



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held at the Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **WEDNESDAY 20 JANUARY 2016 AT 7.00 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Couldrick', written in a cursive style.

Andy Couldrick
Chief Executive
Published on 12 January 2016

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Our Vision

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

Our Priorities

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

The Underpinning Principles

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillors

Norman Jorgensen
(Chairman)
Ken Miall
Bill Soane

Michael Firmager (Vice-
Chairman)
Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
Shahid Younis

Chris Bowring
David Sleight

Substitutes

Mark Ashwell
Alison Swaddle

Lindsay Ferris

Tom McCann

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
19.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.	
20.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2015.	5 - 10
21.		DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest.	
22.		PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice. The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this committee. Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions .	
23.		MEMBER QUESTION TIME To answer any member questions.	
24.	None Specific	REPORT OF THE COMMUTER PARKING TASK AND FINISH GROUP To receive the report of the Commuter Parking Task and Finish Group.	11 - 48

- 25.** None Specific **FLOOD RISK UPDATE REPORT** **49 - 54**
To inform Members of the progress made with the Lead Local Flood Authority's (LLFA) duties under the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 during 2015.
- 26.** None Specific **REVIEW OF EXTERNAL BODIES** **55 - 64**
To consider the discussions to date on this matter, which was originally proposed for a Task and Finish Group but which the Community Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided to take on itself, and to decide how to take it forward.
- 27.** **WORK PROGRAMME** **65 - 70**
To consider the Committee's work programme for future meetings.

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading.

CONTACT OFFICER

Colm Ó Caomhánaigh

Tel

Email

Postal Address

Democratic Services Officer

0118 974 6059

colm.ocaomhanaigh@wokingham.gov.uk

Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2015 FROM 7.00 PM TO 10.00 PM

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Norman Jorgensen (Chairman), Michael Firmager (Vice-Chairman), Chris Bowring, Ken Miall, David Sleight and Alison Swaddle

Other Councillors Present

Councillors: Parry Batth, Tim Holton, Pauline Jorgensen and John Kaiser

Officers Present

Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Secretary

Clare Lawrence, Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services

Matt Davey, Head of Highways and Transport

9. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Bill Soane (substituted by Alison Swaddle) and Shahid Younis.

10. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 October 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Ken Miall declared a personal interest in Item 14, Council Policy on Houses of Multiple Occupation, by virtue of the fact that his family were involved with the Shinfield Players and the Theatre had been mentioned in relation to parking problems in Shinfield. Councillor Miall remained in the meeting during discussions and voted on the matter.

12. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

13. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

14. COUNCIL POLICY ON HOUSES OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

Councillor Miall declared a personal interest in this item.

Claire Lawrence, Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services, introduced two reports that had been circulated. The first dealt with the legislative background to Houses in Multiple Occupations (HMOs). She outlined the different definitions of HMOs under licencing and planning legislation and the different types of 'nuisance'.

The second document outlined Wokingham Borough Council's policy in dealing with problems related to HMOs. In the first instance they try to reach amicable solutions and involve neighbourhood officers in reaching solutions.

She described what would be involved in using Article 4 Directions to increase the Council's control. This would be contrary to general Government policy which is to favour deregulation and it could be quashed by the Secretary of State. She described feedback she has had from other councils regarding use of Article 4 Directions which indicated that

they were more likely to succeed if they were small in scale and it is essential that they are evidence-based. However, the time and resources required are significant and a one-year notice period is required.

In the meantime, she reminded Members that Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) has been sought by the Borough and when that is available it will increase the Council's powers to tackle parking problems which appear to be the main current problem with HMOs.

John Kaiser said that he believed that the numbers of HMOs are likely to increase as rents rise and it becomes more profitable. Parking problems arise because the old regulations on parking provision in areas like Shinfield were inadequate. He believed that some of the green space in Council ownership could be provided for parking but that the Council did not have money to pay for the parking provision.

Members sought clarification on the licencing and planning definitions of HMOs. Clare Lawrence agreed that the definitions left a lot of grey area and there was a great deal of case law involved. She believed that genuine families were easily identifiable but that it can be extremely difficult to know who is living in shared houses and HMOs where, for example, partners may stay occasionally or may be resident.

Michael Firmager pointed out that it is likely to be 18 months before CPE comes in and he asked what can be done in the meantime.

John Kaiser replied that there can be three ways to deal with parking enforcement: by the police, by the management companies and by residents. He said that there was a permit scheme operating for social housing in the Shinfield area.

Chris Bowring asked if it was mainly a problem relating to rented accommodation. Clare Lawrence responded that planning regulations deal with the use of a property and not whether they are owner-occupied or rented.

Alison Swaddle asked if the installation of bollards might help to prevent illegal parking. John Kaiser responded that bollards had their own problems.

Parry Bath, Mayor, thanked the Officer for the report. He said that he had sympathy with the residents of Shinfield who were subject to unhelpful behaviour by some of their neighbours. He noted that WBC had refused planning permission for this development but it was successfully appealed. He believed that the Council should try to stop continuing conversion of properties to HMOs and hold any current applications in abeyance as well as expediting CPE and providing more parking spaces.

The Chairman invited two residents to speak: Ms. Helen Yeo and Ms. Doreen Couzens. They outlined the problem of family homes being converted to five or six bedroom HMOs. They said that there were only 7 licenced HMOs out of 310 properties so they believed that most HMOs are unlicenced.

There was also a problem of people parking in their area in order to avail of the frequent bus service to Reading. In addition, there could be problems around the Shinfield Players Theatre. The residents said that parking could be provided by using a currently derelict road or some of the green space. The Council could make money if they charged for the parking provided.

The Chairman asked if parking was the big issue here. The residents said that there were other more minor problems but agreed that parking was the main concern of residents - in Shinfield and elsewhere. There was some permit parking for social housing but that itself caused an overflow problem.

John Kaiser expressed concern that the result of consultation on a potential Article 4 might be that most residents oppose it, if there are so many HMOs there already. He also asked if the licencing system was working. Residents said that they got no response to emails to licencing staff.

Pauline Jorgensen said that there was a meeting of the Joint Services Review Panel taking place next week which includes licencing and anyone with evidence of poor service should submit it.

John Kaiser suggested that the Parish Council might have the money to pay for the provision of parking and he felt sure that the Borough would be happy to provide the land. He also said that he would work with his enforcement officers to see if anything can be done regarding any unauthorised HMOs. He asked if resources were available to the shared licencing service with West Berkshire to do a test project on licencing of HMOs in Shinfield Park.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted the report and requested that

- 1) The planning and licencing position regarding HMOs in the borough generally and Shinfield Park specifically be monitored and reviewed and that a report be brought to the Committee in six months;
- 2) The Mayor contact the Parish Council with regard to the suggestion that the Borough provide land and the Parish Council fund the provision of parking;
- 3) The Executive Member for Resident Services consider the issue of the licencing of HMOs particularly in the Shinfield Park area.

15. ROAD REPAIRS - IMPACT OF EXPECTED INITIATIVES AROUND CUSTOMER SERVICE AND PUBLIC AND WARD MEMBER ROAD REPAIR NOTIFICATIONS.

Matt Davey, Head of Highways and Transport, described the Council's approach to reactive and planned road maintenance. He said that all roads are inspected at least once a year - many more often. Inspectors make judgements and place orders for works - around 7,000 orders per year.

The contract with the road maintenance service provider defines various periods for work to be carried out with a premium paid for speedier response. Their work is inspected afterwards - on a random basis for smaller repairs.

Members related different experiences of the response when they send emails about road problems. Some were happy with the response, others were not. Pauline Jorgensen asked if the inspection schedules could be circulated to councillors so that they could assist the inspectors in identification of problems. The Chairman asked if Members could be notified of the inspector for their area.

John Kaiser told the meeting that Members will be given an email address the day following this meeting to use for reporting problems.

Members questioned the quality of some of the repairs. Matt Davey said that there had been a problem with the quality of some works done by the contractor. As a result there

will be a reorganisation of the team with design and supervision work separated. He is optimistic that there will be an improvement.

He told the meeting that an independent survey indicated that the public perception was that the situation had improved. The number and value of claims against the Council had also declined.

Pauline Jorgensen asked if the information was available as to how many repairs were requested and how many were actually done. Matt Davey said that he could get those figures.

Ken Miall asked if paths are included in inspections. Matt Davey confirmed that paths are covered as well as any problems with hedges, electrical lines etc. He said that sometimes utility companies need to be contacted regarding problems.

Members asked for clarification on the involvement of utility companies in road repairs. John Kaiser replied that it is controlled by a licencing system which also gives the Council the opportunity to coordinate different works on the same piece of road. He said that he obtained agreement that S106 funds can be used for road repairs. He would also like to see some funds from the New Homes Bonus used for this purpose.

Some Members asked if it would be better to clearly define what constitutes a 'pot hole' that needs to be repaired to ensure consistency.

Matt Davey told the meeting that all A, B and C roads are examined by a machine. For new estates the Council specifies the road surface and checks that the developer builds them to the required standard but older roads could be substandard.

Members also questioned why the predicted length of road works always seems to be too optimistic.

Matt Davey told Members that there are four inspectors and he will email them details of the inspector for their area.

RESOLVED: It was agreed that

- 1) The Executive Member for Planning and Highways will ensure that an email will be sent to Members on the day following this meeting to provide them with a single email address for road repair issues.
- 2) The Head of Highways and Transport will email Members of the details of the road inspector for their area.
- 3) The Head of Highways and Transport will consider how to keep Members informed of the work programme and will make a proposal to the March meeting of this committee.
- 4) The Committee will review this matter again in July 2016 to judge the success of the latest changes in the road repairs system.

16. WORK PROGRAMME

The draft Work Programme was discussed.

It was agreed to add the report from the Commuter Parking Task and Finish Group to the agenda for January.

The Secretary informed the Members that legal opinion is still awaited on the question of the Part 2 Report on the Review of the Town Centre Regeneration Scheme.

With regard to the Review of Outside Bodies Appointments Members clarified that they wanted a list of such bodies and how much funding is allocated to them by the Council.

Pauline Jorgensen suggested that the Committee review Procurement in May after the new regulations have been implemented. She agreed to draw up draft terms of reference for such a review.

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**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Report and recommendations arising from a
review by the
Commuter Parking Task and Finish Group**

Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

December 2015

Task and Finish Group Membership

Councillor David Sleight (Chairman)
Councillor Lindsay Ferris
Councillor Michael Firmager
Councillor John Jarvis
Councillor Norman Jorgensen
Councillor Malcolm Richards
Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

Support:

Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Democratic Services Officer

Governance and Improvements Services
Wokingham Borough Council
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1WQ
Tel: 0118 9746059
colm.ocaomhanaigh@wokingham.gov.uk
website: www.wokingham.gov.uk

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Executive Summary

The number of passenger using rail services has doubled over the last 20 years and this growth in demand shows no signs of abating with travel from Wokingham increasing by nearly 6% over the last 12 months with only some of the new housing stock occupied. Planned enhancements to rail services, most notably from Twyford, are likely to increase the demand for travel further.

Parking is limited at stations and, with the exception of Winnersh Triangle, the capacity of car parks has largely remained unchanged. Railway owned car parks exist only at Crowthorne, Wokingham, Twyford and Wargrave with the responsibility for their operation being with the train operating company. No railway owned car parks exist at Winnersh, Winnersh Triangle or Earley stations. The shortfall in station parking and the charges therein results in commuter parking in residential roads. While this has been a particular problem in Twyford, it is now replicated at other locations. Planned additional housing in Wokingham Borough and in Bracknell Forest is considered likely to increase pressures on parking near railway stations.

Policy direction including that in the Borough's Local Transport Plan encourages modal shift from cars to more sustainable transport including rail. A 3 pronged approach to the problems posed by commuter parking is suggested: alternative provision of access to stations by cycle, bus or parking provision; effective enforcement of restrictions by the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement; and, finally, to continue to be consistent in the application of parking restrictions. We suggest and recommend that some form of metered parking on public roads near railway stations should be considered.

There are no easy answers to providing more parking at or near railway stations but, where practical, car parking capacity should be enhanced. Recommendations are made for the 6 railway stations in the Borough plus Crowthorne as to how some additional parking could be achieved. Twyford is both the most difficult to identify solutions for and the most critical that solutions are implemented if that station is to fulfil its full potential. It is recommended that all parties meet to identify possible solutions.

The report accepts the important role of connecting buses if overall journey times can be competitive and connectational reliability achieved. We had no evidence that a "Park & Ride & Ride" solution was practical or operated successfully anywhere in the UK. Consequently it is recommended that professional consultancy advice is obtained on this concept. Finally, it is recommended that Wokingham Borough should be indifferent as to whether users of the expanded car park at Winnersh Triangle travel by bus or train and charges for car parking should be the same for both bus and train passengers.

List of recommendations.

Recommendation on pricing of Council operated car parks (7.5)

Council run car parks near railway stations primarily required to service local needs should have a time restriction or a pricing mechanism to discourage their use by commuters.

Recommendations on Parking Provision (8.6)

- We support the decision to seek to implement CPE.
- That the Council considers some form of metered parking in selected roads near railway stations which are used for commuter parking where road safety issues allow.

Recommendations on Active Transport (9.5)

- That the Council should continue to work with the TOCs to increase and improve cycle storage at all stations.
- That the suggested cycle routes from Woodley and Charvil to Twyford Station should be progressed.

Recommendation (10.7)

The Council should maintain a watching brief on Smart Card development.

Recommendations at Crowthorne Station (11.9)

- That the Council requests that Bracknell Forest Council considers removing the 2 hour time limit on 16 spaces in the car park on Dukes Ride at the entrance to Wellington Business Park.
- That GWR explores with Wellington College the possible availability of a small part of Derby Field to expand the station car park at Crowthorne.
- That Bracknell Forest Council is asked to work with GWR to enhance the provision of cycle storage at Crowthorne Station.

Recommendations at Wokingham Station (11.13)

- That SWT is asked to ensure that the design for partial decking in the Wokingham station car park allows further expansion.
- That the Council considers, in conjunction with the bus operators, the viability and reliability of through bus services from Arborfield to Twyford Station via Wokingham.
- That the Council works with SWT to enhance the provision of cycle storage at Wokingham Station.

Recommendations at Winnersh Station (11.16)

- That the Council explores the possibility of a joint use car park for Forest School and the station and, were that possible, how parking would be managed.
- That the Council works with SWT to enhance the provision of cycle storage at Winnersh Station.

Recommendations at Winnersh Triangle Station (11.22)

- That the Council equalises charges for the car park at Winnersh Triangle for both bus and train users.

- That the Council works with SWT to enhance the provision of cycle storage at Winnersh Triangle Station.

Recommendations at Earley Station (11.27)

- That the Council works with Earley and Woodley town councils to identify options to increase the availability of car parking near Earley Station including some form of metered parking on selected roads.
- That the Council works with SWT to enhance the provision of cycle storage at Earley Station.

Recommendation at Wargrave Station (11.32)

- That the Council, with Wargrave Parish Council, examines the option of removing the double yellow lines on Station Road between the station parking area and the public parking.

Recommendations at Twyford Station (11.41)

- That all parties including the Council, GWR and Twyford Parish Council work together to ensure that residents of the Borough are able to access rail services at Twyford.
- That the Council seeks professional consultancy advice on the practicality of Park & Ride services and connecting buses to serve Twyford.
- That Bracknell Forest Council is asked what plans, if any, they have for connecting buses from their new housing in the Binfield area.

Introduction.

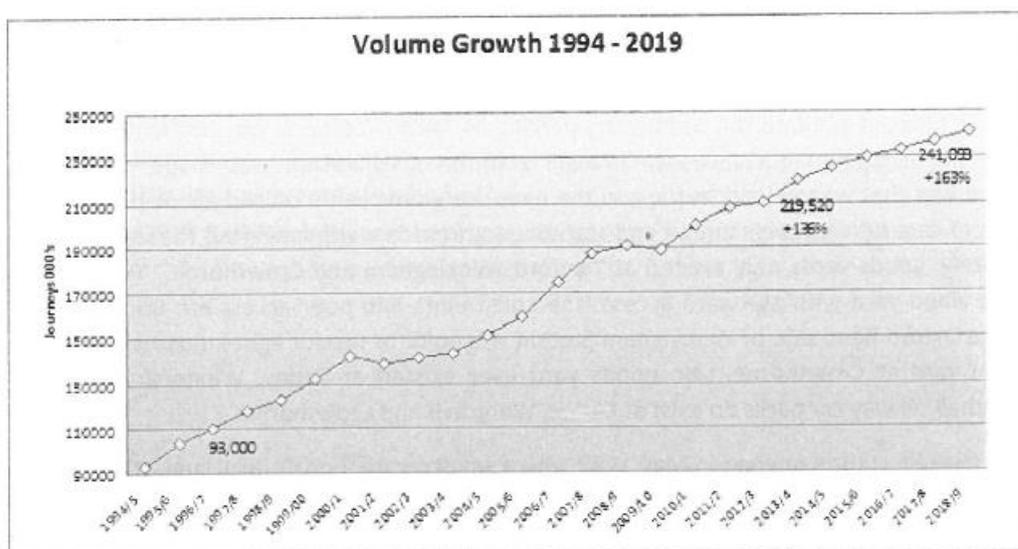
1.0 The suggestion for a scrutiny review was submitted by Cllr Lindsay Ferris primarily to consider the problems near Twyford Station where commuter parking has been an issue for a number of years. It was agreed that the scope of the review would be widened to consider commuter parking issues at all six railway stations within the Borough as well as Crowthorne Station which lies just outside the Borough boundary in Bracknell Forest but where the parking issues are in Wokingham Borough.

Background.

2.1 **Demand for Rail Travel.** Demand for rail travel has roughly doubled since privatisation in 1995 with the growth in demand showing no signs of abating, growing at about 3% to 4% per year. The growth in the demand for rail travel is illustrated by the graph below which shows Wessex Volume Growth, the Wessex Route being basically the lines into Waterloo Station.



Wessex Volume Growth



Volume growth expressed as number of journeys.

2.2 **Planned Enhancements of Train Services.** As a result of the burgeoning demand for rail travel, plans exist for the enhancement of services. Better quality trains, journey time reductions, extra seating in trains, frequency enhancements and additional journey opportunities are all expected to further drive demand for rail travel and for access to railway stations. These enhancements are described in the following paragraphs.

2.2.1 **Services through Twyford to Reading and Paddington.** Services through Twyford will see significant change over the next 6 years. Twyford already enjoys a very popular peak service with fast services to Paddington that will remain in the timetable. There is also a 4 trains per hour (tph) off peak service between Reading and Paddington. Electric services should begin in May 2017 with a revised timetable, followed by the full Crossrail service through Twyford to Reading in December 2019 with another timetable recast. Although Crossrail will offer through services under London, as it is expected to be an all stations service the principal effect, as far as Twyford is concerned, will be to transform the eastern connections from Paddington. GWR expects to operate a 2 tph semi-fast residual service (to complement 2 tph Crossrail services) from December 2019.

2.2.2 The Western Rail Link to Heathrow. The Western Rail Link is expected to open in December 2021 to include 2 tph calling at Twyford. There is to be a further consultation on the Western Rail Link in February 2016.

2.2.3 The Henley-on-Thames Branch. GWR has announced that the branch will operate as a self-contained electrified shuttle service from December 2017 with the withdrawal of the through services from Henley to Paddington (2 up in the morning, 3 down in the evening). It is planned to increase the branch frequency to 2 tph (so allowing connections into the GWR semi-fast residual service) and retain stops on all trains at Wargrave and Shiplake if the timetable allows.

2.2.4 Reading to Gatwick Airport. GWR plans to double the frequency of the Reading to Gatwick Airport service to 2 tph from May 2017, to complement the current hourly stopping service from Reading to Redhill.

2.2.5 Reading to Waterloo.

2.2.5.1 Following work to upgrade the traction power and extend the London bound platform at Wokingham Station, 10 car trains are to be introduced on these services during 2017. Platforms will not be extended at Earley, Winnersh Triangle and Winnersh Stations with Selective Door Opening applying. These 10 car trains will have, in total, 18 more seats than the current 8 car trains as they have 2+2 seating rather than the current 2+3 seating. Consequently these trains will offer significantly more capacity, with train capacity defined as the number of standard class seats plus the room for standing where the allowance is 4 standing passengers per square metre.

2.2.5.2 The recently published (August 2015) Wessex Route Study which has now been 'adopted', meaning confirmed by the rail regulator - the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), states that the franchise specification process will determine the services providing best value in 2019 but suggests that Wokingham, during the off peak, will be served by 2 'fast' trains per hour via Richmond that "will be approximately 4 minutes faster than now" plus 2 'semi-fast' service per hour running via the Hounslow Loop which will form the services calling at Earley, Winnersh Triangle and Winnersh.

2.2.5.3 As currently planned, journey times will remain uncompetitive and slow compared with those from Twyford. This will be represented in Wokingham Borough Council's response to the Department of Transport's consultation, issued in November 2015, on the replacement South Western Franchise which is due to commence in mid-2017.

2.3 Housing Numbers.

2.3.1 The Council's current Local Plan concentrates new housing in 4 Strategic Development Locations, 2 of which are around Wokingham town adding some 4,000 homes or about 12,000 to its population. Although the rate of completion has been fairly slow so far, this rate will pick up significantly over the next few years with well over 1,000 completions expected annually. The SHMA allocation for the Borough for the period

beyond 2026 is 856 per year. Some of these new residents will wish to travel by train adding to the demand for rail travel and for parking at or near railway stations.

2.3.2 Our neighbouring authority, Bracknell Forest, will build about 1,200 homes in Crowthorne with the remaining 6,000 or so in an arc round the north of Bracknell adding some 18,000 residents. Again, this is expected to add demand at adjacent stations for travel and for parking. This new housing in the Binfield area is likely to add to the pressures on Twyford Station as services from that station will offer shorter journey times, better frequencies and greater connectivity compared with services from Bracknell.

2.4 Responsibility for Stations.

2.4.1 Ownership of railway land is vested in Network Rail as the infrastructure company. However, Network Rail only manages some of the largest stations such as Reading, Waterloo and Paddington. For other stations, the Train Operating Company (TOC) that runs most services at a station is normally appointed the Station Facilities Operator (SFO). For stations in Wokingham Borough, GWR is the SFO for Twyford, Wargarve and Crowthorne (in Bracknell Forest.) SWT is the SFO for Wokingham, Winnersh, Winnersh Triangle and Earley. The SFO is granted a station operating lease by Network Rail which includes station buildings, platforms, car parks and non-operational railway land.

2.4.2 The SFO has the responsibility for operating any station car parks and for developing the railway business. Significant changes have to be agreed with Network Rail. Where a SFO wishes to improve a station forecourt by, for example, pedestrianisation, any parking places lost have to be added back or permission sought from the ORR to allow a reduction in parking places.

2.4.3 Station car park income forms part of the financial projections when franchises are awarded by the Department for Transport (DfT).

2.4.4 The 'station' car parks at Winnersh Triangle and Earley are not on railway land and are therefore not operated by SWT but are Wokingham Borough Council run car parks.

2.5 Car Parking Capacity and Charges. A table showing the current capacities at station car parks, including those at Winnersh Triangle and Earley, across the Borough is as follows:

Stations in Wokingham Borough and Crowthorne

Station	TOC	Usage	Interchange	Car Parking	Peak Cost	Cycle Storage
Crowthorne	GWR	303,816	Nil	42	£2.70	29
Earley	SWT	639,888	Nil	46	£4.00	67
Twyford	GWR	1,369,126	638,123	324	£6.10	c100
Wargrave	GWR	95,910	Nil	30	Free	2
Winnersh	SWT	520,922	Nil	0	n/a	0
Winnersh Triangle	SWT	490,878	Nil	390	£4.00	5
Wokingham	SWT	2,344,598	164,264	414	£7.50	80

Notes:

1. Figures are entries and exits combined for 2014/15, the most recent data available from the ORR.
2. No station is gated so there may be an element of ticketless travel.
3. Station car parks at Earley and Winnersh Triangle are operated by Wokingham Borough Council.

Terms of Reference.

3.0 The Terms of Reference for the Review are at Annex A. In summary they are as follows:

- To consider the desirability of car parking keeping pace with the demand for rail travel and how that might be provided.
- To consider the balance of parking restrictions and their enforcement when weighed against encouraging modal shift from cars.
- To consider feeder buses to railways stations and, in particular, orbital bus services as suggested in Wokingham Borough Council's adopted Park & Ride Strategy.
- To enquire on progress towards the targets for active transport in LTP3.
- To consider and understand the effect of commuter parking on residents near railway stations.

Meetings.

4.0 The Task & Finish Group met 8 times to consider our work. One of these meetings comprised a tour of the 7 stations and their surrounding roads to be able to see and assess the problems of commuter parking for ourselves. This tour was on a Wednesday not at half term (as demand for parking is greatest from Mondays through to Thursdays) and, fortuitously, on a wet morning which minimises cycling and increases the demand for car parking.

4.1 The Group took evidence from relevant Council Officers and the Executive Member for Highways and Transport. The Group also met with Tom Pierpoint, the Regional Development Manager of GWR and Richard Tyndall, transport consultant to the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP. Evidence was also taken from a number of residents and the Henley Branch User Group and the Wargrave User Group. We are grateful to all who gave their time to discuss this issue with us.

4.3 Letters were also written to the MPs for Bracknell, Maidenhead and Wokingham advising them of the review, outlining changes affecting stations within their constituencies, acknowledging that the task of addressing the problems lay primarily with the local authority but, nevertheless, invited input and views. John Redwood MP responded with a considered and thought provoking reply and that is reproduced at Annex B. Theresa May MP also replied stating, inter alia, that "Improving car parking facilities at Twyford is vital.." A copy of this letter is at Annex C.

Policies.

5.0 We explored what Government, Department for Transport, Network Rail, Thames Valley Berkshire LEP and Wokingham Borough Council policies were in place to give guidance on the provision of commuter parking.

5.1 **John Redwood MP** informed us that the Government had amended parking policy and had abandoned the idea to restrict parking provision as a way of reducing car usage. The Government recognised that cars are generally not in use and when not in use, these cars should not be on the highway as road capacity is generally restricted and highway space should not be used for parking. The Government is also committed to encouraging modal shift to rail but parking at or near railway stations needs to be provided to help encourage this.

5.2 **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** states that *“plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people.”* and *“The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice of how they travel.”*

5.3 **Thames Valley Berkshire LEP Strategic Economic Plan** states that *“the transport and communications infrastructure...is therefore essential (and it is necessary) to invest in it and also to encourage local sustainable transport networks that promote active travel on foot, on bicycle and on public transport.”*

5.4 **Network Rail** in its work on the Western Route Study with the final report published in August 2015 specifically excluded car parking provision from that study (with much protest from local authority representatives attending Stakeholder briefings) merely giving the view that *“car parking provision at or close to stations will need to keep pace with growing rail demand, as will highway access to stations. Good integration and co-ordination with local transport such as...bus...services and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists are equally important if rail travel is to achieve its maximum potential.”*

5.5 **Wokingham Borough Council’s** policies are contained in our adopted Local Transport Plan 3 which covers the period to 2026 and states that *“We will encourage alternative modes of travel to the use of private vehicles....and reduce the quantities of CO2 produced”, “We will increase opportunities to walk or cycle to work”, “To work with bus and rail operators to improve public transport services to increase their overall use”* and quite simply *“Encouraging modal shift.”*

Addressing the Terms of Reference.

6.0 In addressing the terms of reference, we decided to address them in a slightly different order as follows:

- To consider and understand the effects of commuter parking on residents near railway stations.
- To consider the balance of parking restrictions and their enforcement when weighed against encouraging modal shift from cars.
- To enquire on progress towards the targets for active transport in LTP 3.
- To consider feeder buses to railway stations and, in particular, orbital bus services as suggested in Wokingham Borough's Park & Ride Strategy.
- To consider the desirability of the provision of car parking keeping pace with the demand for rail travel and how that might be provided.

6.1 Where we refer to specific stations these comments are, for the most part, concentrated under the last heading.

To consider and understand the effects of commuter parking on residents near railway stations.

7.0 We met with various residents on Wednesday 4th November who described the problems resulting from cars parked in residential roads that were not designed to have lines of cars along them. This appeared to be all day commuter parking, shopper parking, cars waiting to meet people from trains and, in the case of Crowthorne, it is suspected that roads are being used for some long term car parking for people using Gatwick Airport. Some cars obstruct pavements (which is addressed by our Parking on Verges and Pavements Policy). The problem is perhaps more apparent with open plan estates where parking in full view of residents' houses is considered a particular nuisance. But it is the road safety aspects that cause most concern and we realise that this perception of risk is subjective but, nevertheless, we accept that unconstrained parking adds to the risk in residential roads.

7.1 We also recognise that there is a temptation on behalf of motorists to opt for on-street parking to avoid parking charges but this is not universal, we have seen motorists touring the station car park in Twyford vainly seeking a spare parking place and many other car parks at stations are effectively full. In such circumstances, potential rail users have little choice other than to find on-street parking if they are using cars to reach railway stations and wish to continue their journeys by rail.

7.2 We were also advised of the situation in Wargrave, but this may apply elsewhere, where Station Road is used for commuter parking but is also the only road in lower Wargrave where all day parking is possible without paying parking charges. The parish church in Wargrave Church is also on Station Road and weekday weddings or funerals result in parking chaos.

7.3 We heard of the situation in Twyford, which may also apply elsewhere, where commuters are using car parks such as the Polehampton car park for all day parking because of the availability of spaces and it being cheaper than the station car park, to the detriment of other users. We recommend that Council car parks specifically designed to service local needs such as shopping should either have time restriction or a pricing mechanism to discourage their use by commuters.

7.4 The membership of this Task & Finish Group was drawn from members from across the Borough who brought their own knowledge and experiences of the issues.

7.5 **Recommendation on pricing of Council operated car parks.** Council run car parks near railway stations primarily required to service local needs should have a time restriction or a pricing mechanism to discourage their use by commuters.

To consider the balance of parking restrictions and their enforcement when weighed against encouraging modal shift.

8.0 The relevant policies quoted above all suggest that modal shift from car to more sustainable transport is to be encouraged. In this case, we are considering transfer to rail and we note that plans exist to have electric passenger services operating on all our rail routes with electric trains being pollution free at the point of use.

8.1 We do not interpret this wish to encourage modal shift as meaning a free for all when it comes to parking on residential roads. Instead we consider that there needs to be a 3 pronged approach: alternative provision of access to stations, a means of effective enforcement of parking and, finally, consistent application of parking restrictions where it is deemed necessary to impose them. These will be considered in more detail in general terms and, later, how these might be applied at individual stations.

8.2 **Alternative provision of access to stations.** The provision of access to stations covers all modes of travel including improved walking routes with enhanced lighting, improved and new cycle routes to station with secure storage facilities of cycles, feeder or connecting bus services and the provision of more car parking space where it is practical and cost effective to do so. All the railway stations, with the exception of Winnersh Triangle which opened in 1987, were constructed in the early to mid-19th century. Consequently they pre-date motor cars by some distance and urban development makes parking provision challenging. This is most acute at Winnersh Station which has no dedicated station parking. A Park & Ride facility remote from a station may have its place, particularly if providing additional parking at the station is difficult to achieve. However, we are unaware of any operational “Park & Ride & Ride” elsewhere in the UK but this concept is explored in greater detail later in this report. We also explored with the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP possible funding of parking schemes to be told that the essential question to be addressed is “how does it encourage economic growth?” For any proposal to be considered for funding by the LEP, this needs to be answered positively.

8.3 **Effective Enforcement of Parking.** The enforcement of parking in Wokingham Borough is currently the responsibility of Thames Valley Police who do not prioritise this task. We consider that a more effective means of parking enforcement is necessary and that the decision to apply for the authority to implement Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) is both correct and inevitable. We understand that CPE will take at least 18 months to implement.

8.4 **Consistent application of Parking Restrictions.** Commuter parking on residential roads almost inevitably brings calls for parking restrictions to prevent or curtail that parking. As parking restrictions have an implementation cost, have to be enforced to be effective, urbanise the street scene and may penalise residents in their own roads we consider that any further parking restrictions need to continue to be implemented on a formal objective basis Borough-wide to ensure consistency of application. This objective basis should take account of all the factors including road width, traffic, demand for parking, the off road parking available to residents and the general street scene and be made against a

presumption that parking restriction should not be applied except where considered necessary.

8.5 Metered Parking near Railway Stations. We consider that it is inevitable that rail commuters using cars to access railway stations will seek to use free on road parking if that is available and convenient rather than pay sums ranging from £7.50 at Wokingham to £2.70 per day (peak charges) at Crowthorne to use station car parks. Any shortfall in parking capacity in station car parks will also drive motorists to then seek on road parking. We consider that it would not be unreasonable to introduce metered parking on certain roads where parking is prevalent and where road safety issues permit its continuance. Charges could reflect the distance from the station and the charges in the appropriate station car parks. Following the introduction of CPE, regular enforcement of parking restrictions will be introduced; complementary to that could be regulation of metered parking in certain roads. We consider that this would give added legitimacy to this parking provision as well as a funding stream for enhancing parking provision.

8.6 Recommendations on Parking Provision.

- We support the decision to seek to implement CPE.
- That the Council considers some form of metered parking in selected roads near railway stations which are used for commuter parking where road safety issues allow.

To enquire on progress towards the targets for active transport in LTP 3.

9.0 The Local Transport Plan is a statutory requirement and is the third such plan produced, hence LTP 3. This covers the same time period as the Borough's Local Plan that is 2011 – 2026 and include an active travel goal as follows: *"To work with partners to promote walking and cycling as a health-enhancing physical activity for all our residents through providing:*

- *Connected, convenient, safe and signed pedestrian networks across the Borough to enhance existing networks.*
- *New cycleways integrated with the existing cycle network.*
- *Improved cycle parking at stations, businesses and schools."*

9.1 We heard how Wokingham Borough had been successful with bids to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund which had helped fund the provision of cycle lanes on the A329 Reading – Bracknell corridor complementing other significant cycle lanes such as that along Lower Earley Way.

9.2 Provision of additional cycle storage, using double stack racks, has been achieved in conjunction with GWR and SWT at Twyford and at Wokingham Stations with match funding achieving early installation.

9.3 The Borough Council prepares Travel Plans for new homes in the SDLs to inform new residents of the availability of public transport as well as walking and cycling opportunities. Measuring cycle usage objectively is difficult but our modal share for cycle use, in a Borough with one of the highest ratios of car ownership, is about 7% compared to a 2% national average.

9.4 We accept that success in encouraging active transport is difficult to measure but note that the layout of the SDLs is designed to encourage this. We consider that the aim should be to further improve secure cycle storage facilities at railway stations and improve, where practical, the access routes to them. Twyford Village Partnership has suggested that the Borough's aspiration to have a cycle route from Woodley to Twyford Station should be progressed together with another route from Charvil to Twyford Station. We would, in principle, support these suggestions.

9.5 Recommendations on Active Transport.

- That the Council should continue to work with the TOCs to increase and improve cycle storage at all stations.
- That the suggested cycle routes from Woodley and Charvil to Twyford Station should be progressed.

To consider feeder buses to railway stations and, in particular, the orbital bus services suggested in Wokingham Borough's Park & Ride Strategy.

10.0 We note that events have moved on somewhat since the Terms of Reference were drafted and various strands of work are in progress seeking to introduce and improve bus services to stations, particularly Twyford. For example, a meeting took place with bus companies at Shute End towards the end of November to brief them on developments within the Borough and specifically on future train services from Twyford and to invite proposals for services.

10.1 The Borough's Park & Ride Strategy adopted in June 2013 stated that: "*Orbital bus services should be considered in the longer term, in order to connect destinations and interchange locations not linked by the main corridors. These services would provide better connections to interchange locations such as Twyford Station.*" Two corridors were proposed for consideration:

- Reading Green Park Station (to open in 2018) through the south of the M4 SDL to Winnersh Triangle then to Twyford Station.
- Arborfield Garrison SDL through Wokingham to Twyford Station.

10.2 We consider that these were 'concept suggestions' with no details provided of routes, frequencies, hours of operation, stopping patterns, journey times or fares. That Park & Ride paper, we suggest, understated the problems of car parking at Twyford when it said "*The station already suffers from some car parking related problems*" suggesting "*a more immediate solution would be to increase the size of the existing car park.*" As the challenge of significantly enhancing the capacity of the station car park seems to be intractable, the provision of some feeder bus service that could also serve as a Park & Ride service must be an urgent requirement to be addressed. We deal with possible services to stations in detail individually in the section following.

10.3 We were informed that the procedure to be followed by a private operator was that an application had to be made to operate a service to the Traffic Commissioners and, when approved, the operator had a legal requirement to provide that service with any variation needing approval by the Traffic Commissioners.

10.4 The Council can commission services and a tender process is used. Services can be part commercial, part supported with the Council 'buying' additional services, for example off peak services or to extend operating hours. Services can also be supported by developers' contribution (either S106 or CIL) and this may be used to introduce services to the SDLs.

10.5 We note that services have been introduced to the bus stops at Wokingham Station with the 121, 122, 128 and 145 calling (although the 145 has one return journey on Tuesdays only). We also note that the 126, 128 and 129 call at Winnersh and Twyford Stations but none of these services are specifically designed to meet trains and there is no element of through or smart ticketing. Were specific feeder buses to run to Twyford, GWR has indicated that some form of through ticketing should be possible.

10.6 **Smart Ticketing.** We consider that there should be no question of Wokingham Borough Council attempting to introduce its own smart ticketing system. We are aware of the significant expenditure by ITSO Ltd (and other organisations) with little tangible result. But the Council should keep abreast of developments in this field and seek to join a tried and tested system.

10.7 **Recommendation.** The Council should maintain a watching brief on Smart Card development.

To consider the desirability of car parking provision keeping pace with the demand for rail travel and how that might be provided.

11.0 We now turn to the fundamental question of car parking provision at or near railway stations and do not, for a moment, consider that this can be easily resolved. There are a host of factors making this difficult including the short term nature of TOC franchises, the availability of spare land in an urban environment, making a business case for any expansion of car parking and then finding the funding for it. Nevertheless solutions do need to be found, with Twyford Station being clearly the prime example of a station possibly failing “*to achieve its maximum potential*” – which is a mini-quotation from Network Rail’s Western Route Study.

11.1 We also note that parking provision is insufficient at all our railway stations now, with the possible exception of Winnersh Triangle, and that demand shortfall needs to be addressed first and only then should the further requirement for car parking keeping pace with the roughly 4% annual compound growth for rail travel apply. This really is a classic case of “predict and supply”, only here there is a reluctance to predict and an inability (in most cases) to supply.

11.2 We will now deal in turn with our railway stations in the following order – Crowthorne, Wokingham, Winnersh, Winnersh Triangle, Earley, Wargrave and last (but certainly not least) Twyford. We do not attempt to put forward exact solutions but merely indicate how we consider the problems at each station might be approached.

Crowthorne Station.

11.3 Crowthorne is a GWR operated station with an estimated usage figure for 2014/15 (the latest data available) of 303,816 Entries & Exits as published by the ORR. There is a small station car park on the west side of the station operated by GWR with 42 spaces with a peak charge of £2.70 with off peak charges from 11am. The train service is basically 1 tph provided by the Reading – Redhill stopping service with augmentation during the peak hours. Departures are about xx43 for Reading and xx19 for Guildford and Redhill.

11.4 The former station building with forecourt is on the east or Guildford side of the station but is leased by Network Rail to a beauty salon who have parking rights on the forecourt although they have to provide access to a car repair business which is also on leased Network Rail land. The beauty salon seems to have a relaxed attitude to ‘meeters and greeters’ using their car park to meet passengers from the Reading direction. We suggest that a watching brief is maintained on the future use of that land and the possibility, at some stage, that it could become available for station parking.

11.5 Bracknell Forest plans to add about 1,250 homes to Crowthorne all over a mile distant from the station. Wokingham Borough has approved a planning application for about 110 homes about the same distance from the station. As this is not within reasonable walking distance, this will add to the pressures on parking at Crowthorne Station. Surrey County Council commissioned Arup Ltd to carry out a North Downs Line Rail Study that identified that parking provision at Crowthorne needed to be enhanced and also

recommended that the stopping service from Guildford to Reading (including a Crowthorne stop) be increased to 2 tph. This remains an aspiration but may be delivered in future timetables.

11.6 The travel plan for the development of the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) site (with 1,000 homes) proposed increasing the frequency of the 122 bus service, that currently runs at irregular intervals between Wokingham via Finchampstead to Crowthorne, to an hourly service and extending it along Dukes Ride to Crowthorne Station although without any detail of where the bus might turn, sit and what trains it was meant to connect with. Therefore more work is required on this proposal by Bracknell Forest Council to make it a practical and useful connection.

11.7 One immediate relief lies in the hands of Bracknell Forest Council as there is currently a free to use car park with 27 spaces on Dukes Ride at the entrance to Wellington Business Park about 200m from the station which is primarily there to serve the Station Parade shops but has a 2 hour waiting limit (enforced by Bracknell Forest's CPE). There are rarely more than about 3 cars in that car park which suggests that it is underutilised. We suggest that the 'short side' with about 9 spaces plus 2 disabled bays could be maintained at the current 2 hour limit with the time restriction removed on the remaining 16 spaces. We recommend a formal request to Bracknell Forest Council for this change to be implemented.

11.8 Crowthorne Parish Council informed us that they understood that Wellington College may be minded to consider the transfer of part of what is known as Derby Field, adjacent to the existing station car park, to allow the possible expansion of capacity in the station car park. This could allow the access, currently close to the overbridge approach and at an awkward angle, could be resited but that is within Bracknell Forest. GWR indicated that they would be interested in negotiating directly with Wellington College on this and a contact has been forwarded to allow this to take place.

11.9 **Recommendations at Crowthorne Station.**

- That the Council requests that Bracknell Forest Council considers removing the 2 hour time limit on 16 spaces in the car park on Dukes Ride at the entrance to Wellington Business Park.
- That GWR explores with Wellington College the possible availability of a small part of Derby Field to expand the station car park at Crowthorne.
- That Bracknell Forest Council is asked to work with GWR to enhance the provision of cycle storage at Crowthorne Station.

Wokingham Station.

11.10 Wokingham is a SWT operated station with usage figures of 2,344,598 plus 164,264 interchangers and is thus the Borough's busiest station. Following the construction of the Station Link Road, the SWT run car park has a total capacity of 414 spaces with a £7.50 peak charge with off peak rates applying after 4pm. The train service is currently 2 tph to Waterloo, 1 tph to Gatwick Airport and 1 tph to Redhill combining to give a 4 tph service to and from Reading. There are additional services run during peak hours and GWR has

announced plans to run an extra service to Gatwick Airport per hour from May 2017 so raising the total to and from Reading to 5 tph. The car park at Wokingham is deemed to be at about capacity and SWT has announced that the car park will be decked in the latter half of 2016 to increase the capacity by about 100 spaces with the work being carried out under Permitted Development.

11.11 In his submission to us, John Redwood MP made some excellent points that parking at the station needs to keep pace with housing development around the town and, ideally, with the enhancement of the service to Gatwick Airport, secure long term parking should be available. We will make the point to SWT when we meet with their Stakeholder Manager that the planned decking should allow further expansion to be readily added on so allowing the capacity of the car park to be increased beyond the additional 100 places.

11.12 The possible 'orbital bus service' from the Arborfield SDL to Twyford Station could also serve Wokingham Station but this will need very careful scheduling to ensure reliability and reasonable connections at both Wokingham and Twyford Stations. Routeing of buses over the Barkham Road level crossing is likely to become more difficult with any frequency enhancement of the train service. Because of this we recommend consideration as to whether a through service is possible compared with decoupling the services to, say, an Arborfield to Wokingham service and a separate Wokingham – Twyford Station service.

11.13 **Recommendations at Wokingham Station.**

- That SWT is asked to ensure that the design for partial decking in the Wokingham station car park allows further expansion.
- That the Council considers, in conjunction with the bus operators, the viability and reliability of through bus services from Arborfield to Twyford Station via Wokingham.
- That the Council works with SWT to enhance the provision of cycle storage at Wokingham Station.

Winnersh Station.

11.14 Winnersh is a SWT operated station, usage figures of 520,922, no station parking and a basic service of 2 tph provided by Waterloo – Reading trains.

11.15 Commuter parking on residential roads is prevalent around Winnersh Station, for example in Danywern and Bathurst Roads. Arguably alternative provision for parking has now been provided at Winnersh Triangle Station but we endorse John Redwood's proposal that the Council should explore a joint use car park for Forest School and the station. This could also incorporate secure cycle storage as cycle storage provision is poor at Winnersh when it should form a much higher proportion of travel to that station. As the greater use of cycling to Winnersh Station is likely to be the most practical solution of enhancing access, the provision of better quality and expanded cycle storage should be explored jointly with SWT.

11.16 Recommendations at Winnersh Station.

- That the Council explores the possibility of a joint use car park for Forest School and the station and, were that possible, how parking would be managed.
- That the Council works with SWT to enhance the provision of cycle storage at Winnersh Station.

Winnersh Triangle Station.

11.17 Winnersh Triangle is a SWT operated station, usage figures are 490,878, there is a car park owned and operated by the Council and the basic service is 2 tph provided by Waterloo – Reading trains. The station was opened in 1987 by the then Network SouthEast and was built fairly cheaply with no disabled access. The station has seen remarkable growth in usage over the last 5 years of over 97% (roughly doubled) and this led to study funded by TVB LEP to identify options for enhancement including disabled access.

11.18 The opening of the enlarged car park at Winnersh Triangle took place on 19th October during the work of this Task & Finish Group. This enlarged the car parking provision from 123 spaces to 390 spaces, partly to serve the adjacent railway station but primarily to serve a bus Park & Ride facility, in conjunction with Reading Borough Council, to replace the facility at the Showcase Cinema that was prone to flooding. The bus operation is a commercial service with the operator taking the revenue risk. It is appreciated that the train service is only 2 trains per hour but we question the logic of charging rail passengers £4 per car to park but only charging £1 per car for passengers using the Park & Ride service and we suggest that car parking charges should be indifferent to the chosen mode of travel by users and therefore recommend that this differential be eliminated with charges for all users brought to the same level.

11.19 The Council has an aspiration for greater frequency of trains at Winnersh Triangle and to enhance the range of stations served to help reduce road congestion, increase the pool of potential employees available and to offer Borough residents improved travel opportunities. This will be taken forward in the Council's responses to various consultations on rail franchises and studies.

11.20 We consider that cycle storage facilities require expansion and improvement and that the Council should work with SWT to achieve this to encourage further use of the station.

11.21 We note that the position of the station car park lying as it does to the north side of the railway which runs on an embankment could be fairly unobtrusively decked as a way of further increasing capacity if demand warrants. The Executive Member for Planning and Highways has stated in Council that he would be endorse such a proposal were demand to increase beyond the current capacity.

11.22 Recommendations at Winnersh Triangle Station.

- That the Council equalises charges for the car park at Winnersh Triangle for both bus and train users.

- That the Council works with SWT to enhance the provision of cycle storage at Winnersh Triangle Station.

Earley Station.

11.23 Earley is a SWT operated station, usage figures are 639,888 which makes it our third busiest station, there is a small car park adjacent to the station owned and operated by the Council with 46 spaces with a daily charge of £4, and the basic service is 2 tph provided by Waterloo – Reading trains. As the car park fills to capacity there are significant on road parking issues on both sides of the A329 in the South Lake and the Maiden Erlegh wards.

11.24 Once again we agree with John Redwood when he says there is no easy answer. We note that there is significant commuter parking in Nightingale Road and Hazel Drive in South Lake. It looked to be possible to construct more parking at the east end of Nightingale Road which is a cul-de-sac and this is one area that seemed to us as being suited to metered parking.

11.25 This highlights the need for our Council to work with the town councils of Woodley and Earley to identify options that could be used for additional parking near Earley Station. As ever, funding will not be straightforward and we consider that the ‘user pays’ principle should be followed which, in our opinion, points to parking charges where it is practical and appropriate to apply them.

11.26 We note the well-used and fairly extensive cycle storage facility at Earley Station plus Reading’s cycle hire scheme stand outside the station. The Council should work with the South Western franchisee to expand cycle storage at the station.

11.27 Recommendations at Earley Station.

- That the Council works with Earley and Woodley town councils to identify options to increase the availability of car parking near Earley Station including some form of metered parking on selected roads.
- That the Council works with SWT to enhance the provision of cycle storage at Earley Station.

Wargrave Station.

11.28 Wargrave is a GWR operated station, the usage figure is 95,910 which makes it our least busy station by some margin – the next lowest figure is Crowthorne with 303,816. There is a small station car park with 30 spaces, run by GWR, where no parking charges are applied. The station is served by the branch train to Henley-on-Thames which operates off peak at about 3 trains every 2 hours although there are 2 through trains to Paddington in the morning and 3 through trains from Paddington in the evening.

11.29 GWR has announced that the through trains will cease in 2017 with the branch then operated a self- contained shuttle. The aspirations is to have a 2 tph branch service, the constraint being to get a round trip from Twyford to Henley and back within 30 mins but

there is a suggestion that Wargrave could be served only by alternate trains in order to achieve a robust timetable. Connecting services depend on punctual services on the GWML. The point that we wish to make here is that there will be significant changes to the services over the next 2 years from Wargrave which could conceivably discourage and reduce use of that station.

11.30 It is against that background that we consider parking at Wargrave Station. The Henley Branch User Group suggested that Network Rail land to the south of the station could be used for additional car parking. We understand the Network Rail has suggested using this land for additional parking but making a business case for investment will be difficult as parking at the station is currently free. It is likely that some means of third party funding will be necessary for this to be taken forward.

11.31 It was explained that Station Road serves as overspill parking for the station and provides long term free parking in lower Wargrave but any weekday service in the parish church then results in a significant parking problems. There are double yellow lines between the station parking and the public parking in Station Road. It is not obvious why they were deemed to be necessary and a quick and cheap way to provide additional parking would be to remove them. This, we suggest, may be the least bad of the various options in seeking some quick and practical solution.

11.32 **Recommendation at Wargrave Station.**

- That the Council, with Wargrave Parish Council, examines the option of removing the double yellow lines on Station Road between the station parking area and the public parking.

Twyford Station.

11.33 Twyford, the junction station for the branch line to Henley-on-Thames, is a GWR operated station (and will remain so post the introduction of Crossrail services in 2019), the usage figures are 1,369,126 plus 638,123 interchanging passengers making it the Borough's second busiest station. Station parking has 324 spaces in two car parks, one for car park season ticket holders off Station Road known as Car Park 1 and the larger car park in the confined space bounded by the main line, the branch line and the River Loddon known as Car Park 2. This is accessed by Gas Lane which joins Station Road and there is a second entrance lane from Hurst Road joining Gas Lane at an awkward junction near the two under-bridges. Parking at Twyford costs £6.10 as a peak charge with off-peak charges starting at 11am – if spaces so allow.

11.34 The basic off peak service is 4 tph on the Relief Lines but there is significant enhancement in the peak hours services with calls on the Main Lines which are extremely popular as they offer some impressive journey times, for example the 6.47pm train from Paddington is an HST service with a first stop in Twyford at 7.10pm, 23 mins for a journey of 30.68 miles. It is therefore obvious why Twyford is a popular railhead and parking at Twyford has been a problem for the last 20 years or so.

11.35 The problems at Twyford are manifold. These include:

- The station forms the hub of the Twyford Station Conservation Area.
- The footbridge is a Public Right of Way (since 1839.)
- Station Road is a narrow road with residents' parking and has awkward junctions at either end onto Waltham Road.
- The station forecourt is an untidy shambles.
- The 'railway land' area on Station Road is not well defined into taxi ranks, waiting areas for those meeting trains, drop off areas, pedestrian flows and motor cycle parking.
- The access to Car Park 2 via Gas Lane and from Hurst road is poor - helped only by the 'tidal flow' nature of their use.
- The car parks are poorly laid out and Car Park 2 is for the most part unsurfaced, puddles, with cramped parking spaces (identified by the consultants Aedas Ltd, commissioned by GWR). The site is constrained by the main line, the branch line, the River Loddon and the access roads via Gas Lane. Car parks are full on Mondays through to Thursdays and fill up early.
- The ORR requirements on TOCs not to reduce station parking without their express permission.
- The station buildings need enhancement, for example there is no heated waiting area on the main departure platform, Platform 4.
- Neither coffee stall offers any seating, both are on Platform 4 (causing some obstruction that could become more critical with a greater number of interchanging passengers from the Henley Branch) and may need removing to de-clutter the platform.
- Platform 4 is short for the trains that will be introduced and cannot be extended, constrained at one end by the Waltham Road Bridge and by the Henley Branch junction at the other end. (Crossrail trains will have Selective Door Opening with the doors on the rear cars not opening as they will not be in the platform on Platform 4.) It is planned to extend Platforms 1, 2 and 3.
- Access from Car Park 2 to the station is via the 'barrow crossing' at the end of Platform 4/5 that will now remain in use.
- Land at the southern entrance is very restricted, is part Council land, part GWR (Network Rail) land through which runs the access road to Car Park 2. (Some motorists use the Council's grassed area for parking.)
- Parking for people meeting trains is limited on the Hurst Road side leading to most waiting to meet trains taking place on Station Road adding to congestion there.
- There is very limited cycle storage on the Hurst Road side of the station.
- GWR is thought unlikely to be successful in its bid for funding for a multi storey car park.
- The short term nature of GW franchises with the current one ending in April 2019.

11.36 All these factors are, to an extent, inter-related and suggests that unless some radical improvement is achieved rail travel from Twyford Station will not *"achieve its*

maximum potential". For example, any expansion of the station buildings into the forecourt, or pedestrianisation of the forecourt will remove parking places which then need adding to the existing car parks. These car parks already have sub-standard spacing which if addressed will again remove spaces. But it is essential that the problems and limitations are addressed to maximise rail travel to help address road congestion, reduce car use and to assist the business credentials of Wokingham Borough by helping to ensure the planned inclusion of stops on the Western Rail Link to Heathrow services.

11.37 GWR had convened a 'Twyford Workshop' in conjunction with Wokingham Borough Council to consider the problems and recommend solutions. This will have to be revisited if the multi storey car park bid is not successful and the membership should be widened to encompass all relevant parties including Twyford Parish Council.

11.38 It appears inevitable that some Park & Ride solution will have to be urgently considered, even in the short term, but this would appear to still require more land near the southern entrance. Feeder/connecting buses could also run and these could, potentially, serve various purposes, for example connect a Park & Ride site as well as feeding the railway station. However, we consider that regular commuters' primary requirements are overall journey times and reliability of their journey. Secondary considerations are cost, frequency, operating hours, comfort including the probability of a seat, wi-fi availability and connectional policy in the event of late running trains. In our opinion, the Park element should be as near to the station as possible to minimise the duration of the bus Ride element and allow a higher frequency of operation. Consequently we consider that the more remote the Park element, the greater the difficulty in offering an attractive package. We are unaware of any comparable 'Park & Ride & Ride' operating in the UK and consider the Achilles heel is likely to be the overall journey time. However, we do not feel qualified to comment on the viability of these potential services but recommend that formal professional consultancy advice is necessary and should be obtained.

11.39 We realise that we have listed many problems but few solutions on Twyford Station. It is a cliché to suggest that doing nothing is not an option. In the case of Twyford, this is basically what has occurred over the last 20 years – with the exception of a new 'Access for All' footbridge, some expansion of Car Park 2 some 15 years ago and, more recently, an extra exit gate added to Platform 1. We fully agree with the Home Secretary when she wrote *"Improving car parking facilities at Twyford is vital..."* a view incidentally fully supported by the Managing Director of GWR, Mark Hopwood. We consider that the onus for devising a solution on the Station Road side must lie with GWR with assistance as appropriate from the Council. However, on the Hurst Road side, we consider that the reverse should apply, the Council should lead with assistance as appropriate from GWR.

11.40 We are aware that Bracknell Forest Council will build the majority of its new housing on the north side of Bracknell. Compared with the extended journey times currently in place to Waterloo (about 60 minutes for 32 miles) a portion of these residents is likely to choose, access permitting, to travel from Twyford Station, particularly after eastern connections from Paddington have been transformed by Crossrail in 2018. This suggests 2 actions, one is to press yet again for journey time reductions on services on services to

Waterloo in the Council's response to DfT's current consultation on the South Western franchise (and to invite Bracknell Forest Council to make a complementary response) in order that the Wokingham- Waterloo services take a greater share of the demand. The second is to ask Bracknell Forest Council what plans, if any, they have for connecting bus services from the new developments in Binfield to Twyford.

11.41 Recommendations at Twyford Station.

- That all parties including the Council, GWR and Twyford Parish Council work together to ensure that residents of the Borough are able to access rail services at Twyford.
- That the Council seeks professional consultancy advice on the practicality of Park & Ride services and connecting buses to serve Twyford.
- That Bracknell Forest Council is asked what plans, if any, they have for connecting buses from their new housing in the Binfield area.

Recommendations.

12.0 In making our recommendations, we do not propose to reiterate the suggested actions on individual railway stations and on other sections of this report. We consider that we have offered an outline strategy to follow to enhance access to stations within the Borough plus Crowthorne with the notable exception of Twyford. The numerous problems at Twyford make it challenging in extreme yet the potential rewards to the Borough from maximising its potential mean that satisfactory solutions must be found.

12.1 However, we realise that certain of our recommendations made for individual stations have a wider application and highlight these here:

- There should be a three pronged approach to applying parking restrictions on residential roads: alternative provision of access to stations, an effective means of enforcement, and to continue with the consistent application of parking restrictions. (Paragraphs 8.1 to 8.4)
- There appears to be a case for some metered parking on public roads near railway stations. (Paragraph 8.5)
- Professional consultancy advice should be obtained on Park & Ride schemes where the Park element is remote from the station as the overall journey time and journey reliability will be key to their success or, indeed, failure. (Paragraph 11.39)

Conclusions.

13.0 While demand for rail travel has doubled in the last 20 years, the provision for parking at stations, with the exception of Winnersh Triangle, has basically remained unchanged, far less than 'keeping pace with demand'. The result is the increased prevalence of on street parking that has given rise to complaints from householders leading to this review.

13.1 All policy direction, including that in our Local Transport Plan, encourages modal shift from cars to more sustainable transport. To help to fulfil these policies, access to railways stations, including the provision of additional car parking, requires enhancement where possible.

13.2 The Borough's efforts to establish Park and Ride services are commendable but largely ignore the fact that provision of parking for rail services takes cars off roads, is greener and serves an established demand for customers who have a track record of being prepared to pay tidy sums to park. We consider that commuters' primary requirements are overall journey time and reliability of service and that this may not be provided by a remote Park and Ride facility.

13.3 Twyford will be the Borough's gateway station to London, Crossrail and the planned development and interchange at Old Oak Common, to Heathrow via the Western Rail Link and to the west. Access, and particularly car parking, needs significant enhancement, although this is a challenge. We are aware that efforts are ongoing to achieve this but co-operation from all will be necessary to be successful. But they are essential for the generation of economic growth.

13.4 As the increased demand for rail travel will, in future, be at least partly proportional to our increasing housing numbers and population, the various infrastructure funds, such as CIL, should help fund improvements in access to railway stations and the provision of parking. This also applies at Crowthorne where it is likely that the majority of the increased demand will come from housing in Bracknell Forest.

Acknowledgements.

14.0 The Task & Finish Group are grateful to all those who contributed to the study and to Colm Ó Caomhánaigh of Democratic Services who served as our secretariat.

Appendix A: Terms of Reference

Purpose of Review: To consider the problems of commuter and other parking at, or near, railway stations.

1. To consider the desirability of car parking near railway stations keeping pace with the rising demand for rail travel and if such additional car parking is deemed to be necessary, where and how it could that be provided.
2. To consider whether feeder bus services to stations are desirable and, if so, to recommend what services should be considered and when planning for these services should commence.
3. To consider in the longer term orbital bus services running to Twyford Station serving the SDLs, as suggested in the Borough's adopted Park & Ride Strategy given that house building is under way in all the SDLs except Arborfield Garrison where outline approvals have been given. The potential for smart or through ticketing might also be examined.
4. To enquire what improvements, if any, have been achieved since the adoption of LTP3 and what further improvements are planned.
5. To consider the balance of parking restrictions and enforcement as to whether motorists are being discouraged rather than being encouraged to change their mode of travel.
6. To consider and understand the effect on residents living in the area.

Key Objectives:

1. To determine what progress has been made towards the goals in LTP3
2. Is further car parking near railway stations desirable and practical and, if so, where and how should that be provided?
3. What planning should be initiated for the orbital and for other bus feeder services suggested in the adopted Park & Ride Strategy? What through ticketing might be possible?
4. What improvements in active transport have been achieved since the adoption of LTP3 and what further improvements are planned and what further improvements are needed?
5. Is the current balance between having parking restrictions and encouraging modal shift correct and how should it be changed?

Scope of the work:

1. To gain an understanding of the current commuter parking situation in the Borough and immediately adjoining areas.
2. To gain an understanding of the impact of alternative modes of travel as possible solutions.
3. To gain an understanding of how the Vision priority to tackle congestion and improve journeys across the Borough is being impacted by the problems of commuter parking.
4. To gain an understanding of how Commuter parking impacts on economic growth and business and links to ensuring strong sustainable communities both of which form part of the Vision.
5. To gain an understanding of appropriate local and national policies relating to commuter parking.
6. To consider what constraints exist whether legal, physical or resource-related.
7. To consider the impact of service changes to trains or buses.

BACKGROUND:

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, at its meeting held on 23 June 2014, considered a number of suggestions from Members for possible Scrutiny reviews.

Councillor Lindsay Ferris had put forward a suggestion relating to the impact of commuter parking on Wokingham Borough Council residents across the Borough.

Commuter parking in residential roads can be seen across the Borough and this has a negative impact on residents for example, in Winnersh, Twyford and Wokingham. This links to the Vision priority to tackle congestion and improve journeys across the Borough. Commuter parking is also linked to economic growth and business and links to ensuring strong sustainable communities both of which form part of the Vision. Tackling this issue and improving the situation would have a direct benefit to residents. Planned development in the Borough will increase the number of residents and will exacerbate this issue.

Commuter parking has caused particular concerns with access to residential roads e.g. waste collection and emergency vehicles. For example, in Cavendish Gardens, Winnersh a petition for double yellow lines. In Wessex Gardens, Twyford a petition in 2010 and further request in 2012. In Jan 2014 waste collection could not be made due to parking blocking the road.

SPECIFIC AREAS FOR THE PANEL TO ADDRESS:

1)	Consultation with residents in all areas surrounding railway stations in the Borough.
2)	A report assessing exactly when and where commuter parking creates problems and establishing the full extent of the problem.
3)	The Committee to look at and make recommendations on a Commuter Parking Policy.
4)	Development of a fair, even handed and consistent policy that can be applied across the Borough.

INFORMATION GATHERING:

Witnesses to be invited

Name	Organisation/Position	Reason for Inviting
Rail companies;	First Great Western South West Trains	To obtain their views
Various Groups/Officers/MP/ Councillors	Matt Davey, Head of Transport and Planning Matt Gould, Service Manager Transport and Road Safety Rail user groups; Executive Members for Planning and Highways; Other Councillors; Local MPs; South West Trains LSTP Officers; Representative from the LEP.	To find out what they have done to tackle the problem of commuter parking.
Residents who commute		To obtain their views

Information to be obtained from

Organisation	Information to be Requested
Various Local Authorities	Benchmarking exercise.

Key Documents / Background Data / Research:

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | A benchmarking exercise be carried out with other local authorities to see if (and if they have, how) they have reviewed the problems of commuter parking at or near railway stations. |
|----|--|

TIMESCALE:

Starting: June 2015

Ending: January 2016

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS:

Body	Date
Executive	18 February 2016

Referred by the Management Committee to: Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Terms of Reference agreed by: Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Committee Members involved in the review: To be confirmed but to include Councillors Lindsay Ferris and David Sleight

Committee Lead Member: Councillor Norman Jorgensen
Executive Member: Councillor John Kaiser

Appendix B: Letter from the Rt Hon John Redwood MP

THE RT HON JOHN REDWOOD MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Councillor David Sleight
114 Ellis Road
Crowthorne
Berkshire RG45 6PH

27 October 2015

Dear David

Thank you for your letter consulting on the provision of parking at stations. This issue is part of a wider question of making sufficient parking provision generally.

The new Conservative government has altered parking policy. It has altered the idea that parking provision has to be restricted to try to reduce car use. The government recognises that cars are usually not in use. When not in use they need to be off the highway, as we are short of road capacity generally and cannot spare much limited highway space for parking.

The government remains happy to encourage more use of trains as a substitute for cars. To do so my constituents need to be able to drive to a station and park easily. If it takes too long or is too expensive people will complete their total journey by car and not change to a train. Many of my constituents live too far from a station to be able to walk there.

I support the actions the Council are taking to expand parking facilities at Winnersh Triangle and Wokingham stations. In view of the growth of housing in the area and the wish to develop Wokingham town centre to the south, I would urge a large enough expansion at Wokingham station to allow for growth. It is also important to provide some longer term parking at stations, allowing people to be away for more than a day when using trains. There needs to be sufficient drop off and pick up spaces close to a station. This is currently cramped at Wokingham.

Earley and Winnersh are more problematic, as both are on constrained sites in built up areas. At Winnersh the Council should explore a joint use car park for the school and station, offering more spaces for both users. Residents in Earley and Winnersh rightly object to people parking all day outside their homes in narrow residential roads, sometimes blocking their drives. There is no easy answer on parking for Earley, where a study of options should be made. There is land on the other side of the railway track to Station Road adjacent to the A329M which could be considered.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Redwood'.

Email: john.redwood.mp@parliament.uk Tel: 020 7219 4205

Appendix C: Letter from the Rt Hon Theresa May MP



THE RT HON THERESA MAY MP
Member of Parliament for Maidenhead

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Cllr David Sleight
Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

28 October 2015

Thank you for your letter regarding commuter parking at or near railways stations.

I am pleased to read about your Working Group, which is addressing an extremely important issue. As you mentioned, this is of relevance to Wargrave in my constituency, and particularly to Twyford where there is a clear need for increased capacity – and this is only likely to be exacerbated once Crossrail comes into operation.

I am supportive of GWR's efforts to find a solution to this problem. Indeed, I wrote a letter of support for the funding bid and discussed the plans with their Managing Director, Mark Hopwood. I have also discussed this matter with Cllr John Halsall.

Improving car parking facilities at Twyford is vital and I am pleased to support your efforts to make progress. Please do let me know what conclusions your Working Group reaches.

Many thanks again for writing.

Yours sincerely,

The Rt Hon Theresa May MP

Tel: 020 7219 5206

www.tmay.co.uk

Email: mavt@parliament.uk

Appendix D: Glossary of Abbreviations.

AfA	Access for All – step free access either through ramps or lifts
CPE	Civil Parking Enforcement
DfT	Department for Transport
GW	Great Western – not specific to the current GWR
GWML	Great Western Main Line – the route from Paddington to the west.
GWR	Great Western Railway – formerly First Great Western
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LTP	Local Transport Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ORR	The Office of Rail and Road – the railway (and Highways England) regulator
P & R	Park & Ride
SDL	Strategic Development Location
SDO	Selective Door Opening – where carriage doors do not open when not in a short platform.
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SFO	Station Facilities Operator (The train operating company managing a station)
SWT	South West Trains
TOC	Train operating company
Tph	Trains per hour
TRL	Transport Research Laboratory in Crowthorne
TVB LEP	Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Agenda Item 25.

TITLE	Flood Risk Management End of Year Update
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee
WARD	All
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR	Heather Thwaites, Director of Environment
LEAD MEMBER	Angus Ross, Executive Member for Environment

OUTCOME

To inform Members of the progress made with the Lead Local Flood Authority's (LLFA) duties under the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 during 2015.

RECOMMENDATION

The committee is asked to comment on the issues highlighted in the report, specifically progress in implementing the Flood and Water Management Act.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Flood and water management is a key responsibility of Wokingham Borough Council in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) following the introduction of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) in 2010. The LLFA has been gradually progressing with the implementation of its new responsibilities whilst continuing to deliver existing related services. This report provides an update to Members of the progress made during 2015. The next 12 months will see further progress following the appointment of a Flood Risk Manager, a Principal Flood Risk and Drainage Engineer, and a Strategic Development Location (SDL) Flood Risk Advisor in late 2015.

Flood and Water Management – End of Year Update

1. Flood and Water Management Act - Progress

During 2015, the Flooding and Drainage team made progress with fulfilling Wokingham Borough Council's (WBC) statutory obligations as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) under the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010. It is expected that progress leading into 2016 and beyond will improve even further following the appointment of a Flood Risk Manager towards the end of 2015, who has been tasked with helping the Authority to fulfill its role as LLFA. In addition, the Planning team has appointed a Principal Flood Risk and Drainage Engineer and a Strategic Development Location (SDL) Flood Risk Advisor to focus on WBC's new responsibilities as a statutory consultee for all major planning applications with regards to surface water drainage implications.

Key elements that have been addressed by WBC over the last 12 months have included:

- Recruitment of a Flood Risk Manager, a Principal Flood Risk and Drainage Engineer and a SDL Flood Risk Advisor
- Completion of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS)
- Production of Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports following the 2013/2014 floods
- Progression with the development of the Flood Asset Register under Section 21 of the FWMA
- Progression with the implementation of Land Drainage Byelaws
- Development of the Wokingham Borough specific Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) Technical Guidance for developers
- Engagement with community groups and increasing awareness of flood risk in the borough.
- Drainage and flood management work

2. Recruitment

Francesca Hobson was appointed as Flood Risk Manager in November 2015. Boniface Ngu was appointed as a Principal Flood Risk and Drainage Engineer and Julia Greene was appointed as SDL Flood Risk Advisor.

3. Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Action Plan

The FWMA requires LLFA's to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for dealing with local flood risk management. The last time the Overview and Scrutiny Panel were updated about flooding issues in early 2014, the strategy was still in a very early form.

A first draft of the strategy was completed in the summer of 2014 and was published for public consultation from 1 September until 31 October 2014. This provided individuals, communities, businesses and other organisations with the opportunity to influence the LFRMS. The consultation documents were available to read and download on Wokingham Borough Council's website and comments were submitted via an online questionnaire, emailed and sent via post to the Council.

The final Strategy was published on the council's website in March 2015. The associated action

plan provides actions to be completed and the time frame that these need to be completed in. Following appointment of the new recruits, progress is being made to achieve some of the shorter term actions such as the development of a flood asset register, publication of flood investigations, implementation of land drainage byelaws, development of flood action groups and recruitment of flood wardens. A Task and Finish Group has also been set up consisting of officers and members to ensure that progress is being made with the action plan. So far this group has met twice and the next meeting is scheduled for 16th February 2016.

4. Section 19 Flood Investigation Reports

On becoming aware of a flood in its area, Section 19 of the FWMA requires LLFA's to investigate which Risk Management Authorities (RMA's) have relevant flood risk management functions, and whether each of these RMA's has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to a flood. The results of these investigations should be published and the relevant RMA's notified.

In February 2013, WBC's Flood Investigations Policy was initially agreed via an Individual Executive Member Decision (IEMD) which set the threshold at which a formal investigation of a flooding incident is undertaken by WBC. Following the 2013/2014 winter floods in Wokingham, WBC in house consultants, WSP, conducted parish based flood investigations for Arborfield, Charvil, Hurst, Shinfield, Swallowfield and Wargrave. The reports made various recommendations for RMA's and all RMA's have been notified of these recommendations and given the opportunity to comment on the final reports.

These reports will be placed on the WBC website, under the 'Flooding and Drainage' section, following the agreement of a further IEMD due to minor changes made to the Flood Investigations Policy document. It is anticipated that the reports will be available online towards the end of February 2016.

5. Section 21 Asset Register

Under Section 21 of the FWMA the LLFA has a duty to maintain a register of features or structures within the borough that, in the opinion of the Authority, could affect flood risk. The LLFA must also maintain a record, linked to the register, of information regarding the ownership and state of repair of each feature or structure. The register and record will help WBC develop more informed maintenance regimes which can take account of assets important for managing flood risk. It will also help to establish where the borough's drainage and watercourse systems are, allowing for quicker identification of the responsible authority in incidences of flooding. Similarly to other LLFA's, it has been decided that WBC will put this information together in the form of a Geographical Information System (GIS) map layer that can be viewed on community maps by staff and residents.

This work is on-going. It was decided at the monthly Flood Liaison Group that the register and record should be populated with all WBC owned assets such as drains, gullies, manholes, ditches, culverts, bridges and surface water pumping stations first. Once this has taken place, any other assets considered to affect flood risk will be added gradually, as more information is collected. A meeting between key stakeholders was held on 7 January 2016 to decide the best way to collate all the information WBC currently has available.

6. Land Drainage Byelaws

As a LLFA WBC are able to make byelaws to ensure the effective operation of our land drainage across the Borough. Currently, WBC has powers under the Land Drainage Act but these only relate to works within a watercourse or ditch. Wokingham specific Byelaws could give us control over a wider area outside of the ditch line and extending up to 9m from the top of the bank. Not only would this have clear benefits in terms of protecting the natural floodplain of smaller watercourses and ditches but it would also assist with providing a 'buffer zone' for

biodiversity.

Officers have amended model drainage byelaws by Defra to make them Wokingham specific. The draft byelaws have been sent to Defra for informal review and following this, the draft byelaws shall go through a consultation process whereby a copy of the draft byelaws will be placed in at least 2 local newspapers, on the WBC's website, and also a written copy available for viewing at the council offices for comments from the public. Following public consultation, the byelaws will go to Council for approval. The final version of the byelaws will then be sent to Defra for final approval. WBC will then be able to enforce the byelaws, helping WBC to mitigate any activities that could impact flood risk.

7. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Government consulted on the implementation of Schedule 3 of the FWMA between December 2012 and March 2013. Prior to the consultation, WBC was expecting to become a SuDS Approving Body (SAB) which would have placed responsibility on the Council for approval, adoption, and maintenance of SuDS on new developments. However, as a result of the consultation, in September 2014 Government proposed making better use of the planning system to secure SuDS in new development. It was confirmed in December 2014 that this approach would be taken forward and this was implemented as of 6th April 2015. It was also proposed that to support local planning authorities (LPAs) in assessing the provision of SuDS in new development, LLFAs would be made statutory consultees on all major planning applications with surface water drainage implications.

To deliver this enhanced planning system, planning guidance has been strengthened to give increased weight to the provision and maintenance of SuDS in the determination of planning applications. Non statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems have been published by DEFRA and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) – Flood Risk and Coastal Change has been updated to provide further clarification on managing flood risk and securing the use of SuDS.

The Planning Drainage Officers have developed a standard Pre-Application Drainage Advice Note which sets out the requirements in terms of SUDS to support the various types of Planning Application. This is being issued to developers to inform them of our requirements at the Pre-Application stage. WBC has had a long standing commitment to consider adopting SuDS within the Borough and a draft Wokingham specific SuDS Technical Guide has been developed to ensure the SUDS are designed appropriately. This document aims to set out our local requirements for sustainable drainage in Wokingham Borough and provide guidance on the suitability of the various SUDS options in different areas of the Borough. The document, intended for use by developers and their consultants, is currently being reviewed internally.

8. Community Engagement

The Borough has a duty to engage with the public and representative bodies and share information with them.

Quarterly meetings were held with the Loddon Valley Residents Association. These meetings are used by local residents groups to voice their concerns. Thames Water, National Flood Forum and Environment Agency also attend these meetings. Officers also regularly attend the meetings of the Swallowfield Flood Action Group and are engaging with students and lecturers at the University of Reading to develop flood related research projects that aim to improve information sharing and knowledge of flooding within the borough.

Progress is being made with the setting up of Flood Action Groups and the recruitment of flood wardens in parishes at flood risk. Officers will be speaking at various events to raise awareness of the benefits of Flood Action Groups and flood wardens. Information about this will also be shared through social media, the WBC website, and borough and parish newsletters. Following

the setting up of Flood Action Groups, it is hoped that WBC will be able to recruit at least 2 flood wardens per parish.

Officers are currently in the process of investigating the potential for a WBC flooding microsite. This would be linked to the main WBC website but will provide a hub for all information relating to flood risk to be held for the community to access. It will be similar in layout and structure to the Northamptonshire Flood Toolkit, which has been a huge success and has helped residents living in flood risk areas of Northamptonshire. The microsite would provide a place for the Asset Register, Land Drainage Byelaws, Flood Investigation Reports, LFRMS and action plan, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, and all other relevant flood information to be stored and viewed by the public. Discussions are currently being held with the IT team to establish the cost and timings of the microsite production. It is anticipated that the microsite will be complete by late 2016.

9. Proposed Flood Alleviation Works

WBC has allocated £4 million, to be spent over the next 3 years, for improvements to the strategic network and other roads that have flooded previously during major weather events. WBC is currently in the process of investigating potential schemes for various sites in Wokingham including the A327 (between Shinfield and Arborfield) and Loddon Bridge Roundabout (junction between B3270 and A329). WBC was planning to investigate improvement works to the A327 first because it is thought that by alleviating the flooding problems on the A327, there might be beneficial effects downstream at the other sites that WBC intends to improve. However, progress has been delayed due to the Shinfield Eastern Relief Road works which involved raising part of the A327 and installing large culverts under the road. These changes to the drainage around the A327 mean that WBC will need to conduct further modelling following the completion of the Shinfield Eastern Relief Road works.

10. Drainage and Flood Management Works 2015/2016

Capital Works

The Borough had a capital budget of £200,000 for drainage and flood prevention works in 2015/16. These consisted of improvements to existing assets and infrastructure:

- A new deep bore hole soakaway was constructed on Culham Lane, Wargrave
- New drainage infrastructure was installed in Eastheath Gardens Wokingham
- The verges of the A33, Swallowfield were regraded to allow water to flow from the carriageway easier
- White Horse Lane, Finchampstead had additional gullies installed to alleviate flooding
- Wellingtonia Roundabout, Wokingham Without is to have its drainage upgraded this financial year.

Revenue Works

Throughout the year numerous reactive works are carried out to repair the drainage infrastructure. The cost of these works total approximately £512,570 over the year which included £ 150,000 for gully emptying.

Gully Emptying

31,002 gullies emptied – 9100 cleared twice

Land Drainage

A budget of £33,210 is used to maintain and clear Council owned ditches and maintain grilles

11. Flooding Incidents

In 2015 there were no reports of flooding to properties. Following the heavy rain over the Christmas period the River Loddon burst its banks at 3 locations in early 2016 resulting in the road closures of Whistley Mill Lane in Twyford, Sandford Lane in Woodley, and Mill Lane in Earley. No properties were flooded during this heavy rainfall period.

List of Background Papers
The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 Northamptonshire Flood Toolkit http://www.floodtoolkit.com/

Contact Francesca Hobson	Service Highways and Transport
Telephone No x6569	Email Francesca.hobson@wokingham.gov.uk
Date 6 th January 2016	Version No. 1

REVIEW OF OUTSIDE BODIES APPOINTMENTS DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose of Review:

To review all outside bodies with WBC member representatives on them, looking at the appropriateness, usefulness, performance (of the outside body – as well as Wokingham’s involvement) and cost effectiveness.”

Key Objectives:

The Committee is required to set its key objectives for this review.

Scope of the work:

The Committee is required to agree the scope of the review.

BACKGROUND:

At its meeting on 26 June 2014, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee considered a request for a scrutiny review from Councillor Dee Tomlin, “to review “all outside bodies with WBC member representatives on them, looking at the appropriateness, usefulness, performance (of the outside body – as well as Wokingham’s involvement) and cost effectiveness.”

The desired outcomes of the review were stated as:

- an improvement to ensure a mutually beneficial outcome from the Council’s involvement in local outside bodies;
- a clear up-to date process and guidance for Members nominated to outside bodies, such as required minimum attendance at meetings;
- Up to date terms of reference for all outside bodies.

The decision of the Management Committee was to refer the request to the Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

Representatives on ‘outside bodies’ are appointed by Council in response to requests from the organisations, often to fulfil the requirements of their constitution, charity charter or terms of reference. The Council does not ask for representation on these bodies. The monetary cost to the Council from these appointments is when Members claim travel expenses for attending meetings. Some of the outside bodies receive partial funding from the Council.

At meeting of the Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 September 2014, the Chairman circulated Members with some information including the Outside Bodies Directory and they were asked to consider how the review would be conducted.

SPECIFIC ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE / TASK AND FINISH GROUP TO ADDRESS:

What is the classification of 'outside bodies' and 'other bodies'?

What is the financial contribution made by the Council to outside bodies?

If the representation by Members is not effective, should the representation cease?

INFORMATION GATHERING:

Witnesses to be invited

Name	Organisation/Position	Reason for Inviting
Bob Wyatt <i>Previous representative invited as new representatives was only appointed in June 2014</i>	Representative on Age UK, Berkshire	To discuss their views on the effectiveness of the Council's representation on the outside body
Abdul Loyes	Representative on Woodley Volunteer Centre	To discuss their views on the effectiveness of the Council's representation on the outside body
Ian Pittock <i>Previous representative invited as new representative was only appointed in June 2014</i>	Representative on Mid & West Berkshire Countryside Access Forum	To discuss their views on the effectiveness of the Council's representation on the outside body

Key Documents / Background Data:

Outside Bodies Directory 2014

TIMESCALE: The Committee is required to set a timescale for this review.

Starting:

Ending:

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS:

Body	Date

Terms of Reference agreed by:

Committee Members involved in the review:

Committee Lead Member:

Executive Member:

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Minutes 11 November 2014

29. REVIEW OF OUTSIDE BODIES APPOINTMENTS – DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee received the draft terms of reference for a review of the outside bodies appointments, as set out on Agenda pages 8 to 10. The Committee was also asked to consider the timescales for a possible review. This issue had been proposed for review by Councillor Dee Tomlin at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 26 June 2014.

It was noted that some of the appointments, such as to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, were very important, however, some Members had expressed a view that they did not find some of the other appointments very useful.

Members briefly discussed some of the outside bodies they had been appointed to and agreed that a review should be undertaken. Members queried which outside bodies received funding from the Council and the Senior Democratic Services Officer undertook to find this out and advise Members accordingly.

The Chairman advised that some bodies were not included in the Council's directory of outside bodies, such as the Berkshire Local Transport Body and he suggested that there may well be other bodies not included in the list. He also advised that four Members appointed to outside bodies had not produced a report to Annual Council in 2014, as required. The Chairman suggested using those reports as the basis for the review. It was also suggested that those Members who did not submit a report to Council be invited to attend the next meeting to discuss their appointment informally.

The Committee agreed to carry out the review as a whole Committee, rather than create a Task and Finish Group. The Committee also agreed to classify the various outside bodies into three groups as follows:

- a) those that are in the directory for historical reasons and those where Member appointments have been requested by the outside body;
- b) those who receive funding from the Council;
- c) those which Members feel add value to the Council.

The Committee also suggested that this item be considered further at the next meeting, with an extraordinary meeting being organised between the January meeting and the March meeting so that any changes arising from the review could be fed into the Council's budget, if necessary.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) those Members who did not submit a report to Annual Council in 2014 be invited to attend the next meeting to discuss their appointment informally;
- 2) the Senior Democratic Services Officer investigates which outside bodies receive funding from the Council;
- 3) this item be considered further in January 2015,
- 4) an extraordinary meeting be convened between January and March so that any changes arising from the review can be fed into the Council's budget, if necessary.

Minutes 22 January 2015

36. REVIEW OF OUTSIDE BODIES APPOINTMENTS

The Committee received a report, which was circulated at the meeting by the Chairman.

The report stated that the Outside Bodies Directory produced by Democratic Services recognised that “there is no absolute definition of an Outside Body, but we have defined them as ‘organisations which have either asked the Borough Council to nominate a representative to serve on that body, or where historically the Borough Council has always been represented in their governance arrangements.’” The Committee accepted that there was no absolute definition of an Outside Body but the “where historically the Borough Council has always been represented” suggested that the current review may be timely and that changes in circumstances may make continuing representation no longer appropriate.

There also appeared to be a lack of clear distinction between “Other Bodies” as listed in the Council’s Year Book and “Outside Bodies”. For example, the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel was listed as an “Other Body”, while the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority was listed as an “Outside Body”. Representatives on Outside Bodies are required to submit a report to Council (although regrettably some Members had failed to do so in 2014) but there was no such requirement on representatives of Other Bodies. The Committee considered that membership of statutory or quasi- statutory bodies (where the Council was required to nominate representatives) should be listed as ‘Other Bodies’ but, where membership was discretionary, the ‘Outside Body’ terminology should be used. The Committee could see charitable organisations dominating the list of Outside Bodies. Members noted that the Council paid fees or grants to certain Outside Bodies; in these cases , the Committee considered it self-evident that membership should continue to get value for money from the Council’s subscriptions or to have some oversight on charitable spending.

The Committee also noted that various Other Bodies were not listed in the Outside Bodies Directory, such as representation on the Berkshire Local Transport Body. These should be included in the listing in the Council’s Yearbook to inform Members (and others) of the Council’s representation on these bodies.

The Chairman suggested the following recommendations:

- That the Other Body and Outside Body lists are reviewed to consider listing all statutory or quasi-statutory as Other Bodies while Outside Bodies should essentially be bodies where membership is discretionary;
- That the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, Bracknell and Wokingham College, the membership of the LGA General Assembly and the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP should be listed as ‘Other Bodies’;
- That other appointments to bodies, such as the Berkshire Local Transport Body and the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum should be listed appropriately; in these cases as ‘Other Bodies’; and
- That the requirement of a timely report to Council on their membership of an Outside Body should be stressed to Members.

The Committee was concerned that the Council gave grants / funding to various outside bodies but that the amount and frequency of these payments was not recorded in the Outside Bodies Directory.

The Committee agreed that the term "Outside Bodies" should be changed to "External Bodies". Members agreed that there was no need for the Council to receive annual reports from joint committees or working groups but that an annual report to Council was required by the Councillor Representative and that the amount of funding the Council gives to each of the external Bodies should be investigated.

The Committee requested that this item be brought back to the March meeting with the additional information sought.

Minutes 11 March 2015

44. REVIEW OF OUTSIDE BODIES

The Committee received information, verbally, regarding the grants/funding received by outside bodies and given by the Council.

The Chairman explained that following the last meeting only limited information had been obtained about the detail of funding given to outside bodies. Information was given in the Outside Bodies Directory to indicate which Bodies received grants/funding, and a list had previously been circulated.

Brian Grady, indicated that his brief as Head of Strategic Commissioning for Children and Adult Services, included taking a lead on the involvement of the Community and Voluntary Sector organisations with the Council. He will be reporting to the Executive and Deputy Executive Members for Regeneration and Communities on a review of the activities of the voluntary and community sector organisations, some of which are included in the list of Outside Bodies. Many voluntary/community organisations give a lot of time in providing services for Borough residents, and as such some receive funding from the Council. Part of the review will be to understand the governance of these organisations and will include the relevance/effectiveness of any Council appointed representatives.

The annual reports on Outside Bodies that the Member representatives make to Council, include a section on their roles within the organisation. It was noted that this year all representatives had submitted their annual reports and these will be reported to the Council meeting on 19 March 2015. The Community Safety Partnership has a clear statutory framework to receive reports from the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel.

Brian said that he would present a copy of the report on his review on the accountability/reporting structure of the voluntary/community organisations that are working in partnership with the Council to the next meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That Brain Grady's report on his review of the accountability/reporting structure of the voluntary/community organisations that are working in partnership with the Council, which will include some of the organisations on the Outside Bodies list, be presented to the next meeting of the Committee on 15 June 2015.

Minutes 15 June 2015

6. REVIEW OF OUTSIDE BODIES

The Committee received and considered a report from Brain Grady, Head of Strategic Commissioning Children and Adults, giving an update on the review of the accountability and reporting structure of the voluntary and community organisations that are working in partnership with the Council, which included some of the organisations on the list of Outside Bodies.

Members were pleased to see that a review of the work of voluntary and community sector organisations is being carried out by the Deputy Executive Member for Regeneration and Communities, to give councillors visibility of voluntary and community activity in the Borough.

However they felt that the report did not give them the information they required around funding. A list of Outside Bodies indicating those that received some financial support from the Council had been previously presented to the Committee, but no details of the actual amounts had been obtained.

Diane King said that in a previous role within the Council, she had been involved in reviewing applications for funding from outside organisations, with recommendations being put to Executive for approval. More recently this work had been taken on by the Giving Partnership, but that body had now been disbanded.

Members questioned how the allocation of funding to outside organisations was made and what was the level of funding provided. There should be transparency as to who made such decisions and how they were made.

It was noted that the Outside Bodies Directory gave information about each of the bodies/organisation on the list where the appointment of representatives was made at Annual Council. The information given included details of: the legal status; aims/objectives; status of the Council's representative; and financial status of the organisations. The Directory also included a copy of the section in the Council's Constitution which set out the protocol for Councillor representation on Outside Bodies, and the requirement for an annual report of their representation to Council.

There was some discussion as to whether there were other organisations where Members served as representatives of the Council that should be included on the Outside Bodies list. It was pointed out that the only bodies/organisations in the list were those where the appointment of representatives were made by Council. In some instances, Members served on panels/boards where the appointment was made by the Leader as his representative.

There was still some confusion as to the definition of 'Outside Bodies' and 'Various Bodies'. It was explained the 'Outside Bodies' were those organisations external to the Council's services, who had requested or were required to have, a Council representative to serve on their management committees etc.

It was suggested that they should be renamed 'External Bodies', and any organisation with an external focus, where a Member is represented, should be included in the list, irrespective of how they are appointed, so that their activities can be reported.

RESOLVED: That the following recommendations be passed to the Leader of Council and the Executive Member for Regeneration and Communities for consideration:

- 1) Change the name of the 'Outside Bodies' list to 'External Bodies'.
- 2) Add to the list any organisation that has an external focus which has a Member representation.
- 3) Seek clarity on how funding or grants are made to Outside Bodies; who makes the decisions; and the amounts allocated. An annual report should be made to Executive on the allocations.

A report on progress be made to the new joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting in September.

Minutes 23 November 2015

16. WORK PROGRAMME

With regard to the Review of Outside Bodies Appointments Members clarified that they wanted a list of such bodies and how much funding is allocated to them by the Council.

Update January 2016

There are a number of external bodies, not listed in the Year Book, on which the Borough is officially represented by the relevant Executive Member but they have invited other Members to represent them. Executive Members have been requested to notify Democratic Services of any such situations and the following have been identified:

Body	Executive Member	Representative
Berkshire Local Transport Body	John Kaiser	John Halsall
Climate Berkshire	Angus Ross	Philip Houldsworth
Safety Advisory Group	Pauline Jorgensen	John Halsall

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COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Work Programme from January 2016

**Please note that the work programme is a 'live' document and subject to change at short notice.
The information in this work programme is subject to approval at the Committee meeting scheduled for
20 January 2016**

*The order in which items are listed at this stage may not reflect the order they subsequently appear on the agenda / are dealt with
at the scrutiny meeting.*

All Meetings start at 7.00pm in the Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, unless otherwise stated.

COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
14 Mar 2016	To assess and review and the potential impact of the Government's Right to Buy Scheme	To consider how to progress a review of this scrutiny review subject.	Review referred to the Committee by the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee	Stuart Rowbotham/ Simon Price
	Review of Town Centre Regeneration Scheme	To consider the business case for the regeneration of the town centre and to scope the review	Referred to the Committee by the OSMC	Mark Ashwell / Bernie Pich
	Update on Review of the Voluntary Sector by the Deputy Executive Member for Regeneration and Communities	Following on from the work of the Community Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive an update from the Deputy Executive Member for Regeneration and Community Services on the review of voluntary sector outside bodies.	Transferred from Community Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	Mark Ashwell/ Brian Grady

	Update on the Progress of the Community Café at Shutters, Wokingham Borough Council	To consider an update report on how the project has developed from the group of young people running the Café in order that the Committee can understand the impact and value added of the project.	Requested by the Community Partnership O & S Committee in March 2015 <i>(Transferred from the Community Partnerships O & S Forward Programme)</i>	Brian Grady
	Road Repairs - ward Member road repair notifications.	To receive an update report on the issue to include a proposal on ward Member road repair notifications.	Requested by the meeting on November 2015	Matt Davey
	Work Programme	To consider the work programme for the committee for 2015/2016 so that the resources of the committee can be used as effectively as possible.	Standing Item	Democratic Services

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
20 Jun 2016	Council Policy On Houses Of Multiple Occupation	To consider an update report on licencing of HMOS and on how problems relating to parking requirements for HMOS might be addressed through the Borough Design Guide.	Referred from meeting on November 2015	John Kaiser
	Road Repairs - impact of expected initiatives around customer service.	To receive an update report on the issue to include impact of expected initiatives around customer service.	Requested by the meeting on November 2015	Matt Davey
	Review of Procurement	To assess the impact of new regulations.	Requested by the meeting on November 2015	Pauline Jorgensen
	Work Programme	To consider the work programme for the committee for 2015/2016 so that the resources of the committee can be used as effectively as possible.	Standing Item	Democratic Services

**POTENTIAL ITEMS FOR REVIEW REFERRED FROM
THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
TBC	Possible income generation possibilities from the Cross Rail project	To consider possible income generation opportunities from the Crossrail project.	Referred to the Community Partnerships O & S Committee by the Overview & Scrutiny Management <i>(Transferred from the Community Partnerships O & S Committee Forward Programme).</i>	

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