Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

PUBLICA

Annual Report and Accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2026

Publica Group (Support) Limited

Company Registration No. 10580349

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Publica Group (Support) Limited

	Page
Company Information	1
Strategic Report	2
Directors' Report	6
Independent Auditor's Report	12
Statement of Comprehensive Income	16
Statement of Financial Position	17
Statement of Changes in Equity	18
Statement of Cashflows	19
Notes to the Accounts	20

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Company Information

Non- Executive Directors

Dr Christine Elizabeth Gore
Chair



Christopher Gilbert Wood
Chair Audit & Risk Committee



Steve Anderson-Dixon
Resigned 30 September 2025



David Leslie Powell



Ann Wolstencroft
Appointed 1 October 2025



Phillip Henry Martin
Appointed 1 October 2025



Resigned 1 July 2026

Executive Directors

Frank Malcolm Wilson



Claire Louise Locke



Jon Dearing



Resigned 31 March 2026

Registered Office: Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1PX

Independent Auditor: Grant Thornton UK LLP, Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor, 6th Floor, 3 Callaghan Square, Cardiff, CF10 5BT

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Strategic Report

Business Review

In 2025/26 after the Publica Review, we concluded the restructuring of Publica Group (Support) Limited (Publica) leading to a more traditional shared services company from the original model where all services were delivered for our shareholding councils. This has left Publica with a much more focused delivery agenda and a clearer commissioner/provider split between the councils and Publica. In many respects, Publica is now in a stronger position moving forward as we start to focus more acutely on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) alongside our councils in 2026/27.

After a successful Phase 1 transition of services in November 2024, a second phase was completed on 1 July 2025, when a small tranche of services transitioned back to council delivery. The impact of this was for a budget transfer for 63 posts passed back to the councils allowing them to continue service delivery. This resulted in a full year equivalent budget reduction in company turnover of £2.2m.

As with Phase 1, the transfer of services went smoothly, although there were some departures within teams where employees chose not to secure new roles within the Shareholder Councils where the Transfer of Undertakings, Protection of Employment regulations (TUPE) did not apply due to the fragmentation of roles. There were also some gaps in the new council structures for a period where vacancies were not filled as part of the transfer. A review of service performance over this transition period does not however indicate any deterioration in service delivery outcomes.

As a consequence of these second phase changes, there were some minor modifications to Publica leadership structure as we rebalanced our teams to meet the reduced service requirements. This delivered the final elements of the £500,000 of savings initially identified as a reduction of the Publica overheads due to its reduced scale and responsibilities from the model changes.

In 2025/26 we also concluded the governance changes at board level which were a recommendation from a review undertaken by Local Partnerships commissioned by the Shareholders. In response to this, both James Towner (31 March 2025) and Steve Anderson-Dixon (30 September 2025) left the board and were replaced by senior council employees. This provided a balance of independent and shareholder representative Non-Executive Directors on the Board.

Following the Phase 2 transfer of services completed in July 2025, the focus swiftly moved to the potential impact of Local Government Reorganisation. It became clear that the work undertaken to deliver service transition would be invaluable to both Publica and councils in this next phase of change. Aggregation and disaggregation of services is likely to form a large part of the preparations for all councils impacted by the reorganisation, and Publica has expertise and experience in doing this over several years. All the Publica leadership team are involved in the activities in both Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire, and a range of other service leads are also involved across the geography in preparing for the impacts of reorganisation. A decision from government was received on 16 July 2026. Preparing for impact of this decision forms a key focus of the new Publica Business Plan 2026-28.

From an operational perspective pressures continue to persist in a number of services due to service demand, most notably in housing and homelessness, where caseload numbers have remained high over the last year as supply is constrained. This has placed great strains on the team and additional resources have been provided by the councils to support this service using government grants. We continue to work with West Oxfordshire to implement solutions to deliver more hostel type accommodation for emergency housing which is needed to reduce the need for costly and less than ideal bed and breakfast accommodation or ‘out of district’ placements.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Strategic Report

There are some notable successes during the year which warrant particular consideration. These include-

- Acquisition of up to 30 units of emergency accommodation working with West Oxfordshire, reducing Bed and Breakfast use and reducing the cost of homelessness for local taxpayers.
- Conclusion of work on the new Publica costing model and agreement upon implementation for 2026/27 budgets supporting a fairer consumption-based model.
- Delivery of Car Parking Strategies at West Oxfordshire and Cotswold District Councils
- Further roll out of the Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) and subsequent interventions ensuring residents receive any additional benefits due.
- Preparation for the implementation of the Renters Rights Act.
- Implementation of the Business Rates Revaluation and new reliefs.
- Multi-agency stop and search operations to prevent enviro-crime.

The 2025/26 Business Plan focused on a successful completion of the second phase Publica transition, commencing our preparations for LGR and delivery against councils' priorities and service delivery targets. Generally, performance against targets set by councils has been good, despite a period of significant change and uncertainty but there remain areas where we need to improve and we have focussed our improvement efforts in these areas. The establishment of the new Operational Forum as part of the Local Partnerships governance improvements has provided a useful addition to this performance focus and allowed us to make progress with appropriate council support in areas where improvement was needed.

With the uncertainty of both the Publica Review and subsequently LGR and the potential impact that has on Publica, the performance across the range of activities that Publica provides has been recognised by our council partners. The Board of Directors would like to express their thanks to all our excellent employees who contributed to this. We continue to recognise their contribution in our recognition scheme.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Strategic Report

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The recognition and understanding of risks relevant to the company and the services it provides is key to the successful management of the business and the delivery of the vision and objectives.

A register of business risks is maintained and reviewed quarterly by the executive management team. This is accompanied by action plans to mitigate identified risks. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee receive quarterly monitoring reports on the company's finances and at least half yearly reports on the strategic risk register. The company has appropriate insurance cover for assets and business operations, including directors' and officers' indemnity.

Having successfully navigated the Publica Review and subsequent transition of services across two phases, Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) now represents the key business risk over the next two years. Whilst shareholding councils have recently extended agreements until October 2030 the impact of LGR is so fundamental that it could lead to the closure of the company by April 2028. This potential for destabilisation of the employee workforce due to the uncertainty that changes of this magnitude bring is significant and require us to communicate the position clearly and effectively to our employees.

In addition to this the Directors have identified the main risk to be technology related in respect of Cyber and Data related incidents which continue to be managed but, for which, the impact could be regarded as severe from a major incident.

Whilst the company's ability to continue as a going concern is intrinsically linked to that of our member councils who continue to support the company via the recently extended member agreements in place it is clear that LGR will have an impact on this. It is currently anticipated that Publica will continue to deliver the services at least until LGR Vesting Day (1 April 2028) and any decision to move away from this principle is not envisaged until after May 2027.

On the basis of the above, the ongoing cash positive position of the company and letters of support from member councils including approval of the Business Plan, directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for a period of 12 months post financial statement signature. Thus, they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements. Further detail is included within the going concern accounting policy.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Strategic Report

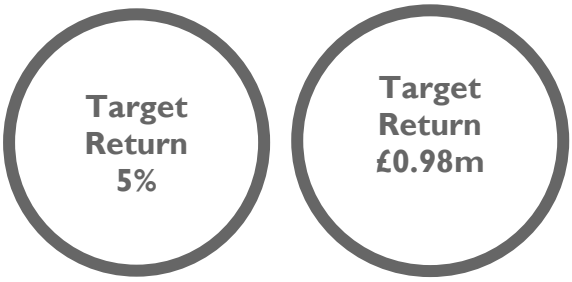
Financial Key Performance Indicators

Our savings and modernisation plans for 2025/26 included the second half year savings of the management structure changes and bringing the balance of these savings to £500,000 over the two financial years as planned. In total £260,000 of baseline savings were delivered in 2025/26 and in addition to this base budget reduction Publica returned a further £449,000 of one-off savings back to its partner councils so that they could reinvest in service delivery.

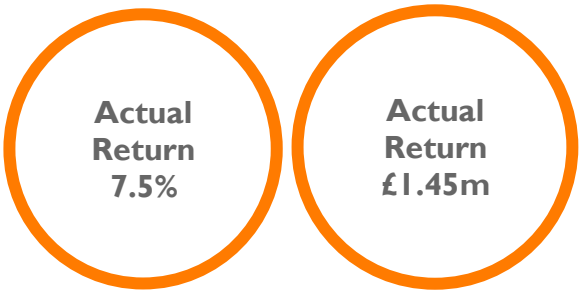
The savings made in 2025/26 bring the total underlying annual budget savings to £3.8m since the formation of Publica set against a target of £2.1m at this stage of the business case. In addition to this underlying budget reduction Publica has delivered back to the partner councils a total of £4.7m of one-off savings through a track record of delivering the service within the budget envelope allowing partners to reinvest these funds in priorities of the councils. Total cumulative savings over the period since Publica was formed have now reached £26.6m against a business case target of £13.8m.

Summary Financial Performance Indicators: April 2025 to March 2026

Target Pre-Tax Surplus



Actual Pre-Tax Surplus



The return is calculated as the Surplus before Tax as a percentage of turnover, excluding the contract fee refund and tax charge.

There are no other financial or non-financial key performance indicators the directors wish to disclose.

This report was approved by the board on 7 August 2026 and signed on its behalf on 7 August 2026.

Frank Wilson

Frank Wilson
Managing Director

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Directors' Report

Financial Review

Over the full financial year Publica has again met its budget targets. The budget for 2025/26 incorporated a savings target of £260k principally being the second half of the management savings delivered as part of the Publica Review. These savings have been delivered, together with an additional £449k of one-off (non-recurring) savings which will be returned to the councils.

The second phase of the transition of some services back to partner councils was concluded on 1 July 2025 and was followed by the implementation of a revised costing model updating the historic basis for cost distribution which had been in place since 2017. This change, implemented in the 2026/27 budget, brought about some significant financial movements in respective contract values between partners and has necessitated further budget amendments in 2026/27 to deal with the impact of these.

As a trusted 'not for profit' partner we have sought to pick up most of the additional work within the core contract with variations only being sought where additional expenses were incurred.

Details of spend to budget are set out below.

BUDGET VS ACTUAL 2025/26

	Current Budget Q4 £000s	Actual / Accrued Q4 £000s	(+) / - £000s
Sales			
Contract Income	**20,268**	**20,268**	**0**
Direct Costs:			
Salaries (Inc oncosts)	(17,097)	(16,399)	(698)
Agency Costs	(30)	(481)	451
Contractor Costs	0	0	0
Employee Transport & Travel	(115)	(70)	(45)
Other Staff costs	(458)	(350)	(108)
Gross Surplus	**2,568**	**2,968**	**(400)**
Administration Expenses	(1,665)	(1,662)	(3)
Other Operating Expenses	0	0	0
Operating Surplus	**903**	**1,306**	**(403)**
Net Interest (Payable)/ Receivable	76	142	(66)
Surplus before Tax	**979**	**1,448**	**(469)**
Tax	(14)	(34)	20
Contract Fee Refund	(965)	(965)	0
Additional Surplus Distribution	**0**	**449**	**(449)**

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Directors' Report

Events since the Balance Sheet date

On 16 July 2026 the government announced their proposed decisions in respect of Local Government Reorganisation in Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire. This may have an impact on the future of the company as the operating models for the new councils are established over the implementation period up to 1 April 2028.

Future Developments and Financial Risk

A new Publica Business Plan taking the company up to Local Government Reorganisation Vesting Date of 1 April 2028 has been approved by the shareholders. This recognises the issues raised as a consequence of the government announcement on Local Government Reorganisation and sets out how Publica will prepare for any changes to the company that might be required.

Should the existing or new council shareholders choose to transfer services currently provided by Publica back to direct council provision there is a risk that the number of fragmented roles could give rise to a risk of termination payments should TUPE not apply and employees not be found suitable alternative employment opportunities.

The financial risks to Publica remain intrinsically linked to those of our member councils as is the nature of all 'Teckal' companies. Any increased termination payments, should they fall on Publica, will be financed by the shareholder councils.

Our Approach to Employees

As part of our key objective of being a 'great place to work' we have identified six strategic themes which form part of our newly developed people strategy which has been produced to ensure our people are best placed and prepared for Local Government Reorganisation. The themes include:

- Recruitment and onboarding
- Wellbeing and belonging
- Upskilling and developing
- Listening and communicating
- Reward and Recognition
- Preparing for LGR

Under each theme are agreed actions to be delivered as we lead up to vesting day on 1 April 2028.

We continue to support the member councils' to create fairer opportunities in recruitment. This includes our ongoing commitment to being a 'Disability Confident Employer', and in 2025/2026, we also committed, along with our Shareholders to recognise applicants who have care experience, treating those who have care experience as if it were a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act (2010). This is further supported by our approach to agile working which supports a varied and flexible approach to both workplace and workday. We continue to be a 'Real Living Wage' employer, which was first implemented in 2021/22, where we pay a minimum wage as set out by the Living Wage Foundation. In 2023/24 we have achieved Silver Carbon Literacy status underpinning our approach to supporting the councils net zero targets and our target is to reach Gold in 2026/27.

From 1 April 2025 we also improved our pension scheme offer by match funding increased member contributions beyond the base 5% up to 7%.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Directors' Report

We continue to offer a wide range of employee benefits, including Medicash which is a health plan available to all Publica employees, providing cashback on a wide range of everyday healthcare costs, an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Life Assurance, Income Protection and a wide range of optional schemes such as the green car scheme, cycle to work and home electronics.

A key focus this year has been on our employee wellbeing due to the significant change over the past 18-months and further uncertainty created by LGR. In response, we have relaunched our wellbeing advocates, who are a cohort of employees who have been trained in mental health first aid and have introduced Everymind at Work which is a mental health platform designed to provide mental health support. New networks have been introduced such as menopause champions and we are delivering bespoke training including managing resilience during change, building and managing stress within teams and leading and managing change through LGR.

The average number of Full Time Equivalent employees during the year was 373 (2024/25: 516).

Employee Engagement

As part of our workforce relations, we recognise two trade unions, GMB and Unison, and continue to have a very positive and constructive relationship with them both. The company also uses a range of other tools to engage with its workforce including regular workforce surveys which over the last year have been used to assess the wellbeing of employees during the transition of services, and more latterly, the uncertainty created by LGR. In addition, Gloucestershire are also undertaking a regular 'pulse' survey which is focused on LGR, which our employees are able to engage with.

We have relaunched our Employee Forum during 25/26, as a representative employee-led platform and have revisited the terms of reference to ensure clarity in the roles and responsibilities of the forum. This will be further developed during 26/27.

Our employee recognition scheme continues to be well supported. Despite the transfer of services, the recognition scheme continues to be partnership wide with quarterly nominations and awards, and an annual award announced at the annual Publica picnics. This is then supported with regular 'shout outs' to individuals and teams in our weekly Executive Communication.

We continue to run regular all employee staff briefing sessions and open Q & A sessions on a range of subjects that may be of interest or are requested by employees.

With Local Government Reorganisation being a significant focus, dedicated portal pages are in place for employees to obtain the latest information for both Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire. Gloucestershire are publishing fortnightly updates and Oxfordshire are now starting to send out regular communication updates.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Directors' Report

Financial Instruments

The company has a low risk approach to financial instruments and the only instruments used are bank deposit accounts, call accounts. The company does not operate any hedging instruments.

Details of Directors

The directors during the year were:

Executive Directors

Frank Malcolm Wilson
Claire Louise Locke
Jon Dearing (resigned 31 March 2026)

Non-Executive Directors

Dr Christine Elizabeth Gore	Chair
Christopher Gilbert Wood	Chair Audit and Risk Committee
Steve Anderson-Dixon	(resigned 30 September 2025)
David Leslie Powell	
Ann Wolstencroft	(appointed 1 October 2025)
Phillip Henry Martin	(appointed 1 October 2025, resigned 1 July 2026)

Executive Directors appointed after 31 March 2026

Cheryl Louise Sloan (appointed 1 May 2026)

Directors Responsibilities Statement

The directors are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'). Under company law, the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Directors' Report

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions, to disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the company's website.

Governance and Risk

Publica Group (Support) Limited is a company, limited by guarantee, operating with mutual trading status to deliver the Services to the Members under contracts.

The company is a Teckal company fulfilling the conditions set out in Regulation 12(4) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The company is subject to management supervision by the Members. As such, the company is a body governed by public law as defined in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

The Publica Board is made up of three Executive Directors and five Non-Executive Directors. The balance of experience that makes up the board provides a balance of accountability, council knowledge, external experience and business insight.

Internal Audit

The Internal Audit service for Publica is provided by SWAP Internal Audit Services Limited (SWAP). SWAP is a local authority controlled company. SWAP has adopted and works to the Standards of the Institute of Internal Auditors, further guided by interpretation provided by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). The Partnership is also guided by the Internal Audit Charter which is reviewed annually. Internal Audit provides an independent and objective opinion on the organisation's control environment by evaluating its effectiveness through the work based on the Annual Plan agreed by Senior Management and the Publica Board.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Directors' Report

Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit

Publica also contracts with the Gloucestershire Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit, through Cotswold District Council. The Fraud Unit work closely with the Human Resources team on internal investigation work on issues of staff misconduct and works proactively to prevent fraud and corruption or investigate potential areas of risk. Publica has a zero-tolerance policy and investigates any staff wrongdoings in these areas.

The Counter Fraud Manager reports directly to the Executive Director with responsibility for Finance and attends Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meetings regularly.

Whistleblowing

Publica has its own whistleblowing policy and encourages any member of staff to report their concerns.

Statement on disclosure of information to the auditors

In so far as each of the directors is aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware; and
- The directors have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

Re-Appointment of Auditors

The auditor, Grant Thornton UK LLP, will be proposed for reappointment in accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the board on 7 August 2026 and signed on its behalf on 7 August 2026.

Frank Wilson

Frank Wilson
Managing Director

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Publica Group (Support) Limited

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Publica Group (Support) Limited (the 'company') for the year ended 31 March 2026, which comprise the statement of comprehensive income, the statement of financial position, the statement of changes in equity, the statement of cashflows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2026 and of its result for the year then ended;
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We are responsible for concluding on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify the auditor's opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our report. However, future events or conditions may cause the company to cease to continue as a going concern.

In our evaluation of the directors' conclusions, we considered the inherent risks associated with the company's business model including effects arising from macro-economic uncertainties such as current inflationary pressures, we assessed and challenged the reasonableness of estimates made by the directors and the related disclosures and analysed how those risks might affect the company's financial resources or ability to continue operations over the going concern period.

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Publica Group (Support) Limited

Conclusions relating to going concern (continued)

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The directors are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the strategic report and the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matter on which we are required to report under the Companies Act 2006

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Publica Group (Support) Limited

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the directors' responsibilities statement set out on page 9 and 10, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below:

- The Company is subject to many laws and regulations where the consequences of non-compliance could have a material effect on amounts or disclosures in the financial statements. We identified Financial Reporting Standard 102 and the Companies Act 2006 as those most likely to have a material effect if non-compliance were to occur;
- We have obtained an understanding of how the Company is complying with significant legal and regulatory frameworks through inquiries of management;
- We assessed the susceptibility of the Company's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur. We considered the opportunity and incentives for management to perpetrate fraud, and the potential impact on the financial statements;
- Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included: .
  - testing of journal entries, in particular journal entries relating to management estimates and entries determined to be large or relating to unusual transactions; and
  - identifying and testing related party transactions,
- These audit procedures were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from fraud or error. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error and detecting irregularities that result from fraud is inherently more difficult than detecting those that result from error, as fraud may involve collusion, deliberate concealment, forgery or intentional misrepresentations. Also, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it;

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Publica Group (Support) Limited

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements (continued)

- The engagement partner's assessment of the appropriateness of the collective competence and capabilities of the engagement team included:

  - Consideration of the engagement team's understanding of, and practical experience with, audit engagements or a similar nature and complexity;
  - Appropriate training, knowledge of the industry in which the company operates; and
  - Understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements specific to the company.

- We communicated relevant laws and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indicators of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit;

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Grant Thornton UK LLP

Helen Jones BSc ACA
Senior Statutory Auditor
for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP
Statutory Auditor, Chartered Accountants
Cardiff

Date: 7 August 2026

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Statement of Comprehensive Income

	Note	2025/26 £	2024/25 £
Turnover	4	18,904,073	25,527,024
Cost of Sales	5	(17,298,729)	(23,593,677)
Gross Profit		**1,605,344**	**1,933,347**
Administrative expenses		(1,712,730)	(2,085,834)
Operating loss	6	**(107,386)**	**(152,487)**
Interest receivable and similar income	17	143,040	202,473
Interest payable and similar charges	7 / 17	(1,499)	(239)
Profit on ordinary activities before taxation		**34,155**	**49,747**
Tax on profit on ordinary activities	9	(34,155)	(49,747)
Profit / (deficit) for the financial year		**-**	**-**
Total comprehensive income / (expenditure) for the financial year		**-**	**-**

The notes on pages 20 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Statement of Financial Position

Company Registration No. 10580349

	Note	31-Mar-26	31-Mar-25
		£	£
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible fixed assets	*10*	-	-
Intangible assets	*11*	-	-
		-	-
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors (amounts due within one year)	*12*	202,515	765,419
Cash and cash equivalents	*13*	1,629,081	2,086,452
		1,831,596	**2,851,871**
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors (amounts due within one year)	*14*	(1,690,262)	(2,376,426)
Provisions	*15*	-	(334,111)
		(1,690,262)	**(2,710,537)**
Net Current Assets		**141,334**	**141,334**
NET ASSETS		**141,334**	**141,334**
CAPITAL AND RESERVES			
Retained surplus / (deficit)		141,334	141,334
TOTAL RESERVES		**141,334**	**141,334**

The notes on pages 20 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board and were signed on its behalf.

Frank Wilson

Frank Wilson
Managing Director
7 August 2026

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Statement of Changes in Equity

	Retained Surplus £
Balance as at 1 April 2024	**141,334**
Changes in equity 2024/25	
Profit / (loss) for the year	-
Other comprehensive income	-
Balance as at 31 March 2025	**141,334**
Changes in equity 2025/26	
Profit / (loss) for the year	-
Other comprehensive income	-
Balance as at 31 March 2026	**141,334**

The notes on pages 20 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Statement of Cashflows

	Note	2025/26 £	2024/25 £
Net cash flow from Operating Activities	*19*	**(598,912)**	**(1,675,601)**
Investing Activities			
Interest received	*17*	143,040	202,473
Disposal of tangible fixed assets		-	-
Net cash flow from Investing Activities		**143,040**	**202,473**
Financing Activities			
Interest paid	*7 / 17*	(1,499)	(239)
Net cash flow from Financing Activities		**(1,499)**	**(239)**
Net decrease in Cash and Cash Equivalents		**(457,371)**	**(1,473,367)**
Cash and Cash Equivalents at 1 April		**2,086,452**	**3,559,819**
Cash and Cash Equivalents at 31 March		**1,629,081**	**2,086,452**

The notes on pages 20 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

1. Legal Status and General Information

The Company is registered in the United Kingdom under the Companies Act 2006 and was incorporated on 24th January 2017. The accounting period covers the 12-month accounting period, from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

The Company is a private company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom.

The registered office is: Council Offices, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 1PX

Cotswold District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Forest of Dean District Council and Cheltenham Borough Council have jointly set up Publica Group (Support) Limited, a wholly owned company, operating with Mutual Trading Status to deliver the services to the Member Councils and to other Members under contracts. The principal activity of the Company is the provision of general public administrative services.

2. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation of the financial statements
These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102, The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, and with the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements are presented in Sterling (£).

The preparation of financial statements in compliance with FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise judgement in applying the Company's accounting policies (see note 3).

The following principle accounting policies have been applied:

Going Concern
The financial statements have been prepared on a 'going concern' basis. The Publica review Phase two was concluded on 1 July 2025 and was followed by the implementation of a revised costing model. The Directors therefore consider that the use of the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate.

Publica's viability as a going concern is closely linked to the support provided by its member councils through existing agreements, together with the letters of ongoing support provided to the Directors, which cover a period of at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements. A new Publica Business Plan, covering the period up to the Local Government Reorganisation vesting date of 1 April 2028, has been approved by the shareholders (the member councils).

On 16 July 2026, the Government announced its proposed decisions in respect of Local Government Reorganisation in Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire. This may have an impact on the future of the Company as the operating models for the proposed new unitary councils are developed over the implementation period to 1 April 2028. At this stage, there remains uncertainty as to the final structure and the implications for Publica.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

2. Accounting Policies - continued

Notwithstanding the above uncertainties, and based on the Company's positive cash position, the approved Business Plan, and the continued financial support from its member councils, the Directors have a reasonable expectation that Publica has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for a period of at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements. Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

Turnover
Turnover comprises of revenue generated from member council contracts, and is recognised when services are provided against the contracts. Revenue is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the Company and the revenue can be reliably measured. Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts, rebates, refunds, VAT and other sales related taxes.

Tangible fixed assets
Fixed assets are capitalised at cost/purchase price, comprising purchase price and any costs directly attributable to bringing the asset into use, and stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Assets will be capitalised where they will provide economic benefit to Publica for more than one accounting period. Assets with a cost of less than £10,000 will be treated as de-minimus and may not be capitalised, except where the sum of a group of similar assets together (for example ICT equipment) have a value in excess of this.

Intangible assets
Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, intangible assets are measured at cost less any accumulated amortisation and any accumulated impairment losses.

All intangible assets are considered to have a finite useful life. If a reliable estimate of the useful life cannot be made, the useful life shall not exceed ten years.

Financial Instruments
The Company only enters into basic financial instrument transactions that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other debtors and creditors, and loans from banks and other third parties.

Debt instruments (other than those wholly repayable or receivable with one year), including loans and other accounts receivable and payable, are initially measured at present value of the future cash flows and subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Debt instruments that are payable or receivable within one year, typically trade debtors and creditors, are measured, initially and subsequently, at the undiscounted amount of the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received. However, if the arrangements of a short-term instrument constitute a financing transaction, like the payment of a trade debt deferred beyond normal business terms or financed at a rate of interest that is not a market rate or in the case of an out-right short-term loan not at market rate, the financial asset or liability is measured initially, at the present value of the future cash flow discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument and subsequently at amortised cost.

Financial assets that are measured at cost and amortised cost are assessed at the end of each reporting period for the objective evidence of impairment. If objective evidence of impairment is found, an impairment loss is recognised in the Statement of comprehensive income.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

2. Accounting Policies – continued

Leases (and Licences): the Company as lessee
Rental paid under the operating leases are charged to the Statement of comprehensive income on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Benefits received and receivable as an incentive to sign an operating lease are recognised on a straight line basis over the lease term, unless another systematic basis is representative of the time pattern of the lessees benefit from the use of the leased asset.

The Company has taken advantage of the optional exemption available on transition to FRS 102 which allows lease incentives on leases entered into before the date of transition to the standard 24 January 2016 to continue to be charged over the period to the first market rent review rather than the term of the lease.

Provisions for liabilities
Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Company a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefit, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the statement of comprehensive income in the year that the Company becomes aware of the obligation, and are measured at the best estimate at the Balance Sheet date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, taking into account relevant risks and uncertainties.

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Balance sheet.

Amortisation and Depreciation
Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of fixed assets (less their residual value) over the estimated useful life of the asset. Assets are normally depreciated over the following lives, using the straight-line method as follows:

ICT Equipment	20% straight line (5-years)
Vehicles and Other Equipment	20% straight line (5-years)

At the point Publica began trading, assets were acquired from the Council clients. Asset valuations and useful lives were estimated at the point of transfer. Assets acquired after 1 November 2017 will be capitalised at their purchase price.

For any purchases of used (second-hand) assets, the useful life of the asset will be determined at the point of acquisition.

Taxation
Publica is a local authority company wholly owned by its partner councils. It operates under a mutual trading status with the councils. This status means that any surplus generated by Publica in-year is treated as an in-year contract price reduction and returned to the partner Councils at the end of the year. Any retained surplus which is generated from contract sums is not assessed for corporation tax due to Publica's mutual trading status with the Councils.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

2. Accounting Policies - continued

While Publica may have mutual trading status with the partner councils for the surplus generated from contract sum, it is still subject to corporate tax for the interest income and income generated from third parties. This means any profit generated from these sources is taxable, and Publica is responsible for reporting and paying corporate tax on that income. Publica includes the estimated tax payable to HMRC as a current liability in the account at end of the year.

Value Added Tax
The Company charge value added tax (VAT) where applicable on its income and is able to recover VAT on the majority of its expenditure. The balance of VAT payable to HMRC at year-end is included in the accounts as a current liability.

Pension Schemes
The Company participates in several separate pension schemes; two defined benefit pension schemes for transferred employees, based upon the terms and conditions of the Local Government Pension Schemes (LGPS) and a defined contribution scheme for 'new' Publica employees (employed after 1 November 2017).

The defined benefit scheme is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme. Publica takes deductions from eligible Publica staff and pay over contributions to the respective Gloucestershire or Oxfordshire LGPS. Contributions are paid to the scheme in accordance with the recommendations of an independent actuary in order that the benefits accruing in respect of current and future service can be met. The risk and rewards for these schemes are held with the host Councils and hence they are accounted for as defined contribution schemes. Consequently, legacy LGPS pension scheme assets and liabilities are all included on the partner Council's balance sheets and are not accounted for as part of these accounts.

The defined contribution scheme for employees engaged post 1 November 2017 is a pension plan under which the company pays contributions into a separate entity. Once the contributions have been paid the company has no further payment obligations.

Contributions for all schemes are recognised as an expense in the income and expenditure account and amounts not paid are shown as accruals on the balance sheet. The assets of the plan are held separately from the company in independently administered funds.

Cash and cash equivalents
Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature in no more than three months from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to know amount of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

Debtors
Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment. Loans receivable are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

Creditors
Short term creditors are measured at the transaction price. Other financial liabilities, including bank loans, are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

3. Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies and Key Sources of Estimation Uncertainty

Preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements and estimates. The items in the financial statements where significant estimates have been made are as follows:

- **Defined benefit pension schemes**
  Management has reviewed the TUPE agreements between the Council and Publica and considers the balance of risks and rewards sits with the Council clients.

  As such, the net pension liability on the LGPS sits solely in the Council accounts and no net defined benefit pension liability in relation to the LGPS sits on the Company's balance sheet. The schemes are accounted for as defined contribution schemes in the Company's financial statements.

4. Analysis of Turnover

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Turnover by shareholders		
Cheltenham Borough Council	824,489	770,577
Forest of Dean District Council	4,036,539	6,045,292
West Oxfordshire District Council	7,615,903	9,984,405
Cotswold District Council	6,427,142	8,726,750
	18,904,073	**25,527,024**
Third party work	-	-
	18,904,073	**25,527,024**

All turnover is generated from the company's principal activity within the United Kingdom.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

5. Analysis of Cost of Sales

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Salaries and employment on-costs	(16,397,765)	(21,905,564)
Other employment costs	(824,319)	(1,558,548)
Transport costs	(69,727)	(126,820)
Equipment and Materials	(6,918)	(2,745)
	(17,298,729)	**(23,593,677)**

6. Operation Loss

Operating loss is stated after charging the following:

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
External Audit fees	(37,595)	(36,256)

There is no non-audit remuneration for both financial years.

7. Interest Payable

Interest payable and similar costs comprise of bank service charges.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

8. Employees and Directors Remuneration

Salaries and employment on-costs, including directors' remuneration during the year were as follows

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Staff salaries and allowances	(13,207,990)	(17,948,597)
Employer's NI contributions	(1,641,325)	(1,774,016)
Employer's superannuation contributions	(1,548,450)	(2,182,951)
	(16,397,765)	**(21,905,564)**

Redundancy costs arising from the Publica Review were recharged to the member councils in accordance with the agreed arrangements. These costs have been excluded from the above table and are disclosed separately in Note 15 (Exit Costs). The associated recharged income has also been excluded from the reported income figures to ensure consistent treatment of the related expenditure and income.

Remuneration in respect of Publica's directors was as follows:

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Emoluments	(366,498)	(335,622)
Employer's superannuation contributions	(65,137)	(60,065)
	(431,635)	**(395,687)**

Post-employment benefits are accruing for three directors (2024/25: three) under a defined benefit scheme. No directors were members of defined contributions schemes.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

8. Employees and Directors Remuneration – continued

Amounts in respect of the highest paid director are as follows:

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Emoluments	(152,323)	(148,050)
Employer's superannuation contributions	(26,809)	(26,057)
	(179,132)	**(174,107)**

Board members allowances and expenses for the accounting period were as follows:

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Non-Executive Director Allowances	(33,000)	(39,065)
Board Member Expenses	(2,503)	(1,133)
	(35,503)	**(40,198)**

The average monthly number of employees, including directors, during the period was as follows:

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Average number of staff employed	373	516

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

9. Taxation

Tax on profit on Ordinary Activities

Publica Group (Support) Limited has mutual trading status and is therefore not liable to pay tax on trading profits that arise from mutual trade. Publica does not get relief for trading losses arising and from capital allowances on assets provided for their mutual trade. There were no trading activities outside of the mutual trade group in this reporting period.

Publica has received some interest income, which is outside the mutual trade agreement. The government has increased the Corporation Tax from 1 April 2023. Companies with profits between £50,000 and £250,000 will pay tax at the main rate, reduced by a marginal relief. The tax on the interest income for the reporting period is £34,155.

	2025/26 £	2024/25 £
Corporation tax		
Current tax on Profit for the year	34,155	49,905
Adjustments in respect of prior periods	-	(158)
Total tax charge for the year	**34,155**	**49,747**

Factors affecting tax charges for the year

Profit on ordinary activities before tax	34,155	49,747
Profit on ordinary activities multiplied by the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 25% (2024/25: 25%)	8,538	12,437
Add:		
Non taxable income	27,221	38,181
Other movements	(1,604)	(713)
Adjustments in respect of prior periods	-	(158)
Total tax charge for the year	**34,155**	**49,747**

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

10. Tangible Fixed Assets

Publica Group (Support) Limited has no land or property assets. All fixed assets shown below are motor vehicles.

		2025/26	2024/25
		£	£
Cost or valuation			
Balance at 1 April		32,782	53,388
Disposals		(3,548)	(20,606)
	Balance at 31 March	**29,234**	**32,782**
Depreciation			
Balance at 1 April		(32,782)	(53,388)
Charge for the period		-	-
Eliminated on disposal		3,548	20,606
	Balance at 31 March	**(29,234)**	**(32,782)**
Net Book Value 31 March		**(0)**	**(0)**

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

11. Intangible Assets

All of the values below represent the cost of ICT software. Publica Group (Support) Limited has no other intangible assets such as goodwill or trademarks.

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Cost or valuation		
Balance at 1 April	59,000	59,000
Additions	-	-
Disposals	-	-
Balance at 31 March	**59,000**	**59,000**
Amortisation		
Balance at 1 April	(59,000)	(59,000)
Charge for the period	-	-
Eliminated on disposal	-	-
Balance at 31 March	**(59,000)**	**(59,000)**
Net Book Value 31 March	**-**	**-**

12. Debtors – amounts due within one year

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Balances due from Member Councils		
Cheltenham Borough Council	-	800
Forest of Dean District Council	19,718	203,953
West Oxfordshire District Council	17,574	292,174
Cotswold District Council	99,579	212,438
	136,871	709,365
Prepayments	43,948	44,264
Other debtors	21,696	11,790
	202,515	**765,419**

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

13. Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Bank current accounts	34,081	2,086,452
Business call account	1,595,000	-
	1,629,081	**2,086,452**

14. Creditors – amounts due within one year

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Amounts due to Member Councils		
Cheltenham Borough Council	(59,851)	(75,367)
Forest of Dean District Council	(136,159)	(342,982)
West Oxfordshire District Council	(284,351)	(548,399)
Cotswold District Council	(156,179)	(477,882)
	(636,540)	**(1,444,630)**
Trade creditors	(279,580)	(43,077)
Other Tax and Social Security	(351,839)	(351,245)
Corporate Tax	(34,151)	(49,747)
Accumulated Absences	(213,429)	(252,852)
Other creditors	(174,723)	(234,875)
	(1,053,722)	**(931,796)**
	(1,690,262)	**(2,376,426)**

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

15. Exit Cost

The total redundancy costs for the period amount to £648,475, which includes:

- Statutory and /or enhanced redundancy payments
- Payment in Lieu of Notice (PILON)
- Early retirement pension cost for members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

These costs are primarily a direct result of the Publica review. It has been agreed that these costs will be shared among Cotswold District Council, Forest of Dean District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council. There were no costs associated with Cheltenham Borough Council.

	2025/26 £	2024/25 £
Statutory redundancy payments	126,256	220,099
Payment in Lieu of Notice (PILON)	137,642	90,507
Early retirement pension costs	384,577	390,074
	648,475	**700,680**

No provision has been recognised in the reporting period. The provision recognised in 2024/25 (£334,111) related to the agreed termination of the employment contract of a senior member of staff.

	2025/26 £	2024/25 £
Provision	-	334,111
	-	**334,111**

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

16. Related Party Transactions

Services provided by Publica Group (Support) Limited

Publica Group (Support) Limited (the Company), is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee with no share capital.

Cotswold District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Forest of Dean District Council and Cheltenham Borough Council have jointly set up Publica Group (Support) Limited, a wholly owned company, operating with Mutual Trading Status to deliver the services to the Member Councils and to other Members under contracts similar to this Agreement.

During the period the Company supplied services to its partner the Councils totalling £18,904,073 (2024/25 £25,527,024). An analysis of this turnover is provided in note 4 of the financial statements, along with an analysis of the amounts due from each Member Council at year-end in note 12 of the financial statements.

The Company is a Teckal company fulfilling the conditions set out in Regulation 12(4) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The Company is subject to management supervision by the Members. As such, the Company is a body governed by public law as defined in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Publica additionally provides services to the Cheltenham Trust, Cheltenham Borough Homes Limited and UBICO Limited (an environmental services local authority company) via the Council contracts.

Services provided to Publica Group (Support) Limited from the partner Councils

The following services are provided to Publica (for a fee):

- Counter Fraud Support from the Gloucestershire Counter Fraud Unit – who are employed by Cotswold District Council.
- ICT office accommodation (desk fees) from each of the partner Councils.

	2025/26	
Fees From Member Councils	**Licence fees**	**Counter Fraud Unit**
	£	**£**
Cheltenham Borough Council	(20,627)	(584)
Forest of Dean District Council	(76,997)	(3,047)
West Oxfordshire District Council	(138,077)	(5,821)
Cotswold District Council	(157,273)	(4,914)
	(392,974)	**(14,366)**

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

Related Party Transactions (continued)

	2024/25	
Fees From Member Councils	Licence fees	Counter Fraud Unit
	£	£
Cheltenham Borough Council	(20,508)	(1,410)
Forest of Dean District Council	(195,278)	(10,991)
West Oxfordshire District Council	(238,795)	(16,770)
Cotswold District Council	(256,479)	(16,205)
	(711,060)	**(45,376)**

An analysis of amounts due to Member Councils at the year-end is included in note 14 of the financial statements.

Publica Executive Directors and Senior Officers

All Executive Directors and senior officers within Publica have made declarations as to any potential conflicts of interest within their roles within Publica and their private lives. A close family member of a director is employed by the Company. They receive a salary on an arm's length basis, comparable to other employees in similar roles.

A number of Publica staff have the ability to commit to expenditure on behalf of the Council clients, as well as Publica. While a number of these officers have operational responsibility within both the Company and the client clear distinctions remain between the organisations with separate accounting policies, financial rules and general ledger systems to ensure the organisations remain separate and are accounted for as such.

Details of Executive Directors remuneration is included in note 8 of the financial statements.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

17. Financial Instruments

The following categories of financial instrument are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position:

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Financial Assets at Amortised Cost		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,629,081	2,086,452
Debtors	158,567	721,155
Total Financial Assets	**1,787,648**	**2,807,607**
Financial Liabilities at Amortised Cost		
Creditors - Current	(1,304,272)	(1,975,434)
Provisions	-	(334,111)
Total Financial Liabilities	**(1,304,272)**	**(2,309,545)**

All instruments are current and as such the carrying values are deemed a reasonable approximation of fair value. Financial assets include cash & cash equivalents, balances due from Member Councils and other debtors. Financial liabilities include amounts due to Member Councils, overdraft balances, trade creditors, accruals, provisions and other creditors.

The items of income, expense, gains and losses recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income in relation to financial instruments consist of the following:

	2025/26	2024/25
	£	£
Financial Assets at Amortised Cost		
Interest receivable and similar income	143,040	202,473
Interest payable and similar charges	(1,499)	(239)
Net gains for the year	**141,541**	**202,234**

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

18. Licences

Publica Group (Support) Limited makes use of office facilities and ICT equipment from its Member Councils under licence. The licences were originally granted for period of 5 or 10 years commencing on 1 November 2017 and have since been extended further to 31 October 2030.

The future operating licence obligations are as follows:

	2025/26 £	2024/25 £
Not later than one year	335,180	392,974
Later than one year but not greater than five years	1,202,058	229,325
Later than five years	-	-
	1,537,238	**622,299**

19. Reconciliation of Net Movement in Funds to Net Cash flow from Operating Activities

	2025/26 £	2024/25 £
Net movement in funds	-	-
Reversal of interest (receivable) / payable	(141,541)	(202,234)
Reversal of asset depreciation and amortisation	-	-
Reversal of proceeds from disposal of fixed assets	-	-
Reversal of corporation tax	34,155	49,747
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	562,904	(305,391)
(Decrease) / increase in creditors	(720,319)	(1,551,834)
(Decrease) / increase in provisions	(334,111)	334,111
Net cash flow from Operating Activities	**(598,912)**	**(1,675,601)**

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

Net Debt Movement

Publica Group (Support) Limited has no long-term borrowings.

	2025/26	Cash flows	2024/25
	£	£	£
Cash and cash equivalents			
Cash	1,629,081	(457,371)	2,086,452
Bank Overdraft	-	-	-
	1,629,081	**(457,371)**	**2,086,452**
Borrowings	-	-	-
Net debt	**1,629,081**	**(457,371)**	**2,086,452**

20. Pension Schemes

Employees are entitled to participate in a retirement benefit scheme. The Company participates in three schemes:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS') for Gloucestershire and the LGPS for Oxfordshire, both of which are a defined benefit scheme. The scheme is a closed scheme for new employees unless the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 applies.

- Stakeholder pension administered by Royal London. Employee contributions are matched by employer's contributions to a maximum of 7% from 1 April 2025.

The Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire Local Government Pension Schemes

The defined benefit scheme is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme. Publica takes deductions from eligible Publica staff and pays over contributions to the respective Gloucestershire or Oxfordshire LGPS. Contributions are paid to the scheme in accordance with the recommendations of an independent actuary in order that the benefits accruing in respect of current and future service can be met. The risk and rewards for these schemes are held with the host Councils and hence they are accounted for as defined contribution schemes. Consequently, LGPS pension scheme assets and liabilities are all included on the partner Council's balance sheets and are not accounted for as part of these financial statements.

Royal London Stakeholder Pension

The Company offers a Stakeholder pension for employees employed post 1st November 2017. The scheme is administered by Royal London. Employee contributions are matched by employer's contributions (at 5% - 7% currently). The cost of pension contributions is included within these accounts as part of the 'Cost of Sales' line within the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Total contributions payable by the Company for the year amounted to £327,566 (2024/25: £381,608). Contributions totalling £27,550 (2024/25: £24,572) were payable to the scheme at the balance sheet date and are included in creditors.

Docusign Envelope ID: E2E6A01A-72AB-89B3-82E1-6D725ED1E4D4

Notes to the accounts

21. Vehicle Leases

The Company has initiated new operating leases with two companies to lease 12 electric vans for duration of 2 and 3 years. Upon the conclusion of leasing agreements, all the vans will be returned to the lessors. Lease payments under the operating leases are charged to the Statement of comprehensive income over the lease term.

Future minimum lease payment under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2025/26 £	2024/25 £
Not later than one year	35,245	23,133
Later than one year but not greater than five years	40,550	6,870
	75,795	**30,003**

22. Reserves

Profit & loss account
Profit and loss account includes all current and prior period profit and losses.

23. Controlling Parties

The Company is wholly owned by Cotswold District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Forest of Dean District Council, and Cheltenham Borough Council.