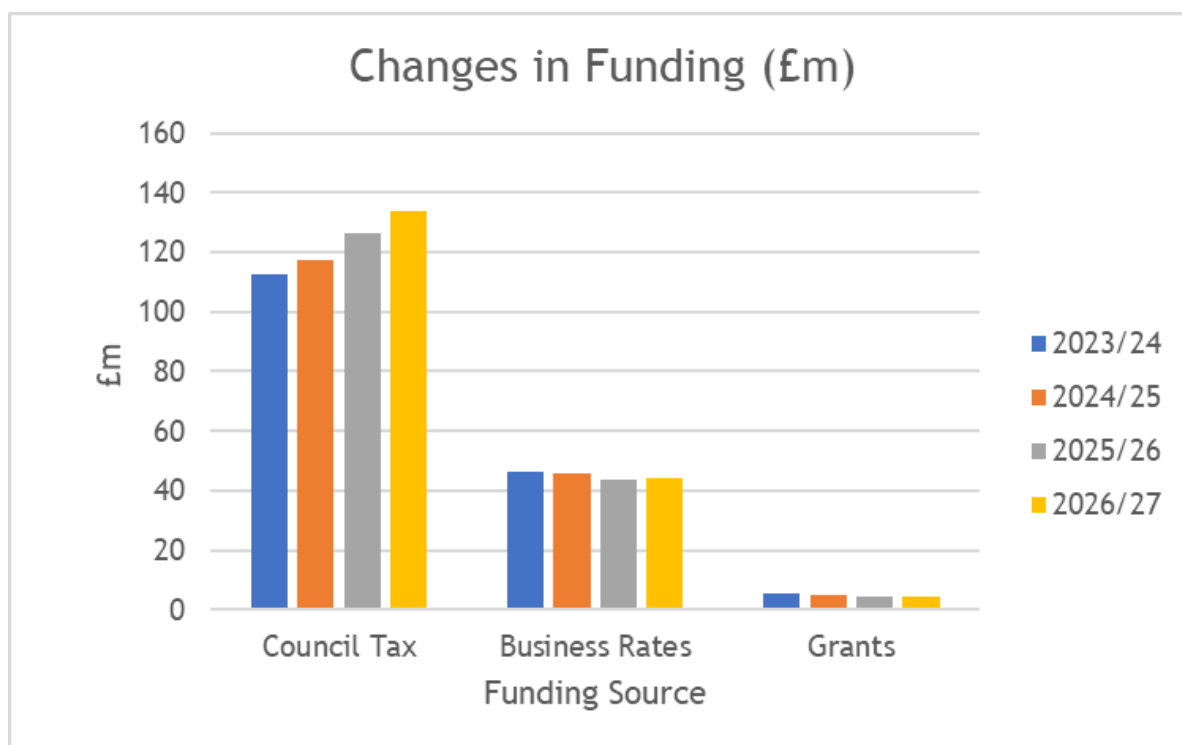
The chart below shows the net funding for the General Fund revenue budget of £167.886m, as set out in table on page 4.



In addition to the core funding above, there are other service specific grants and fees and charges income which fund the gross budget. The chart below shows how the gross General Fund Revenue Budget for Reading Borough Council for 2024/25 is financed:



The chart below shows how the funding for the Net General Fund Budget is forecast to vary over the period of the MTFS. The first two years of the chart are in line with the Member approved budget, which in turn is taken from central Government financial settlement decisions. The latter two years are best estimates contained within the MTFS which will be reviewed in future years and may change.



The 2023/24 and 2024/25 figures for both Council Tax and Business rates include surpluses and deficits on the Collection Fund brought forward from prior years.

Council Tax

The Council approved a 4.99% increase in Council Tax for 2024/25, including a 2.0% social care precept. The Council Tax base has been calculated as 58,944.73 Band D equivalent properties.

Reading's share of Council Tax for a Band D property is £2,016.88 compared to the 2023/24 figure of £1,921.02; an increase of £95.86 or approximately £1.84 per week. The largest number of properties in any one band is for a Band C property which makes up 40% of the total properties in the Borough.

Reading also collects Council Tax precepts on behalf of Thames Valley Police and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. The total amount chargeable by band is set out in the table below:

Council Tax Band	Proportion of Properties	Reading Borough Council £	Thames Valley Police £	Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service £	Total £
A	10.2%	1,344.59	179.52	54.21	1,578.32
B	19.4%	1,568.68	209.44	63.24	1,841.36
C	40.2%	1,792.78	239.36	72.28	2,104.42
D	15.5%	2,016.88	269.28	81.31	2,367.47
E	7.7%	2,465.08	329.12	99.38	2,893.58
F	4.4%	2,913.27	388.96	117.45	3,419.68
F	2.5%	3,361.47	448.80	135.52	3,945.79
H	0.1%	4,033.76	538.56	162.62	4,734.94

Business Rates (Non-domestic rates)

Business Rates in England, or non-domestic rates, are a property tax on the occupation of non-domestic property. Business rates are charged on most non-domestic properties, such as:

- Shops
- Offices
- Pubs
- Warehouses
- Factories
- Holiday rental homes or guest houses

The Government are currently reviewing the way the Business Rates system works across the country.

Grants

Most grants are made to fund a specific project or are ring-fenced, where the money can only be used for the purposes specified in the grant conditions and grants usually require some level of compliance and reporting. There are corporate grants such as New Homes Bonus which is to incentivise housing growth in the local area. There are also service specific grants such as the Public Health Grant which must be spent on improving the health of individuals living or working in the Borough.

Fees and Charges

The Council reviewed and agreed the 2024/25 Fees and Charges schedule as part of the Budget Report in February 2024. The full list can be found on the Council's website; Appendix 9, 2024/25 Budget Report.

[Fees and Charges Schedule](#)

2.2. Communities and Adult Social Care

Service Summary

The Communities & Adult Social Care Directorate encompasses a number of key services focused on keeping Reading Resident's as independent as possible in a place they call home. The service works with System Partners including Health, Police and Voluntary & Community Sector to deliver this aim.

The Department is a Social Landlord for 7000 properties and has an ambitious New Build Programme spanning the next 3 years. In Adult Social Care currently more than 1,650 people are supported on a weekly basis.

The Department will be subject to two new inspection regimes in 2024 – Social Housing Regulations & Care Quality Commission Assurance. The service will need to prioritise the preparation for these and focus appropriate resource to ensure inspection readiness.

The department continues to note the increased levels of acuity and complexity of people approaching our demand led services. This is having an impact on the level of staff time, the level of service required and higher cost of packages where applicable. This is being monitored across all system partners to ensure services are in place to meet needs.

Executive Director: Melissa Wise
Email: melissa.wise@reading.gov.uk

Directorate of Communities & Adult Social Care

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Commissioning, Transformation & Performance	57.0	2,690
Adult Services Operations	97.5	46,110
Safeguarding, Quality & Practice	137.4	3,567
Community & Adult Social Care Management	19.3	1,650
Housing & Communities	102.9	2,870
Public Health	15.6	0
Net Budget	429.6	56,887

Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	20,429
Premises-Related Costs	10,064
Transport-Related Costs	79
Supplies and Services	11,245
Contract Costs	58,839
Transfer Payments	3,972
Total Expenditure	104,628
Sales, Fees and Charges	(8,802)
Grants	(18,739)
Other Income	(20,200)
Total Income	(47,741)
Net Budget	56,887

Commissioning, Transformation and Performance

The Adult Social Care Commissioning team are responsible for ensuring the Council arranges care provision that meets the needs of service users, is of a high-quality standard and ensures value for money. This involves working with providers to maintain and further develop a sustainable marketplace for service users to access care packages which could include care at home, care in accommodation-based services e.g. residential care and day opportunities.

The team work throughout the year on key procurements and contract monitoring to ensure services are in place. This ensures the Council receives value for money, the rates Providers are paid are sustainable and we work in partnership to develop innovative and creative solutions for our service users. The team undertakes robust Contract Monitoring both on a proactive and reactive basis thus ensuring Providers are provided with appropriate and proportionate support to avoid Provider failure and any actions set out in a clear framework. The team also ensure that all contracts in place across Adult Social Care represent value for money for the Council and delivers a good service to its users.

Key work in this financial year will focus on setting out a new Market position Statement outlining our commissioning priorities. In addition, work in relation to the social care reform, in particular calculating a fair cost of care for Residential & Nursing and Home Care services will be critical.

Assistant Director (Interim): Christopher Greenway
Email: christopher.greenway@reading.gov.uk

Commissioning, Transformation & Performance

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Commissioning, Transformation & Performance	57.0	2,690

Net Budget	57.0	2,690
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	2,768
Premises-Related Costs	1
Transport-Related Costs	3
Supplies and Services	2,108
Contract Costs	230
Transfer Payments	(833)
Total Expenditure	4,277
Sales, Fees and Charges	(172)
Grants	(116)
Other Income	(1,299)
Total Income	(1,587)
Net Budget	2,690

Adult Services Operations

Adult Social Care provides adopts a strengths-based approach for working with people and offers information advice and support for all adults in Reading to ensure that they are able to live independent, healthy and fulfilling lives in their communities. This includes older people, people with physical disabilities or learning disabilities and those with mental health needs. We also support people caring for someone with their own care and support needs.

These people have been assessed and have eligible support needs and require a formal care package (residential, nursing, supported living or homecare). There are a range of other service such as equipment, adaptations and technology in the home which we divert people too that can help people to remain independent. Individuals that receive a service are encouraged to take up a Direct Payment which ensures that the services that they need are personalised and the person remains in control of their support.

There are a number of teams involved with the delivery of Adult Social Care across the service area Operations. Each work closely together to ensure a seamless experience for an individual who may find themselves requiring support.

Operations

Information and Advice services are provided through initial contact into the Adult Social Care Front door called the Advice and Wellbeing Hub. This team of Social Workers, Care Co-ordinators and Occupational Therapists will look to find a resolution for the presenting need. The service is underpinned by the Conversation Counts model focusing on strength based with a focus on abilities, opportunities and signposting to universal services.

The hospital team deals with all adults who may require Care Act 2014 eligible support to enable a safe discharge or support immediately after discharge from the acute and community hospitals.

If people do require an ongoing service, then they will have a more intensive assessment and support planning experience via the appropriate long term team which could be the Learning Disability and Autism Team (which support vulnerable adults and transition of young people from Children's Social Care to Adult Social Care), the Mental Health and Forensic Team or the Physical Disability and Older People Team. These teams will also work within a strength based approach way but due to the complexity of issues the individual or family may present with, workers in these teams may need to spend more time working with these people in order to reach a stable conclusion.

Assistant Director: Sunny Mehmi
Email: sunny.mehmi@reading.gov.uk

Adult Services Operations

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Mental Health Support	20.0	4,068
Learning Disability Support	0.0	23,951
Group Homes & Properties	0.0	(217)
Adult Social Care Activities	77.5	(2,169)
Memory and Cognition Support	0.0	2,940
Physical Support	0.0	17,537
Net Budget	97.5	46,110

Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	4,837
Premises-Related Costs	117
Transport-Related Costs	21
Supplies and Services	1,528
Contract Costs	58,491
Transfer Payments	(555)
Total Expenditure	64,439
Sales, Fees and Charges	(8,216)
Grants	(5,355)
Other Income	(4,758)
Total Income	(18,329)
Net Budget	46,110

Safeguarding, Quality and Practice

The work of the team includes Accredited Mental Health Practitioners (AMPH) and the Deprivation of Liberty team. These undertake work on behalf of the Council as determined by the statutory legislative requirements. In addition, the safeguarding work and social care practice across the service is quality assured through the work of the Principal Social Worker and Principal Occupational Therapist and through assurance processes such as Serious Concerns investigations, Safeguarding Adult Reviews and investigations and other case reviews relating to abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults in care settings and living in the community.

Internal Provider Services

This service covers a range of Provider services, these include Charles Core Court, Strathy Close, Maples Day Services, Focus House and the Shared Lives Services. All these services are supporting service users on a day to day basis and aim to work to deliver excellent services.

ASC also offers short-term inputs such as Community Reablement, which supports residents at home to enable to build the skills to living independently or reduce the support they require, carers assessments or one off pieces of equipment are also offered through this area of service.

Assistant Director (Interim): Susan Ross
Email: susan.ross@reading.gov.uk

Safeguarding, Quality & Practice

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
ASC Safeguarding	137.4	3,567

Net Budget	137.4	3,567
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	5,537
Premises-Related Costs	195
Transport-Related Costs	43
Supplies and Services	479
Contract Costs	11
Transfer Payments	(39)
Total Expenditure	6,226
Sales, Fees and Charges	(103)
Grants	0
Other Income	(2,556)
Total Income	(2,659)
Net Budget	3,567

Community and Adult Social Care Management

The Senior Management Team's costs as well as the Business Support function are funded from this budget. The Transformation Team is funded from within the Adult Social Care budget reflecting our ongoing commitment to continuously develop and adapt the service to ensure it is sustainable and fit for the future. This team currently support the delivery of the Directorates savings and efficiency programme. The Performance Team provide the business intelligence to support the smooth running of the Directorate. The Team complete statutory returns which in turn enables benchmarking across other authorities to provide an accurate picture of overall performance.

Executive Director: Melissa Wise

Email: melissa.wise@reading.gov.uk

Community & Adult Social Care Management

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Community & Adult Social Care Management	19.3	1,650

Net Budget	19.3	1,650
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	1,058
Premises-Related Costs	0
Transport-Related Costs	0
Supplies and Services	981
Contract Costs	0
Transfer Payments	(173)
Total Expenditure	1,866
Sales, Fees and Charges	0
Grants	0
Other Income	(216)
Total Income	(216)
Net Budget	1,650

Housing and Communities

The Housing and Communities Service is focused on the provision of good quality sustainable affordable homes in attractive, safe, and connected neighbourhoods.

The service has a key role as the largest social landlord in Reading (The Housing Revenue Account) and provides a range of services for tenants including rent collection, debt advice, support services as well as planned and cyclical repairs to Council homes many of which include low carbon improvements.

The service also has a key focus on thriving communities through the prevention of homelessness, breaking the cycle of rough sleeping, supporting vulnerable people to access support and maintain their independence, reducing inequality, building resilience in communities tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping communities safe. Much of this is achieved by working with partners at a local level.

Improving access to good quality accommodation in the private sector is an important part of the work of the service as well as working with landlords to improve standards.

Building new affordable sustainable homes is a priority for the service as well as maximising the supply of affordable housing in the town from other housing providers to meet housing need.

Assistant Director (Interim): John Knight

Email: john.knight@reading.gov.uk

Housing & Communities

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Housing General Fund	42.1	2,638
Community Safety & Enablement	23.8	355
Direct Labour Organisation	37.0	(123)

Net Budget	102.9	2,870
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	5,377
Premises-Related Costs	9,752
Transport-Related Costs	11
Supplies and Services	3,876
Contract Costs	2
Transfer Payments	(2,220)
Total Expenditure	16,798
Sales, Fees and Charges	(310)
Grants	(2,247)
Other Income	(11,371)
Total Income	(13,928)
Net Budget	2,870

Public Health

The public health grant is a ring-fenced grant to be used to improve health and wellbeing in the borough and reduce health inequalities. It is used to fund services such as Health Visiting and the School Nursing service, Sexual Health services, Drugs and Alcohol Treatments services, and services to promote healthy lifestyles such as smoking cessation and weight management. The grant also supports public health activities undertaken across the Council where there are clear links to health- for example local Leisure services.

Consultant in Public Health: Martin White

Email: martin.white@reading.gov.uk

Public Health

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Public Health	15.6	0

Net Budget	15.6	0
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	852
Premises-Related Costs	0
Transport-Related Costs	1
Supplies and Services	2,272
Contract Costs	105
Transfer Payments	7,791
Total Expenditure	11,021
Sales, Fees and Charges	0
Grants	(11,021)
Other Income	0
Total Income	(11,021)
Net Budget	0

2.3. Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

The Directorate plays a fundamental role in shaping the sustainable development of Reading's economy, neighbourhoods and environment through its place-making role. In doing so it directs the bulk of the Council's capital investment programme and deploys the full range of the Council's assets to meet the needs of Reading's diverse communities, whilst working in partnership with other statutory bodies, businesses, developers and the voluntary and community sector to secure positive outcomes for the borough.

The Directorate plays a strategic role in setting Reading's spatial planning, economic, social and environmental policy frameworks, and responding to over-arching challenges like the climate emergency, whilst also delivering high profile front-line services in key community and commercial areas. These include transport, highways and parking; waste reduction, collection and disposal; community safety, housing and homelessness; parks, greenspace and the public realm; libraries, leisure centres and the arts; planning, regulatory and corporate property services.

The services provided by the Directorate contribute directly to the council's vision as set out in the Corporate Plan which is to help Reading realise its potential and to ensure that everyone who lives and works here can share the benefits of its success, through delivering against the three themes - a Healthy Environment, Thriving Communities and Inclusive Economy.

Executive Director (Interim): Emma Gee
Email: emma.gee@reading.gov.uk

Directorate of Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Planning, Transport & Public Protection	161.1	(444)
Culture	153.0	2,914
Environmental & Commercial Services	362.6	18,950
Property & Asset Management	99.1	(3,190)
Management & Sustainability	13.5	1,174
Net Budget	789.2	19,404

Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	35,225
Premises-Related Costs	10,876
Transport-Related Costs	1,908
Supplies and Services	24,278
Contract Costs	8,987
Transfer Payments	(5,221)
Total Expenditure	76,053
Sales, Fees and Charges	(33,720)
Grants	(2,340)
Other Income	(20,589)
Total Income	(56,649)
Net Budget	19,404

Planning, Transport and Public Protection

The purpose of the Development Control (Planning and Building Control) service is to secure sustainable development through the Local Plan which supports the positive management of development through the planning application process. The service also includes specialist areas related to heritage, landscape, trees, biodiversity and enforcement. Building Control seeks to ensure that development is safe, accessible and compliant with Building Regulations.

Strategic Transport is a combination of a number of functions including Transport Planning, Transport Development Control and Concessionary fares.

The parking service is made up of the delivery of Civil Enforcement functions, Off-Street and On-Street Car Parking, Bus Lane Enforcement and Moving Traffic Enforcement. The back-office function supporting the contracted Civil Enforcement service and Residents Parking sits in the Customer Fulfilment function within the Directorate of Resources.

Public Protection delivers a wide range of regulatory functions which includes supporting and regulating businesses in relation to licensing, food safety, fair trading, food standards, product safety and health and safety. The Service regulates private sector housing, including the licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Empty Homes as well as protecting the environment against statutory nuisances, pollution, improve air quality, protect animal welfare and regulate land to prevent rats. Public Protection also delivers the Berkshire wide coroner's Service.

Assistant Director: James Crosbie
Email: james.crosbie@reading.gov.uk

Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Regulatory Services	80.2	2,211
Planning Services	33.7	560
Building Control	9.1	40
Network & Parking Services	25.7	(8,278)
Strategic Transportation	12.3	5,023

Net Budget	161.1	(444)
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	7,689
Premises-Related Costs	1,501
Transport-Related Costs	13
Supplies and Services	6,760
Contract Costs	1,733
Transfer Payments	(19)
Total Expenditure	17,677
Sales, Fees and Charges	(15,928)
Grants	0
Other Income	(2,193)
Total Income	(18,121)
Net Budget	(444)

Culture

The Culture service is focused on facilitating and delivering a sense of place through culture and using culture and learning activities to bring about positive changes to Reading as well as enhancing people's lives through skills training, physical activity, and cultural participation.

Reading's library service operates across the town from a network of 7 local libraries as well as a growing online learning and eBook/magazine offer. Every branch offers free public Wi-Fi and access to PCs, supporting the Council's ambitions for reducing social and digital exclusion. Reading Museum is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation in partnership with the Museum of English Rural Life. The service brings together the cultural placemaking activities including the Abbey Ruins, Abbey Gateway, and public art.

The Active Reading team are focused on increasing levels of physical activity to tackle health inequalities. This includes management of the leisure contract with GLL, who operate the borough's leisure centres, and the educational play and support team, which delivers valuable educational support for children at risk of exclusion from school or with SEND.

Reading Arts and Venues offer a wide-ranging programme of events and performances across at the Hexagon Theatre, South Street Arts Centre, and Reading Town Hall.

New Directions College is the Adult and Community Learning Service for Reading. It engages adults in education and provide the skills and learning they need to progress into, or within, work; or equip them for an apprenticeship, further education or to help build their confidence and/or enhance their wellbeing.

Berkshire Record Office is run by Reading Borough Council on behalf of all the Berkshire unitary councils and provides the County archive service as well as a Modern Records function.

Assistant Director: Donna Pentelow

Email: donna.pentelow@reading.gov.uk

Culture

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Leisure & Recreation	21.1	(10)
Arts & Theatre	27.8	557
Town Hall and Museum	28.8	899
Archives	17.9	299
Libraries	25.3	1,130
New Directions/Adult Education	32.0	39

Net Budget	153.0	2,914
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	6,199
Premises-Related Costs	2,327
Transport-Related Costs	28
Supplies and Services	2,975
Contract Costs	582
Transfer Payments	(550)
Total Expenditure	11,561
Sales, Fees and Charges	(5,658)
Grants	(1,275)
Other Income	(1,714)
Total Income	(8,647)
Net Budget	2,914

Environmental and Commercial Services

Highways Maintenance & Traffic Services deliver a range of statutory services on the public highway that includes highway maintenance including potholes repairs, street furniture, drainage, road marking, street lighting, bridge maintenance and road & footway resurfacing programmes, in accordance with the Highway Infrastructure: Code of Practice. Also, the network management including traffic regulation orders, road safety, traffic signals, CCTV and regulation of all activities on the public highway. The service also carries out extensive commercial works including small highway road improvements, car parks, vehicle crossings and other schemes for a range of Council and private clients.

Neighbourhood Service covers a broad range of statutory, discretionary and commercial services including Streetscene (Parks & Open Spaces & Cleansing) Waste Operations, Fleet Management and the Neighbourhood Support teams. The services provided include household and commercial waste and recycling collections, bin deliveries, and clinical waste collections, environmental enforcement. Also, highway grass cutting and tree management, as well as sports field, allotments, mooring and children's playground management. The Parks and Open Spaces team manage all parks and open spaces in the Borough including design and installation of environmental improvements and tree planting. The service also provides a year-round Cleansing Service including road sweeping, litter removal, fly-tipping and graffiti removal. Also supports and helps progress the Council's Neighbourhood agenda by promoting schemes such as RAYS (Reading Adopt Your Street) and collaborating with colleagues in the Anti-social Behaviour and Neighbourhood Initiatives team. The Fleet Management team oversee the Council's vehicle fleet ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation and operating a safe, efficient and green fleet.

The Waste Disposal Service is a joint partnership Private Finance Initiative contract which commenced in 2006 with an end date of 2031. The Partnership is with Bracknell Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council.

Assistant Director: Chris Wheeler
Email: chris.wheeler@reading.gov.uk

Environmental & Commercial Services

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Housing Repairs and Maintenance	92.9	(567)
Streetscene	113.4	3,745
Highways, Drainage and Network Management	60.6	2,316
Fleet Management	2.8	1,521
Waste Collection	88.9	2,210
RE3 Waste Disposal	4.0	9,725
Net Budget	362.6	18,950

Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	15,732
Premises-Related Costs	2,934
Transport-Related Costs	1,304
Supplies and Services	13,234
Contract Costs	4,986
Transfer Payments	(1,692)
Total Expenditure	36,498
Sales, Fees and Charges	(4,052)
Grants	(1,065)
Other Income	(12,431)
Total Income	(17,548)
Net Budget	18,950

Property and Asset Management

The service seeks to ensure that our buildings are safe, suitable and fit for purpose. That the Council's property holdings are appropriate, represent value for money and, where disposed of, generate the best value (capital receipt). The service includes Building Cleaning, Security Management, Post & Print Room Services, Lettings of community space, Planned Preventative Maintenance, Reactive Repairs, Statutory Compliance of Buildings as well as general day to day management of RBC operational corporate buildings. It also leads the stock condition survey works, ensuring properties are maintained to a good standard.

The Service seeks to undertake a range of corporate property management functions, commercial and residential property valuations, provide a property management service and manage a range of estate management case work. It plays a key role in delivering financial targets set in the MTFS through disposal of surplus assets. It also seeks to acquire Commercial Investments to help generate income for the council.

The service oversees the delivery of school capital and revenue projects including the delivery of new schools, extensions to existing schools and condition and compliance work. The team act in partnership with the Department for Education where direct delivery is adopted by the Department.

Assistant Director: Charan Dhillon
Email: charan.dhillon@reading.gov.uk

Property & Asset Management

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Assets Management	9.0	(5,959)
Facilities Management	69.5	1,734
Education Property Development	5.6	12
Property Services	15.0	1,023

Net Budget	99.1	(3,190)
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	4,241
Premises-Related Costs	3,801
Transport-Related Costs	561
Supplies and Services	845
Contract Costs	1,687
Transfer Payments	(2,738)
Total Expenditure	8,397
Sales, Fees and Charges	(7,405)
Grants	0
Other Income	(4,182)
Total Income	(11,587)
Net Budget	(3,190)

Management and Sustainability

The Senior Management Team costs and training costs for the whole directorate are funded from this budget, which also includes the Infrastructure, Economy & Capital Projects Service.

The service oversees placemaking in Reading in line with our Corporate Plan priorities. It enables Reading's sustainable economic development through delivery of strategic infrastructure, capital projects and major regeneration schemes to support the Council's economic policy objectives and drive inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

The service identifies, attracts and delivers investment into development proposals from external partners, maximising income generation and resources for capital projects and broader economic regeneration initiatives to deliver inclusive economic growth for Reading.

The service also leads the Council's approach to achieving a net zero, climate-resilient Borough and Council by 2030. The team supports the Reading Climate Change Partnership with delivery of the Reading Climate Emergency and leads on implementation of the Council's corporate Carbon Plan to reduce emissions and energy costs.

Executive Director (Interim): Emma Gee

Email: emma.gee@reading.gov.uk

Management & Sustainability

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
DEGNS Management & Overheads	9.5	1,205
Sustainability	4.0	(31)

Net Budget	13.5	1,174
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	1,364
Premises-Related Costs	314
Transport-Related Costs	2
Supplies and Services	464
Contract Costs	0
Transfer Payments	(223)
Total Expenditure	1,921
Sales, Fees and Charges	(677)
Grants	0
Other Income	(70)
Total Income	(747)
Net Budget	1,174

2.4. Resources

The Resources Directorate is made up of the Council's support and governance services: Policy, Performance and Customer Services; Human Resources and Organisational Development; Procurement & Contracts; Finance; Legal and Democratic Services; and Digital, Technology and Change.

The Directorate provides the infrastructure to facilitate both the delivery of the Council's frontline services and the governance and democratic mandate of the Council. Additionally, the Directorate provides a number of the Council's front-line services, such as the Registrars, Crematorium and Cemetery's function, the Revenues and Benefits service, the Customer Fulfilment Teams and Kennet Day Nursery.

The services provided by the Directorate contribute directly to all three corporate priorities, but with an emphasis on the Foundations element.

Executive Director of Resources: Charlie Stewart
Email: charlie.stewart@reading.gov.uk

Resources

Directorate of Resources

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Policy, Performance & Customer Services	112.0	2,509
Human Resources & Organisational Development	59.6	1,929
Procurement & Contracts	10.4	369
Finance	99.8	4,745
Legal & Democratic Services	138.3	2,930
Digital, Technology & Change	56.2	6,653
Net Budget	476.3	19,135

Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	24,231
Premises-Related Costs	453
Transport-Related Costs	31
Supplies and Services	8,692
Contract Costs	5,643
Transfer Payments	(1,736)
Total Expenditure	37,314
Sales, Fees and Charges	(4,983)
Grants	(612)
Other Income	(12,584)
Total Income	(18,179)
Net Budget	19,135

Policy, Performance and Customer Services

The service delivers customer service excellence through the front-line Customer Fulfilment Teams and the Registration and Bereavement Services. More widely it also supports the organisation via the Policy and Performance area within the department, who provide data intelligence capability and support corporately the development of the Council's Corporate Plan, coordination of the Council's overall performance reporting, as well as policy development and insight related to the Social Inclusion, equalities and accessibility agendas. This area also holds responsibility managing the Council's strategic relationship with the Voluntary and Community Sector. Defined areas within the service are: Customer Fulfilment Team, Registration and Bereavement Services, Data Intelligence and Policy Team, and Executive Support.

Assistant Director: Gavin Handford
Email: gavin.handord@reading.gov.uk

Policy, Performance & Customer Services

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Policy and Performance	16.2	1,207
Directorate Support	11.1	397
Grants	2.0	540
Customer Fulfillment Team	57.6	1,448
Registration	10.1	(71)
Bereavement	15.0	(1,012)
Net Budget	112.0	2,509

Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	4,732
Premises-Related Costs	426
Transport-Related Costs	5
Supplies and Services	823
Contract Costs	32
Transfer Payments	(427)
Total Expenditure	5,591
Sales, Fees and Charges	(2,834)
Grants	0
Other Income	(248)
Total Income	(3,082)
Net Budget	2,509

Human Resources and Organisational Development

Human Resources and Organisational Development provides advice and support to ensure that the Council has the right people, in the right job, with the right skills. It also manages pay for staff. The service includes Resourcing and Human Resource Systems, Payroll, Organisational Development and Learning, Human Resource Advisory Services and Strategic Human Resources and Organisational Development Business Partnering, Health, Safety and Risk Management, Emergency Planning and Kennet Day Nursery.

The service also provides support to all Reading Borough Council maintained schools, and to some academies and voluntary-aided schools within the Borough, and to Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC), through service level agreements.

Assistant Director: Kathryn Cook
Email: kathryn.cook@reading.gov.uk

Resources

Human Resources & Organisational Development

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Emergency Planning	1.4	62
HR & Payroll	31.1	1,086
Organisational Development	5.6	451
Health & Safety	3.9	211
Kennet Day Nursery	17.7	119

Net Budget	59.6	1,929
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	3,137
Premises-Related Costs	20
Transport-Related Costs	2
Supplies and Services	377
Contract Costs	2
Transfer Payments	(467)
Total Expenditure	3,071
Sales, Fees and Charges	(509)
Grants	0
Other Income	(633)
Total Income	(1,142)
Net Budget	1,929

Procurement & Contracts

The Procurement Service advises and supports all Directorates, through a hub-and-spoke model of delivery, on procurement and contract management matters, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and achievement of best overall value to the Council, including delivery of social value as far as is possible. The service also supports savings delivery through a modern, best practice approach to procurement and contract lifecycle management.

Assistant Director: Jonathan Hopkins

Email: jonathan.hopkins@reading.gov.uk

Procurement & Contracts

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Procurement & Contracts	10.4	369

Net Budget	10.4	369
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	596
Premises-Related Costs	0
Transport-Related Costs	0
Supplies and Services	6
Contract Costs	0
Transfer Payments	(200)
Total Expenditure	402
Sales, Fees and Charges	0
Grants	0
Other Income	(33)
Total Income	(33)
Net Budget	369

Finance

The Director of Finance is the Council's Section 151 Officer in accordance with s151 of the Local Government Act 1972. This requires that "every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs".

The team consists of the Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable functions; Treasury, Capital and Technical Accounting; Financial Systems; Financial Planning and Reporting, Finance Business Partners, Audit, Insurance and Corporate Investigations.

The team provides the Council's statutory accounting functions and supports service managers and budget holders in delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, ensuring appropriate support, oversight and reporting of all of the Council's revenue and capital budgets.

The service also includes the Revenues and Benefits function which administers and collects Council Tax and Business Rates as well as supports members of the public who apply for Housing Benefit and other reliefs.

Director of Finance: Darren Carter
Email: darren.carter@reading.gov.uk

Resources

Finance

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Accountancy	43.5	2,424
Insurance	2.0	1,129
Audit & Investigations	10.6	561
Council Tax & NNDR Administration	43.7	631

Net Budget	99.8	4,745
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	5,189
Premises-Related Costs	0
Transport-Related Costs	5
Supplies and Services	1,776
Contract Costs	464
Transfer Payments	(226)
Total Expenditure	7,208
Sales, Fees and Charges	(1,181)
Grants	(601)
Other Income	(681)
Total Income	(2,463)
Net Budget	4,745

Legal & Democratic Services

Legal & Democratic Services perform a key role at the heart of the Council's constitutional and governance arrangements. The Service provides legal advice to the Council and its various bodies, ensuring integrity in the conduct of its business and providing a range of legal support services to other service areas.

It also provides essential support for the councillor decision-making process, ensuring it is streamlined and effective.

The component teams in Legal and Democratic Services are:

Legal Services – providing legal advice and support to the Council and also hosting a shared service for all six Berkshire unitaries for legal support on children's and adults social care services.

Democratic Services – providing business management support for the decision-making process of the Council through its Committees and Officer Decision making.

Councillor Services – providing support to our 48 councillors to enable them to fulfil their democratic mandate.

Customer Relations – providing support for customers who wish to make a complaint about the Council's services.

Information Governance – providing support to other Services to enable the Council to safeguard the data we hold about residents.

Electoral Services – providing voter registration services to residents in Reading. Running elections in Reading.

The Assistant Director is the Council's Monitoring Officer and has a statutory responsibility to ensure that the Council acts lawfully. The Assistant Director is also the Electoral Registration Officer and the Borough Returning Officer, ensuring that residents in the Borough can register for and vote in elections.

Assistant Director: Michael Graham

Email: michael.graham@reading.gov.uk

Resources

Legal & Democratic Services

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Customer Relations & Information Governance	12.7	334
Legal Services	33.2	1,044
Joint Legal Team	73.6	(47)
Four Berkshire Project	3.0	75
Elections	5.1	502
Land Charges	0.0	(187)
Member Services	10.7	1,209
Net Budget	138.3	2,930

Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	7,851
Premises-Related Costs	7
Transport-Related Costs	18
Supplies and Services	5,002
Contract Costs	0
Transfer Payments	(316)
Total Expenditure	12,562
Sales, Fees and Charges	(457)
Grants	(11)
Other Income	(9,164)
Total Income	(9,632)
Net Budget	2,930

Digital, Technology & Change Services

The service provides Information and Communication Technology and Digital services to the Council and Brighter Futures for Children in support both of day-to-day operations and the digital transformation of the organisation. It also provides the corporate portfolio management office, alongside a team of specialists in change delivery (encompassing project management, business analysis and business change).

Chief Digital and Information Officer: Martin Chalmers

Email: martin.chalmers@reading.gov.uk

Digital, Technology & Change

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Digital, Technology & Change	56.2	6,653

Net Budget	56.2	6,653
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	2,726
Premises-Related Costs	0
Transport-Related Costs	1
Supplies and Services	707
Contract Costs	5,145
Transfer Payments	(100)
Total Expenditure	8,479
Sales, Fees and Charges	0
Grants	0
Other Income	(1,826)
Total Income	<b style="color: red;">(1,826)
Net Budget	6,653

2.5 Chief Executive Services

The Chief Executive's budget can be split between those covering the Executive Management Team and the Communications Team.

The Chief Executive is also the Head of Paid Service in accordance with the Councils Constitution. The Head of Paid Service is responsible for the overall management of the Authority and is the principal policy advisor to the Council.

Chief Executive: Jackie Yates

Email: jackie.yates@reading.gov.uk

Chief Executive Services

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Executive Management Team	13.4	897
Communications	14.1	734

Net Budget	27.5	1,631
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	2,135
Premises-Related Costs	0
Transport-Related Costs	7
Supplies and Services	10,626
Contract Costs	0
Transfer Payments	(4,843)
Total Expenditure	7,925
Sales, Fees and Charges	(35)
Grants	0
Other Income	(6,259)
Total Income	<b style="color: red;">(6,294)
Net Budget	1,631

Executive Management Team

Formerly called the Corporate Management Team, the Executive Management Team budget comprises the staffing and ancillary budgets held for the Chief Executive and Executive Directors of Reading Borough Council.

Chief Executive: Jackie Yates

Email: jackie.yates@reading.gov.uk

Executive Management Team

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Executive Management Team	13.4	897

Net Budget	13.4	897
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	1,525
Premises-Related Costs	0
Transport-Related Costs	0
Supplies and Services	10,425
Contract Costs	0
Transfer Payments	(4,850)
Total Expenditure	7,100
Sales, Fees and Charges	0
Grants	0
Other Income	(6,203)
Total Income	(6,203)
Net Budget	897

Communications

The Communications team deliver communication activity in line with the Corporate Plan and the organisation's objectives and priorities.

The monthly communications activity is focused on the Corporate Plan priorities and the team produce and organise campaigns to promote the council services using a variety of communication tools including press releases, social media, and newsletter content. The team produce press releases for service areas as well as producing press statements in response to media enquiries. They arrange photo-calls as well as organising radio and TV interviews and arranging video content to promote service news.

The team are responsible for writing, producing and editing Your Reading, the Council's Resident's Newsletter as well as the council's email newsletter that goes out to a large database of residents. They are also responsible for Your Housing, the council's tenant's newsletter.

They are responsible for the Council's social media strategy and run the corporate accounts as well as providing advice to other service areas.

The team are also responsible for leading on the Reading Borough Council staff engagement and communications and provide updates to staff across the Council.

The Events team run civic and corporate events for the town as well as ensure the Mayoral diary is kept up to date. The Lord Lieutenant function also sits within the communications and marketing team, and they are responsible for organising events in liaison with The Royal Household.

Head of Communications: Louisa Dean

Email: louisa.dean@reading.gov.uk

Communications

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Communications	14.1	734

Net Budget	14.1	734
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	609
Premises-Related Costs	0
Transport-Related Costs	7
Supplies and Services	201
Contract Costs	0
Transfer Payments	7
Total Expenditure	824
Sales, Fees and Charges	(35)
Grants	0
Other Income	(55)
Total Income	(90)
Net Budget	734

2.6 Children's Services

The majority of Children's Services are outsourced to Brighter Futures for Children a wholly owned company of Reading Borough Council.

There is a separate joint arrangement across all Berkshire councils in respect of adoption services.

Director of Children's Services: Lara Patel

Email: lara.patel@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Children's Services

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Brighter Futures for Children		58,839
Retained by Council		843

Net Budget	<u>0.0</u>	<u>59,682</u>
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Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	0
Premises-Related Costs	0
Transport-Related Costs	0
Supplies and Services	0
Contract Costs	59,682
Transfer Payments	0
Total Expenditure	<u>59,682</u>
Sales, Fees and Charges	0
Grants	0
Other Income	0
Total Income	<u>0</u>
Net Budget	<u>59,682</u>

3. Housing Revenue Account Revenue Budget

The Housing Revenue Account includes all the expenditure and income associated with the social housing stock in the ownership of the Council. The HRA is statutory “ring-fenced” account and separate from other activity. The main income is housing rents, and all expenditure related to council housing (such as dealing with lettings; managing, maintaining, and repairing the stock; collecting rent) is charged to this account.

The Council takes a long-term planning approach with the HRA – to ensure that all its housing stock continues to meet the ‘decent homes standard’ and to ensure the continued viability of the Housing Revenue Account. The Council prepares and keeps up to date a financial plan for the Housing operation over a 30-year period. The financial model shows the estimates of rent and other income, the day-to-day management and repair costs as well as the long-term major investment needed to maintain the stock as well as the cost of servicing the debt over 30 years.

Local housing authorities are able to use rental income to support investment in both existing homes and building new council housing. This investment can either be financed directly from rental income or from borrowing that will be repaid from future rental streams. Each new scheme supported must pass tests of viability over the 30-year horizon.

The Council retains its own Housing stock of circa 7,000 properties (1,300 managed under a PFI contract), including over 300 sheltered housing units. The service comprises housing allocations; housing management services to tenants; housing support services; and income recovery and debt advice services – working in partnership to offer personal budgeting support, assistance into employment and access to other services as required. The service also provides housing management and income recovery services to the Adult Social Care residential property portfolio and to properties held by Homes for Reading a wholly owned company of the Council. The Council’s Greener, Warmer, Safer Homes scheme under the ‘Winterwatch’ brand which tackles fuel poverty and home safety in vulnerable households are also funded through the HRA and public health.

Executive Director: Melissa Wise
Email: melissa.wise@reading.gov.uk

Assistant Director (Interim): John Knight
Email: john.knight@reading.gov.uk

Housing Revenue Account

Housing Revenue Account

Service Area	FTE	2024/25 Budget £'000
Management & Supervision	62.7	9,488
Special Services	44.8	4,812
Provision for Bad Debts		891
Responsive Repairs		4,600
Planned Maintenance		3,860
Major Repairs/Depreciation		15,192
Debt Costs		7,009
PFI Costs		8,254
Total Expenditure		54,106
HRA Income		(51,524)
Net Expenditure		2,582
Movement to/(from) reserve		(2,582)
Net Budget	107.5	0

Subjective Analysis	2024/25 Budget £'000
Employee Costs	5,303
Premises-Related Costs	28,979
Transport-Related Costs	37
Supplies and Services	2,558
Contract Costs	8,303
Transfer Payments	8,926
Total Expenditure	54,106
Sales, Fees and Charges	(1,196)
Grants	(4,452)
Other Income	(48,458)
Total Income	(54,106)
Net Budget	0

4. Capital Programme

4.1. Overview

The Capital Programme is the authority's plan of its capital expenditure and investment needs over the medium term to ensure the efficient and effective provision of services. The Programme includes details on the funding of schemes. The Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2028/29 was approved as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy in February 2024.

The Council's Capital Strategy¹ provides high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services; along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

The Strategy is informed by the Council's priorities and links to key strategy documents notably the Treasury Management Strategy, Asset Management Strategy, Property Investment Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Plan.

The Capital Programme enables delivery of these priorities by:

- Providing investment to improve access to decent housing to meet local needs and help combat homelessness, as well as maintaining existing council dwellings;
- Supporting delivery of sustainable, local social care services through investment to enable independent and supported living in the local community for both children and adults;
- Working in partnership with Reading Transport, Network Rail, the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and others in seeking funding and delivering an improved transport network, whilst being mindful of environmental factors
- Building schools to meet the future needs of the population and ensuring access to education;
- Providing investment to deliver low carbon living, reduce pollution and increase recycling;
- Providing investment in community and leisure provision to meet Reading's needs;
- Addresses inequality, for example by investing in community safety;
- Facilitating transformation schemes, ensuring that the Council is fit for the future.

Due to competing demands for limited resources, the capital investment is prioritised based on its contribution to the Council's overall objectives and several different factors including:

- Essential Health and Safety works;
- Availability of external funding, full or match funding;
- Invest to save opportunities;
- Maintenance of the essential infrastructure of the organisation, such as buildings and IT;
- The outcome of feasibility studies.

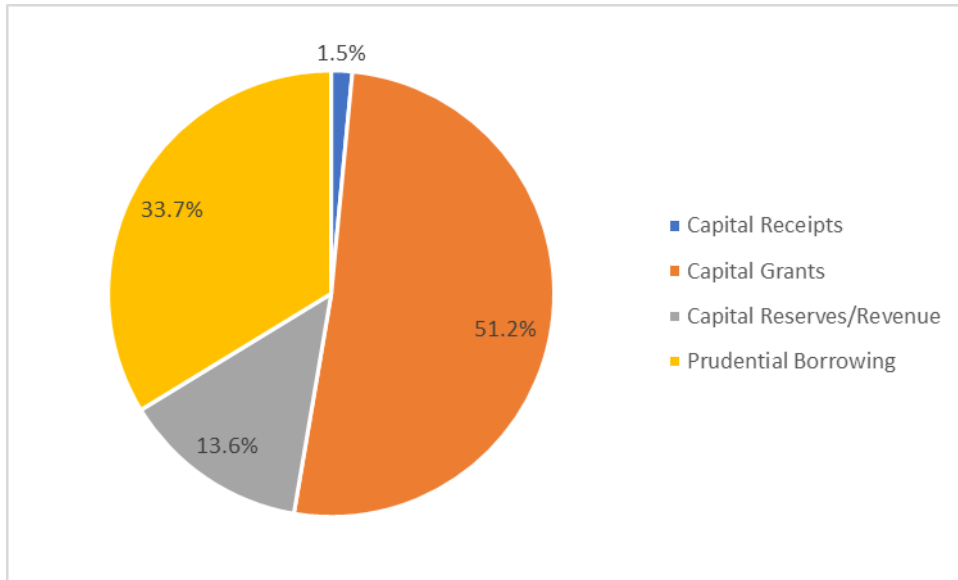
In line with the Council's Constitution, capital schemes require both spend and scheme approval prior to expenditure being incurred.

¹ <https://images.reading.gov.uk/2024/02/CapitalStrategy2024-25-Appx.pdf>

4.2. How the Capital Programme is Funded

The Capital Programme is funded through a mix of prudential borrowing, internal sources such as capital receipts and contributions from revenue/reserves and external sources such as capital grants and developer contributions.

The chart below shows the funding for the Capital Programme as set out in the table on page 7.



4.3. General Fund Capital Programme 2024/25-2028/29

Key areas of proposed investment within the General Fund Capital Programme include:

Corporate/Transformation - To support the transformation of services and delivery of ongoing savings, £1.587m of transformation funding (Delivery Fund) has been made available within the Council's Capital Programme funded from Capital Receipts.

Adult Social Care & Health Services - The Capital Programme provides £9.207m for the re-provisioning of fit for purpose accommodation following the strategic review of and consultation on options.

Children's Education & Early Help Services - The Capital Programme includes £29.458m over the next 3 years for the building, enhancement and maintenance of new and existing school buildings. The majority of funding for these schemes comes from central government grants.

Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services - To support the Council's role as place maker and regeneration within the Borough, as well as the continued delivery of front line services through generation of income, the Capital Programme includes:

- £15.305m on remodelling provision at the Hexagon Theatre following a successful bid to the Levelling Up Fund;
- £11.976m to relocate the Reading Library to the Civic Offices following a successful bid to the Levelling Up Fund;
- £13.610m on a Bus Service Improvement Programme;
- £20.085m Investment in the Council's local highways infrastructure (including Bridges) addressing feedback from the residents' survey;
- £14.000m on South Reading MRT (Phases 5&6);
- £3.172m on schemes to help reduce Reading's carbon footprint.

The full list of schemes can be found on the Council's website; Appendix 7a, 2024/25 Budget Report.

[General Fund Capital Programme](#)

Summary of General Fund Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2028/29

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Communities & Adult Social Care	9,802	6,459	1,522	1,522	1,522
Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services	65,171	37,790	6,129	4,232	4,082
Resources	1,570	1,641	0	0	0
Education Schemes	9,470	4,154	12,610	1,612	1,612
Corporate	9,219	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,600
General Fund Total	95,232	52,644	22,861	9,966	9,816

4.4. HRA Capital Programme

The HRA Capital Programme is intrinsically linked to the HRA Business Plan since the resources to fund the Programme are largely generated through housing rents.

The Council's house building programme is well underway and continues with phases 2, 3 and 4 as well as schemes to support older and vulnerable adults. In total the Council has made provision to invest a further £68.626m in its new build and acquisitions programme over the five years 2024/25 – 2028/29 providing additional new affordable homes, subject to approvals.

The Council also plans to continue to invest around £10m per annum in its existing housing stock over the next 5 years, as well as £18.225m over the period for zero carbon retro-fit work.

The full list of schemes can be found on the Council's website; Appendix 7b, 2024/25 Budget Report.

[Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme](#)

Summary of Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2028/29

	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000
Housing Revenue Account Total	47,760	54,370	18,088	11,894	10,500