



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in Council Chamber
- Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on
THURSDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 7.30 PM

Manjeet Gill
Interim Chief Executive
Published on 13 September 2017

This meeting will be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website.

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WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

To: The Members of Wokingham Borough Council

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
33.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence	
34.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 July 2017.	15 - 44
35.		DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest	
36.		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 the Council Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Council 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	
36.1	None Specific	Steve Bowers has asked the Executive Member for Adults Services the following question: Question: The Council is currently in breach of its Statutory Duties with actions taken under the 21st Century project, how do you propose to remedy this urgent situation? The Statutory duties are clearly laid out in the HCA – The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/628396/Tenant_Involvement_and_Empowerment_Standard.pdf) particularly clause 2.2.3. ‘2.2.3 Where registered providers are proposing a change in landlord for one or more of their tenants or a significant change in their management	

arrangements, they shall consult with affected tenants in a fair, timely, appropriate and effective manner. Registered providers shall set out the proposals clearly and in an appropriate amount of detail and shall set out any actual or potential advantages and disadvantages (including costs) to tenants in the immediate and longer term. Registered providers must be able to demonstrate to affected tenants how they have taken the outcome of the consultation into account when reaching a decision.'

Phase 1 of the 21st Century has already seen the unilateral decision taken to split the Housing Service into strategic and operational services without any form of consultation.

This split between Strategic and Operational decision making has the potential to lead to some disastrous plans being put in place without the expertise of operational personnel. This sort of situation cannot be a good use of your existing resources, wasting time and money on inspirational projects that are impractical in the local environment and likely to lead to an even greater loss of credibility within the Borough.

We are already seeing the negative impact of Phase 1 within the Housing Service with the loss of experienced staff both permanent and short term. The replacements are short term contractors or agency temps which impacts on both the existing staff and the tenants. With Phase 2 being split into two tranches without an end date but tranche 1 only aiming for completion in April 2018 Housing are looking at another year of dealing with the fallout from lack of direction.

The Involved Tenant members of the Tenant & Landlord Improvement Panel (TLIP) a fully constituted group of WBC, a group charged with scrutinising the use of the HRA budget circa £15 million, have expressed concerns over many months to both the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive but no action has been taken to improve the situation in spite of promises made by both gentlemen.

Whilst we appreciate that the Council is under increasing pressure to reduce costs if the current trends continue you are in danger of losing what little trust that Wokingham residents have in your ability to run our affairs.

36.2 None Specific

Jen Challis has asked the Executive Member for Finance the following question:

Question:

When the 21st Century Council Project was first announced one of the key elements was to improve local coverage and reduce the costs associated with multiple personnel having to carry out visits to localities thus helping to improve community involvement and development. Is this still one of your priorities, as the opposite appears to be happening?

The Neighbourhood Officers, Rent Officers and the Community Development Officers are front line staff dealing with your customers on a daily basis and as such their roles are critical to local communities. However over the last six months we have seen these key staff leaving, being seconded to projects, having to attend multiple training sessions thus leaving gaps in availability. The recruitment of short term replacements with little local experience also adds to the pressure on existing staff whilst they are being trained. Long term some of these replacements may become valuable members with the short term nature of their employment there is no commitment to either the area or the communities. Tenants are finding it increasingly difficult to know who to contact, in one case the Neighbourhood Officer who was introduced one week had left when they tried to contact a week later. This does not inspire confidence in residents. The Rent department has seen a massive turnover of staff which is extremely frustrating for Tenants trying to make contact and get a problem resolved. Our overall impression is of total chaos with letters being generated that no one understands even the staff whose signatures are on them. Rent arrears are a problem for the Council but the lack of credibility in your systems only frightens the innocent while the intentional non-payers just ignore them. This needs to be addressed sooner rather than later.

36.3 None Specific

Brian Lee has asked the Executive Member for Adults' Services the following question:

Question:

The Council's 21st Century Project is having a major impact on the functions carried out by the Asset Management team within Housing Services. How much longer are we as Tenants expected to tolerate the growing staff shortages and the Councils' failure to appreciate the problems that both the team and

Tenants are having to tolerate?

The Council's embargo on the recruitment of permanent staff and the consequent use of agency or temporary contractors is costly in financial terms but also places pressure on the remaining staff who are unable to attract applications for the vacancies or retain experienced staff. Eventually the increased pressure will lead to increasing staff welfare issues and gaps appearing in the services to residents across the Borough. Prior to the start of the 21st Century project this team was a busy, proactive group who had improved the Council's property Assets bringing 99% up to the Decent Homes Standard but are now in very real danger of collapse. They have let major contracts and monitored them effectively to ensure that the Council is achieving improved value for money and that Tenant Satisfaction continues to improve. We are now in the position where staff shortages mean that not all of these functions can be fully carried out. The Council needs to change their recruitment policy now before further damage is done and your assets depreciate.

36.4 None Specific

Chris Wallace has asked the Executive Member for Finance the following question:

Question:

The 21st Century Project is supposed to reduce staff costs whilst improving interaction between the Council and residents primarily through the use of enhanced IT. How will this work when there has been no input from customers and the Council's website has been downgraded in a national survey by Better Connected from 3 Star to 2 Star while other local Councils are improving?

The Council are investing large sums of our money into IT systems and staff training but no one has bothered to ask us what we want to see improved. There are many residents in the Borough who are disabled or disadvantaged who cannot access your IT services and the helpline is less than helpful, nine times out of ten they don't know the answer nor do they know who might. Reporting problems on the website appears to be a complete waste of time with no acknowledgments at the time or later by email. Web pages over 5 years out of date, updated pages having incorrect information, the list is endless. The communications about 21st Century, even the minutes from the Scrutiny Committee, are all papering over the problems being experienced by

your customers. Everything is supposedly on track, everyone is on board with the changes and the Council will save huge sums of money. No it's not. If two out of three, on track and on board, are false can you be sure that the predicted costs and savings are true. Involved Tenants have questioned changes to the Housing Service and yet again there is a total lack of communication or consultation on this area of your business. Rumours of the Housing Service splitting into multiple areas within the Council are hopefully just that because the destruction of the most organised, experienced and dedicated team will come back to haunt you. By all means change what needs to be changed, to improve services, but don't ruin the parts that work in your drive for change.

36.5 None Specific

Keith Malvern has asked the Executive Member for Strategic Highways and Planning the following question:

Question:

Why have you had to find an extra £400K this financial year to cover Local Plan activities when the schedule of work was already known?

36.6 Arborfield

Helen Power has asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

Question:

Will the Executive Member please advise why the number of pupils per year (Published Admission Number) for Bohunt School has changed from the agreed 180 (September 2016) to 240 a year, which means the present buildings are only big enough to accommodate 11-16 year olds, not 11-18 year olds, as was intended, with the increase in pupils meaning consequent impacts for other local schools and a presumed requirement to build the additional wing to accommodate the 6th form pupils which the current buildings were supposed to cater for?

36.7 None Specific

Peter Humphreys has asked the Executive Member for Finance the following question:

Question:

Back in April I phoned the Council and was reluctantly put through to the finance department as I wished to ask some questions about the accounts extract published in WBC's Borough News. My key question was how much in total WBC had received in developer contributions (s106 and CIL) in 2016/17 and was expecting for 2017/18. I was told by an

officer that he didn't have the information immediately to hand but that he would get back to me.

A month later, well past the target response time, I received an email stating my questions were "not a valid request as they were asking for an opinion/explanation/justification, not for recorded information held by the Council". That response is of course complete nonsense to put me off asking embarrassing questions. I pursued the matter with WBC's legal department.

After various exchanges of emails the officer presumably read the definition of the word "question" in the OED and had a change of heart and my other queries were accepted and answered but not the key question re developer contributions.

Contrary to stated official policy the officer has not subsequently replied to my follow-up email. I thus wish to know who within the Council (officer or / and councillor (s)) issued the edict to block this information from public view.

36.8 None Specific

Diane Heyes has asked the Executive Member for Adults' Services the following question:

Question:

The buildings insurance premiums for about 250 shared ownership and leasehold tenants which under our lease agreement have to be negotiated on the tenants behalf by the Council has trebled over the last few years. Our bill this year is £490 for a 2 bedroom semi detached which is buildings insurance only. This is apparently due to the small size of the overall pool and a small number of significant claims. The rises have created a significant difference between shared ownership tenants and neighbouring fully owned properties who have the benefit of insuring through a much larger pool.

Please would the Council take steps to provide cost effective insurance on our properties and ensure that the premiums do not rise faster than the general market rate for household insurance. If this is not possible please would the Council allow its tenants and shared equity owners to purchase cheaper insurance in the general private market themselves.

36.9 Shinfield South; Swallowfield Ian Young has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question:
Bearing in mind:

1. That Hyde End Road is a busy commuter route, for Wokingham and local residents travelling to and from Basingstoke and Junction 11 of the M4 a significant section of the road is only just over 5 metres wide instead of the standard 7.3 metres
2. The recent photographic evidence, sent to the Council, showing HGVs and buses mounting the pavement to avoid each other, and endangering the lives of pedestrians. This section of road has a blind bend, and the introduction of a new bus service, using buses 3 metres wide, is making the problem much worse

does the Council accept the need to provide an improved and safer route for pedestrians, and a wider road for vehicles?

36.10 Maiden Erlegh Guy Grandison has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question:
Can the Executive member for Highways give an update on the Bus Service down Silverdale Road and why the morning peak services were removed?

36.11 Shinfield South Simon Cooper has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question:
As a result of an accident that occurred at my property on the 21 January that sadly resulted in the loss of life of a passenger of the vehicle and the subsequent two serious accidents, the continued speeding issues that have been reported to both Thames Valley Police and Wokingham Borough Council, please can the member responsible for Highways Chris Bowring advise on what actions will be taken and by when to resolve the speeding issues that plague Grazeley residents before another serious accident occurs and can Chris please advise what would be required to lower the speed limit in the village?

- 37. PETITIONS**
To receive any petitions which Members or members of the public wish to present.
- 38. None Specific PRESENTATION BY THE CHIEF CONSTABLE, FRANCIS HABGOOD AND THE DEPUTY POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR THAMES VALLEY, MATTHEW BARBER**
To receive a presentation from the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police Francis Habgood and the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley, Matthew Barber.
- This is expected to be approximately 20 minutes in duration after which there will be an opportunity for Member questions of no more than 15 minutes in duration.
- 39. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**
To receive any announcements by the Mayor.
- 40. None Specific TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT 2016-17** **45 - 74**
To consider the Treasury Management Outturn Report for 2016/17; which was approved by the Executive on 27 July 2017 and considered by the Audit Committee on 13 June 2017.
- RECOMMENDATION** That the Council is asked to:
- 1) note that this report was presented to the Audit Committee on 13 June 2017 and the Executive on the 27 July 2017;
 - 2) approve:
 - (a) the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2016/17; and
 - (b) the actual 2016/17 prudential indicators within the report.
- 41. STATEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS, AND DEPUTY EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**
To receive any statements by the Leader of the Council, Executive Members, and Deputy Executive Members.
- In accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.23 the total time allocated to this item shall not exceed 20 minutes, and no Member shall speak for more than 5 minutes

42.

STATEMENTS FROM COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES

To receive any statements from Directors of Council Owned Companies.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.24 the total time allocated to this item shall not exceed 10 minutes, and no Director, except with the consent of Council, shall speak for more than 3 minutes.

43.

MEMBER QUESTION TIME

To answer any member questions

A period of 20 minutes will be allowed for Members to ask questions submitted under Notice

Any questions not dealt with within the allotted time will be dealt with in a written reply

43.1 None Specific

Gary Cowan has asked the Executive Member for Strategic Highways and Planning the following question:

Question:

Page 68 of the July Executive Report (Local Plan Update Options Development) relates to a duty to co-operate and it states that the Council has been and continues to work closely with other local authorities. Can I have dates these meetings took place, who was present and copies of all the meeting notes?

43.2 None Specific

Lindsay Ferris has asked the Executive Member for Adults' Services the following question:

Question:

It has come to my attention that a number of our residents, who are leaseholders of WBC owned properties, have been hit with increases of over 100% in their Household Buildings Insurance for the year 2017/2018. Many people are struggling to make ends meet at the moment and such a large increase could cause significant financial problems for such residents. It would also appear that these residents are unable to find their own Insurance due to various policies within WBC thereby leaving them with an unreasonable take it or leave it, anti-competitive approach from this Council. What is the Executive Member going to do to rectify this position?

- 43.3 None Specific Prue Bray has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:
- Question:**
How does the income so far received from the charging for overnight and Sunday parking compare to the income predicted? Please include information on the trial in Woodley, which substituted an additional charge for the first hour instead of Sunday and overnight charges, and provide the figures by individual car park.
- 43.4 Hawkedon Tim Holton has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:
- Question:**
I and the residents of Hawkedon are concerned that the junction with Hatch Farm and Earley Way North, which is already very congested, will become even worse if that is possible. I have already spoken at length with the Executive Member on this issue, and I would like confirmation that the lights at this junction and Showcase roundabout can be linked to ensure the free flow of traffic.
- 43.5 None Specific Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey has asked the Executive Member for Finance the following question:
- Question:**
What departments have been included and are already participating in Phase 2 of 21st-Century Council?
- 43.6 None Specific John Jarvis has asked the Executive Member for Environment the following question:
- Question:**
Could the Executive Member explain the Council's approach to grass-cutting for the benefit of residents who are writing to me concerned about the failure to cut grass until it is so long the resultant mulch is both unsightly and prevents use of the landscaped areas? There are particular concerns that during this summer holidays grass cutting of playgrounds etc did not occur until after the children had returned to school.
- 43.7 None Specific Dianne King has asked the Executive Member for Environment the following question:
- Question:**
I have read that some councils are threatening fines of up to £2500 if residents overload bins or put them

out late or too early amongst other things. Could I ask the Executive member to reassure my residents that this will not be happening in Wokingham?

44. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WARD MATTERS

A period of 20 minutes will be allowed for Members to ask questions in relation to the latest circulated volume of Minutes of Meetings and Ward Matters

45. MOTIONS

To consider any motions

In accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.11.2 a maximum period of 30 minutes will be allowed for each Motion to be moved, seconded and debated, including dealing with any amendments. At the expiry of the 30-minute period debate will cease immediately, the mover of the Motion or amendment will have the right of reply before the Motion or amendment is put to the vote

45.1 None Specific

Motion 398 submitted by Lindsay Ferris

There are areas within the 21C project that do need to be introduced. However the general view is that many aspects of the 21C project have yet to be proven.

The current morale of staff at Wokingham is extremely low. In addition not only have staff been made redundant, (under Phase 1), but a significant number of staff have just left due to the uncertainty caused by such a dramatic change. In addition many Members are still unclear as to what is the correct way to proceed and how it impacts their relationship with the Council and the wider public.

The Council is about to recruit a new Chief Executive with an expected timescale of early 2018 before any chosen candidate is likely to be in post. Any new Chief Executive would want to review the 21C project on his/her appointment. It is therefore proposed that Phase 2 of the 21C programme be delayed until after the appointment of the new Chief Executive. This would give time to review how Phase 1 has progressed and to resolve any issues arising.

45.2 None Specific

Motion 399 submitted by Charlotte Haitham Taylor

This Council reaffirms its commitment to condemn all forms of discrimination designed to exclude individuals or groups from social and public life. This

Council will further agree to review its existing practices to ensure that discrimination does not occur within our Borough, except where there is a legal or moral requirement to focus on or exclude a particular group or groups.

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON 20 JULY 2017 FROM 7.30 PM TO 9.50 PM

Members Present

Councillors: Rob Stanton (Mayor), John Kaiser (Deputy Mayor), Mark Ashwell, Alistair Auty, Keith Baker, Parry Batth, Laura Blumenthal, Chris Bowering, David Chopping, UllaKarin Clark, Gary Cowan, Andy Croy, Richard Dolinski, Lindsay Ferris, Michael Firmager, Kate Haines, Mike Haines, Charlotte Haitham Taylor, John Halsall, Emma Hobbs, Tim Holton, John Jarvis, Philip Houldsworth, Clive Jones, Norman Jorgensen, Pauline Jorgensen, Dianne King, Abdul Loyes, Charles Margetts, Julian McGhee-Sumner, Ken Miall, Philip Mirfin, Ian Pittock, Bob Pitts, Barrie Patman, Anthony Pollock, Malcolm Richards, Angus Ross, Beth Rowland, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, David Sleight, Chris Smith, Wayne Smith, Bill Soane, Alison Swaddle, Paul Swaddle, Simon Weeks, Oliver Whittle and Shahid Younis

19. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Prue Bray, Pauline Helliard-Symons, David Lee and Stuart Munro.

20. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 May 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

Councillor Beth Rowland referred to Minute 9: Election of the Leader of the Council, in relation to the wording about the previous Leader's decision to step down from the role.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

22. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure, the Mayor invited members of the public to submit questions to the appropriate Members.

22.1 David Hare asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

A number of residents have complained to me that very few roads in Hawkedon ward, Earley, seem to have been resurfaced recently, despite many roads needing to be done. Can you tell me how much money has been spent, and where resurfacing has occurred, in Hawkedon ward over each of the last two financial years (2015/16 and 2016/17)?

Answer

The annual road resurfacing budget for the whole of the Borough is £2.4m per annum. Regarding road schemes in Hawkedon ward in Earley; in 2015/16 £32,000 was spent resurfacing the Rushey Way/Gipsy Lane junction, and in 2016/17 £16,600 was spent resurfacing Meldreth Way.

Supplementary Question

Could you tell me how it is decided which roads are to be resurfaced and also more than just Meldreth Way has been done this year?

Supplementary Answer

We do not divide up the roads programme on a ward by ward basis as that would be

contrary to effective repairs. We follow the Highways Asset Management system promoted by Government, and adopted by Wokingham's Executive in 2016. The roads treated are the ones in most need, so it does not relate to a particular ward. We aim to provide a consistent level of resurfacing for our roads across the entire Borough.

22.2 Chris Singleton asked the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Highways the following question:

With the continuing house building programme, congestion seems to be worsening, affecting residents of the Town Wards and visitors to Wokingham Town. In the period prior to completion of both Northern and Southern Distributor roads, what peak flows and delays are anticipated, in particular on London Road, Peach Street, Denmark Street, Langborough Road, Finchampstead Road and Reading Road and what steps can the Council take to mitigate the impact of development on traffic and the potential damage to the prospects of the Regeneration programme in the period up to these 2 major road improvement projects becoming effective?

Answer

Whilst housing delivery is progressing in both North and South Wokingham Strategic Development Locations, housing occupations currently stand at 28% for the North Wokingham SDL and 15% for the South Wokingham SDL. The Town Centre Regeneration is in its very early stages, with some applications still awaiting submission. Therefore, at the moment there has not been significant additional pressure applied to the network as a result of those developments.

The Council owns and operates a Wokingham Strategic Transport Model (WSTM) which has been validated in accordance with the Department for Transport's guidance. This allows us to assess aspects of the highway for chosen forecast years, which include 2019 and 2026. For each forecast year they can be reviewed against, 'no development' (which is base year plus growth) and 'development with infrastructure' (which is base year plus growth, plus planned infrastructure). This assists us in understanding what the network background growth is and what the development related growth is. It separates the two. It should be noted that the Core Strategy includes Transport Interventions (triggers linking house completions to new highways investment) assessed through the use of the WSTM, which were secured and found to be sound through an Examination in Public.

During the delivery of the Core Strategy it is inevitable that there will be some pain prior to the infrastructure gain. The Council, as you will remember, is focused on Infrastructure Delivery and is progressing on time with the current programme which, when completed, will provide network improvements and resilience. There is not always an option for an interim scheme to be considered prior to the delivery of strategic infrastructure (which ends in 2026) and where an interim scheme may be considered (i.e. the Holt Lane junction with Reading Road, Rances Lane, Binfield Road and Priest Avenue junctions with London Road) an option is not always possible or advisable due to negative associated effects. Interim junction improvements in these locations would encourage increased traffic movements in areas where this should not be encouraged (residential and school areas). It would also divert significant s106 funds from the infrastructure projects and result in abortive works (often requiring the removal of trees and landscaping), which would not be required once the strategic infrastructure is delivered.

Rather than try to provide a lengthy range of data within this fairly short response, I would be happy to discuss this and the specific areas you mention in a separate meeting and make the main points of the meeting available on the Council's website. I would also point

out that there will be a series of information sessions for ward Members and Town/Parish Councils which will take place in the autumn. These will cover traffic modelling, Civil Parking Enforcement and our emerging Highways Strategy.

Supplementary Question

My concern is, leading up to the new roads being opened, how bad the situation is going to get. I am concerned that we are seeing the difficulty of driving through the town, in encouraging visitors to the town and that we may stop people coming here. Are there any figures available for footfall, relative to Bracknell and Reading?

Supplementary Answer

I am not aware of footfall figures for Bracknell or Reading, but I am sure that Councillors Lee and Mirfin will be able to supply you with the data you are asking for.

22.3 Annabel Yoxall asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

It is welcoming to hear that the Leader of the Council is committed to standing up for victims of domestic abuse in our community. My question is on behalf of those who have suffered historic abuse, those who are currently in abusive and controlling relationships and for the perpetrators of the abuse. For the many who have experienced abuse there will be a range of strong emotions attached to it. They may also feel isolated and that they have no voice. What will the Leader be implementing to encourage those who are afraid, who feel shame and who carry guilt, to step forward and seek the help they so desperately need?

Answer

By publicly championing this agenda, I am tackling the very notion that any victim should feel isolated, shame or guilt. By talking publicly about this priority I am encouraging anyone who needs support to be brave and ask for it.

Earlier this year the Community Safety Partnership approved the refreshed Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy that sets the strategic aims and objectives for the next three years.

This strategy has three main areas of focus; prevention, provision, and risk reduction.

The focus on prevention has the following aims:

1. Increased understanding of coercive control and 'hidden abuse' across the workforce in order to help early identification, so that support can be offered;
2. Empower the community to seek support - to know where to ask for help and to demystify what the process for asking for help is; and
3. Work with schools and early education settings to support young people in developing an understanding of healthy and safe relationships to prevent future domestic abuse.

There are a range of services that the Council commissions and intends to commission to support residents who are or have experienced domestic abuse and to support and enable perpetrators of abuse to change their abusive behaviours.

In addition, I aim to make sure that every elected Member and Officer of this Council recognises the serious implications of domestic abuse and recognises their responsibility to tackle this blight on our community.

23. PETITIONS

Kenneth Lowe and Councillor Keith Baker presented petitions in relation to the matters indicated below.

The Mayor's decision on the action to be taken is set out against each petition.

Kenneth Lowe	Mr Lowe presented a petition with 75 signatures requesting a review of the use of Rose Street by buses. To be forwarded to the Executive Member for Highways and Transport.
Councillor Keith Baker	Councillor Baker presented a petition with 40 signatures (supported by an e petition with 128 signatures) requesting the introduction of height barriers to all Council owned car parks in order to minimise the risk of incursions by Travellers and others. To be forwarded to the Executive Member for Highways and Transport

24. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor informed Members of the following:

- This was the final Council meeting for Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, before he departed to take up a new role as Chief Executive of the Birmingham Children's Trust. Mr Couldrick had been appointed in 2009 as Director of Children's Services before taking up the role of Chief Executive in 2012. On behalf of the Council, the Mayor wished Mr Couldrick success in his new role.
- The book of condolence opened following the terrorist attack at the Manchester Arena on 22 May 2017 had now been closed and would be delivered to the Mayor of Manchester, Andy Burnham. Mr Burnham had confirmed that the book would be displayed publicly with gratitude from the residents of the city.
- The Mayor's main charities for the year were Cancer Care and a new charity, Cancer Champions. Any funds raised would be used to support the work carried out by the Royal Berkshire Hospital to treat and care for local residents.
- The Mayor and Deputy Mayor had carried out a number of recent engagements including a number of summer fetes. They were impressed by the efforts of local residents and the vibrant community spirit on display across the Borough.

25. LOCALISM ACT PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2017/18

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 27 to 35, which gave details of the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18. Under the Localism Act 2011 the Council was

required to publish details of its pay policy. However, the statement did not include data about staff based in schools, as this was outside the scope of the legislation.

The statement gave details of pay levels at the Council ranging from the highest to lowest paid. It also gave details of mean and median pay rates. The report indicated that, whilst there had been no change to senior management pay, the gap between the highest and lowest paid was narrowing.

Councillor Oliver Whittle reported that the Pay Policy Statement was submitted to Council on an annual basis and that the 2017/18 statement had been supported by the Council's Personnel Board.

Members commented on recent national discussions about public sector pay and the impact of ongoing Government austerity measures. Councillor Charlotte Haitham Taylor confirmed that any changes in the Government's position on public sector pay would be the subject of local negotiations and would also be the subject of a further update to Council.

It was proposed by Oliver Whittle and seconded by Charlotte Haitham Taylor that the recommendation in the report be agreed.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18 be approved for publication on the Council's website in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

26. COMPLAINT - LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN'S REPORT

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 37 to 55, which gave details of the findings of an Ombudsman investigation into a complaint made on behalf of a resident of Murdoch House care home between 2010 and 2013. The complaint had been brought by the resident's daughter.

The report stated that the placement was arranged and funded by the Council and, at the time, the care home was managed by Four Seasons Healthcare (FSHC) Ltd. It was alleged that, as a result of poor care planning, delivery and monitoring by both FSHC and the Council, the resident suffered severe malnourishment.

The Ombudsman had found that:

- The resident's nutritional care was inadequate and not in line with the relevant regulations and guidance;
- There were not enough activities arranged to stimulate the resident;
- Care planning and risk assessments around falls and mobility were inadequate.

In light of the findings the Ombudsman had recommended that the Council make payments of £3,500 and £500 to the resident and her daughter respectively. The Ombudsman had also recommended that the Council review its contract monitoring process.

The report gave details of subsequent changes made to the Council's information gathering systems, risk assessments, quality assurance procedures and training and development for front line staff. The Council had also established a register to facilitate

monitoring of safety standards in agencies causing concern. The Ombudsman had been informed of these changes and had indicated that they were reasonable.

The report was submitted to the Council for consideration as required by S 31 of the Local Government Act 1974.

Councillor Julian McGhee-Sumner gave details of the Ombudsman's findings and, on behalf of the Council, apologised to the resident and her family for the Council's failings.

Members noted the details of the case with concern and sought assurance that the changes made to the Council's systems and monitoring procedures would ensure that there was no possibility of further cases of this nature. Councillor McGhee Sumner confirmed that the new systems had been thoroughly checked and that other checks and balances were now in place. The Ombudsman was satisfied that the Council had taken appropriate action.

It was proposed by Julian McGhee-Sumner and seconded by Richard Dolinski that the report of the Local Government Ombudsman and the subsequent actions taken by the Council be noted.

Upon being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED: That the report of the Local Government Ombudsman and subsequent actions taken by the Council be noted.

27. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 57 to 62, which gave details of proposed changes to the Constitution, as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group. The proposed changes related to:

- the annual review undertaken by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel;
- the quorum for the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- the Planning Committee's Terms of Reference;
- the process for considering Code of Conduct complaints.

Councillor Lindsay Ferris stated that the Liberal Democrat Group had concerns about the current operation of the Member Code of Conduct procedure and the role of the Standards Committee. Councillor Charlotte Haitham Taylor commented that the Standards Committee was properly constituted and would continue its important role in promoting high standards of behaviour with or without support from the Liberal Democrats.

Councillor Keith Baker referred to the recent handling of Code of Conduct complaints and suggested that further guidance be provided on the process for making complaint details public, specifically who "owned" the complaint.

It was proposed by Paul Swaddle and seconded Pauline Jorgensen that the proposed changes to the Constitution, set out in the report, be agreed.

On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED: That the following changes to the Constitution be agreed:

1) Chapter 2.2.3 Independent Remuneration Panel

that Rule 2.2.3 be amended as follows:

2.2.3 Independent Remuneration Panel

The Council commissions an Independent Remuneration Panel to review the Scheme of Members Allowances annually. ***Should there have been little or no change during the year, the Independent Remuneration Panel may decide not to undertake a full review or any review of the Scheme of Members Allowances. In such instances, the Panel will report their decision and the reason for it to Full Council.***

2) that Rule 4.4.35 Quorum be amended as follows:

“4.4.35. The quorum of the Health and Wellbeing Board shall be four. Representatives from Wokingham Borough Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group must be in attendance at each meeting.

If neither the Chairman nor Vice Chairman is present a Chairman will be elected for that meeting. Substitute voting members for the Chairman and Vice Chairman, for that meeting will be identified prior to the meeting.”

3) that the following be added to Rule 8.1.1 Planning Committee’s Terms of Reference and the Procedure for Appeals added as an appendix to the Constitution (Appendix A to the report):

“m) Applications by any person in respect of a decision to designate/de-designate a building as a Building of Traditional Local Character. This is conditional in that the application must be made within eight weeks beginning with the day on which written confirmation of the decision was issued to the relevant parties (unless a longer period is agreed by either the Chairman of the Planning Committee or the Director Customer and Localities Services).

4) Chapter 9.1 Process for Considering Code of Conduct Complaints

Guidelines to support the Monitoring Officer’s initial decision regarding a complaint to be added to Rule 9.1.13.4 Initial Decision of the Monitoring Officer (Appendix B to report).

28. STATEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS, AND DEPUTY EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

Charlotte Haitham Taylor, Leader of the Council

Before going on to the main topic of my speech this evening, I need to inform Council that Councillor Alison Swaddle decided to step down as Deputy Executive Member for Children’s Services in June. I want to thank her for her work since she accepted the appointment when I became Leader. I can announce that Councillor Clark has accepted the position as the new Deputy Executive Member for Children’s Services.

I spoke at some length at the last full Council meeting about Andy Couldrick, but I would also like to give my thanks to him for all the work he has done for this authority and wish him the very best of luck in his new role at Birmingham.

In May, I talked about engaging better with local businesses and finding more ways to generate income. We have made clear also that the Council needs to change, using technology and early intervention to provide services that respond to the needs of our residents. Phase 1 of the 21st Century Council programme, dealing with internal services staff, is now complete. We have taken on board important lessons for the implementation of Phase 2.

However, we completely disagree with Unison's conclusions in last week's press. Affected staff have been consulted throughout, and the programme was raised with residents at last year's Budget Engagement sessions. Unison's comments about the impact on vulnerable people simply do not match the changes being implemented: improved availability and access to our services, whilst ensuring those who need or want to speak to someone still can. Councillor Whittle will speak a bit more about the implementation of this programme later.

It is disappointing that Councillor Croy used the Unison article to say "The Council is struggling to provide services residents expect". Our proud record of making this Council more efficient whilst protecting frontline services has seen other Councils visit Wokingham to learn about our innovation.

We have maintained weekly waste collection, unlike Labour in neighbouring Reading. We continue to invest in infrastructure, providing houses, roads, new schools, new car parks, community centres and leisure centres.

Only two weeks ago, Members visited the finished Bohunt School and were there to witness the handing over of the keys to the school. I think that this is a real accomplishment.

Optalis leads in providing adult social care, and our housing companies go from strength to strength in providing more affordable homes. Indeed, last year we built more affordable homes than any year since the financial crash, and this year we are set to double that number.

We are implementing Civil Parking Enforcement this autumn, making parking in the Borough fairer whilst stopping illegal and anti-social parking. We have built a new car park in Wokingham, we are regenerating the town centre at pace and we are renovating and building new leisure centres.

Our library service is seeing an increase in usage, against the national trend. And our Borough continues to be one of the best places to live in the country.

"Struggling to provide services"... I am not sure which planet you live on Councillor Croy? Just compare this to Reading, run by your party. Children's Services in crisis, swingeing cuts to services, Council Tax and fee rises through the roof, multiple swimming pools closing, and an administration incapable of getting its spending under control, despite receiving three times as much money per head from the Government as Wokingham.

We have serious challenges ahead, some of which I have set out tonight. When I was elected Leader of my Group and this Council, I set out a plan for what we need to meet these challenges head on.

But when I look at how Labour runs Councils, and compare them to our successes, the strength and high-quality of our services, our dedicated and skilled officers, our sound financial management and our high quality of life, I reach a stark conclusion: you only get these things with the Conservatives.

Mark Ashwell, Executive Member for Children's Services

This week, the secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening, announced an extra £1.3bn in Central Government funding for schools over the next two years. At the same time a new minimum per pupil funding limit will be set in secondary schools, meaning that all secondary schools will receive at least £4,800 for each student. This is a real breakthrough for the schools in Wokingham Borough.

As we know, up to now, our schools have received less money per pupil than anywhere else in England. My predecessor and now Leader, Charlotte Haitham Taylor, worked with Councillor Richard Dolinski, her deputy, and Councillor Keith Baker, when he was Leader, to press the Government on the issue of fairer funding for schools. We raised the issue with Ministers in Whitehall. We met the Schools Minister along with former Reading East MP Rob Wilson. This was to set out the case for our schools and, since gaining this role, I have continued to keep fairer funding on the agenda.

The announcement of extra funding is a triumph for Wokingham Borough. I want to thank all those who have helped us to argue for fairer funding for schools, including Councillors, our local MPs, schools, voluntary organisations, local residents and those who prompted our debates in this very chamber. You all made that difference.

I am glad that it is a Conservative Government that has not only recognised the problem, but started to address it. But there is still so much more to do. It is important that we continue to press the Government to increase the level of funding and, in particular, to recognise the base levels of funding for our primary schools and early years providers in our Borough. These are simply inadequate. I pledge to lead the charge to get more money for our pupils and I know that I have the Council's support which will be vital to ensure that the schools in Wokingham Borough remain some of the best in the country and every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

With this in mind, as Councillor Haitham Taylor has just stated, last week I had the honour of organising a cross-party tour of our new secondary school, Bohunt, in Arborfield Green. While we were there we officially handed over the keys to Ben Godber, the headteacher. This project, which I know is dear to your heart Mr Mayor, was delivered on time and on budget. Huge congratulations to all involved.

I have made it my personal mission to visit every one of the 70 plus education establishments in our Borough over the next 12 months. Today I visited Foundry College in Norreys which is a pupil referral unit to provide or support the education needs of vulnerable and permanently excluded pupils. Their strap line is "It takes commitment to change lives".

In chairing the recent Corporate Parenting Board meeting we had a great interaction with the Chair and representatives of the Children in Care Council. This Council is made up of and represents our children in care. After their presentation I said to Julia, Lily and Jackson that they could leave the meeting because they might be bored. They insisted that they wanted to stay as they found great comfort in hearing the meeting talking about them and their care. So please don't forget that we are all corporate parents for our children in care. I will continue to report back to full Council on Children's Services as it will take all our commitment to change lives.

Oliver Whittle – Executive Member for Finance, 21st Century Council, Internal Services and Human Resources

The first phase of the major project to improve efficiency and reduce costs within the Council has completed in line with the programme and targets set. Phase one focused on internal areas, and our residents and Councillors will not have noticed any changes.

A much enhanced IT system has been introduced and all internal functions have been redesigned to ensure the operations are streamlined, that is to say lean processes.

The next stage will see a similar approach applied to outward facing services. The intention is to offer our residents greater and easier access to information through the Council website which is being redesigned. The website is also available now as an app for mobile phones, and again this will be improved. Residents unable to access the web will still be able to telephone the Council or visit Shute End.

Julian McGhee-Sumner – Executive Member for Adults' Services, Health, Wellbeing and Housing

I would like to share two good news items with Members.

The first relates to Fosters Care Home in Woodley. As Members will remember, we agreed to have Fosters rebuilt to 21st century standards. The building is due to be handed over in October and is fully on schedule and on budget. I know my colleagues in Optalis are excited to be taking over this brand new, state of the art, building and I am advised that residents will begin moving in towards the end of the year.

The other area I wanted to mention is Phoenix Avenue in Norreys Ward. A number of houses have been handed over and I was delighted to be able to meet two new residents who were delighted with their new homes which offer greater family indoor and outdoor space. I look forward to seeing the remaining units completed in the coming months.

I would also like to update Members on the recruitment of a new Chief Executive Officer for Optalis. Recent applications have been whittled down to 27, of which four have been shortlisted for interview, due to take place in the first week in August. I will report back once a decision has been made.

Norman Jorgensen – Executive Member for Environment, Sports, Environmental Health, Leisure and Libraries

Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower and our subsequent reviews, I provide this statement about the fire safety status of the Council's buildings.

- For the buildings where we have a duty to provide a Fire Risk Assessment these are fully compliant.
- All maintained Schools have been re-surveyed this year and are being assessed for any works that are required.
- All Corporate buildings were Fire Risk Assessed last year and, of the three sites identified as moderate risk, we have completed the necessary works to take them to low risk.
- As part of the Council's policy, all new educational properties completed since 2012 have sprinklers installed. These include Waingels, Bulmershe, St Crispins, Charvil Primary, Wheatfield Primary, Windmill Primary and the New Arborfield School
- Our buildings are not high rise and none are over 5 storeys.

Cladding

- Two new buildings have been constructed recently with cladding, Shinfield Infants Hall and the new Bulmershe Administration block. Both buildings are only single storey in height and have used cement fibreboard cladding.
- Windmill and Wheatfield Primary schools (both Academies) are clad with plastic composite decorative planks. Both are single storey and have multiple escape routes and sprinkler protection.
- The cladding in all these cases meets building regulations.

Properties under Construction by our Housing Companies

- Fosters and 52 Reading Road both include a sprinkler system within the design and as part of the build specification due to the more vulnerable nature of the expected future tenants.
- The apartment blocks under construction at Phoenix Avenue are of traditional brick construction with no sprinkler system.

The Grenfell Tower fire provides a reminder that we cannot become complacent with the security and safety of our buildings and accommodation. Although our records show we are diligent in fire risk assessments and that we are relatively low-risk in terms of the nature of our buildings, we will continue our reviews and apply any learning from this fire as the Inquiry develops.

Simon Weeks, Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement

I have several items to report. Members will be aware of the Hare Hatch Sheeplands issue, which has occupied the time of this Council in the past and also one of our Council meetings. I have an update following Court appearances. The High Court granted the Council an injunction in February 2017 which required Mr Scott and other retailers to comply with the Planning regulations at Hare Hatch Sheeplands by the 1st May. Officers visited on the 2nd May and found that neither Mr Scott nor Mr Parry, of Garden Trends, had complied.

A breach of a Court order is contempt of court and the Council made an application for committal. The first hearing took place on 30 June and Mr Scott and Mr Parry admitted that they had not complied and were, therefore, in contempt of court. The Judge adjourned the case until 19 July to give Mr Scott and Mr Parry the opportunity to purge their contempt by complying with the order. Officers visited again on Monday and Tuesday this week and found that, other than the complete removal of demolition debris, Mr Scott and Mr Parry

had complied. Mr Scott and Mr Parry apologised unreservedly to the Court for their contempt. The Judge gave Mr Scott a two month custodial sentence, suspended for two years, subject to his continued compliance with the Planning regulations on site. Mr Scott and Mr Parry were also ordered to pay the Council's full legal costs, totalling £19,477. Other legal issues are pending.

The second matter relates to the 5 Year Land Supply which many of you are aware is contentious and puts some of our longer term plans at risk. A decision was taken over a year ago, in relation to Stanbury House, where we refused an application which we then lost on appeal. We felt that the Inspector was erroneous in reaching his decision and we applied for a Judicial Review. We received the outcome of the Judicial Review at 4pm today. It is 68 pages long so I will just read out a couple of relevant paragraphs. "The Council has suffered a material prejudice as a result of the manner in which the Inspector dealt, unfairly in my judgement, with the application of a 10% lapse rate. It made the difference between whether or not the Council had demonstrated a 5 Year Supply of deliverable housing. For these reasons the Inspector's decision is quashed".

Finally, as some of you will be aware, we have had a matter ongoing for nine or ten years in Nine Mile Ride known as Pine Ridge Caravan Park and New Acres. These have been through a series of appeals, High Court reviews, Appeal Court reviews and eventually they have reached the end of the line. The final appeal decision has just been released. The latest appeal was a ten day public inquiry, held in November 2016 and March 2017. The relevant paragraph states that "For both sites, for the reasons given above, and having given account of all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeals should not succeed. I shall uphold the enforcement notice with variations and refuse to grant planning permission on the deemed application". This is the culmination of 12 years' work.

Chris Bowring – Executive Member for Highways and Transport

Civil Parking Enforcement begins in Wokingham Borough in early October. But this is much more than a transfer of responsibility for parking enforcement from the Police to the Council.

In recent years, the Police have not regarded enforcement as a top priority. The result is that parking has, in places, become a problem. Residents have been inconvenienced by people parking where they shouldn't. Even worse, this can be a danger to road safety and a cause of road congestion.

Under the new regime we will be more active in dealing with bad parking. But our watchword will be "reasonableness". We will not be clamping or towing vehicles away, at least not to begin with, and the traffic wardens (or "civil enforcement officers" as we are supposed to call them) will be polite and not over-zealous.

Our aim is to reduce the amount of bad parking in the Borough. The vast majority of drivers park sensibly. But those who don't, the serial offenders, should know that we intend stop their anti-social behaviour.

Philip Mirfin – Deputy Executive Member for Business and Economic Development and Regeneration

2017 has seen Wokingham's town centre regeneration moving firmly from the drawing board to delivery. Work started last June to build a brand new car park at the Carnival site

and, a year later, this facility is now complete on budget and helping to meet local parking needs. It is a great facility and is something that Wokingham should be proud of.

It is also the perfect backdrop for the new Carnival Phase 2 proposals which will see the rest of the Carnival site redeveloped with a brand-new sports, leisure and community concert hall facility for Wokingham that will give residents lots to do right here in Wokingham. The planning application is in the process of being submitted and people will be able to see these exciting plans very shortly.

As can be seen in the town centre, work at Peach Place is progressing quickly with the old 1960's parade long gone and the new units already beginning to take form along Peach Street as the steel frames are installed. Works will continue apace over the coming months with the remainder of the Rose Street façade stripped back and replaced, and buildings continuing to go up across the site.

The coming months will also see more work at Elms Field as the Council works with the preferred contractor, McLaughlin and Harvey, on essential works such as archaeological surveys and clearing the old Wellington House site in the run up to main construction works later this year. I'm also pleased to confirm we have agreed with McLaughlin and Harvey to minimise works around the main park this summer so the play area can remain open for families to use over the summer holidays.

I urge people to continue to support Wokingham Regeneration as we move forward with creating a better town for our existing residents and the many new residents that are moving into this area, along with the many new jobs.

29. STATEMENT FROM COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES

Anthony Pollock – Chairman of Optalis Ltd

I would remind Members that on 3rd April 2017 the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead became a shareholder in our local authority trading company, Optalis, when it transferred its adult social care services into the company. This is the result of much work by our Council Officers, Directors and managers of Optalis and Members of this Council over the last 12-15 months.

It is a vote of confidence in the vision we had for Optalis when we set it up 6 or 7 years ago. We have successfully transformed the company from being a local authority department to a partner of choice for a neighbouring Local Authority. Consequently the company is now jointly owned by Wokingham Borough and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead with an operating budget of about £40m, which I expect to increase further by the end of the municipal year.

As colleagues will remember, since its inception Optalis has been delivering provider services to residents in Wokingham Borough and more recently sought and won contracts with other local authorities: Bracknell, Oxfordshire and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for specific provider services and the company has sought to establish a foothold in the private sector.

The new partnership has resulted in Optalis, providing the full array of adult social care services for the Royal Borough, as well as provider services for Wokingham, contracted work in Slough, Bracknell and Oxfordshire and a limited level of private work. This array of

service provision places Optalis in a unique position as the only local authority trading company providing statutory adult social care services.

The company has revised its vision to accommodate this new development and set three strategic objectives. All of which align with both Councils' ambitions for delivering services which meet residents' needs. The strategic vision is that Optalis will be a bigger and more resilient Social Care Company, which has the flexibility to deliver a wider range of high quality services to residents, with the capacity to cope with increasing local demand, the efficiency to cope with diminishing resources and to be capable of further significant growth.

Over the next three years the focus will be on:

- Providing high quality adult social care services to residents of the two Boroughs;
- Delivering adult social care services that provide greater value for money but without compromising the quality of care;
- Growing the business by looking for other local authority partners.

As Councillor McGhee-Sumner stated, the company is currently recruiting a permanent Chief Executive, who will work with the two Councils to deliver our shared Vision, whilst seeking to draw more local authorities into the partnership.

Current financial results are on target for the first quarter with planned extra care projects which are coming on line in October within the agreed timelines. These projects are Birches and Fosters which are brand new Extra Care facilities in Wokingham and Woodley.

Alistair Auty – Wokingham Housing Ltd (WHL)

Mr Mayor, I am pleased to advise that the new Board of WHL is taking shape, with a new independent non-executive director having joined at the start of this month, to complement the MD, Bill Flood, and I as the other Board members.

Reiterating what Councillor McGhee-Sumner said earlier, I am also pleased to advise that Fosters, which will deliver 34 extra care homes and be managed by Loddon Homes, is on target for completion at the end of October as planned and to budget.

The Phoenix Avenue development is part way through completion, with 22 of the 68 homes already handed over and the others scheduled to be completed and handed over in phases between now and the end of October.

In total there is construction on-going at 7 WHL development sites across the Borough. Planning approval has also been secured for at an additional 4 development sites which will see a further 26 affordable homes delivered.

The first phase of Gorse Ride, which will see up to a further 44 affordable homes, is due to go to the Planning Committee in the near future.

Mr Mayor, it is a testament to the staff and Council officers that in total, WHL are anticipating the delivery of 118 affordable homes within the Borough during this financial year.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to Councillor John Jarvis and, particularly, to Councillor David Chopping for their contribution to WHL. I look forward to working with Councillor Chopping as Chairman of Berry Brook Homes, the new Council-owned company which, I am sure, will go from strength to strength.

Cllr David Chopping – Chairman of Berry Brook Homes Ltd

Before I start my update, I would like to make a comment on Andy Couldrick's departure. I sat on the Personnel Board which appointed him as Director of Children's Services and again when he became Chief Executive. He was the ideal candidate for both jobs. As Members we have to say a big thank you and wish him well in his future career.

My update is a report on behalf of Berry Brook Homes Ltd which is the Council's new housing company. I will also make a few comments on behalf of Councillor Cowan relating to Loddon Homes.

It is some 8 years since we started down the road to put together a Housing Investment Company. My original idea has grown from an idea on a single sheet of paper into a £30 million group of companies, building homes for Wokingham residents. Not just houses and flats for letting to those on the housing list but also building the Special Needs properties we could not, otherwise, have provided. Members will be aware that we now have residents moving in to their new homes, into quality properties that will provide for them well into future decades. Much more is to come.

Schemes are going through the various planning, contract and building stages and our current register of some 118 units should double in the next few years. We have the first Local Authority owned "for profit" Registered Provider and I am particularly proud of that achievement, as well. This company, Loddon Homes, is independent of Council control and operates within the required Homes and Communities Agency framework. In line with these guidelines I have stepped down from the company. There are two new independent directors and Councillor Kaiser has joined the Board. We wish them all well.

Whilst WHL, the original company, will carry out the initial development and construction work, they will pass on to Loddon any properties where grant aid is involved. The new company Berry Brook Homes, will be responsible for the management and future benefit of other developments.

This company will also have a majority of independent Non-Executive Directors, in Robin Roberts and Derek Cash who have already joined the Board in order to help us get up to speed quickly and deliver our objectives. We feel we now have a strong and experienced Board.

The first Berry Brook Homes Board meeting has also taken place with a number of key issues discussed and progressed in ensuring arrangements for governing and managing the company. We have a lot of work to do.

WBC Housing Services is to have a dedicated Housing Officer for Local Housing Company (LHC) work and, when employed, will enable us to manage everything effectively. Similarly, as the housing stock grows we will need to employ suitable staff to meet the opportunities coming our way as the Council becomes more commercial in its approach to the businesses.

30. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

In accordance with the agreed procedure the Mayor invited Members to submit questions to the appropriate Executive Members.

30.1 Lindsay Ferris asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

The Meeting TV Screen at Shute End is not working. This is causing considerable confusion and some annoyance. When will this facility become available again?

Answer

This has been rectified and a solution has been implemented that displays key meeting rooms on one screen display negating the need to wait for the screens to scroll through. The booking of meeting rooms is now integrated with the Council's email system so Councillors can also view meeting room locations directly in their meeting invites.

Supplementary Question

Most of us will have seen the new screens and I don't think that they are fit for purpose. I am concerned, if this is part of an integration of computer systems, that we don't have any more hiccups relating to something that looks fairly simple to transfer across. So, can I ask will there be any other issues associated with dealing with this type of change?

Supplementary Answer

The short answer is, I hope, no.

30.2 Imogen Shepherd-DuBey asked the Executive Member for Environment, Sports, Environmental Health, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

Given recent tragic events around the country, our thoughts have moved to what would we do in these situations. I understand that Wokingham Borough Council has an Emergency Plan, but I have not seen any information on it. Isn't it time to have a Members' briefing on it?

Answer:

Wokingham Borough Council has in place a suite of Emergency Response Plans to meet the requirements of Emergency Risk Assessments carried out as part of the Council's Duties under the Civil Contingencies Act.

Emergency Risk Assessments are undertaken at the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum by the multi-agency partners. The Thames Valley Community Risk Register is available as a public document at:

www.thamesvalleylrf.org.uk

The Council's Emergency Plans are underpinned by an Emergency Response Team comprised of the Council's Emergency Planning Officers and supported by Officers at Gold (Strategic), Silver (Tactical) and Bronze (Operational) levels. The 21st Century Council project has allowed us to strengthen this arrangement by inserting Silver emergency team roles into Job Descriptions.

A robust training package ensures that Officers required to respond to emergencies are fully trained and competent in their role, and now the high level management structure is in place for 21st Century Council, a series of Silver level courses have been scheduled to ensure that our managers are fully trained.

We have an Emergency Operations Centre from which to manage such emergencies and a backup Emergency Operations Centre in case our primary venue is unavailable.

Our Out of Hours emergency call handler processes all of the Council's out of hours calls and has access to our Out of Hours manual and emergency rotas, so that they are able to activate them at any time.

In advance of recent terror attacks around the UK, the Council had developed a plan for a move to the Critical threat level and this included development of a Lockdown/Shelter Plan for the Shute End building. This plan is in the early stages of development though it is planned to complete the rollout by the end of autumn 2017.

An E-learning training package for elected Members is being developed by the Emergency Planning Officers of the six Berkshire councils with a view to providing a consistent training package for all elected Members across Berkshire. It is planned that this will be available towards the end of 2017.

Supplementary Question:

This is good information, but when are we likely to receive a briefing on it?

Supplementary Answer:

Two points. One, the information is available on the website. Two, specific training for Members is planned for later this year.

30.3 Gary Cowan asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

There are many examples where Members do not comment one way or another on planning applications and/or consultations in their own wards so what message does that send to residents and should they be encouraged to do so?

Answer

The Council receives over 3,000 planning applications each year and the relevant local ward Members are informed about each of these individually via an email that asks them to contact the allocated planning case officer if they have any concerns. As the majority of applications are for residential extensions and other minor proposals that have a limited impact, most do not generate resident and hence local Member concern, so in line with the consultation email, Members do not need to respond.

If, however, Members are concerned or are contacted by concerned residents, they are encouraged to contact the planning case officer to discuss the proposal, or if appropriate, to submit a listing request to trigger consideration and determination of more contentious applications by the full Planning Committee, rather than by delegated authority.

A Member response to every application would not necessarily be proportionate and I am content that Members use their own judgement when commenting on applications. They know their wards best and understand the planning proposals that will have the greatest potential impact on their communities.

Supplementary Question

The question did make reference to planning applications and/or consultations in Members' own wards. One of the advantages of being an independent Councillor is that one is not tied to a ruling party and the pressures that may come with that. This also, perhaps, explains why disgruntled residents contact me when they feel that they have

been let down by their elected Councillors. For example, Shinfield, where many of the residents have contacted me over Bridge Farm gravel extraction and the cement factory, 2,000 houses in Grazeley and continued problems with the Shinfield Bypass. Their biggest concerns relate to the fact that their elected Councillors did not reply or even acknowledge their concerns. Is there a message that Shinfield Councillors would like me to pass on to their residents when they get in touch with me?

Supplementary Answer provided by Councillor Charlotte Haitham Taylor

There are some very rare instances when Council Members may have declared an interest in a planning application, not on a consultation, in which instance it is appropriate within a ward, sometimes with one ward Member, for another Member to make comments or represent those residents. They can do that at a Planning Committee or at different dates through a consultation period. You are talking about gravel extraction so I will make a reference to that. I have consulted with Andrew Moulton (Monitoring Officer) about this particular issue and I have declared a non-prejudicial personal interest in it.

30.4 Philip Mirfin asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Many residents have for some long time complained about the, often, near misses that have occurred when walking on shared pavement areas with cyclists.

Indeed, in walking myself, along only a short stretch of Smiths Walk at Woosehill with my dog, I often encounter speeding cyclists who give the impression of owning that entire walkway and who cycle at high speeds with a total disregard for any unfortunate resident, young or old, that is also trying to share that space. These are mostly adult male cyclists but can also be school boys. Usually if it is suggested that they should respect other users and slow down you simply get a profanity in reply!

Despite all I have said, I am a big supporter of shared pedestrian cycle ways and this Council has invested millions in developing a network of them across our Borough for the enjoyment of all. This is being spoilt and lives are being put at risk from the rogue cycle users who bring shame on all cyclists, disrespect those walking and cycle at high speeds to and from work or school.

Indeed, despite there being a legal requirement that bikes should be sold with a bell or horn, few seem either to have them or at the very least wish to alert pedestrians of their presence.

So, what can the Council do to slow these cyclists down, educate them and ensure the safety of young and old pedestrians?

Answer

The Council carries out significant work to educate cyclists including the "Bikeability" training programme which is aimed at 10 to 11 year olds. Around 1,500 children are trained each year, before they go to secondary school. We aim to educate local cyclists to do the right thing from a young age. In the last 9 years we have educated over 11,300 children in Wokingham Borough.

Wokingham's Bikeability Team are recognised by DfT as being high achievers and are regularly cited as examples of best practice and asked to speak at national events on the effectiveness of the programme.

Cycling safety is also built into Wokingham's "My Journey" sustainable transport initiative, including travel planning advice given to new home owners in the Borough. Maps of cycle routes are provided as part of this initiative, which indicate the designated cycle routes across the Borough as we want our new residents to feel safe and to encourage transport behaviour change to include increased walking, cycling and use of public transport.

To compliment road safety education the Council has made best use of government grant and developer funding to deliver new cycle infrastructure, which is designed to encourage good transport behaviour, a recent example being the A329 cycle scheme.

The Council is also developing stronger partnership with Sustrans and, locally, the Reading Cycle Campaign. Both organisations do excellent work in promoting cycling and how to be safe while doing it. This includes being courteous to other road users.

A bell is not a legal requirement for cyclists. Some pedestrians think that cyclists using a bell are being rude or pushy demanding pedestrians get out of their way. There are many pages on the internet devoted to "bike bells" and how to use them; however as a Borough we do promote bell use for cyclists using shared facilities.

The message promoted by the Council for cyclists is to be safe, be courteous and to have respect for other highway users, and we hope as cycle use continues to grow in the Borough this will become universally embraced by all cyclists.

Supplementary Question

Are there any legal steps that can be taken by this Council against abusive speeding cyclists?

Supplementary Answer

In the case that you refer to, with the shared pedestrian cycleway facility, the safe operation is based on pedestrians and cyclists behaving in a considerate and courteous manner. It is a bit of a jump to go to legal action. You would need pretty strong evidence that a criminal offence had been committed in order to achieve fines and you would also require the Police to judge that it was criminal. Due to pressures on the police force I would suggest that any breach would need to be of a significant nature, with the necessary evidence or witnesses available in order to proceed.

30.5 Laura Blumenthal asked the Executive Member for Environment, Sports, Environmental Health, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

In light of survivors of the Grenfell Tower tragedy saying that they did not receive enough support directly after the disaster, how confident are we that our Council has a robust emergency plan to provide a significant number of residents with immediate shelter and support if needed?

Answer

Yes, we do have a plan. However, an emergency of that scale would test any single Local Authority, which is why Wokingham Borough Council has for over a decade annually reviewed and entered into formal and robust Mutual aid arrangements with the other five Berkshire Unitary Authorities.

I will give an overview of our arrangements for responding to a similar incident.

Wokingham Borough Council has an Emergency Response Team structured in such a way as to allow it to work alongside Emergency Service partners and a suite of emergency plans to cater for incidents such as Grenfell.

Our Rest Centre Plan is the plan we would activate to allow us to receive evacuees that have been made unintentionally homeless. Our largest single Rest Centre is Loddon Valley Sport Centre and this can cater for approximately 320 people (sleeping – seated capacity is nearer 1000). We have stocks of Evacuation equipment (airbeds, sleeping bags, pillows, toiletry kits) available to us sufficient to cater for approximately 100 in Wokingham, over 600 when combined with Reading Council's stocks and over 800 when combined with all the Council stocks across Berkshire.

The Council has robust numbers of trained staff at all levels. Further training in respect of Silver level is due to be delivered in September 2017 following the recent 21st Century Council appointments.

Wider ongoing support and aftercare for those affected by such an incident is the responsibility of individual Council services.

A reminder of the importance of planning to proactively support victims of such incidents is picked up regularly through the Council's Business Continuity Planning process.

Supplementary Question

Can you tell me how the emergency teams practice for the possibility of such events?

Supplementary Answer

This is done in a number of ways, such as table top exercises, live exercises and feedback/learning from real incidents. All of these are undertaken by single agencies and multi-agency working. A range of exercises and specific training programmes are arranged across these areas. The next table top exercise, for example, is to be held with the Fire and Rescue service hosting. That will provide an opportunity to address some of the issues relating to evacuees. The next major training exercise relevant to the Grenfell incident will be a multi-agency mass fatality training session, scheduled for September 2017.

30.6 Alison Swaddle asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

The Council has been running the pilot car parking charges scheme in Woodley for nearly a year. Can the Executive Member provide an update on when the results of the comparison against the Borough-wide system will be available?

Answer

The "Woodley Car Parking trial" has been running from September 2016 and is due to expire at the end of September 2017, when it would revert to the Sunday and Evening charging that operates elsewhere in the Borough.

Before making a permanent decision on car parking in Woodley it is essential the data from the trial has been available for a full year, to show seasonal variations. The data collection and analysis has a 2-3 month lag period. Therefore, this takes us to the end of 2017 before an informed decision could be made.

As you are aware Civil Parking Enforcement is programmed to "go live" across the

borough from October 2017. The associated improved parking enforcement will reduce congestion, improve road safety, and is likely to have an impact on the parking behaviour of Wokingham Borough's residents, commuters and shoppers. The impact of Civil Parking Enforcement is unlikely to be available until the end of 2018.

Due to the timescales above it is likely that the Council will look to extend the current Woodley car parking trial at the Executive committee in September until the end of 2018. That is a decision for the Executive, but I hope that my colleagues will agree with that assessment.

Supplementary Question

Can you assure me that the impact on Woodley car park revenues of the Traveller incursions, referred to by Councillor Baker when presenting the petition, will be taken into consideration?

Supplementary Answer

Yes, of course it will be. It would be an invalid comparison if we did not do that.

Due to time constraints, the following questions were not put and received written answers as set out below.

30.7 Alistair Auty asked the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development and Regeneration the following question:

Can the Executive Member provide an update on the regeneration works on Peach Street?

Answer

January 9th this year saw Dawnus Construction Limited start work on delivering Peach Place for the Council in line with the programme.

Since then work has continued to progress well and over the last six months we've complete the following

- Strip out the buildings across the site including the removal of asbestos and disconnection of utility services;
- Demolish the existing Peach Street buildings and undertake party wall works to the adjacent buildings, the Redan and Costa;
- Work closely with utility companies to achieve the re-routing and connection of power, water and telecoms services;
- Pour the foundations for the new Peach Street buildings;
- And, just last week, we've started erecting the steelwork of the buildings fronting Peach Street.

This has all been managed with minimum disruption to the town centre. We continue to set ourselves ambitious targets, such as getting the Peach Street lane restriction removed within 15 weeks and continuing to keep Rose Street open for two way traffic whilst works are carried out to services, and we continue to achieve them successfully.

We fully expect to achieve our target of Peach Place being completed ready for Christmas next year.

As can be seen from the hoardings around the site, Peach Place will be a great new destination for Wokingham.

We will be bringing great new retailers and restaurants to the town centre, improving the offer for local residents and visitors, with better variety and choice of shops and new places to relax with friends and family, away from traffic and benefitting from outdoor seating. We're in negotiations with some great companies which I know local residents will be excited to see come to Wokingham and I'm looking forward to sharing more in the coming months.

We're also creating the kind of outdoor space which will be perfect for expanding existing events like local markets and specialist markets along with the Fayres and Carnivals that bring so many people to town.

But it's not just about what we're doing to improve the experience of people coming to Wokingham. It's also about the other benefits the Peach Place scheme brings such as

- the creation of new jobs, with over 50 new construction jobs and over 100 new permanent jobs in the retail and restaurants at Peach Place alone
- New homes that will bring around £700k per year additional spend into the local economy and help create a safer and more vibrant location, as well as helping deliver the regeneration at no cost to the tax payer
- £358k in contributions towards local infrastructure such as schools and leisure
- Circa £1.5m a year in rental income which can be used to help fund projects and services for residents across the Borough for years to come

Benefits like these, and more, are echoed across our regeneration proposals. At Elms Field and Carnival too.

Personally, I can't wait for the scheme to be finished and am pleased to see so much progress on site.

This is about delivering the town centre Wokingham, its residents and its businesses deserve. A great future for a Wokingham that exceeds expectations rather than struggles to meet them.

30.8 Abdul Loyes asked the Executive Member for Adults' Services, Health, Wellbeing and Housing the following question:

Does the Executive Member support the Government's proposals to ban landlords and letting agents from forcing tenants to pay letting fees as a condition of their tenancy?

Answer

The Council welcomes the proposals to remove fees and cap the deposit payable by prospective tenants. Private rental accommodation in Wokingham Borough is limited in supply and expensive for tenants, so these measures should improve affordability. As a Council, we often have to assist our more vulnerable residents (for example, those facing homelessness) access private rented accommodation through the provision of interest-free loans to cover these upfront costs.

As with any new policy, we will monitor its impact locally when the measures take effect to see if there are any unintended consequences. For example, where supply is so

constrained, it is possible that landlords will try to pass the additional costs on through higher rents. With lower deposits, landlords may also become more risk adverse when selecting tenants, which could further restrict the supply of private rented homes available to those on benefits. We hope that this will not be the case in Wokingham Borough and these new measures will help residents access the private rented sector.

30.9 Malcolm Richards asked the Executive Member for Finance, 21st Century Council, Internal Services and Human Resources the following question:

Can the Executive Member explain what training, including use of the IT systems, will be available on 21st Century Council for Members and staff?

Answer

Staff within Phase One went through an extensive 6 week transition programme this included attending training (where relevant) on a number of new IT systems, a launch event and several meetings with their line manager.

In addition to this all budget managers are currently being trained on the new budget management software over the coming weeks

Floorwalkers were present during the first week of go live and a network of staff (Super users) have been given extra support and training to help people over the coming weeks/months. This approach will be replicated during Phase 2 of the programme.

Training for Councillors is being developed in conjunction with the relevant officer/councillor groups and will be ongoing over the life of the programme. Initially there is a round of briefing sessions for Councillors to better understand the programme and there will be a number of drop in sessions focussing on accessing Office365 (email, calendar and contacts) and the resident self-service portal on 20th and 26th July.

30.10 Clive Jones asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

What is the process used to decide which roads in the Borough are resurfaced, including how the work is scheduled, how these decisions are recorded and reported, and when this process was last updated?

Answer

As promoted by Government, and following the adoption at Executive of Wokingham's Highways Asset Management Policy and Strategy in 2016, roads for treatment are determined from technical highway assessment surveys and analysis, which produce an annual programme of roads for treatment on an annual basis.

The annual programme is designed to undertake sensitive roadworks during school holiday periods when there is reduced traffic; the remaining roads are programmed over the remainder of the year and agreed in advance with the Council's contractors to ensure resources are available.

As Executive Member for Highways and Transport I have sight of this programme before it is published; and support this technical approach which ensures the roads that are most in need are given the appropriate treatment; ensuring value for money for Wokingham's residents and businesses.

31. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WARD MATTERS

31.1 Beth Rowland asked the Executive Member for Environment, Sports, Environmental Health, Leisure and Libraries

Question

My residents are asking about Bulmershe Pool. They would like to know what is happening?

Answer

The project is currently in the planned development stage.

31.2 Clive Jones asked the Executive Member for Environment, Sports, Environmental Health, Leisure and Libraries

Question

Earlier this year I asked several questions of the then Executive Member for Environment about Re3's charges for DIY waste. A resident in my ward has recently asked if these charges are still in operation. Two junior Ministers and a Cabinet Minister have stated that there should not be charges for DIY waste. Just before the previous Leader of the Council resigned he indicated in the press that he was willing to ask Officers to suspend these charges. Nothing has happened since the General Election. When will the charges be suspended?

Answer

A large number of people have expressed opinions on this issue including some members of the Government and MPs. The advice we are getting is that the situation is not clear. We are expecting the Government to publish a policy statement. Once we have that policy statement we will review our charging position. In the meantime the charges will continue.

31.3 Michael Firmager asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport

Question

In my ward, Hawkedon, most of the roads were built in the early 1980s and are now in need of repair. I read in the newspapers that there is a sum of £1bn to be handed over to Councils to upgrade crumbling roads. Unfortunately, I understand that this money will not be available until 2020. Would the Executive Member for Highways and Transport agree with me that an appropriate amount of this money be used to repair the roads in my ward?

Answer

Dividing up the roads programme on a ward by ward basis would be contrary to effective highways asset management, promoted by the Government and adopted by the Council's Executive in 2016. Not targeting investment where it is most needed across the Borough would not deliver value for money for Wokingham's residents and businesses.

Technical assessments, including road scanning machines combined with visual assessments by qualified engineers ensures parity in relation to the best use of the Council's overall maintenance resources. Any additional funding made available for road maintenance from Central Government would be gratefully received by Wokingham Borough Council.

In the meantime, I am happy to accompany Councillor Firmager and the other ward Members in looking at the roads in Hawkedon that are causing concern.

31.4 Anthony Pollock asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport Question

Reading University borrowed £28m from Central Government, as an advance against Section 106 contributions in the Shinfield SDL, in order to build the Eastern Relief Road for Shinfield village. The project is now over 12 months late and there has been a recent discovery of flooding in the new road, near the University bridge. Have the technical issues causing this flooding been resolved and when will remedial works start?

Answer

A solution to the groundwater problem has been agreed between the works promoter, Reading University, their agents, Hochtief, and the Council. The Council will take over the new road once it is finally completed. Works commenced at the beginning of June 2017.

Reading University have since communicated that the works will be completed in August 2017. Based on past performance, the Council lacks confidence that Reading University will deliver on this timeline. Only when the Council is satisfied with the condition of the entire relief road will an opening date be communicated by the University. Only then will the route be open and fit for purpose.

31.5 Imogen Shepherd-Dubey asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport Question

Question

A cycle lane is being constructed on the Reading Road in Emmbrook. This is currently dangerous for cyclists and is causing concern amongst residents due to the ongoing building works which affect traffic going into and out of town. Can you update us on the date when the works will be finished?

Answer

The Reading Road Cycle Way scheme commenced on time as per the initial communication to Members, local businesses and residents. The scheme has fallen behind schedule. The bus shelter which had to be relocated had a Scottish and Southern Electric (SSE) board connection rather than a Council connection which would normally be expected to power a bus shelter. This unforeseen issue caused a three week delay while the Council waited for SSE to disconnect the shelter to enable its relocation. SSE were unwilling to attend the site earlier. This led to some modification of the programme to enable progress. However, the contractor fell behind the programme slightly. As the project proceeds the contractor is endeavouring to catch up with the original programme.

Affected businesses were informed well in advance of the works. Regrettably, to implement a large improvement scheme on the network, funded by Central Government in this case, local residents, businesses and motorists will have to deal with some disruption while the works are under way. I can confirm that the Council intends to keep disruption to a minimum as it does on all highways projects.

Yesterday, I had an update which is that the project is now on track and progressing as per the programme. There are still some parts of the scheme that require attention. The bus stop at Emmbrook is not finished due to a broken kerb stone. This is a large "Kessel" kerb used to bring the levels up to meet the entrance of a bus. We hope that these works can take place next week. After that Queensbury will install the shelter. I am not sure about your comments on safety so I would be grateful if you could let me have more details.

31.6 Keith Baker asked the Executive Member for Adults' Services, Health, Wellbeing and Housing

Question

For some time now the grant of £15k to Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative (TCMI) has been built into the base budget. Recently, the Town Centre Manager has been called in to explain how this money is invested and what return the town receives. Whilst he has done this before, and will do so again, he has not been required to do this for several years. In the last few months several additional millions have been committed through the Wokingham regeneration project at the same time as the grant to the TCMI appears to be questioned.

Can I ask the Executive Member to provide reassurance that this is merely a new process and that the £15k grant to the TCMI is not at risk?

Answer

The Woodley TCMI has been supported by Wokingham Borough Council to help maintain a successful town centre in Woodley, making it attractive for retailers, businesses, residents and the general public. The aspirations of the Woodley TCMI complement Wokingham Borough Council's Economic Development Strategy which aims to create a place where businesses thrive.

Wokingham Borough Council contributes £15k, as Councillor Baker has said, towards the cost of employing the Woodley Town Centre Manager. This is paid as part of the Economic Development budget. Wokingham Borough Council is a member of the Management Committee responsible for the policy and direction of the Woodley TCMI plan. The Committee oversees the expenditure of funds and the annual budgets. The Borough's Economic Development Officer also supports the Woodley Town Centre Manager in relation to various projects and initiatives. The Woodley TCMI and Town Centre Manager create a more dynamic town centre through various activities, events and markets. The Town Centre Manager ensures effective communication between traders, residents and other official bodies in the town centre.

The Woodley TCMI grant is reviewed annually, in line with other grants, and has to demonstrate value for money for Council Taxpayers. The Woodley grant will be reviewed in line with other grants. We do not foresee it changing at the present time, but it does need to deliver value for money and a return on our investment. That is why the Town Centre Manager was called in.

31.7 Laura Blumenthal asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement

Question
Residents on the Cala Homes development are deeply disappointed that a marketing suite has been built by Cala without planning permission where they had promised to build a play park. Please can you explain what the Council is doing to ensure that the planning procedure is followed and the play park does get built?

Answer

Once the issue of the construction of the marketing and sales suite by Cala Homes, without the benefit of planning permission, was brought to the Council's attention, Officers acted quickly to prevent further development and prevented it from being brought into use. A planning application was submitted and is currently under consideration. In view of the

earlier questions, I would encourage ward Members to comment on that application if they so wish. The marketing suite is to be located in an open area not intended for the play park equipment and it is to be landscaped as open space.

The Council has been advised that the play equipment was ordered at the beginning of July as requested by Council Officers. Cala will push for it to be delivered at the earliest possible time, hopefully before the eight week lead in time, but they are in the hands of the manufacturers. They will remove the unsightly hoarding between the open space and the proposed marketing suite and will also commence the preparation works for the play area prior to the delivery of the play equipment so that it can be installed as soon as it is delivered to the site.

**31.8 Ian Pittock asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport
Question**

Many of my residents eagerly await the installation of a safe route to Bohunt School. Improvements under way to the footway down the Nine Mile Ride are welcomed by the wider community. Likewise the cycle route using the greenway under construction between my ward and Barkham is also welcome for a variety of purposes. However, many residents will not recognise this as a safe route to school given that it is a country route and increasingly looks like it will not be lit in the winter months.

Many children will cycle down the improved Nine Mile Ride footway rather than walk it. Will the Council address the issue of land illegally acquired by residents so that the improved Nine Mile Ride footway can be upgraded further to incorporate cycle usage? It will take a couple of years to be completed but, to date, it is a process that the Executive have been too frightened to start. For how long will the Executive put the assumed Tory votes along the Nine Mile Ride before the safety of the wider community's children?

Answer

The route down the Nine Mile Ride to the Bohunt School is a safe walking route to school. I appreciate the desire of some residents in Finchampstead to have a cycle route. That is still under consideration and, as you point out, there have been difficulties caused by residents' encroachment onto Nine Mile Ride.

**31.9 Barrie Patman asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport
Question**

My question relates to the remodelling of the bus gate at Tabby Drive and Basingstoke Road in Three Mile Cross. Nothing seems to have started on this. It was scheduled to have been completed 15 months ago. Please can I have an update?

Answer

I am pleased to report that both the initial feasibility and detailed design work for this scheme have recently been completed by Officers. We are in discussion with our highways contractors, their traffic signal suppliers and the network management team to find a three week window to carry out the work. Due to the level of activity already booked on the highway network over coming months this is proving difficult. However, it is a priority and we hope to complete the scheme this calendar year.

**31.10 Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey asked the Executive Member for Highways and
Transport**

Question

In relation to Simons Lane which runs from Winnersh into Emmbrook, when is it going to

be paved?

Answer

I will look into that and provide an answer outside the meeting.

31.11 David Chopping asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport Question

In the storms earlier this week one and a half inches of rain fell on Maiden Erlegh in under an hour. This caused major problems on local roads. Can you advise on the expenditure on the roads in Earley over the last five years and can you specify how much has been spent in Maiden Erlegh in that time?

Answer

In the last five years £2.1m has been spent in Earley town (the three wards) and £1.2m in Maiden Erlegh ward.

32. MOTIONS

32.1 Motion 397 submitted by Lindsay Ferris:

In accordance with Section 4.2.13.8 of the Constitution (Alteration of Motion) Lindsay Ferris requested that the Motion set out in the Agenda be altered to add the words highlighted below:

“This Council expresses its thanks to the Police, Ambulance and Fire Services for their professional and dedicated actions arising from the recent terrorist attacks and the terrible fire at Grenfell Tower in North Kensington.

The Council will lobby the Government, **where appropriate, and in consultation with the Fire Authority and other relevant Bodies**, to ensure these vital emergency services receive the necessary funding and resources, **and take on board any necessary changes to practice**, to meet their increased obligations arising from such events”.

Upon being put to the vote, the altered Motion was accepted and became the substantive Motion for debate.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Ferris and seconded by Councillor Haitham Taylor.

During the debate Members commented on the outstanding bravery and professionalism demonstrated by the emergency services in a number of recent high profile incidents. The impact of public sector pay restraint, as discussed earlier in the meeting, was also highlighted in relation to recruitment and retention issues for key services.

Members noted that the specific areas for lobbying activity would become clearer once the initial findings of the Grenfell Inquiry were made public.

Following debate and upon being put to the vote, the substantive Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

RESOLVED: This Council expresses its thanks to the Police, Ambulance and Fire Services for their professional and dedicated actions arising from the recent terrorist attacks and the terrible fire at Grenfell Tower in North Kensington.

The Council will lobby the Government, where appropriate, and in consultation with the Fire Authority and other relevant Bodies, to ensure these vital emergency services receive the necessary funding and resources, and take on board any necessary changes to practice, to meet their increased obligations arising from such events.

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TITLE	Treasury Management Outturn Report 2016-17
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Council on 21 September 2017
WARD	None specific
DIRECTOR	Graham Ebers, Director Corporate Services
LEAD MEMBER	Oliver Whittle, Executive Member for Finance

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Effective and safe use of our resources to deliver service improvements and service continuity through capital investments.

RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to:

- 1) note that this report was presented to the Audit Committee on 13 June 2017 and the Executive on the 27 July 2017;
- 2) approve
 - (a) the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2016/17; and
 - (b) the actual 2016/17 prudential indicators within the report.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report summarises the Treasury Management operations during 2016/17. It is presented for the purpose of monitoring and review, in accordance with Council's treasury management practices.

The Council adhered to all agreed prudential indicators in 2016/17.

As at 31st March 2017 the Council achieved an average investment return rate of 1.66%. In house team achieved an average external investment of 0.50% against the London Interbank Bid Rate (LIBID) for 2016/17 which was 0.20%.

The Council has taken 3 new loans out on the 31st March 2017 of £18m. These Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans were at a special rate (40 bases point lower than the standard PWLB rate) they will be used to fund capital expenditure in 2017/18. This was secured through work with the Local Enterprise Partnership. The Hosing revenue account repaid an external loan of £3.5m.

Background

The Council operates a balanced budget, which broadly means cash raised during the Year will meet its cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operations ensure this cash flow is adequately planned, with surplus monies being invested in low risk counterparties, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering maximising Investment return.

The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure the Council can meet its Capital spending operations. This management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans or using longer term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.

Analysis of Issues

External Debt

In 2016/17 the external general fund debt increased by £18m, the Council also took the opportunity to use internal funds and other sources to fund the capital programme. The Housing Revenue Account external debt decreased by £3.5m.

As at 31st March 2017 external debt was:

- General fund (Non- Housing Revenue Account): £65.8m
- Housing Revenue Account: £81.5m.

Capital Expenditure year end outturn

As at 31st March 2017:

- General fund (Non- Housing Revenue Account): £72.0m
- Housing Revenue Account: £4.9m.

Investment actual year end outturn

As at 31st March 2017:

- Returns on investments (external and internal companies): £1.3m compared to a budget of £1.2m

Appendices

The full Treasury Mid-Year report for 2016/17

Appendix A

The Council's Prudential indicators

Appendix B

The Council's Loan Portfolio as at 31st March 2017

Appendix C

The Council's Investments as at 31st March 2017

Appendix D

Economic update

Appendix E

A Glossary of Terms

Appendix F

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£147.4m External Loans £1.3m Return on Investments	Yes	Capital and Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	To be determined through the Medium term financial plan		Capital and Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
--

None

Cross-Council Implications

None

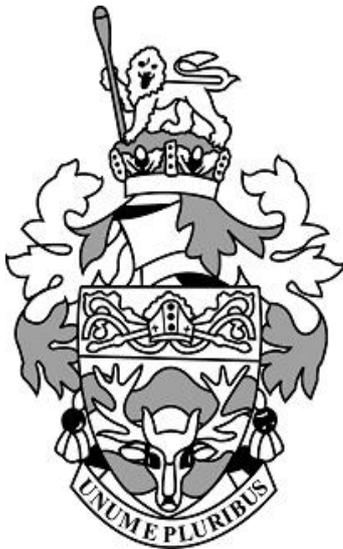
List of Background Papers

None

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Date 17 July 2017	Version No. 1

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WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Treasury Management Outturn Report 2016-17

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Investment Portfolio	Appendix D
Economic review and update (Inc. Interest rates forecast)	Appendix E
Glossary of Terms	Appendix F

1. Introduction

This report presents the Council's treasury position for 2016/17 in accordance with the Council treasury management practices. This is a backward looking report reviewing performance to 31st March 2017.

The report provides a summary of the economic conditions affecting the Council's investment strategy over the last financial year. It then analyses the capital outturn which is a key driver of treasury management, driving the borrowing requirement of the organisation. It then shows how the Council has financed its borrowing between internal and external borrowing and then how the Council has managed its short-term cash investments.

The Council's treasury management strategy is largely influenced by capital expenditure. Revenue expenditure is largely balanced with expenditure matching income, and short term borrowing and deposits. The large driver of the longer term treasury management strategy is therefore capital expenditure and financing.

There are two aspects of treasury performance – debt management and cash investment:

- debt management relates to the Council's borrowing;
- Cash investment relates to the investment of surplus cash balances.

2. Economic Review

UK economic growth remained relatively strong at around 2% in the year to the 4th quarter of 2016/17. The Bank of England kept monetary policy on hold since the rate decrease to 0.25% in the summer and re-enforced its commitment to maintain interest rates the same and to continue it's the Quantitative Easing (QE) programme in February 2017 meeting . For a more detailed economic summary please look at Appendix E.

3. The Council's Capital Expenditure and Financing 2016/17

The Council undertakes capital expenditure on long-term assets. These activities may either be:

- financed in year, immediately through the application of capital or revenue resources (capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions etc.), which has no resultant impact on the Council's borrowing need or;
- funded by borrowing (internal or external).

The actual capital expenditure forms one of the required prudential indicators. During August 2016 the Council under took an exercise to obtain more accurate forecasts of capital expenditure from budget managers. This provides the Council with a more realistic year end outturn giving the Council the opportunity to adjust its capital budget and related funding plans, tables 1 and 2 on the following page show the actual capital expenditure and the funding.

A

Table 1:

General fund capital expenditure and financing	2016/17 Budget £'000	2016/17 forecast outturn @ Sept £'000	2016/17 Outturn £'000
Capital expenditure			
Financed in year	63,710	33,685	27,168
Funded by borrowing (borrowing requirement)	81,495	50,945	44,858
Total	145,205	84,630	72,026

Table 2:

HRA capital expenditure and financing	2016/17 Budget £'000	2016/17 forecast outturn @ Sept £'000	2016/17 Outturn £'000
Capital expenditure			
Financed in year	7,853	5,909	4,857
Funded by borrowing (borrowing requirement)	0	0	0
Total	7,853	5,909	4,857

4. The Council's Overall Borrowing Need

The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). It represents the 2016/17 capital expenditure financed by borrowing, and prior years' unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.

The Council's general fund underlying borrowing need (CFR) is not allowed to rise indefinitely. The Council is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), to reduce the CFR. This ensures the general fund pays for the capital asset and is a proxy for depreciation. The total CFR can also be reduced by:

- The application of additional capital financing resources (such as unapplied capital receipts); or
- An additional revenue contribution to the statutory minimum revenue provision (MRP) each year through a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).

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This differs from the treasury management arrangements which relates to cash transfers. External debt can be borrowed or repaid at any time, but this does not change the CFR.

The Council's CFR forecast for 2016/17 year end is shown below, and represents a key prudential indicator. It includes PFI and leasing schemes on the balance sheet, which increase the Council's borrowing need. However no borrowing is actually required against these schemes as a borrowing facility is included in the contract.

Table 3:

Capital financing requirement: General Fund	2016/17 Budget £'000	2016/17 forecast outturn @ Sept £'000	2016/17 Outturn £'000
Opening balance	113,397	118,580	118,580
Capital expenditure funded by Borrowing	73,014	50,946	44,858
Prior year adjustment (Swap funding)	0	0	(771)
Sub Total	186,411	169,526	162,667
Less Minimum Revenue Provision			
MRP Charge	(3,310)	(3,024)	(2,362)
PFI Principal Charge	(215)	(215)	(283)
Sub Total	(3,525)	(3,239)	(2,645)
Closing Balance	182,886	166,287	160,022
Movement	64,305	47,707	41,442

Table 4:

HRA Capital financing requirement:	2016/17 Budget £'000	2016/17 forecast outturn @ Sept £'000	2016/17 Outturn £'000
Opening balance	93,876	93,876	92,964
Repayment of Loan Principle	(3,476)	(3,476)	(2,564)
Closing Balance	90,400	90,400	90,400

Table 5

Capital financing requirement: General fund and HRA	2016/17 Budget £'000	2016/17 forecast outturn @ Sept £'000	2016/17 Outturn £'000
Opening balance	207,273	212,456	211,544
Movements	66,013	44,231	38,878
Closing Balance	273,286	256,687	250,422

The in-year increase in the borrowing requirement is due to a large increase in the capital programme for schemes such as the town centre regeneration and loans to group companies and will reduce again when capital receipts are recovered or loans repaid. It has also increased as a result of the forward funded infrastructure schemes. These will decrease again as developer contributions are received. The council's total capital financing requirement (CFR) of £250.4m was considerably lower than the councils external borrowing of £147.4m (see table 6 below)

Part of the Council's treasury activities is to address the funding requirements for this borrowing need. Depending on the capital expenditure programme, the treasury service organises the Council's cash position to ensure that sufficient cash is available to meet the capital plans and cash flow requirements. The Council does not borrow all of this money externally but uses some of its internal cash reserves to fund this expenditure. This is referred to as "internal borrowing". This means that the Council's capital financing requirement is higher than its external borrowing figures. External borrowing may be sourced from bodies such as the Public Works Loan Board [PWLB] or the money markets.

5. External borrowing and compliance with treasury limits and prudential indicators

On the 31st March 2017 the Council took out a £18m loan, this was at a special rate of 40 bases point lower than the PWLB rate. (Local Enterprise Partnership agreement)

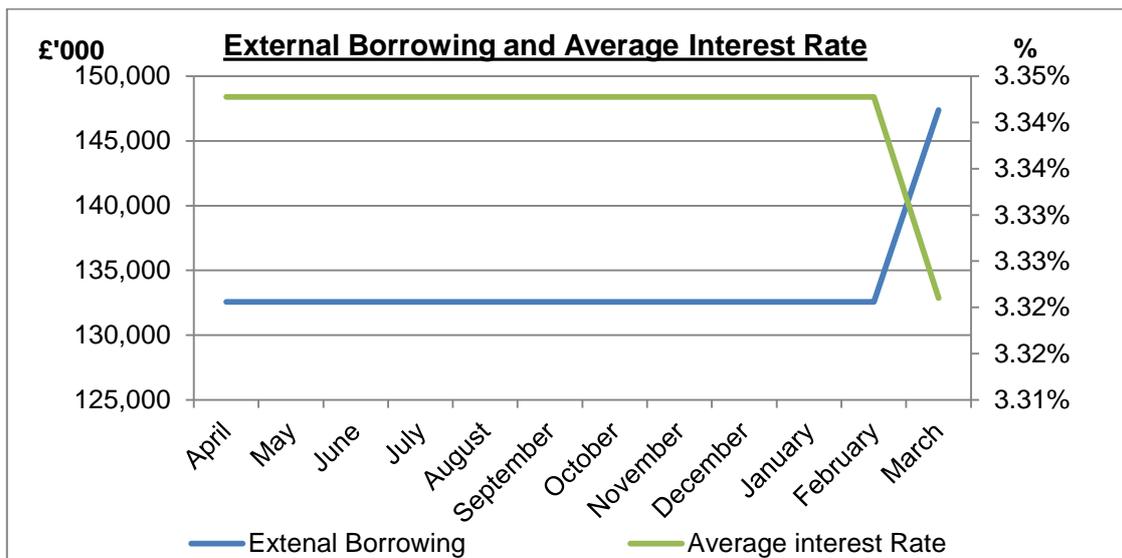
Table 6 demonstrates the outturn for 2016/17 external borrowing.

Table 6:

External Borrowing	2016/17 Budget £'000	2016/17 Outturn £'000
Market	24,000	24,000
PWLB	107,482	122,006
Local Enterprise Partnership	750	1,380
Total borrowing	132,232	147,386

Graph 1 Total external borrowing and average interest rate by month

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Graph 1 above includes the £18m loan taken out on the 31st March 2017. This increased the external borrowing to £147.4m. This meant as of the 31st March 2017 the average interest rate dropped to 3.32%.

During 2016/17, the Council operated within the treasury limits as set out its borrowing treasury management strategy. The position for the prudential indicators is shown in table 7, which is found below. These show that all prudential indicators have been complied with. Further detail on each of these indicators is included in Appendix B.

Table 7:

Prudential Indicator – Debt	Year-end position 2016/17	
	Does gross borrowing exceed CFR?	Has the limit/boundary been broken
Gross external borrowing	NO	
Authorised limit		NO
Operational boundary for external debt		NO
HRA debt limit		NO
Maturity structure of borrowing		NO
Upper limits on interest rate exposure		NO
The percentage of financing costs set aside to service debt financing costs		NO

In order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term and only for a capital purpose, the Council should ensure that its gross external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the capital financing requirement in the preceding year (plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years). This essentially

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means that the Council is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure. This indicator allows the Council some flexibility to borrow in advance of its immediate capital needs.

6. Compliance with treasury limits and prudential indicators for investments

The treasury management team ensure the cash flow is adequately planned, with surplus monies being invested in low risk counterparties, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering maximising investment return. The return on investments contributes to the Council's budget for both the general fund and housing revenue account.

During 2016/17 the Council yield on investments has been impacted by the EU Referendum vote and the Bank of England's decision to reduce interest rates earlier in the financial year.

The Council will continue to monitor the economic outlook and money markets to ensure it is able to achieve a yield in line with market expectations whilst ensuring security and liquidity of capital are maintained. Graph 2 below demonstrates the change in investment by type up to 31 March 2017.

Graph 2 Total amount invested April 2016 to March 2017 by category

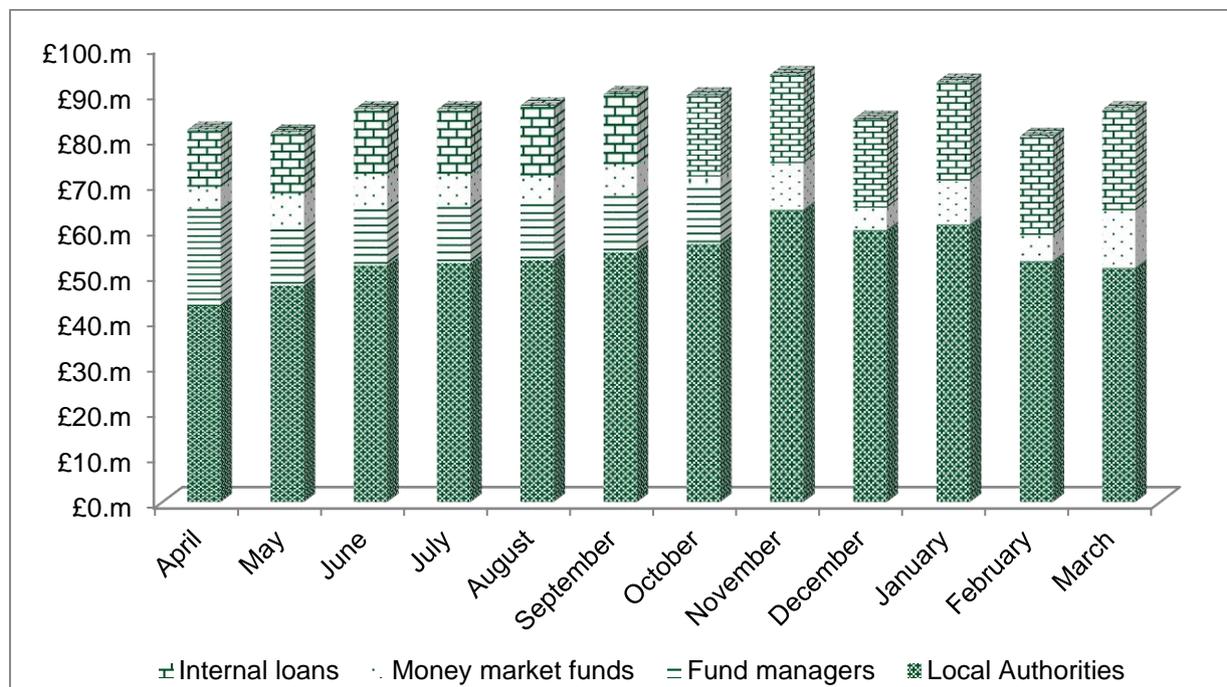


Table 8, below shows the counterparties where cash deposits are held. Further detail is available in appendix D.

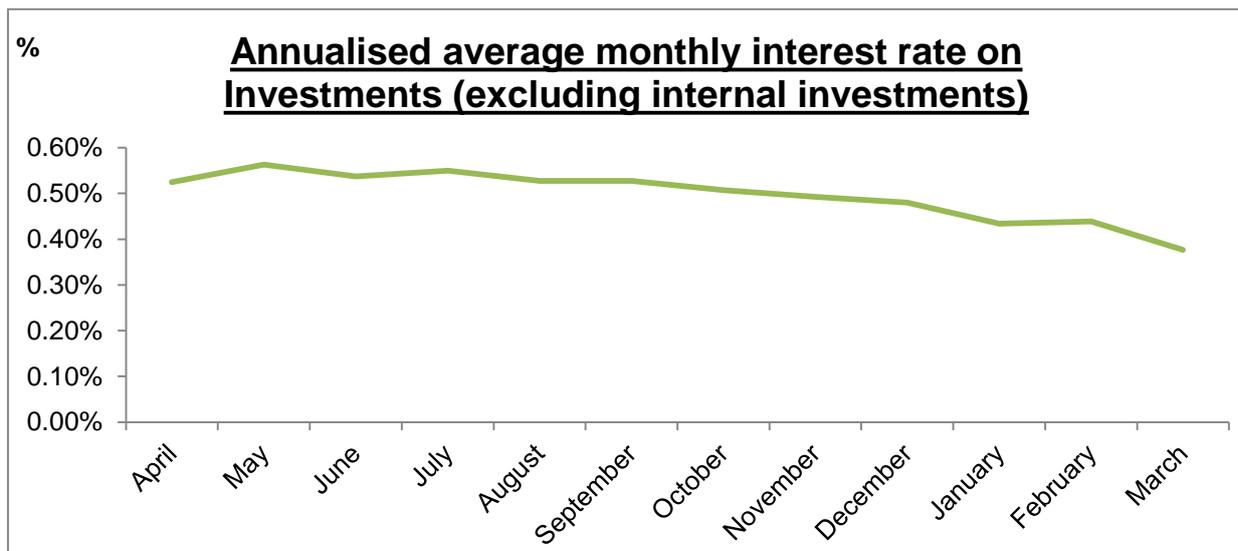
Table 8:

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Investment Type	Actuals invested @ 31-03-16 £'000	Actuals invested @ 30-09-16 £'000	Actuals invested @ 31-03-17 £'000
	Local Authorities	37,000	52,000
Fund Managers / Money Markets	21,413	12,575	12,882
Internal investments (WBC companies and HRA)	12,128	15,961	22,117
Total	70,541	80,536	73,999

Graph 3 on the following page shows an analysis of the rate of return for 2016/17.

Graph 3 Average return on investments



During 2016/17 year the Council operated within the treasury limits as set out in investment strategy. The position for the investment prudential indicators is shown in table 10 and full details are available in appendix B.

The average return on the Council's portfolio (excluding internal loans) to 31 March 2017 was 0.46%. This is 0.26% above the average 7-day London Interbank Bid Rate (LIBID) of 0.20%. The average rate of return including internal loans is 1.66%.

Table 9 below, gives a breakdown of returns per type and the annual interest rate received.

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Table 9:	Amount of interest received 2016/17 £'000	Cumulative interest %
Return on Investment		
Local Authorities	271	0.50%
Fund Managers / Money Markets	58	0.31%
Internal loans	952	5.34%
Total	1,280	1.62%

Table 10: Prudential Indicator – Investment Year-end position @ 31-03-17	Has the limit/boundary been broken	Was the budget achieved at year end
Upper limits on interest rate exposure	NO	
Investment interest received		Yes

7. Conclusion

The Director of Corporate Services confirms that the approved limits and prudential indicators incorporated within the Annual Investment Strategy were not breached during 2016/17 with the prudential indicators. The Council is operating in a stringent financial climate, but is still managing to deliver within budgeted interest levels.

Prudential and treasury indicators as at 31st March 2017**General Fund**

Table 1: Prudential Indicators	Capital	2016/17	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
		Budget	16/17	16/17	16/17	16/17
		£'000	Year end forecast	Year end forecast	Year end forecast	Year end Actual
Capital expenditure		148,922	105,077	84,630	87,561	72,026
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)		182,886	171,952	166,287	166,222	160,022
Annual change in CFR		64,305	53,372	47,707	44,402	41,442
In year borrowing requirement		80,532	56,611	50,945	47,712	44,858

Table 2: Prudential Indicators Borrowing	2016/17	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
	Budget	16/17	16/17	16/17	16/17	
	£'000	Year end forecast	Year end forecast	Year end forecast	Year end Actual	
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream		3.8%	3.6%	3.4%	2.9%	2.8%

The percentage of the revenue budget set aside each year to service debt financing costs is shown above. The outturn figure is below budget as a result of favourable returns compared to budget.

This is calculated as follows: Financing cost Divide by Net revenue stream

As per budget 2016/17: £4,293 / £113,973 = 2.8%

HRA

Table 3: Prudential Indicators HRA	2016/17	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
	Budget	16/17	16/17	16/17	16/17	
	£'000	Year end forecast	Year end forecast	Year end forecast	Year end Actual	
Capital expenditure		9,827	9,991	5,909	6,923	4,857
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)		90,400	90,400	90,400	90,400	90,400
Annual change in CFR		0	0	0	0	0
In year borrowing requirement		0	0	0	0	0

Table 4: Prudential Indicators Borrowing	2016/17 Budget	Quarter 1 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 2 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 3 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 4 16/17 Year end Actual
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	18.8%	18.6%	18.6%	18.8%	18.7%

The percentage of the revenue budget set aside each year to service debt financing costs.

This is calculated as follows: Financing cost Divide by Total income received

As per budget 2016/17: £2,851 / £15,164 = 18.8%

General Fund & HRA

Table 5: Prudential Indicators – Capital Expenditure & CFR	2016/17 Budget	Quarter 1 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 2 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 3 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 4 16/17 Year end Actual
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital expenditure	148,928	115,069	90,539	94,484	76,883
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	273,286	262,352	256,687	256,622	250,422
Annual change in CFR	61,740	53,372	47,707	44,402	41,442
In year borrowing requirement	79,740	56,611	50,945	47,712	44,858

Table 6: Internal Borrowing	2016/17 Budget	Quarter 1 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 2 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 3 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 4 16/17 Year end Actual
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
CFR (year end position)	273,286	262,352	256,687	256,622	250,422
Less External Borrowing	(197,119)	(150,232)	(150,232)	(150,232)	(147,386)
Less Other long term liabilities	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(8,429)
Internal Borrowing *	66,167	102,120	96,455	96,390	94,607
Movement	(5,499)	46,306	40,641	40,576	38,793
% of internal borrowing to CFR	24.21%	38.92%	37.58%	37.56%	37.78%

Note:* This will be reviewed on a regular basis to make sure we are getting best value for money. The Council is currently using its own cash flow (as rates of return are low), if rates start to increase a new external loan may need to be taken out.

Table 7: Upper limit -Investments Only	2016/17 Budget	Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) Actual	Quarter 2 (Jul-Sep) Actual	Quarter 3 (Oct - Dec) Actual	Quarter 4 (Jan-Mar) Actual
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
On fixed rate exposures	(80,000)	(41,114)	(56,120)	(59,000)	(39,000)
On variable rate exposures	(40,000)	(12,432)	(12,432)	0	(12,882)

Table 8: Upper limit -Debt Only	2016/17 Budget	Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) Actual	Quarter 2 (Jul-Sep) Actual	Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec) Actual	Quarter 4 (Jan-Mar) Actual
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
On fixed rate exposures	180,000	107,482	107,482	107,482	123,386
On variable rate exposures	40,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000

Table 9: Internal investments: interest Received	2016/17 Budget	Quarter 1 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 2 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 3 16/17 Year end forecast	Quarter 4 16/17 Year end Actual
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
HRA Internal loan from The General fund	399	399	399	399	399
Wokingham Housing	0	320	503	484	553
Age Concern	0	3	3	0	0
	399	722	905	883	952

Table 10: Internal investments:	Quarter 1 16/17 Year end forecast £'000	Quarter 2 16/17 Year end forecast £'000	Quarter 3 16/17 Year end forecast £'000	Quarter 4 16/17 Year end Actual £'000
HRA Internal loan from The General fund	8,874	8,874	8,874	8,874
Wokingham Housing	8,095	13,562	14,488	13,243
Optalis	50	50	50	0
Age Concern	75	75	0	0
Total	17,094	22,561	23,412	22,117

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General Fund Loan portfolio @ 31st March 2017

PWLB/Market	Loan no	Principle £'000	Interest Rate %	Maturity Date
General Fund				
PWLB - GF	485805	976	4.88	01 August 2022
PWLB - GF	488876	2,343	4.95	01 February 2034
PWLB - GF	491320	2,929	3.85	01 August 2051
PWLB - GF	491456	1,431	4.35	30 September 2046
PWLB - GF	491474	5,587	4.40	01 August 2052
PWLB - GF	493309	9,764	4.60	31 March 2054
PWLB - GF	505949	8,000	2.34	31 March 2035
PWLB - GF	505950	4,000	2.37	31 March 2036
PWLB - GF	505948	6,000	2.30	31 March 2034
Market - GF	3b	4,882	4.35	24 February 2077
Market - GF	2c	4,882	4.60	11 January 2077
Market - GF - KA Finanz	1c	4,882	4.88	06 February 2066
Market - GF	4	1,953	3.68	16 February 2066
Market - GF	5	4,882	3.73	19 October 2076
Market - GF	6	1,953	3.77	19 October 2076
Local Enterprise Board		380	0.00	01 December 2017
Local Enterprise Board		250	0.00	01 December 2017
Local Enterprise Board		750	0.00	01 December 2019
Total		65,844		

Housing Revenue Fund Loan portfolio @ 31st March 2017

PWLB/Market	Loan no	Principle	Interest Rate %	Maturity Date
Housing Revenue Account				
PWLB - HRA	485805	24	4.88	01 August 2022
PWLB - HRA	488876	57	4.95	01 February 2034
PWLB - HRA	491320	71	3.85	01 August 2051
PWLB - HRA	491456	35	4.35	30 September 2046
PWLB - HRA	491474	135	4.40	01 August 2052
PWLB - HRA	493309	236	4.60	31 March 2054
HRA Self Financing	501033	1,750	1.50	28 March 2018
HRA Self Financing	501034	3,482	2.21	28 March 2021
HRA Self Financing	501035	8,516	3.30	28 March 2032
HRA Self Financing	501036	1,988	1.99	28 March 2020
HRA Self Financing	501037	7,231	3.26	28 March 2031
HRA Self Financing	501038	4,199	2.40	28 March 2022
HRA Self Financing	501039	6,378	3.15	28 March 2029
HRA Self Financing	501040	5,415	3.01	28 March 2027
HRA Self Financing	501043	9,276	3.34	28 March 2033
HRA Self Financing	501044	1,000	3.37	28 March 2034
HRA Self Financing	501045	3,744	2.82	28 March 2025
HRA Self Financing	501046	5,981	3.08	28 March 2028
HRA Self Financing	501047	6,789	3.21	28 March 2030
HRA Self Financing	501048	3,971	2.92	28 March 2026
HRA Self Financing	501049	4,116	2.70	28 March 2024
HRA Self Financing	501050	3,484	2.56	28 March 2023
HRA Self Financing	501051	3,098	1.76	28 March 2019
Market - HRA	3b	118,129	4.35	24 February 2077
Market - HRA	2c	118,129	4.60	11 January 2077
Market - HRA - KA Finanz	1c	118,129	4.88	08 February 2066
Market - HRA	4	47,252	3.68	16 February 2066
Market - HRA	5	118,129	3.73	19 October 2076
Market - HRA	6	47,252	3.77	19 October 2076
External		81,542		
WBC General Fund *		8,874	4.5	
Total		90,416		

* Note this is an internal loan from the general fund to the HRA and is not included in the total external loans.

Total external borrowing loans @ 31st March 2017

WBC External Borrowing	Actuals @ 30-09-16 £'000	Actuals @ 31-03-17 £'000
Market	24,000	24,000
PWLB	107,482	122,636
Local Enterprise Partnership	750	750
Total borrowing	132,232	147,386

Maturity structure @ 31st March 2017

Long Term Borrowing	31st March 2016 £,000	31st March 2017 £,000	Average rate %
Between 1 and 2 years	3,856	28,098	3.45
Between 3 and 5 years	7,086	5,470	2.10
Between 6 and 10 years	23,996	20,514	3.31
Between 11 and 15 years	31,794	31,794	3.14
Between 16 and 20 years	21,192	39,192	3.37
Between 21 and 25 years	0	0	0.00
Between 26 and 30 years	1,465	1,465	4.35
More than 30 years	42,723	18,723	4.28
Total Long Term	132,112	145,256	
Short Term Borrowing			
less than 1 year	120	2,130	0.75
Total Borrowing	132,232	147,386	3.32

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Investment portfolio

Current Investments @ 31st March 2017

Institution	Amount	Rate	Maturity Date	Broker
Current lending				
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	3,000	0.58%	16/05/2017	Tradition
Conwy County Borough Council	3,000	0.38%	02/11/2017	Tradition
Corby Borough Council	3,000	0.60%	15/06/2017	Tradition
Eastleigh BC	5,000	0.54%	18/04/2017	Tradition
Lancashire CC	5,000	0.58%	04/05/2017	Tradition
Leeds BS	2,000	0.43%	24/07/2017	Tradition
Leeds CC	5,000	0.35%	01/09/2017	Tradition
London Borough of Enfield	4,000	0.40%	28/11/2017	Tradition
North Ayrshire Council	3,000	0.60%	03/04/2017	Tradition
Salford CC	3,000	0.35%	26/06/2017	Tradition
Suffolk County Council	3,000	0.35%	14/09/2017	Tradition
Total	39,000			
Money Market Funds / Fund Managers				
Fund Managers	632	Variable		
Invesco	5,000	Variable		
Deutsche Global (Henderson)	4,500	Variable		
Goldman sachs	2,750	Variable		
Total	12,882			
Grand total	51,882			
Investments with internal companies				
Wokingham Holdings	13,243	5.5% + bank rate (variable)		
Housing Revenue Account	8,874	4.5%		
Total	22,117			
Grand Total	73,999			

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Economic Update

1.1 Growth

Change in gross domestic product (GDP) is the main indicator of economic growth. 3rd quarter growth came in at 0.6% and the 4th quarter growth of 0.7%, but 1st quarter 2017 is expected to ease back. At its meeting of 19th January, the European Central Bank (ECB) left its main policy for interest rates at -0.4%. The easing in monetary policy in the euro area over the past few years has reduced the interest rates facing households and companies, and so has been one factor supporting GDP growth.

The Federal Reserve in February decided to keep interest rates on hold following its first meeting since President Donald Trump took office and the uncertain international backdrop. Despite the positive outlook on the economy, the central bank signalled there would be further gradual interest increases. Quarterly US GDP growth fell from 0.9% in the 3rd quarter to 0.5% in 4th quarter 4 2016.

1.2 Inflation:

The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation rose to 1.6% in December and further substantial increases are very likely over the coming months. In the central projection, conditioned on market yields that are somewhat higher than in November, inflation is expected to increase to 2.8% in the first half of 2018, before falling back gradually to 2.4% in three years' time. Inflation is judged likely to return to close to the target over the subsequent year. Measures of inflation compensation derived from financial markets have stabilised at around average historical levels, having increased during late 2016 as concerns about a period of unusually low inflation faded.

1.3 Monetary Policy:

On 1 February 2017 the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted unanimously in favour of maintaining the bank rate at 0.25% and re-enforcing its commitment to maintain the Quantitative Easing (QE) programme at £435bn. All Committee members judged it appropriate to leave the stance of monetary policy unchanged. The MPC noted that the path of monetary policy would continue to depend on the evolution of prospects for demand, supply, the exchange rate and therefore inflation. As a result, monetary policy could move in either direction to ensure a sustainable return of CPI inflation to the 2% target.

1.4 Interest Rates

The Council's treasury advisor, Capita Asset Services, has provided forecasts for PWLB rates based on the certainty rate (minus 20 bps), as shown in table on the following page

Interest rate forecast (as per Capita Treasury solutions)

	Jun 2017	Sep 2017	Dec 2017	Mar 2018	Jun 2018	Sep 2018	Dec 2018	Mar 2019	Jun 2019	Sep 2019	Dec 2019	Mar 2020	Jun 2020
Bank rate	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%	0.75%	0.75%
5 yr. PWLB rate	1.40%	1.60%	1.60%	1.70%	1.70%	1.70%	1.80%	1.80%	1.90%	1.90%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
10 yr. PWLB rate	2.10%	2.30%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.40%	2.40%	2.50%	2.50%	2.60%	2.60%	2.70%	2.70%
25 yr. PWLB rate	2.70%	2.90%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.20%	3.30%	3.30%	3.40%	3.40%
50 yr. PWLB rate	2.50%	2.70%	2.80%	2.80%	2.80%	2.90%	2.90%	3.00%	3.00%	3.10%	3.10%	3.20%	3.20%

Glossary of terms

Authorised Limit – Represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited, and needs to be set and revised by Members. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desirable, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term.

Boundary Limit – Is an estimate of the authorised limit but reflects an estimate of the most likely, prudent, but not worst case scenario, without the additional headroom included within the authorised limit to allow for example for unusual cash movements.

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) - reflects the Council's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose. It shows the total estimated capital expenditure that has not been resourced from capital or revenue sources. This requirement will eventually be met by revenue resources through the Minimum Revenue Provision mechanism.

CIPFA Prudential Code - is a professional code of practice to support local authorities in taking capital investment decisions. Local authorities determine their own programmes for capital investment in fixed assets that are central to the delivery of quality local public services in accordance with the Prudential Code.

Consumer price index (CPI) - measures changes in the price level of a market basket of consumer goods and services purchased by households.

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) - Is a ministerial department, supported by 11 agencies and public bodies. They are working to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area.

European Central Bank (ECB) - The central bank for the euro and administers monetary policy of the eurozone, which consists of 19 EU member states and is one of the largest currency areas in the world.

Fair value - Is defined as the amount for which an asset could be exchanged or a liability settled, assuming that the transaction was negotiated between parties knowledgeable about the market in which they are dealing and willing to buy/sell at an appropriate price, with no other motive in their negotiations other than to secure a fair price

FED - The Federal Reserve System (also known as the Federal Reserve, and informally as the Fed) is the central banking system of the United States.

Financing Cost to Net Revenue Stream-The percentage of the revenue budget set aside each year to service debt financing costs.

Funding for Lending Scheme (FLS) – was launched by the Bank and HM Treasury on 13 July 2012. The FLS is designed to incentivise banks and building societies to boost their lending to the UK real economy.

Gilt - is a UK Government liability in sterling, issued by HM Treasury and listed on the London Stock exchange.

Gross domestic product (GDP) - is the market value of all officially recognized final goods and services produced within a country in a given period of time(usually the fiscal year).

Local Authority Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) - The underlying loan facility is typically very long-term - for example 40 to 60 years - and the interest rate is fixed. However, in the LOBO facility the lender has the option to call on the facilities at pre-determined future dates, such as every 5 years.

Local enterprise partnerships - Are partnerships between local authorities and businesses. They decide what the priorities should be for investment in roads, buildings and facilities in the area.

London Interbank Bid Rate - the rate at which banks will bid to take deposits in Eurocurrency from each other. The deposits are for terms from overnight up to five years.

Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) - Interest rates are set by the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee. The MPC sets an interest rate it judges will enable the inflation target to be achieved.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) - Is a provision the council has set-aside from revenue to repay loans arising from capital expenditure financed by Borrowing.

Private Finance Initiative (PFI) - This is funding public infrastructure projects with private capital.

Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) - is a statutory body operating within the Debt Management Office, an Executive Agency of HM Treasury.

PWLB certainty rate - A reduced interest rate from PWLB to principal local authorities, which provided required information to government on their plans for long-term borrowing and associated capital spending.

Quantitative easing (QE) -A government monetary policy occasionally used to increase the money supply by buying government securities or other securities from the market. Quantitative easing increases the money supply by flooding financial institutions with capital, in an effort to promote increased lending and liquidity.

Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP) – This a discretionary provision to reduce the unfinanced capital expenditure (Borrowing) by additional loan repayments.

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