



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **THURSDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2018 AT 7.00 PM****

**Please note the earlier start time

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Heather Thwaites'.

Heather Thwaites
Acting Chief Executive
Published on 14 November 2018

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

Please note that other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting. The use of these images or recordings is not under the Council's control.



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.
53.		<p>APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence</p>	
54.		<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 September 2018.</p>	21 - 54
55.		<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest</p>	
56.		<p>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS To receive any announcements by the Mayor</p>	
57.		<p>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions</p>	
		<p>A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.</p>	
		<p>The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of the Council</p>	
		<p>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</p>	
57.1	None Specific	<p>Stephen Ollerhead has asked the Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning the following question:</p>	
		<p>Question</p>	
		<p>What measures do WBC have in place to use or develop Brownfield sites across the Borough (e.g. empty houses left by the MOD in Arborfield) on a large portion of land and building owned by WBC to help meet the Borough's housing target?</p>	
57.2	None Specific	<p>Stewart Richardson has asked the Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning the following question:</p>	

Question

WBC can improve their control of housing delivery, managing the 5 year land supply and passing the housing delivery test by decreasing dependence on the developers who have different agendas. How is WBC planning to use the considerable financial capacity available to it to contract directly with builders to construct a higher proportion of the housing needed?

57.3 None Specific

Alan Scott has asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question:

Question

Policy CP18 of the Core Plan provided for measures to maintain separation between the Arborfield Garrison SDL and surrounding settlements; Policy CP11 made similar provision in more general terms for all of the SDLs. Residents in the surrounding areas relied on those provisions when they acquiesced to these major developments taking place. There are now a number of housing proposals being considered in the area around the Arborfield Garrison SDL and in particular at Barkham Square. Such developments would be in violation of policies CP11 and CP18 of the Core Plan. Would you affirm that CP11 and CP18 are still in force and that it would be perfidious to renege upon them and allow these proposals to go ahead or to be included in the Local Plan Update?

57.4 Barkham

Paul Steel has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

The Inspector conducting an Inquiry regarding Woosehill in 1974 ruled that Barkham Road was 'already operating at about its theoretical capacity'. The roads in and out of Barkham have not changed since then, and being locked in by housing, offer little scope for increased capacity.

The population of Barkham directly affects the traffic using those roads. Census data shows that the population of Barkham had increased by over 40% by 2001, after the building of Elizabeth Park, an estate of some 350 houses.

The SDL development of Arborfield Green is adding 3,500 new houses to the area, 10 times as many as on Elizabeth Park. About half of these will fall within Barkham. With only about 15% of the SDL so far

completed, the bulk of the impact has yet to be felt.

There are whole series of bottlenecks in and around Barkham, and clearing only some simply releases traffic to worsen the situation at the next.

The Local Transport Plan fails to acknowledge any known congestion spots within Barkham. However, those who use the roads are painfully aware of how serious the problem already is.

If a further 1000 houses were to be allowed at Barkham Square, in the middle of Barkham, how would the Council address the accompanying incremental congestion without destroying the remaining rural ambience?

57.5 None Specific

Pam Stubbs has asked the Executive Member for Housing the following question:

Question

Providing affordable housing is understood to be one of the Council's key objectives. So, with the Cap on Council borrowing having now been lifted on the amount local authorities can borrow to fund social housing, how does WBC intend to make maximum use of this initiative aimed at increasing the number of affordable homes within the Borough?

57.6 Hawkedon;
Hillside; Maiden
Erleigh

Andrew Mickleburgh has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

Recently, a keen motorcyclist living in Earley expressed grave concern that the wooden fence beside the cycle-path on Lower Earley Way is a dangerous hazard to motorcyclists. Organisations I have canvassed since have made observations and raised sufficient issues to suggest that the resident's safety concerns may have substance and need investigation. I have conveyed their written responses to the Executive Member for Highways and Transport. In light of the matters raised in those responses, can the safety of this fence be assessed by Highway engineers, and the full findings and any recommendations reported publicly?

57.7 None Specific

Peter Dennis has asked the Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning the following question:

Question

Wokingham has grown massively in prosperity and size in the last 25 years, due mainly to its highly convenient location next to J10/11 of the M4 corridor which is the artery providing easy access to Heathrow, the M25 and London for the ever-expanding IT, science, biotech and engineering industries which have made the Thames Valley their home. Considering the Council is going to be short of £7,000,000 in government grant next year plus will no longer have access to EU funding, what steps has the Council taken to counter the threat of these large and small companies relocating their European headquarters into the EU, along with the other huge multinational conglomerates who have settled in the Thames Valley who may also relocate or splinter, or have indeed already done so or are in the process of planning to do so, if they lost their current passporting facility of goods, services, capital and staff into the EU after Brexit?

57.8 None Specific

Vanessa Rogers has asked the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing the following question:

Question

The Borough relies heavily on EU migrant labour in the health and manual labour markets, as well as on the highly skilled sectors of its local industries. Has the Borough recognised and prepared for the impact of a labour shortage in all these sectors and especially the care/NHS sectors, in view of the fact that EU migrants are leaving the UK and the area en masse and the numbers are not being replaced by EU migration?

57.9 Winnersh

Paul Fishwick has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

The central island traffic signal pole on the King Street Lane approach to the Sainsbury's junction was damaged in an accident during March 2018 and was repaired by Wokingham Borough Council during May 2018. However, a torn plastic bag covering a circular hole still 'flaps around in the breeze' on the lower part of the secondary signal. How long will it be before Wokingham Borough Council either replaces the torn plastic bag or installs a more meaningful sign for drivers?

- 57.10 None Specific Lisa Kelly has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:
- Question**
Because of its location and its rural market town charm, Wokingham has attracted a huge influx of highly qualified and highly paid residential owner occupiers and the attendant manual labour to service them, prompting massive residential and infrastructure development and redevelopment in recent years with the town's population expanding exponentially. What contingency plans or risk assessments have the Council undertaken to assess the impact of an economic slump on its finances and services after Brexit, both commercial and residential, and especially in light of the current ambitious and very expensive and extensive town centre schemes whose development is financed by loans?
- 57.11 None Specific Carl Hammond has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:
- Question**
Regarding littering, there is more or less zero enforcement of littering around town, while Car Parking enforcement is very actively and efficiently managed with plenty of fines and wardens around town. It's a shame to see endless littering of the new town centre, especially cigarette butts, which are everywhere. Would you please consider employing environmental enforcement officers to issue fixed penalty notices for littering?
- 57.12 None Specific Peter Humphreys has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:
- Question**
There is a history of lack of foresight within the Council such as installing new LED lights on London Road a few months before the road was widened leaving the lampposts stranded in the middle of the inside lane rather than on the pavement.
- Likewise, a large number of trees have been planted in the past couple of decades and subsequently uprooted or scheduled for felling even though it was known at the time of planting that those trees were in the way of planned developments. Would you please inform me how many trees, and at what cost, have been planted during this period only to be scheduled

for demolition relatively shortly afterwards.

57.13 Bulmershe and Whitegates

John Booth has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

East Reading Park and Ride: This site by the Thames riverbank at the north end of the A3290, just to the east of Kennet Mouth, has been purchased by Wokingham. Planning permission has been given for a 258-place Park and Ride site primarily to address demand from regular weekday morning peak-hour traffic into Reading. It was projected to cost £3.6 million with operational costs of £45,000 per year. The site has been cleared of trees and scrub but if left the vegetation will revert to 'green' landscape and wildlife habitat. I am concerned that: The operational and maintenance costs may have been underestimated and the revenues from such a small site overestimated; In use, especially with lighting, it will adversely affect landscape and amenity and wildlife habitat; To address cost, congestion, clean air and climate change it would be better if commuters used public transport or shared vehicles for the greater part of their journeys rather than taking cars so close to Reading; In particular it will increase traffic in the area around Suttons roundabout increasing congestion suffered by peak hour traffic to and from Reading. I think the Council should put this project on hold and re-assess it before spending more public money on it and causing long-term environmental loss. Priority should be given to getting more residents to use bus or train for most of the distance from their homes to Reading. If the Council is still convinced that Park and Ride in the proposed area is a good idea it should run a trial scheme using the vacant car parks in Thames Valley Park to test viability. What are the current plans, timescales and cost projections for this proposed Park and Ride?

58.

PETITIONS

To receive any petitions which Members or members of the public wish to present.

59.

PETITION DEBATE

To debate a petition.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 3.5.4.2 a maximum period of 30 minutes will be allowed for petitions to be debated.

The process below will be followed at the meeting:

- a) the petition organiser(s) will be given five minutes to present the petition (if there is more than one petition organiser then they will share this time);
- b) the petition will then be debated by Councillors for a period not exceeding 30 minutes;
- c) the petition organiser(s) will have the right of reply of up to a maximum of three minutes;
- d) the Mayor will then ask for motions on how the Council wishes to respond to the Petition which may include;
 - i) taking the action or some of the action the petition requests;
 - ii) not taking the action the petition requests;
 - iii) referring the petition to another body for them to consider the matter and take the appropriate action;
- e) once a motion has been put forward it will be voted on without discussion or amendment;
- f) if the motion falls then the Mayor will ask for a further motion to be put forward;
- g) if the Mayor is of the opinion that a decision on how to respond to the petition cannot be reached then he/she can decide, on behalf of the Council, not to take the action that the petition requests.

59.1 Barkham

Petition submitted by Chris Heyliger and Graham Dexter

The following petition containing in excess of 1,500 signatures, which is the threshold to trigger a debate at Council, was submitted at the Council meeting held on 20 September 2018:

“Please sign our petition to generate a debate at Wokingham Borough Council and help defeat any impending plans for development of housing on Barkham Square and any other unsuitable sites that may be considered in the future. We the undersigned urge Council Members to hold a debate addressing proposals for 1,000+ houses which are in addition to the 3,500 houses already with planning permission.

This is not only contrary to the adopted current Council planning policy but will have serious traffic and other implications for Barkham and surrounding parishes.

The main site proposed is Barkham Square. Residents accepted the development of the former Arborfield Garrison site as it involved largely regeneration of brownfield land but now the wider area is being exposed to potential development creep, meaning encroachment upon the much valued countryside and on our overstretched roads within Barkham, Arborfield and Finchampstead. This goes against current Council planning policies (such as CP11) which were designed to protect the separate identity of settlements.”

60. None Specific

IRP REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

55 - 74

To receive a report from the Independent Remuneration Panel on their review of Members' Allowances.

RECOMMENDATION that Council agrees that:

- 1) the time contributed component of the Basic Allowance be increased by 2% in line with the 2018/19 increase in Officer pay, and backdated to 1 April 2018;
- 2) the £500 component of the Basic Allowance for the provision of IT should continue to be claimed only by those Members who provide facilities which allow constituents and Officers to communicate with them by e-mail and the self-certification process be continued;
- 3) the out of pocket expenses component of the Basic Allowance be reduced by £40 to allow for the mass registration of Members to the Information Commissioners Office by Wokingham Borough Council, from April 2019;
- 4) the Leader of the Council's SRA be increased to 4.5 x SRA = £22,500, from April 2019;
- 5) the Leader of the Opposition SRA be restructured via a new formula whereby all opposition group leaders with a membership of more than 2 receive an SRA based in part on a figure of £100 per group member. In addition, if the lead opposition group has four or more members more than the next largest group, its

leader should receive a further £5,000; but if the lead over the next largest group was less than 4 members the addition to the Leader of the Opposition's SRA should be reduced to £4,000. In the event that there were two or three leading opposition groups, each with the same number of members, then £5000 should be distributed equally between them as well as the £100 per group member

A condition of this formula should be that the gross cost of the SRA to all Groups should not exceed £8,000 (compared to the £7,500 now), and that in the event of any excess over £8,000 occurring, that excess should be deducted from the SRA granted to the Opposition Group leader with the fewest Members. These changes are recommended to be implemented from April 2019;

- 6) the budgeted cost covering SRAs for Executive Members and Deputy Executive Members be capped at the current level of £100,000;
- 7) the Chairman of the Planning Committee's SRA be increased to $1.2 \times \text{SRA} = \text{£}6,000$, and the SRA for Members of the Planning Committee SRA be increased to $0.3 \times \text{SRA} = \text{£}1,500$, from April 2019. A condition be agreed whereby there be a maximum budget of £18,000 for Chairman and Members of the Planning Committee;
- 8) the Members Subsistence Allowance and Overnight Accommodation Allowance be amended as follows:
 - (i) Overnight approved absence (from normal place of residence):
Bed and Breakfast as charged by no higher than a 3 star hotel (with the exception that, if an approved conference takes place in a 4 star hotel with the expectation that attendees will stay at the same hotel, 4 star bed and breakfast is allowed).
 - (ii) Daily subsistence (for more than four hours away from normal place of residence covering any meals or refreshments) up to a maximum of £25 receipted expenditure;

- 9) the publication of Members' remuneration on the WBC website be reviewed with the intention that a single document be created and be accessible via an easy to find hyperlink, which would show for each Councillor all WBC related remunerations (Basic Allowance, SRA, NED remuneration and Outside Body (namely the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority) remuneration) received by that Member;
- 10) the Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Allowances be included within the IRP's remit, from April 2019;
- 11) no changes be made to the current Childcare and Dependant Carers Allowance;
- 12) apart from the above recommendations, no further adjustments to Members' Remuneration are necessary until the next review by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

61. None Specific

APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Following the departure of Manjeet Gill, Interim Chief Executive, it is necessary to appoint an Officer who will take on this role and carry out the functions of the statutory role of Head of Paid Service. At the meeting of the Personnel Board held on 31 October 2018 it was resolved "That it be recommended to Council that Heather Thwaites be appointed Interim Chief Executive until Personnel Board are able to interview and appoint a permanent Chief Executive, subject to no objections from the majority of the Executive". Executive have subsequently confirmed their support of this proposal.

RECOMMENDATION: That Heather Thwaites be appointed Interim Chief Executive, and carry out the functions of Head of Paid Service, until such time as a permanent Chief Executive is appointed and commences employment.

62. None Specific

WOKINGHAM'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

75 - 130

To receive an updated Health and Wellbeing Strategy as recommended by the Wokingham Wellbeing Board.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council approve the revised Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and

accompanying focused Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) chapters to allow for implementation of the engagement plan and creation of an action plan.

63. None Specific

CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

131 - 170

To receive a report setting out amendments to the Council's Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group.

RECOMMENDATION That Council agree the following changes to the Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group:

- 1) that Section 3.3 Freedom of Information Policy and Section 3.4 Data Protection Policy be amended as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- 2) that Section 3.5 Petition Scheme be amended as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;
- 3) that Sections 4.2.9.3 Notice of Question (Public), 4.2.10.4 Notice of Questions (Members), 5.4.27 Notice of Question (Public – Executive) and 5.4.36 Rules of Procedure for Questions by Members (Members – Executive) be amended as set out in paragraph 3 of the report;
- 4) that Sections 4.2.9.8 Supplementary Question [Public] and 4.2.10.7 Supplementary Question [Member] and Sections 5.4.32 Supplementary Question [Public - Executive] and 5.4.39 Supplementary Questions [Members – Executive] be amended as set out in paragraph 4 of the report;
- 5) that Section 4.4.23 Membership [Health and Wellbeing Board] be amended as set out in paragraph 5 of the report;
- 6) that Section 8.1 Planning Committee Terms of Reference be amended as set out within paragraph 6 of the report;
- 7) that Section 8.2.7 Speaking by Members other than [Planning] Committee members be amended as set out within paragraph 7 of the report;

- 8) that Section 11.3 Scheme of Delegation to Officers be amended as set out in Appendix 3 to the report;
- 9) that Section 13 Procurement and Contracts Rules and Procedures and Section 5.5.1 List of Items Delegated to Individual Executive Members be amended as set out in paragraph 9 of the report;
- 10) minor amendments as set out in Appendix 4 to the report.

64. Wescott

APPROVAL OF A PERIOD OF ABSENCE FROM MEETINGS BY COUNCILLOR OLIVER WHITTLE

171 - 172

To receive a report requesting a period of absence from meetings for Councillor Oliver Whittle.

RECOMMENDATION that Council:

- 1) note that Councillor Oliver Whittle has not been able to attend meetings of the Council due to ill-health since his attendance at Council on 19 July 2018;
- 2) extend its sympathy to Councillor Whittle and wish him a speedy recovery;
- 3) approve Councillor Oliver Whittle's non-attendance at meetings of the Council due to ill-health up to 22 May 2019.

65.

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

66.

STATEMENT 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.

67.

MEMBER QUESTION TIME

To answer any member questions

A period of 30 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

67.1

Winnersh

Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

We have spoken several times about changing the traffic signals to part time rush hours only on the three roundabouts (not the Loddon Bridge (Showcase) roundabout) next to the A329M in Winnersh Triangle. Is there any progress on this project?

67.2

None Specific

Gary Cowan has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

Question

Looking at the time scale for progressing the Minerals and Waste Plan and the Local Plan can one explain why when minerals are required to build houses that the timing would appear to be back to front? By that I mean you need sand and gravel to build houses so one needs to know the number of houses being planned to determine that amount of sand and gravel needed or are there other reasons?

67.3

Emmbrook

Imogen Shepherd-DuBey has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

The Woosehill Underpass in my ward has been progressively attacked by vandals who persist in scrawling graffiti on the walls. These messages and images are violent, sexually explicit, homophobic and deeply offensive to most. It is visible to all; including children who walk through the tunnel on the way to school and it makes residents feel unsafe when using the tunnel.

I have been advised that this tunnel used to have anti-graffiti rendering, which seems to be working well

in nearby locations. I would like to know why this graffiti resistant rendering was not replaced?

67.4 None Specific

Clive Jones has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

Question

What plans does the Council have to improve Air Quality in the Borough?

67.5 Wescott

Lindsay Ferris has asked the Executive Member for Regeneration the following question:

Question

According to papers that went to Audit Committee, Wokingham Borough Council has paid £14.5M for three commercial properties in Wokingham including Barclays Bank in Market Place for which the gross annual rental income is forecast to be circa £507k p.a. No information was provided to show

- (a) What responsibilities (including financial) do Wokingham Borough Council have as Landlords (for example repairs etc).
- (b) What the estimated annual costs are of servicing both the borrowing costs, the costs of repairs and administration of these properties.

With these costs taken into account, the net income could be considerably less than £507k a year.

What figures for costs and income were used in the business case that was made for purchasing these three properties?

67.6 None Specific

Carl Doran has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Question

At the Tory party conference, Theresa May said that austerity is over.

Can the Executive Member for Finance tell us whether the austerity refund cheque for the £35.9 million taken from this Council, since 2010, has been received yet?

68. 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

69. 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

69.1 None Specific

Motion 412 submitted by Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

Wokingham Borough Council requires the correct installation of sprinkler systems in newly built schools and school buildings within Wokingham Borough.

WBC has recognised the importance of sprinklers in schools for many years and a previous motion passed by this Council required a risk assessment to be undertaken, but this opens the way for sprinklers not to be required, and needs to be strengthened.

School fires continue to occur and latest reports suggest they are getting bigger and more costly. The impact of these fires is significant not just in financial terms but also in terms of the devastating effect on the communities they serve, the environment and the disruption to students, teachers and families. The impact on children's education is not confined to lost coursework but often includes longer travelling times, disrupted social groups and poorer facilities. There is an additional effect of interrupting a child's education due to damage to their classrooms which may hinder their learning of essential skills.

There is a misconception that water systems often cause more damage than they prevent, but with modern technology sprinkler fire suppression systems are far smarter and only activate in the areas that require suppression and only for the time that the risk is evident. In respect of Sprinkler Installations Building Regulations, Regulatory Reform orders and insurers are increasingly calling for active fire

suppression systems such as sprinklers as part of the design of new schools. DCSF BB100 sets out a risk assessment methodology which dictates the use of sprinklers in the majority of new school build.

WBC believes if sprinklers were considered at the design stage of new builds, costs could be kept to a minimum. Each year more than 1300 schools in the UK suffer fires large enough to be attended by Fire services, and over half are non-accidental.

Sprinklers reduce the impact of fires in schools on children, and the public by reducing the costs of insurance and of rebuilding, and most importantly by reducing the cost to the child's education and future. For all these reasons this Council supports the installation of sprinklers in all new school buildings and will work cross-party and with Officers to see how this can be best implemented in all new build schools, whoever is the organisation seeking to build a new school.

69.2 None Specific

Motion 413 submitted by Gary Cowan

This Council will evaluate its existing policies on trees to ensure its policies are fully open and transparent. The new policy recognises that many trees may be subject to some tree work and it is not practical to consult on all works undertaken. For example pruning works carried out is unlikely to cause significant public concern, however the felling of any trees can be contentious. Felling trees without prior consultation due to health and safety issues is understood but where the felling involves any loss of TPO or protected tree/s for any other reason whatsoever the public must be formally consulted on the proposed works and the reasons why it is necessary.

The Council must maintain proper records of all TPO trees felled. For trees which are to be felled which are protected by TPOs, green routes or those situated in Conservation Areas, or in association with development proposals and planning permissions this Council will put in place a statutory consultation processes and current council policies will be reviewed to reflect these changes as soon as it practicable.

69.3 Emmbrook;
Ewendons;
Norreys;
Wescott

Motion 414 submitted by Prue Bray

The Constitution commits this Council to ensuring that "the principles of efficiency, transparency and

accountability are demonstrated throughout the decision making process and the delivery of services.”

The Wokingham town centre regeneration project has now been running for some years. It is the largest single project being undertaken by the council. No income and expenditure figures for the project as a whole have been published. Nor has any assessment of progress or variation from the original specification. This makes it extraordinarily difficult for both residents and councillors to find out how the project is going, and means that the council’s constitutional commitment to transparency and accountability is not being observed.

While ongoing spend and future commitments may be difficult to quantify, or may need to be kept confidential for commercial reasons, income and expenditure which has already happened in previous financial years must have been accounted for in the council’s accounts, which have all been properly signed off. In addition, any contracts entered into are required to be published by the Transparency Regulations. This means that all the information relating to past spend on the Wokingham town centre regeneration project should be readily identifiable and available to be pulled together into one document covering the whole project.

Therefore, in order to ensure the transparency and accountability to which it has committed itself, this council will by the end of December 2018 publish a report detailing

- The total income and expenditure from 1st April 2012 to March 31st 2018 on all works associated with the regeneration of Wokingham town centre, including the Market Place joint project with Wokingham Town Council, broken down to show separately the figures for Peach Street phase 1, Peach Place, Elms Field, Carnival Pool, the Market Place and any other subprojects, and, for each project, broken down to the stages of the project, such as design, and construction
- The original budget and timetable for each of those elements
- An explanation of any variances between the original budget and actual income and expenditure and original timetable and actual progress
- The sources of the funding, with the amounts

obtained from each separate source.

69.4 Wescott

Motion 415 submitted by Rachel Burgess

This Council opposes the closure of Wokingham's Post Office and its franchising to WH Smith.

Wokingham's Post Office is at the heart of the local community and an important community hub for many residents, particularly the older and more vulnerable. It is part of the historic character of our market town.

This Council is concerned that there was no proper consultation on whether this controversial proposal to franchise the Post Office should take place.

Wokingham's residents are concerned that WH Smith's record for quality of service and queuing times is one of the poorest, and many believe that the retailer will provide a reduced service with longer queues and the provision of inferior advice to customers.

This Council notes that WH Smith currently does not have adequate disabled access.

A number of jobs are at risk of being replaced with minimum wage jobs. Public money will be used to seal the deal in the form of compensation payments to remove existing staff.

This Council will write to the Post Office calling for the abandonment of plans to franchise Wokingham's Post Office to WH Smith and calls on John Redwood MP to write to the Minister for the Post Office to request that this proposal to be abandoned.

CONTACT OFFICER

Anne Hunter
Tel
Email
Postal Address

Democratic and Electoral Services Lead Specialist
0118 974 6051
anne.hunter@wokingham.gov.uk
Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2018 FROM 7.30 PM TO 11.00 PM

Members Present

Councillors: John Kaiser (Mayor), Bill Soane (Deputy Mayor), Alistair Auty, Keith Baker, Laura Blumenthal, Chris Bowring, Prue Bray, Rachel Burgess, Jenny Cheng, Gary Cowan, Andy Croy, Richard Dolinski, Carl Doran, Lindsay Ferris, Guy Grandison, Charlotte Haitham Taylor, John Halsall, David Hare, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Tim Holton, Graham Howe, Clive Jones, Norman Jorgensen, Pauline Jorgensen, Dianne King, Abdul Loyes, Charles Margetts, Ken Miall, Philip Mirfin, Stuart Munro, Barrie Patman, Ian Pittock, Anthony Pollock, Helen Power, Malcolm Richards, Angus Ross, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, David Sleight, Chris Smith, Wayne Smith and Shahid Younis

35. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Parry Batth, David Chopping, Kate Haines, Mike Haines, Philip Houldsworth, Julian McGhee-Sumner, Daniel Sargeant, Simon Weeks and Oliver Whittle.

36. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 July 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

38. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor presented awards to the first two recipients of the Mayor's Roll of Honour.

The first recipient was Sukhdev Kaur Bansal who had been running Punjabi language classes for children and adults in the local community for the past 35 years. The students were taught up to GCSE level and many had gone on to use their new language skills in developing successful careers.

The second recipient was Janet Woodruff who had been very active in the Shinfield community for many years. Janet regularly delivered the community newsletter to residents on the Shinfield Rise estate and was a keen supporter of a wide range of community activities in the area.

The Mayor also informed the Council of the following:

- The WBC Future Priorities for the Borough survey was running until 30 September 2018. This was an opportunity for residents to help shape the future of the Borough through the development of a new Borough Plan.
- Josie Wragg (Director of Localities and Customer Service) would be leaving the Council shortly to take up the role of Chief Executive of Slough Borough Council. On behalf of the Council, the Mayor thanked Josie for her outstanding service.
- The Mayor's Masked Ball would be held on Saturday 9 March 2019 at Sindlesham Court in Winnersh.

39. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

39.1 Jenny Lissaman asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

In the Wokingham District Local Plan 1996 - 2006 Policy WT 12: Additional Railway Stations states that: The Council will seek the provision of additional railway stations at Thames Valley Park, and other locations that can serve development and reduce car usage without resulting in net environmental degradation. Interchange facilities and car and cycle parking will be provided as appropriate to each location. Why was the principle of that policy dropped from WBC's 2010 Core Strategy?

Answer

I remember the Thames Valley Park station issue from when I did this role previously and I had various discussions with Mark Moon at the time. As I think you are aware, it was Network Rail that decided that they didn't want another stop either too close to Reading or between Reading and Twyford so, unfortunately, we were unable to get the station in place. However, there is a new station at Green Park which will be available next year and, if Grazeley is chosen as a Local Plan update site, there will be a station at Grazeley. There is nothing that I am aware of on the line through Wokingham to London or Guildford, nor is there anything on the line from Reading to Paddington.

That is the situation as far as stations are concerned. In connection with interchange and modal shift I would direct you to CP 6 and CP 10 in the 2010 Core Strategy which deals with the principles around interchange and modal shift. We are also undertaking work in relation to a potential park and ride at Coppid Beech. We have also been working on a bridge over the canal at Reading which I believe has had some problems with planning but would, in principle, provide a quicker bus service from Thames Valley Park and the Waterside Centre into Reading.

In Shinfield there are plans for round-robin bus services connecting the Shinfield Development into Reading and there have been improved bus services from Arborfield to Reading and also through to the new Lexicon development in Bracknell. I think we are providing and looking to provide opportunities for modal shift as well as new rail facilities where we can.

Supplementary Question

I was particularly interested, as I am sure you are aware, about the proposal for a station at Thames Valley Park which appears to have disappeared. You suggested that it couldn't have happened because there was no room on the rail network at that time for trains to stop in the business park even though this was part of the S106 agreement, as I understand, with Oracle, to provide a station. I would be interested to know where that money actually went as it certainly didn't go on the station. However, the reason I am asking the question is that, surely, the introduction of electrification together with the National Digital Railway Strategy (intended to provide more space on rail networks) have made stopping trains at a station in Thames Valley Park a possibility which should be properly investigated?

Supplementary Answer

As you say, I recall the Thames Valley Park station, the saga around it, and the £15m which was supposedly spent on it. I have no idea whether the Council even received it, so

I can't help you in connection with that one. I do not think, at present, that there are any plans from the rail operator or Network Rail in favour of a new station at Thames Valley Park. I have not heard of any discussions around this so I would suggest that it is not likely any time soon. I will ask the question as I talk to the rail operators and will let you know if I hear anything positive, but I will have to take it on that basis.

39.2 Petra Angel asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question: and, in her absence the written answer was provided

Please can the Council confirm what the current percentage of agency workers within Children's Services Department are?

Ms Lisa Humphreys was asked this question at a previous meeting but her response was that the national target was 80% permanent staff so Ms Humphreys avoided giving the desired answer. I understand that in 2015/16 the Children's Services were running at 37% agency staff usage which is 17% worse than national targets and that a commitment by Ms Felicity Budgen was given to the LGO to reduce this figure and focus on recruitment and training, however I believe the situation has got much worse. It is taking 8 months to compile a basic child assessment with workload pressures blamed - this is a fact. It is vital that the Council addresses this issue. It doesn't matter how good a social worker you are if you are having to undertake significantly more work because there are not enough staff, then this increases the chances of making a mistake. Unfortunately some serious mistakes have been made and which has resulted in children being put at risk.

Answer

Although the figures will vary year on year, the most up to date data we have is as follows:

The South East region as a whole reported an agency worker rate of 14.8%, and for England as a whole it was 15.8%. Within this aggregated percentage are the following local authorities figures:

- Reading 45.2% agency workers.
- Bracknell 9.5%.
- West Berkshire 19.0%.
- Windsor and Maidenhead 38.1%.
- Wokingham 22.0%.

There will always be some agency staff, to cover for example sickness or maternity leave.

In the last year, for a variety of reasons social workers' caseloads have increased from between 12 and 15 to the mid 20's, often more. It was imperative that we use agency staff to cope with the demand and these are now making inroads into the backlog of cases. Recruitment of new social workers is not a quick or easy thing, especially in the South East, shown by the figures above. But the move to recruit more permanent staff began earlier this summer.

39.3 Paul Fishwick asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs launched a consultation during July and August 2018 related to the planned UK Clean Air Strategy and detailed National Air Pollution Control Programme that is due to be published in March 2019. Could you inform me what response Wokingham Borough Council gave to this consultation?

Answer

The Public Protection Partnership, which represents us in these matters, has not responded to this particular consultation as we provided a response to earlier similar consultations on the National Nitrogen Dioxide Action Plan. Previously we provided information on what measures to tackle air pollution have worked well and the challenges of implementation locally. This was requested from each authority to inform DEFRA's development of their strategy.

Supplementary Question

It is extremely disappointing that the Borough Council has not taken part in this consultation. It is actually different to the one on Nitrogen. This will help to shape the forthcoming strategies that the Government is looking to launch in March 2019. Air pollution in the UK kills approximately 45,000 people prematurely every year, so when will the Borough Council take air quality seriously by tackling the sources of these emissions especially Nitrogen Dioxide, which comes mainly from transport?

Supplementary Answer

The Borough Council does take air pollution very seriously. There are a number of monitoring sites in the Borough, as you are aware, so we can keep an eye on the levels. There are a couple of areas which were above the desired limits – in the centre of Wokingham and the centre of Twyford. There has been an action plan in place for each of these areas for the past year, so we are taking action in those areas to bring the levels down. We are monitoring across the piece and the latest information I have is that pollution levels are coming down.

As you are aware, the main issue with Nitrogen Dioxide relates to diesel vehicles. A lot of more modern diesel vehicles are fitted with devices to reduce the amount of Nitrogen Dioxide coming out of the exhaust. A lot of them are also fitted with particulate filters. The fuel economy of diesel vehicles has also gone up enormously in the last few years. All of this is pushing things in the right direction and the Government has a big initiative on electric vehicles. I think that we will see a lot of pressure for electric vehicles in the centre of major cities and towns. Bus companies can also do a lot to cut down on the amount of pollution by moving to electric or hybrid vehicles in appropriate places.

So we do take it very seriously and it is an issue that I am personally very interested in.

39.4 Andrew Mickleburgh asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Earley is blighted by illegal and anti-social parking, with all of the associated problems. Existing and additional signage is necessary, but not sufficient. The Civil Parking Enforcement Officers who from time-to-time patrol in Earley are effective, but unable to visit problem locations as often as required. Could a full time Civil Parking Enforcement Officer be allocated exclusively and permanently to Earley to help tackle these serious parking problems?

Answer

Since the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) in October 2017 (405 days of operation), we have carried out 1,581 patrols in Earley with 938 Contraventions. This equates to 3.9 Earley locations visited per day of operation, so you have had your fair share of resources across the Borough.

Whilst we can never guarantee we will be at the right location every day we do what we

can with the resources available.

As part of the CPE contract, there is an opportunity for community groups and/or Town and Parish councils to fund additional patrols in their area. This is subject to the contractor being able to resource this, i.e. they have people available and I would be very happy to talk to you. However, there is a cost and we would be looking to Earley Town Council to contribute. If this is something you would like to discuss in more detail, the Parking Team will be able to assist. The cost of a full time person would be around £37k per annum. You may not want somebody full time, but depending on what you would like to spend your ratepayer's money on, we would be happy to assist you.

Supplementary Question

I am told that Civil Parking Enforcement Officers try to visit a school in Earley once in a 5/6 week period. Given the ongoing extent of parking abuse around our schools and other locations, how can this be good enough?

Supplementary Answer

As you have commented, there are a lot of issues in Earley and Civil Parking Enforcement Officers have to cover all of the area. If there are particular blackspots that you would wish me to pick up and, perhaps, get some prioritisation I would be very happy to do that. I then go back to my previous question – if there are a number of things that you would like more time on, let's have a conversation about how that can be dealt with and how we can fund it.

39.5 Rachel Bishop-Firth asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

There are no litter bins on Barkham Road between Wokingham railway station and the bus stop on Barkham Road. The bins at each end of this stretch – on the railway bridge and at the bus stop – are small and are hidden from view if you're walking away from the town. There are also no bins between Wellington Road and Barkham Road, for people taking this route out of town over the Tan Hill crossing.

As a result, we have a litter problem along both of these routes. The bins are often overflowing on a Monday morning, and people living along Barkham Road get fast food wrappers, bottles and cans in their gardens. There is a similar litter problem along the Tan Hill shortcut, with litter including broken glass being dropped on the bridge and in the Ormonde Road park.

I have sent some photos showing the problem to the Councillor. Can the Council commit to reviewing this problem and providing adequate litter bins?

Answer

Thank you for raising this matter. It is clear from your photographs that there is an issue and I have asked Officers to have a look at this. We will also review the litter picking frequency to see if adjusting that would help as well.

Supplementary Question

I am concerned by the fact that we have got to the state where the bins are overflowing regularly which is not just unsightly, it could lead to public health issues such as rat infestations. Could the Councillor please tell me what systems are in place to monitor problems of this type and ensure that actions are taken in good time to prevent public hygiene problems?

Supplementary Answer

The contractor empties bins frequently. In your case we have to ask if this is frequently enough. We will certainly have a look at that. There are over 1,000 litter bins around the Borough that we collect from. It is reviewed and, when issues such as these are raised, our Officers go out to look at the situation. They don't just leave it to the contractor. They look to see if the bins are in the right place and are the correct size. The help that people like yourself give is good.

39.6 Sarah Kerr asked the Executive Member for Regeneration the following question:

How were the public consulted about the new layout of the Market Place, including the type and colour of stone, the disabled parking and loading layout, the lack of proper kerbs, the rather expensive looking golden studs, and in particular the use of the same colour paving stone for pedestrian crossings?

Answer

There has been significant public consultation and engagement that has led to the new Market Place design, dating back more than ten years. The initial engagement took place in Wokingham Town Centre Workshops in 2007 that looked at the long-term vision for the town. Further detail was added through workshops that took place in January and June 2008 which led to the creation of the Wokingham Town Centre Development Guide (December 2008). One of the key principles that emerged from the public engagement was the need for an uncluttered public space that encouraged pedestrian access. Further public consultation (including a public workshop in September 2009) was held ahead of the production of the Wokingham Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (June 2010).

The Masterplan set out the key principles of the development and, through consultation, it was generally acknowledged that the former paving was poor quality, uneven and uncoordinated - in particular the red brick which was very slippery when wet – and generally clutter detracted from the historic character of the Market Place. Further engagement took place as the more detailed design evolved, involving various individuals and interest groups. An initial workshop in April 2015 was followed by three more detailed sessions in November 2017.

Two of the workshops were specifically for individuals and organisations representing those with various forms of disability including Guide Dogs for the Blind, learning disabilities group (CLASP), Wokingham Healthwatch and the Alzheimer's Society. The input from them was crucial in informing the design of the Market Place. For example, it highlighted the importance of retaining controlled crossings for people with visual impairments, which were retained in the design as a result. While level surfaces are preferred by most people with restricted mobility, people with visual impairments who rely on a guide dog or cane need a discernible change in level to identify the carriageway edge. Hence it was decided that crossing points (both signalised and courtesy crossings) would be level with the pavement and identified with tactile paving.

In terms of the choice of York Stone, this was selected following engagement feedback that highlighted general dislike of the old red brick and support for more natural material that would provide a neutral backdrop for the town hall and other historic buildings.

Supplementary Question

You made reference to consulting people with visual impairments. The DfT has developed guidance on the use of tactile paving surfaces and it actually states that: “contrasts in colour plus tone should be used to accentuate the presence of certain key features”. It also states that “older visually impaired people and people who have lost their sight from various medical conditions may have reduced sensitivity their feet and it is, therefore, important that textures warning of particular hazards are rigorous enough to be detected by most people”.

Was this guidance consulted during the design of the Market Place regeneration given that the blister studs are barely detectable for the average person through the soles of their shoes, the blister studs do not contrast much in colour from the surrounding area, the colour of the pedestrian crossings is the same as the pavement and the kerbs are the same grey colour as the rows of bricks lining the side of the road?

Supplementary Answer

I can assure you that all the consultations that were carried out took all that into account and, indeed, we were advised by a number of groups that they wanted those tactile surfaces. At this stage, that is why we have gone forward with it.

39.7 Beth Rowland asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

Please will you tell me with a simple answer if the black boxes that are used throughout the Borough are recyclable?

Answer

It is not possible for the black boxes to be processed through our kerbside collection service. We communicated this to customers when we extended our recycling service to include pots, tubs and trays earlier this year.

If, on the other hand, a resident has a specific problem disposing of a damaged black box then we will always help facilitate the removal if the resident contacts us.

Supplementary Question

As you know, earlier this year I was a Member of this Council and I was not aware of any consultation or offer to the public to recycle black boxes. However, they are recyclable, having spoken to the company that manufactures them, if they are returned to the company or they are chipped they can be melted down and recycled. (I am not sure if re3 have the equipment to do this).

That, to me, would seem to be a very sensible thing to do with them. I have had a lot of questions from members of the public about this and they suggested that if it is because they are black we should change the colour. I don't think that this is the issue and the company don't think that it is the issue. I would suggest that the Council make more effort to make these boxes recyclable even if it means returning them to the manufacturer.

Supplementary Answer

I agree, it would make sense if they were recyclable more locally. We will look at this for the future contract for the supply of black boxes. I think that you are right, it is not that they are black, it is the type of plastic that they are made of.

40. PETITIONS

The following members of the public and Councillors presented a petition in relation to the matter indicated.

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

Mac Stephensen	<p>Mac Stephensen presented a petition of 455 signatures requesting a speed reduction on Church Hill, Hurst.</p> <p><i>To be forwarded to the Executive Member for Highways and Transport.</i></p>
Graham Dexter and Chris Heylinger	<p>Graham Dexter and Chris Heylinger presented a petition of 4,000 signatures regarding proposed development in Barkham.</p> <p><i>To be debated at a future Council meeting</i></p>
Councillor Gary Cowan	<p>Gary Cowan presented a petition of 1,688 signatures regarding proposed development South of Cutbush Lane and North of Arborfield Road, Shinfield and the wider issue of over development across the Borough.</p> <p><i>To be forwarded to the Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning</i></p>

41. PRESENTATION BY THE CHIEF CONSTABLE FRANCIS HABGOOD AND THE AREA COMMANDER SHAUN VIRTUE

The Council received a presentation from the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police, Francis Habgood, and the local Police Area Commander, Shaun Virtue.

The first part of the presentation was submitted on behalf of Anthony Stansfeld, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). This gave details of the role of the PCC, the PCC's strategic priorities and the Police and Crime Plan for the period 2017/21. The presentation also gave details of progress made against each of the priorities during 2017/18.

The second part of the presentation gave details of the operational performance of Thames Valley Police and highlighted several key initiatives which were currently under way. This included the Hidden Harm Campaign, aimed at abuse related crimes such as modern slavery, online child abuse and honour-based abuse.

Following the presentations, Members asked a number of questions relating to:

- the use of police S61 powers in relation to traveller incursions;
- the effects of Government funding reductions on police services;
- the impact of the Government's reduction of the proposed salary increase for police officers, from 3% to 2%, on recruitment and retention;
- the capacity of the police to meet demand for services as evidenced by the reduced level of detection rates.

The Chief Constable and Area Commander answered the questions and provided additional information on trends within the Borough area.

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor thanked Francis Habgood and Shaun Virtue for attending the meeting and answering Member questions on crime and community safety issues.

42. HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION TERM SERVICE CONTRACTS RENEWAL

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 47 to 106, which gave details of the procurement process relating to the new Highways and Transportation Term Service Contracts.

The report recommended that the Council award the Professional Services Consultancy Contract and the Maintenance and Construction Contract to the two organisations set out in the Part 2 papers with a commencement date of 1 April 2019.

It was proposed that the two contracts be awarded for an initial term of seven years, extendable by a further period of up to three years, subject to satisfactory performance.

Members were reminded that, under the European Union procurement legislation, the award of the contracts would be subject to a mandatory 10 day standstill challenge period (known as the Alcatel period). During this period confidentiality had to be maintained about the Council's decisions. A media release would be published at the end of the Alcatel period.

It was proposed by Anthony Pollock and seconded by Keith Baker that the recommendations in the report be approved.

Upon being put to the vote, it was **RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the procurement process, which commenced with stakeholder engagement in 2016 and soft market engagement with potential suppliers during 2017, be noted;
- 2) the formal procurement process, underway since January 2018, and the proposals for mobilisation be endorsed;
- 3) the Professional Consultancy Contract be awarded to the organisation named in the Part 2 papers, to be operational from 1 April 2019, for an initial term of seven years, extendable by a further period of up to three years, subject to satisfactory performance;
- 4) the Maintenance and Construction Contract be awarded to the organisation named in the Part 2 papers, to be operational from 1 April 2019, for an initial term of seven

years, extendable by a further period of up to three years, subject to satisfactory performance.

43. TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUT-TURN 2017-18

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 107 to 134, which gave details of the Council's Treasury Management operations during 2017/18.

The report stated that the Council had successfully implemented all the agreed prudential indicators during the year. This reflected sound management of the Council's finances in a challenging environment.

The Executive had considered the report at its meeting on 26 July 2018 and had recommended to Council that the Annual Report for 2017/18 and the actual 2017/18 prudential indicators, set out in the report, be approved.

Lindsay Ferris stated that his Group had serious concerns about the level of debt incurred by the Council and the cost of funding that debt. Consequently, his Group would vote against the recommendations in the report.

It was proposed by Charlotte Haitham Taylor and seconded by Anthony Pollock that the recommendations in the report be agreed.

Prior to a vote being held, six Members, in accordance with Rule of Procedure 4.2.15.5, requested that a recorded vote be taken on the recommendations in the report.

On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The Treasury Management Annual Report for 2017/18 be approved;
- 2) The actual 2017/18 Prudential Indicators, set out in the report, be approved.

The voting was as follows:

For	Against	Abstained
Alistair Auty	Prue Bray	John Kaiser
Keith Baker	Rachel Burgess	Bill Soane
Laura Blumenthal	Gary Cowan	
Chris Bowring	Andy Croy	
Jenny Cheng	Carl Doran	
Richard Dolinski	Lindsay Ferris	
Guy Grandison	David Hare	
Charlotte Haitham Taylor	Clive Jones	
Pauline Helliard-Symons	Ian Pittock	
Tim Holton	Helen Power	
Graham Howe	Imogen Shepherd-Dubey	
Norman Jorgensen	Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey	
Pauline Jorgensen		
Dianne King		
Abdul Loyes		
Charles Margetts		

Ken Miall		
Philip Mirfin		
Stuart Munro		
Barrie Patman		
Anthony Pollock		
Malcolm Richards		
Angus Ross		
David Sleight		
Chris Smith		
Wayne Smith		
Shahid Younis		

44. APPOINTMENT OF STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 135 to 136, which sought approval to the appointment of Carol Cammiss to the statutory role of Director of Children's Services.

The report stated that the Personnel Board had met on 6 September 2018 to undertake final interviews for the statutory role of Director of Children's Services. Following the interview process, the Personnel Board had agreed that Carol Cammiss was the most suitable candidate.

It was proposed by Pauline Helliard-Symons and seconded by Shahid Younis that the recommendation in the report be approved.

On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED: that the Personnel Board's recommendation to appoint Carol Cammiss to the statutory role of Director of Children's Services, on a date to be agreed, be approved.

45. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 137 to 150, which gave details of a formal review of Polling Districts and Polling Places in accordance with the Representation of the People Act, 1983.

The report stated that under S18 of the Act, as amended by S17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, the Council was required to undertake a review within a 16 month period starting on 1 October 2018. It was proposed that a public consultation exercise take place between 1 October and 16 November 2018 followed by discussions with the Political Groups and the independent Member. It was anticipated that final recommendations would be submitted to the Council on 21 March 2019.

Attached to the report was a schedule setting out details of the current polling districts, polling stations and specific issues, if any, relating to each of the stations.

It was proposed by Pauline Jorgensen and seconded by Lindsay Ferris that the recommendations in the report be approved.

On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED That:

- 1) a formal review of all Polling Districts and Polling Places within the Borough be approved;
- 2) the decisions reached under this review be implemented for all elections from the beginning of 2020;
- 3) a Member/Officer working group be set up to administer and review the responses received, the composition of this group to be one Member from each of the political groups, the independent Member and two Officers from the Electoral Services Team.

46. STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 151 to 178, which set out a Statement of Licensing Policy, in line with the Council's statutory duty under the Licensing Act 2003. Under the terms of the Act the Council had a duty to update the statement every five years.

The report stated that an updated statement had been considered and approved by the Licensing and Appeals Committee on 4 September 2018. In addition to reformatting and minor clarifications, the Committee had identified a number of material changes which were set out in the report.

It was proposed by Barrie Patman and seconded by Malcolm Richards that the recommendations in the report be approved.

On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED: that the revised Statement of Licensing Policy, set out at Annex A to the report, be approved.

47. STATEMENT OF GAMBLING PRINCIPLES

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 179 to 214, which gave details of a revised Statement of Gambling Principles. Under the terms of the Gambling Act 2005, the Council had to publish a revised statement by the end of January 2019.

The report stated that the updated statement had been approved by the Licensing and Appeals Committee at its meeting on 4 September 2018. In addition to reformatting and minor points of clarification the Committee had agreed to a number of material changes which were set out in the report.

It was proposed by Barrie Patman and seconded by Malcolm Richards that the recommendation in the report be approved.

On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED: That the revised Statement of Gambling Principles, set out at Annex A to the report, be approved.

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

Charlotte Haitham Taylor, Leader of the Council

May I start Mr Mayor by congratulating you on the launch of your Mayor's Awards this evening and, in particular, the first two recipients. Very worthy indeed. I would also like to thank the petitioners this evening. They really are far reaching issues that they have brought to us this evening and, perhaps, they need taking up with central Government too.

Before I go into the main topic of my speech tonight, I have great pleasure in announcing that I have appointed Pauline Jorgensen as my Deputy Leader of the Council. Councillor Jorgensen has a wealth of experience as an Executive Member and as one of the Directors of the Holding Company too. I am pleased to have her sitting by my side, and I am quite certain that she will keep me on the straight and narrow! Pauline has great experience at the Council but, also, outside in IT, HR and change management in a huge company which some of you may know. I shouldn't really be advertising, but it's BA.

It would be very remiss not to mention Josie Wragg this evening. It is Josie's last full Council meeting here. Josie is not going far, as we have heard, Slough, so I'm sure that we will be crossing paths in other meetings. I just wanted to say a huge thank you for everything you have done in your time here. You have been a truly dedicated Officer and you will be sorely missed. Huge good luck to you. I hope that you enjoy your new role. You really deserve it. Chief Executive is a just reward for all the hard work you have put in here. So congratulations.

At the last Council meeting, I spoke about our work on producing a new Council Plan. Over the course of this month, we have held engagement sessions with the public, seeking their views on our vision and priorities. So far, we've held three separate sessions at Dinton Pastures, Woodley and Twyford. Tomorrow, we will be out in Wokingham, and on Saturday we will be in Lower Earley. Details of the consultation are available on our website. I would urge Members to take flyers and copies of the Council Plan engagement document and speak to residents on the doorstep. I would like to say a big thank you to our Officers who have given up so much of their time going out to these pop-up days. They have given up much of their time at weekends to talk to residents and I would encourage anyone who has the time, especially on Saturday, to join the Officers.

There has been a lot of speculation in the press in recent weeks about my future as the Leader of this Council. So I thought that it would be a good time to stand here and talk about the decisions, what it is like being a leader, how difficult it is sometimes and to see what it's like to be on the side of what is right and fair even when those who are bereft of courage will buckle at the first sign of difficulty. Presiding in judgement over those who choose to stand up and be counted, when you stick your neck out sometimes requires some bravery, and it has been quite difficult over the past few weeks. We would not deserve to be leaders if I, or my Executive, or my Conservative Group were too afraid to do the right things, even when they are unpopular things to do.

Under my leadership, we have had the courage to challenge the Government over the unsustainable housing numbers and we continue to do this. We have faced down Whitehall over negative Revenue Support Grant, the penalty our residents are facing for voting for sound financial management. We have kept up the pressure on the Secretary of State, Ministers and the Prime Minister over funding for children and adult social care too. We have chosen to invest the largest sum of money ever into our communities over the next three years. We have pressed on with reshaping the Council into an organisation fit for a digital age. We set up an investment strategy too so people in Wokingham Borough should never have to face the savage cuts thrust on people such as those on the residents of Reading. We have fought to keep the fundamentals that truly matter to people, making

the sometimes hard decisions on some of the other things we've gotten used to that other Councils aren't doing. And in our Council Plan, we've embarked on the most ambitious programme to redefine the relationship between citizen and local government, giving a voice to communities in a way that has never been done before.

We need to take our residents on a journey to being part of one community. Along the way, we must get on with the job of building a sustainable Council with services for a changing population, and entering into a new spirit of being enterprising and entrepreneurial. The path may be strewn with obstacles and the destination may not always be clearly in sight. Whether it's the town centre regeneration or our work to get in place a plan for sustainable housing for the future - sometimes amongst the pain it can be hard to see the fruits of what we are striving for. We may not always get everything right along the way. And we must seek to shake off the naysayers with a poverty of ambition as well as the fake prophets, the siren voices who push us towards a new Eden, straight over the edge into a pit.

We must never be too timid to think big. If we do not dare to be bold, we need never fear failure – nor ever know the triumph of success. I believe that we have a vision worth fighting for, and while I am Leader of this Council, I will continue to do battle every single day to deliver it for the most important people of all, the residents of Wokingham Borough.

Philip Mirfin, Executive Member for Regeneration

It's an incredibly exciting time to be standing here talking to you as the Executive Member for Regeneration.

Our vision for Wokingham town centre as a vibrant market town that stands out from our larger neighbours is very much coming to the forefront as works begin to reveal themselves across the town. The new Market Place is now complete and residents can start to get a real feel for what we are trying to create and why regeneration is so important for Wokingham. With a far improved layout, lots of room for entertainment and plentiful seating to simply relax and enjoy the town centre, this new space is really coming into its own now. As could be seen last Saturday, it has become a place that is the perfect venue for events and bigger and better markets.

Peach Place moves forwards in leaps and bounds with the scaffolding coming down to reveal the new units, the footpath in Peach Street being resurfaced, shop fronts going in and the first of our new tenants champing at the bit to get access ready to trade for Christmas. Over the next few weeks we will start to release the names of the new businesses coming to Wokingham and, from the comments we have received about the types of operators they would like to see in the town centre, I'm confident that local residents will be pleased with what they hear. We have always been clear that we want a strong local independent offer within Peach Place, along with some great quality national names and niche businesses and this is exactly what we have achieved.

Elms Field continues apace with the steelwork already taking shape for the new hotel, Aldi, cinema and other retail units. No one will deny that the face of the high street is changing, but Wokingham continues to remain strong and to buck the national trends, with businesses continuing to remain interested in units in the town. I, for one, am proud to belong to a Council who are investing in their community and for their community.

Richard Dolinski, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing

I am privileged to be invited to attend Adult Social Care team meetings. At these team meetings I learn a lot more about the challenges and also the outcomes, the very positive outcomes of our work. On the challenges I want to say thank you to the Liberals who have come to join us on a cross party working group looking at some of those difficult challenges. So thank you for coming forwards.

On the outcomes, I want to give you just one outcome this evening. That is a resident, G.D., who is a 78 year old resident who lives with his wife. G.D. has a diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease resulting in reduced mobility. He has become totally dependent on his wife's support despite the physical strain it puts on her. On receiving a referral, it was critical for our Occupational Therapists to build a good rapport as quickly as possible to develop trust with G.D. and his wife. Throughout the course of seven home visits the O.T. team focussed on solutions. They taught Mrs G.D. to avoid using verbal queuing and instructing as people with Parkinson's Disease struggle to multi-task, which increases freezing episodes. The O.T.s worked on developing confidence and used a strength based approach and modification of techniques which has resulted in G.D. regaining his confidence to walk again. Specialist equipment has been provided to help improve his mobility and his independence. In addition a carer's budget was agreed for Mrs G.D. which now allows her to use a taxi a couple of times each month so she can go shopping without having to struggle. More importantly, it has given her some time to herself.

There is a lot more I could say about the extraordinary work delivered by our Officers in meeting the targets and also positive outcomes for some of our most vulnerable residents. However, I will leave the final words to Mrs G.D.: "Occupational Therapy has given me my husband back".

Pauline Helliar-Symons, Executive Member for Children's Services

Firstly, I would like to pay tribute to the staff who turned out for our activity event for children in care at the end of August. Some of them gave up their day off to come. It was a great day enjoyed by everybody. It took place at the Oakwood Activity and Climbing Centre in my ward.

Secondly, I would like to report that yet again our students have achieved excellent GCSE and A level results, in A levels exceeding the national average once again. All four of our children in care in Year 13 who applied to university have secured places, that is 30% of the Year 13 children in care cohort going to university. They will be studying Mathematics, English, Art and Education. I am very proud of them all. It is a huge success for them to gain these places.

There has been a big increase in workload for the department over the last year. In particular, there has been a 32% increase in children in care since the 2017 data and a significant increase during last October and November. There has also been a big increase in the number of referrals coming to our social services staff since last September with up to 900 per month needing investigation. The number of cases our social workers are dealing with has doubled in the past year.

There are a number of reasons for these increases such as:

- an Act of Parliament in 2017 which made us responsible for children in care up to the age of 25, so there have been fewer children leaving care;
- 1,000 new houses in the Borough each year, with families of course;

- double the number of unaccompanied asylum seekers; and
- a greater awareness by partners, schools and police, for example, as we heard earlier, of what to look out for and report.

All of this, of course, is putting huge pressure on the Children's Services budget. But we have seen many success stories. We have worked ever closer with the NHS and the police. Permanent exclusions from school have fallen and this includes a decrease in their use by special schools. Overall absence rates remain low, which has helped our exam results. There has been joint working between the local authority and senior school leaders on behaviour management strategies. Fewer looked after children are placed more than 20 miles from their homes. The Ministry of Justice has match funded us after the approval of our Youth Justice Plan which includes the use of restorative justice and making young people aware of the impact of their offending behaviour.

Bovis Homes has transferred the land for the new Matthewsgreen primary school which received planning permission last February. Wokingham Borough has sufficient entitlement for two, three and four year olds, including the extended free 30 hour entitlement. Childcare provision has 95% of providers judged as "Good" or "Outstanding" by Ofsted.

These statistics are higher than the national norm and are very good news indeed. Unsurprisingly, therefore, parental satisfaction is high and parents feel that they have access to appropriate, high quality, provision for their children.

At the next Council meeting in November there will be a re-signing of the Children in Care Pledge that we make as corporate parents with our children in care. This will be signed by the Mayor and by members of the Children in Care Council.

Finally, I would like to welcome our interim Director of Children's Services, Jim Leivers, and thank him for the excellent work he has been doing to move on the work of our department, for the way he is involving Officers and giving them ownership of their work and, in particular, for the work he is doing in preparing us for a potentially imminent Ofsted inspection.

49. STATEMENT FROM COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES **Alistair Auty, Non-Executive Director of Wokingham Housing Ltd.**

From a WHL perspective, in the last financial year we delivered one quarter of all the affordable homes completed in the Borough, which was 123. This contribution is testament to the hard working team across all of our housing companies, led by Bill Flood. While I am sure that all would agree that this delivery of affordable homes is most welcome, the challenge is to deliver more year in year out.

Developing on Council owned land remains our priority, though I would like to see this move at a greater pace. The regeneration of the Gorse Ride estate will provide an additional number of homes in addition to the existing ones there and they will be of a higher standard. So it is an exciting project that we are pleased to be an integral part of.

Finally, as part of our evolution, we are evaluating non-Wokingham Borough Council owned land opportunities so we can continue to deliver more high quality affordable housing that our Borough residents both need and deserve.

Anthony Pollock, Non-Executive Director of Optalis Holdings Ltd.

In connection with Optalis, I have some headlines. Customer satisfaction is at 87% which is ahead of the strategic objective of 80%. The company has been awarded Disability Confident Employer status by the Department of Work and Pensions. On the quality front, every inspection we have had in the last six months has been "Good", where they were previously "Requires Improvement", which is a 100% success rate.

Financially, we are performing ahead of budget, year to date, and we have won a new contract at Reading College delivering supported employment services. In the previous contract we had there, I think that we are one of the few operators of this service to the learning disability community to achieve almost 100% success in getting service users into employment. That is really important for them and really important for us.

On the people front, staff turnover is below the national average, absenteeism and vacancies are below the national average, so, all in all, I believe that Optalis is delivering for us, Wokingham Borough and its residents, so I commend it to you.

Gary Cowan, Chairman of Loddon Homes Ltd.

Loddon Homes' first shared ownership homes at Elizabeth Road (two units) and Barrett Crescent (two units) are very close to being sold and we expect sales income to be £115k more than estimated which is welcome additional income to the company. Loddon Homes continues to focus on ensuring that WBC Housing Services fill all of the vacancies quickly but there remain some vacancies at Fosters due to the need to identify residents who have both a care need and a housing need. At Loddon Homes' September Board Meeting this issue and loss of income were discussed. Consequently the Board has asked the Borough Council to formally relax the criteria for housing applicants.

Thanks to the many years of cajoling, from David Chopping, to set up housing companies to deliver much needed housing to our residents we have had several years of hard work culminating in our registration as a "For Profit" Registered Housing Provider. This achievement was the very first for a Council and is a truly amazing success story. My thanks must go to the professional staff along with Councillors Alistair Auty and David Chopping for their superb efforts in getting us where we are today. From small beginnings we have moved up a gear and are now on the cusp of a most exciting period in our evolution. That is to deliver to our residents much more affordable housing.

The Prime Minister's recent announcement of £2bn to housing companies and Councils will help to kick start Loddon Homes to bigger and better things. Sadly, I will not be leading the charge as I have offered my resignation as Chairman to the Loddon Homes Board. My reason is very simple. To continue I needed the assurance and comfort of the standard contract which other Non-Executive Directors have, plus the support of this administration. Sadly, for reasons that only the Conservative administration can answer, they saw fit not to renew my normal contract but have put me on a month-to-month contract with no discussion or debate. It seems to have nothing to do with competence or ability to do one's job, so I will leave it to others to guess the reason why. The lack of continuity created by the constraint it has placed on my independence as Chairman of Loddon Homes is insidious and has seriously hampered my ability to freely and independently function in the best interests of the company, the Council and, most importantly, the residents. Such arrangements for me when there are other Non-Executive Directors on longer contracts was not lost on me. It is with a heavy heart that I take this decision and, unlike others, I will

honour my contract by giving 28 days' notice in writing at the next Loddon Homes Board Meeting, thereby allowing continuity until my replacement is finalised.

My thanks to all who have had faith in me, especially all our residents who I will continue to serve to the best of my ability. They deserve the best. Sadly, I do not believe that they are getting it from this Conservative administration.

Stuart Munro, Chairman of WBC (Holdings) Ltd.

I would like to say thank you to Gary and I am sorry that you have got a bit confused. We have been looking at the strategy for our companies, I am talking as the Chairman of the Holding Company that represents the Council. We are looking at the strategy and how we can improve on what we've got. Just because your contract came to an end after two years it does not mean that anyone is picking on you. Just to get the record straight and to thank you for your contribution.

I would also say that when it comes to bringing forward some new sites for these housing companies to work on, I am pleased to state that, later this month, the Executive will be looking at the Wellington Road/Station Road site which is just down the road from here and also the Woodley Age Concern site. So we are starting to look at some of the Council owned companies that we have available.

Finally, I would like to say that, year to date, the income has reached over £1.5m reflecting a real growth coming from these companies and also the income from July was a third of £1m, so we are doing some of the right things. I am happy to take these other pieces that we have been discussing offline.

50. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

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

50.1 Gary Cowan asked the Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning the following question:

In the light of the new NPPF announced by the Government this July does this Council by its actions to date on housing numbers agree with me that it has made a rod for its own and our residents' backs?

Answer

In simple terms, the answer to your question is no.

In tackling our statutory plan-making responsibilities, the Council has followed and continues to follow Government legislative and policy requirements, so we have planned for no more than we should have based upon these requirements.

Having always estimated housing need based on Government policy and guidance, we have been regularly challenged and tested on appeal and in not one of these instances has an Inspector said we have delivered too much housing. On the contrary, we have seen the numbers increase. It is demonstrably clear in this context that the Council has done its statutory duty, but that does not mean that it is right.

As regards to the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and associated guidance, the Government has, as expected, introduced a standardised methodology for

calculating housing need across England. It uses the national household projection for each local authority and applies an affordability adjustment based on median house prices and earnings. It is therefore entirely independent from any past housing estimates, so this is a change.

The NPPF requires our future policies to meet the housing need calculated by the standardised methodology, unless there is agreement with other local authorities for some need to be met elsewhere. In the three to four months that I have been involved, I have not heard from any other local authority coming running to us saying: "Can we have some of your numbers?"

Housing need would be recalculated annually as new data on house prices and incomes become available, and when the Government publishes new national household projections. The exact figure will therefore change regularly, bringing a challenge to how we plan.

A new set of national household projections is imminent. These are expected to show slower household growth, leading to a lower overall housing need across England, and potentially a lower figure for Wokingham Borough.

Whilst confirming the standardised methodology, however, the Government has indicated that adjustments will be considered. This is in order to ensure the output of the methodology meets the Government's well publicised 300,000 additional homes per year target. I am sure that all Members, on behalf of our residents, would join me in stating that this situation, which brings continued uncertainty, is wholly unsatisfactory and undermines our efforts to plan properly for the long term.

Supplementary Question

It is interesting that there were two petitions tonight on housing numbers and there is already a further substantial petition within the process. Stuart Munro did refer to Government legislation and policy, but I would challenge that. I would say that Wokingham Borough Council never challenged the housing numbers that were imposed on them, or after the Core Strategy was agreed. It never challenged the numbers. When will the smoke and mirrors end and when will this madness end? Everything that is being done in this chamber is being done without consultation and it is a disgrace.

Supplementary Answer

The answer is that we are just about to go and talk to all the residents about the Local Plan. We did fight appeals on the numbers. We are not accepting the numbers. I know that members of my group will support me here and we had the Member Steering Group with our colleagues. We think that the numbers are ridiculous, but we are waiting until we have all our facts together. We intend to challenge those numbers.

50.2 Chris Smith asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Can I have an update on the resurfacing of Redhatch Drive?

Answer

The Council's Highways Maintenance Programme sets out to address those schemes that are priorities for delivery within any financial year. However, this programme is published in draft and will always change following detailed assessment of each location.

I can confirm that we plan to accommodate the resurfacing of Redhatch Drive in this year's Structural Maintenance programme. The Structural Maintenance programme will commence from the second week of October. The works on Redhatch Drive are currently expected to be carried out during the week commencing 15 October, weather permitting. The resurfacing will take one day to complete under a full road closure and residents will be notified in advance. There will be further minor works after the resurfacing to replace road markings and adjust iron works.

Supplementary Question

It is good news that Redhatch Drive is back on the programme after being delayed from August, but there have been several communication issues around highways in Hillside. Will the new contract improve the communications we are seeing around these issues?

Supplementary Answer

As I said earlier, as a result of the new mapping system and its access from both computers and mobile phones, I think you will find that your residents will be better informed, not only about road resurfacing but also about times when utilities have to do works on the network. So, in short, yes.

50.3 Prue Bray asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Wokingham has its own process for applying for a Blue Badge online, which requires you to have an account on the Council website and to fill out an enormous form. A number of people have reported issues with the form. There is a national process available on the Gov.uk website which is far more straightforward to use. I have been told that at some stage Wokingham plans to stop having its own process and to use the Government one instead. How quickly can that be made to happen, so that people who need Blue Badges can have an easier time applying for them?

Answer

I think that this answer has been missed in the system, so I will have to give you a written answer.

Note: The following written answer was subsequently provided:

Customers can currently access the Blue Badge service via several channels: Online via the WBC or Gov.uk website, face to face, over the telephone, or if requested via a paper form.

The Department for Transport (DfT) require local authorities to request certain details from customers when applying for a blue badge, and the form they provide is lengthy (20 pages). In developing the online system, we reviewed all of the questions and made sure that customers were only presented with the questions relevant to them, dependent upon their answers.

The online form that we currently use times out if people do not complete the form in a timely fashion. This is to protect personal data should they be using a shared computer. We were looking to introduce a 'Save' option so that customers could revisit the form before submission. However, we have been informed by the Department of Transport that they are introducing a new online system in January 2019 – this is as result of extending the Blue Badge scheme to those with hidden disabilities from January 2019. This means that we will need to review the whole process, including integration with the DfT system so

that inefficiencies do not arise from manual re-keying of lengthy applications. We will be directing customers to the DfT system in the future, and currently this is in the development stage, but are working to the January timescale set by the DfT.

Between January - August 2018, 952 customers have applied successfully online – which is 56% of all applications – the remaining customers have had support from the team, either face to face, over the telephone or paper (13 paper applications received this year to date). We have received huge amounts of very good feedback about the application process, and the option to move away from the lengthy paper form. Our system gives customers an instant decision, in most cases, (the Government system does not) which helps to manage the volume of 180+ applications that we receive into the team each month. This is set to rise with the introduction of the new hidden disabilities criteria. Customers currently receive badges far quicker than before as there is less processing to do when it reaches us. Since 2016, when the system went live, we have received a very low number of complaints – maybe two or three – but have always been able to resolve them to the customers' satisfaction.

It is really important that we are accessible to all, so will continue to listen and act on customer's feedback where we can, to make sure their experience is a good one.

Supplementary Question

We are changing our processes, to use the Gov.UK site ultimately. How much effort has been put into looking at using other sites and resources other than providing information and processes ourselves, in order to save resources?

Supplementary Answer

We provide it ourselves where it is most appropriate and if it is more appropriate to use something else we will do that.

50.4 Lindsay Ferris asked the Executive Member for Finance and Corporate Resources the following question:

I have grave concerns about how finances at Wokingham Borough Council have been managed over the last 12 months or so.

Do you think it is appropriate for a Council that is under financial pressure to have used an open ended contract which included no specific financial figures, to have forgotten the end date of a contract and continued to send/receive invoices for up to 6 months, to have used Section 106 monies which were destined for one part of the Borough (e.g. the northern parishes and used elsewhere in the Borough e.g. in Wokingham) without any reference to anyone and to have produced business cases which included inaccurate and incomplete information simply to make their case look better than it was?

Answer

Could I please ask Councillor Ferris to clarify which contract he is referring to so that I can give an accurate and specific answer?

Supplementary Question

My question related to a number of contracts including the joint Wokingham Borough Council/Wokingham Town Council contract covering the recent Market Place refurbishment. So my question is: "Can you confirm how much of the contingency, above the £3.8m originally allocated to the project, has already been used by each Council?"

Supplementary Answer

I can answer part of the question but will have to give you a written answer about the contingency amounts. In terms of the two Councils, Wokingham Borough Council and Wokingham Town Council, who, as you know, have been working together collaboratively in partnership since 2016 with a view to implementing the Vision of creating high quality public realm, as set out in the Town Centre Masterplan.

This has been produced through a process to deliver a high quality piece of public realm, albeit following delays which were largely due to ground conditions. The scheme was based on the extensive public participation in preparing relevant documents and policies, all of which were funded by developer contributions. The contract was with Balfour Beatty and it was an NEC engineering and construction contract based upon the standard template for this type of work. It contained both an end date and an agreed price so I am not sure about the source of your comment about the contract being open ended in your question, as now I know it relates to that.

With regard to the S106 monies, any such strategic contributions to facilities available to all residents of the Borough are legitimately spent in accordance with the relevant agreements for the purposes to which the money was allocated. This is the case in respect of the agreements to which, I believe, you refer. Allocation was made through our business as usual procedures. We allocate S106 contributions to the key priorities of the Council as set out in the Capital Programme.

Previously, a number of the contributions I believe you are referring to were allocated to the Twyford Station Masterplan project but, unfortunately, as I am sure you know, this project was not ready to progress. Due to the end dates on these developer contributions expiring, these allocated funds would have ended up going back to the developer if they had not been used. So, this time, it was agreed that the developer funds would be put towards the Wokingham town centre regeneration project. In this instance, I hope you will agree that this was a good use of the money and that this was reasonable financial management rather than simply handing the money back to the developer.

50.5 Clive Jones asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Will you join me in congratulating WBC staff and the local police on the professional way in which they dealt with recent traveller incursions across the Borough?

Answer

I heartily agree with you and am pleased with the way the Officers have dealt with the traveller incursions.

The WBC team deals with incursions as quickly and efficiently as possible, primarily with the Thames Valley Police but also other stakeholders such as Parish and Town Councils, private landowners and businesses affected by incursions. As you are aware Wokingham Borough Council, as the Chief Constable stated earlier, has introduced an updated policy which takes into account the joint protocol with the Thames Valley Police, a positive step in joint working.

As I would have said in my Executive statement, if I had managed to give it, the Borough has seen quite a few disruptive traveller incursions over the summer. This is very frustrating for residents and the removal and clear up process is expensive and time consuming for the Council. Where the police do not use their S61 powers, Borough

Officers are taking an increasingly robust approach to the issue and are now using non-court bailiffs, rather than the courts, to accelerate the process of removal. The non-court bailiffs are more expensive but it is actually quicker and removes nuisance from the residents quicker.

So I am hoping that having used it a couple of times we will get better and better at dealing with traveller incursions. I must say, however, that nobody would particularly mind travellers but for the mess. It is the mess and damage and criminal damage that is the problem.

Supplementary Question

Often police officers put themselves in dangerous situations when dealing with traveller incursions. I actually witnessed it myself in Earley just a few weeks ago. Do you agree with me that the failure of the Government to properly fund the police service (the Chief Constable confirmed tonight that he has lost £100m, which is 25% of his budget) has resulted in manpower shortages that contribute to making it increasingly difficult for the police to deal with traveller incursions in a timely manner?

Supplementary Answer

I also know about that particular incursion as I live just down the road from it. I can assure you that I was straight on the email to the Police and Crime Commissioner to see what could be done about it to support the police. Actually, even at 11pm he did respond to the email. Since then I have brought up the question with Kit Malthouse, who is the new Housing Minister, to see what can be done to actually give the police more powers to do something about incursions.

I think that a lot of it is to do with deterrence rather than physically moving people on. The reason I think the police are reluctant to move people on is that they just move to another place and they have to be moved on again. I think that the important thing with the legislation is to have some deterrent effect so that people don't arrive in the first place and so do not create criminal damage. So I think that the real issue is deterrence and legislation, not necessarily the number of police.

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

In Hawkedon the roads are often gridlocked at rush hour. With the development of Winnersh and Shinfield, along with making the M4 a Smart Motorway, this is only going to get worse. Are there any developmental plans to help this situation, in both the short and long term?

Answer

The Smart Motorway on the M4 will add 1,800 car movements an hour when it is completed. This will remove congestion but, I am afraid, only in 2022. However, in theory, because there will continue to be three lanes each way, the current capacity of the M4 will be maintained during the construction process for the Smart Motorway. The other issue you allude to is traffic growth arising from new housing and general growth. However, when the Core Strategy was adopted in 2010 the proposed developments, which you referred to, were designed to mitigate their own impacts including developments at Winnersh and Shinfield. The Council is in the process of delivering a programme of £124 million in major road infrastructure which includes the Winnersh Relief Road (Phases 1 and 2), the Eastern Relief Road in Shinfield, the Arborfield Relief Road and the Northern and Southern Distributor Roads which do not contribute much in your area, or mine, but for

other Members here are very relevant. This infrastructure is being delivered to support this housing and the highway network but the full benefits of this, unfortunately, will not be realised until everything is completed which will be a few years hence.

The Council recognises that building capability of roads is not a long term sustainable option and that the promotion of alternatives to the private car will reduce the pressure on the network. Therefore, through each new development, we are promoting the sustainable 'My Journey' initiative and delivering sustainable transport infrastructure.

The Smart Motorways that Highways England are delivering are designed to provide additional capacity and improve journey times on the Major Route Network that runs through Wokingham Borough.

Prior to the Core Strategy, a higher level of houses were being delivered through a piecemeal approach with no supporting infrastructure to assist with growth of congestion. The Strategic Development Locations are enabling improvements within development areas and on the surrounding highway network which is a significant improvement.

Supplementary Question

I asked you particularly about what events could happen around Earley and Lower Earley and, certainly, the new traffic lights, just down from Winnersh have worsened rather than improved the situation. What is the Council going to do about the fact that people are sitting there for hours, certainly half an hour, as it is getting ridiculous.

Supplementary Answer

I am well aware of the struggles with the road network, particularly at peak times. As you are aware, the dualing of Lower Earley Way, between those lights you refer to and the roundabout, is planned to commence shortly. Once that has been completed I think that it will improve things a little. However, I think that, generally speaking, we need to let the Winnersh Relief Road Phase 1 bed in and we need to get the Winnersh Relief Road Phase 2 constructed. Then, I think, some of the issues you are currently experiencing will improve.

50.7 Rachel Burgess asked the Executive Member for Regeneration the following question:

My residents have raised concerns with regard to the safety of the new pedestrian crossings in the town centre Market Place. The crossings themselves are the same colour as the surrounding pedestrian area. There are significant concerns that children will mistake the crossings for a pedestrian path, as the roadway is not sufficiently distinct from the pavement. Was the colour of the crossings raised as a safety risk during the design phase and, if so, what were deemed to be the mitigating factors before the designs were approved?

Answer

In the interests of brevity at this time of night I would refer you to the answer I gave to Sarah Kerr earlier on which, I think, covers all the points you have raised.

Supplementary Question

Considering the number of concerns that have been raised about this, including a petition regarding the safety of the crossings, what action will the Council Executive take to allay these concerns, such as changing the design to make the roadway distinct from the pavement?

Supplementary Answer

It is fair to say that there is a safety audit being carried out on the new setup in the Market Place and, until we have the results, I cannot comment at this time.

50.8 Guy Grandison asked the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing the following question:

Can you inform us as to what the Council is doing following the announcement of the planned closure of Liberty of Earley Care Home in several months' time?

Answer

WBC has a Market Failure Protocol (operated jointly with Optalis). The purpose of the protocol is to set out roles and responsibilities in the event of Market Failure in an Adult Social Care service. This includes having good knowledge of the provider market in this area, offering assistance to a provider if it is facing closure and what happens when a provider closes.

The Director of Adult Social Care has nominated her Deputy Director to oversee and coordinate the closure process. The Director will ensure that there is sufficient resource available both in terms of staff and finance to safely and appropriately support individuals and to coordinate an appropriate response.

An announcement to staff at Liberty of Earley Care House was made on Monday 10th September. A letter went out to families to arrive on the same day. This was followed by a residents' meeting on Tuesday 11th. WBC were in attendance at the residents' meeting and will support individuals, hopefully with a family member present, to fully discuss the situation, including options and preferences. The Optalis Self Funder Broker will offer support to secure Extra Care or other residential homes.

51. CONTINUATION OF THE MEETING

At this point in the meeting, 10.01pm, in accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.12 (m), the Council considered a Motion to continue the meeting beyond 10.30pm for a maximum of 30 minutes to enable further business on the Agenda to be transacted. This was proposed by Pauline Jorgensen and seconded by Charlotte Haitham Taylor.

Upon being put to the meeting, the Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

52. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WARD MATTERS

52.1 Lindsay Ferris asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

In Twyford we have been pressing for a community hub and new library and have consistently been told that there is no money available. Up to £200k of S106 money has been diverted from the northern parishes which could have been used towards that facility in Twyford. Would the appropriate Executive Member like to comment?

Answer

As you know, there have been a number of meetings over the years to try to resolve that issue as far as Twyford is concerned. That process has certainly not reached a conclusion as yet. So, at present, there is no long term solution, appreciating that the current library is less than ideal and could do with a better facility.

52.2 Shahid Younis asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Regarding the installation of a pedestrian crossing in my Bulmershe and Whitegates ward across Spitfire Way, linking the Redrow estate to the other side of the road. The funding was agreed under S106. According to the original agreement it was supposed to be completed before the start of the school term in September. Clearly this has not happened. Please can you provide an update as to when the installation will start?

Answer

As you are aware, I have only recently taken over this portfolio and this item appears to have slipped through the net. Apologies for that. I would expect to have this in place within 12 months.

52.3 Andy Croy asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Residents in my ward are concerned about the state of the Council leadership. I am looking at the benches in front of me. There is no Executive Member for Finance. There is no Deputy Executive Member for Finance. There is no Member for 21st Century Council. It is like a Marie Celeste Executive. What can you do to reassure residents in my ward that you have the necessary leadership powers to restore some direction for this drifting ship?

Answer

I think that Members should be reassured by the fact that we nearly have a full bench here this evening and the state of the leadership is very strong. I think you will see that we have got good support in terms of the leadership by the number of different things we have taken through this evening which have not only been supported by our own party but have been supported cross party as well.

I was really pleased this evening to announce my new Deputy Leader and I will be pleased to announce the new Finance Member in the coming weeks along with the 21st Century Council Member. I will keep you abreast of those details as soon as I have them. In the meantime, watch this space.

52.4 Laura Blumenthal asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

Please can you explain what the Council is doing to improve Southlake and the surrounding areas?

Answer

A number of things have been going on around Southlake over the last few years, so I will list them:

- Work to deal with the odour from the lake in 2016;
- Repaired sections of the pathway to include the play area and sections up to the picnic area to prevent standing water during wet periods;
- As requested by the engineers, reshaped the bund and dam as it had been walked on and flattened;
- Peripheral works to maintain the integrity of the base of the bund/dam;
- Cleared the pond area of vegetation and, in August, cleared all the litter from the area;
- Numerous tree works have been carried out around the lake, specifically on the bund/dam;
- Repairs to the surfacing of the play area;

- Lake treatment in 2017 by the Countryside Service;
- Significant clearance behind the dam screening to remove vegetation and rubbish;
- Secured funding to resurface the pathway from the bund to the picnic area, with the works planned to be carried out before the onset of winter;
- Hedges around the children's play area are also due to be cut this week.

So, as you can see, a fair number of items.

52.5 Ian Pittock asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

WBC and some local representatives are looking at a potential rebuild of the California crossroads in Finchampstead South, my ward. We had a meeting last night where we considered the latest design and WBC is now planning an exhibition for December. This needs to be turned into a proper public consultation which differs from an exhibition. According to R v Brent London Borough Council in 1985, consultation must be carried out at a "formative" stage. I also refer you to Para 3.1.5 of the Council's Constitution.

The pace of design work means that we are now in danger of moving beyond the formative stage without a public consultation having occurred. I am keen that we avoid a repetition of the mismatched timing of the design and public consultation stages relating to the school crossings. Will you please ensure that a proper public consultation occurs rather than just an exhibition?

Answer

I am happy to look at it. I am afraid that I'm not quite up to speed on all the details of it, although as I have said before: "I remember it from last time". So it is not something that is new although I believe that some of the more grandiose plans that were kicking around 10 years ago have been slightly changed. I am happy to work with you and other local colleagues on the project and I take your point about consultation.

52.6 Guy Grandison asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

Residents have approached me about a rumour of a threat to the Silverdale Centre. Could you reassure residents and squash what I hope is a fictitious rumour and that those responsible for spreading the rumour discuss matters with the relevant Councils before deliberately spreading panic with residents?

Answer

The Silverdale Centre in Earley, as you are aware, has a lease in place between the Maiden Erlegh School and Wokingham Borough Council relating to the property. For the last three to four years Earley Town Council has operated the centre and continues to do so. Since taking over the centre Earley Town Council has invested a lot of time and money in the facility and has improved things.

The facility is now a valuable and well used addition to the centres in Earley, for example with the bike workshop and music sessions going on there. So it is a very important part of the community. Wokingham Borough Council is not aware of any threat of closure of the facility. Whoever is spreading the rumours, and I think a Liberal leaflet has gone out – let's be clear about that. So if they are aware of any issue that shows that there is a threat of closure, perhaps they could be kind enough to let me have that information so we can act on it. If not then they are stirring and creating worry unnecessarily for people.

Last night at Earley Town Council we also discussed this facility at the Policy and Resources Committee. Earley Town Council, as with Wokingham Borough Council, is not aware of any threat of closure of that facility.

52.7 Carl Doran asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Will the Executive Member for Highways and Transport join me in congratulating two residents in my ward, Angie Burnish and Shirley Boyt, who campaigned so successfully for the return of the 19a and 19c subsidised bus services?

Answer

I recall when I first took over this role that there were changes to that service. I think that there were probably more people involved than just those two in the campaign. I think that everyone who was involved in the campaign around bus services that are relevant and appropriate to the local community deserve to be congratulated, particularly as we got a better result at the end of the day which, I think, is the important piece.

52.8 Tim Holton asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

There are a number of roads in Hawkedon which are in desperate need of resurfacing. As this Council tonight has approved the Highways and Transportation Term Service Contracts, would I be correct in thinking that it would give the Council greater opportunity to undertake additional work. If so, please can I make the case for my ward to be first in line?

Answer

I have a feeling that there are 53 other Councillors in this Chamber who have similar aspirations. I would point out that we do assess the quality of the roads and identify those roads that need to be resurfaced or patched or repaired on a technical basis, so as to avoid political favouritism. However, I am sure that your ward has great need and I am happy to confirm that the additional resources that I look to squeeze out of the new contract will be available to deal with those roads with the highest priority for resurfacing or repairs. If that is Hawkedon then I am sure that it will be you.

52.9 Helen Power asked the Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries the following question:

I have been getting constant and numerous contacts from Evendons residents concerned about rat problems across the ward. I believe this to be a problem that is plaguing not only Evendons but many other parts of the Borough. Leaving this growing and widespread issue for individual households to sort out is not working. Will you look into a better policy and solution to this environmental health issue as a matter of urgency please?

Answer

As you are aware it is not a service that the Council provides these days, so it is for residents to deal with their infestations locally. The Public Protection Service can provide advice but that is as far as that goes. If we were to look at anything more widely then it would have to be a policy decision for this Council. We will look at it, but that is the current policy.

52.10 Abdul Loyes asked the Executive Member for Housing the following question:

Re the former Woodley Age Concern site. Firstly, can you provide an update on what is

happening on the site? Secondly, can you please reassure me that ward Members will be kept fully briefed on any future developments?

Answer

As you have seen in the earlier statements, that site will be brought forward to the Executive for potential development. If that is approved it will be a mixture of social housing of various different sorts. I will give you more details afterwards. I can absolutely reassure you that we will be very interested in making sure that all the Woodley Members are engaged in this. It is a really important thing to do. It will be good to get more affordable housing for our residents. It is very important to the local housing supply. The local authority companies have been doing a great job. We want to do more of that and yes we will be very keen to talk to you and your residents, of course, about the requirements they might have.

52.11 Prue Bray asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Re the Minutes of the Executive on 28 August. That was an extraordinary Executive Committee which considered the Council Plan engagement document. As part of that document there were a number of public consultation sessions. Could you tell me please how many people have turned up to each of those sessions?

Answer

I don't have the exact figures tonight but I think that at Dinton Pastures it was between 70 and 90. Twyford had a good turnout as well and also Woodley in the precinct. Tomorrow is Friday so we expect the numbers in Wokingham town centre to be similar, maybe even more. In Earley, the stand will be at ASDA on a Saturday morning so we expect there to be a significant number of people going through there.

The locations have been picked on purpose on days that attract a huge number of people. As I said in my speech before, we want to encourage as many people as possible to participate. So please do try to promote it as much as possible by circulating the leaflets. If you have any other ways in which you can promote it to the end of the month, please do get in touch.

52.12 Imogen Shepherd-Dubey asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Back in the autumn of last year, residents of Meadow Road in Emmbrook submitted a petition to the Highways Team on proposed parking restrictions for a Traffic Regulation Order. They have been waiting over nine months for yellow paint to appear on their road and they are still waiting. An application for TRO changes has also been put in for Caroline Drive which is blighted with commuter parking. There is also one for the Terrace and a few other places as well. Please can you explain why we have petitions with the agreement of residents and why it is taking so long to see the changes being implemented?

Answer

Actually I would have talked about this if I had time for my Executive statement, so thank you for the opportunity to explain. As Members are probably aware, the whole TRO system was amended a couple of years ago. Effectively, we have one master TRO. A decision was taken to allow the new system to bed in for 12 months and, therefore, no changes have been made for the first 12 months of this new system. I have been working with the relevant Officer to batch up the 90 or so amendments to this TRO which then need to be published in the newspaper and comments received. If there aren't any comments we will implement. If there are comments we have to review them.

I will get the details and you can talk to me offline. I will find out where they are in the process. If the residents don't object to them we will get them in more quickly. If people do object to them then we will have to go through a process and revisit it. It is in process. I expect it will probably be completed by Christmas, this current batch. So, hopefully, having done the technical bit of advertising and consultation, we may get some of them done before Christmas, otherwise it will be early in the New Year.

52.13 David Hare asked the Executive Member for Housing the following question:

The possible development of Chalfont Woods, also known as Area DD, is of interest to both Hillside and Hawkedon residents. Will you please confirm that the publishing of the public consultation about the development will include a leaflet to be delivered to every home in both Hillside and Hawkedon wards, giving the date, time and location of the public meeting or meetings? The leaflet to be delivered to those homes with at least three weeks' notice.

Answer

I can assure you that there will be a letter to all affected residents, which will give them plenty of time to come along. The plan is to have a "planning for real" exercise. As you know Area DD has always been zoned for development. It was zoned for development even when the Liberals were in charge of this Council and, during that period, the Liberals actually put forward a proposal that showed development and then backed off. I have the Minutes from the meeting. You obviously decided that it wasn't a good idea, the Council having proposed it in the first place.

This land has always been zoned for development. We would like to talk to residents through a planning for real process about what the options are for this land. I would also like to point out that this is not the development of woodland. This is development of scrubland which was zoned for development from the point when Lower Earley was first planned. There has been a lot of misleading literature put out about the development of Chalfont Park.

53. MOTIONS

53.1 Motion 407 submitted by Gary Cowan

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion, submitted by Gary Cowan and seconded by Lindsay Ferris.

"This Council will evaluate its existing policies on trees to ensure its policies are fully open and transparent. The new policy recognises that many trees may be subject to some tree work and it is not practical to consult on all works undertaken. For example pruning works carried out is unlikely to cause significant public concern, however the felling of any trees can be contentious. Felling trees without prior consultation due to health and safety issues is understood but where the felling involves any loss of tree/s for any other reason whatsoever the public must be formally consulted on the proposed works and the reasons why it is necessary

The Council must maintain proper records of all trees felled. For trees which are to be felled including trees protected by TPOs, or those situated in Conservation Areas, or in association with development proposals and planning permissions this Council will put in place a statutory consultation processes and current Council policies will be amended to reflect these changes as soon as it practicable".

In the ensuing debate a number of Members stated that the proposed Motion had merit but would benefit from clarification on the wording in relation to the practical implications of the proposals for existing Council policies and procedures. Consequently, it was suggested that the Motion be withdrawn and be re-submitted with revised wording to a future meeting.

On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED: That Motion 407 be withdrawn and be re-submitted, with revised wording, to a future meeting of the Council.

53.2 Motion 409 submitted by Pauline Jorgensen

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Pauline Jorgensen and seconded by Guy Grandison.

“This Council believes that the successful operation of a public transport system in our area requires co-operation between neighbouring local authorities.

This Council believes that Reading Buses would benefit from an increased diversity of voices and oversight from neighbouring authorities to Reading Borough whose areas Reading Buses operate in. Therefore, this Council calls on Reading Buses to allow representatives from local authority areas (other than Reading Borough), in which the bus company operates, to attend board meetings of the company in an observer status – ensuring the views of residents in areas including Wokingham Borough are heard and listened to”.

It was moved by Lindsay Ferris and seconded by Prue Bray that the Motion be amended by inserting the words in Bold as follows:

“This Council believes that the successful operation of a public transport system in our area requires co-operation between neighbouring local authorities.

This Council believes that Reading Buses would benefit from an increased diversity of voices and oversight from neighbouring authorities to Reading Borough whose areas Reading Buses operate in. Therefore, this Council calls on Reading Buses to allow representatives from local authority areas **including ward members where a specific issue has been raised by local residents** (other than Reading Borough), in which the bus company operates, to attend board meetings of the company in an observer status – ensuring the views of residents in areas including Wokingham Borough are heard and listened to”.

Pauline Jorgensen stated that the propose amendment was accepted.

The amended (substantive) Motion was then put to the vote and was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

Prior to the vote being held, six Members, in accordance with Rule of Procedure 4.2.15.5, requested that a recorded vote be taken on the proposed Motion.

The voting was as follows:

For	Against	Abstained
Keith Baker	Rachel Burgess	Gary Cowan
Laura Blumenthal	Andy Croy	John Kaiser
Chris Bowring	Carl Doran	Bill Soane
Prue Bray		
Jenny Cheng		
Richard Dolinski		
Lindsay Ferris		
Guy Grandison		
Charlotte Haitham Taylor		
David Hare		
Pauline Helliari-Symons		
Tim Holton		
Graham Howe		
Clive Jones		
Norman Jorgensen		
Pauline Jorgensen		
Dianne King		
Ken Miall		
Philip Mirfin		
Stuart Munro		
Barrie Patman		
Ian Pittock		
Anthony Pollock		
Malcolm Richards		
Angus Ross		
Imogen Shepherd-Dubey		
Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey		
David Sleight		
Chris Smith		
Wayne Smith		
Shahid Younis		

RESOLVED: “This Council believes that the successful operation of a public transport system in our area requires co-operation between neighbouring local authorities.

This Council believes that Reading Buses would benefit from an increased diversity of voices and oversight from neighbouring authorities to Reading Borough whose areas Reading Buses operate in. Therefore, this Council calls on Reading Buses to allow representatives from local authority areas including ward members where a specific issue has been raised by local residents (other than Reading Borough), in which the bus company operates, to attend board meetings of the company in an observer status – ensuring the views of residents in areas including Wokingham Borough are heard and listened to”.

53.3 Motion 410 submitted by Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

Due to time constraints the Motion was not considered and, in accordance with Rule 4.2.8.1 was deemed to have fallen.

53.4 Motion 411 submitted by Prue Bray

Due to time constraints the Motion was not considered and, in accordance with Rule 4.2.8.1, was deemed to have fallen.

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**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT
REMUNERATION PANEL APPOINTED TO
REVIEW THE ALLOWANCES PAID TO
COUNCILLORS OF WOKINGHAM BOROUGH
COUNCIL FOR 2018/19**

**FOR SUBMISSION TO THE COUNCIL ON
22 NOVEMBER 2018**

Introduction

1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 provide for the payment of Allowances to Members of the Council in connection with their work as Councillors. Before the Council can make or amend a scheme of allowances, it should consider the recommendations made in relation to it by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).
2. The Council appointed its first Independent Remuneration Panel in 2003. In each of the following Municipal Years, the Panel has made recommendations on the levels of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for consideration by the Council. An independent review of Members' Allowances has been carried out in 2018. Details of the Panel's remit are described in paragraph 4 below.

The Independent Remuneration Panel

3. The Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel are:

Tom Berman (Chairman) has been a resident of Wargrave for the past 40 years. He is married with two grown-up children and has been involved with various local voluntary groups over the years, of which Wargrave Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG), Wokingham Area PPG Forum and Hennerton Backwater Association are the current main focus.

Nick Oxborough (Vice Chairman) has lived in Wokingham Borough since 1967. He attended Primary and Comprehensive schools in Wokingham and then a local college where he studied photography. He has worked in the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service in an operational role for 34 years and now specialises as a Fire Safety Inspector. During his career in the service he has had opportunity to manage and be responsible for the delivery of the service to the community of Wokingham Borough, as well as working with members of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority. He is a Member of the Institute of Fire Engineers and has also achieved other management and technical qualifications associated with his roles in the service.

David George has been living in Wokingham Borough since 1982, firstly in Woodley and then since 1999 in Arborfield. He retired from Air Traffic Control (ATC) in December 2016 aged 55 after nearly 36 years' service. In addition to his role in Air Traffic Control he was a Union representative in the Prospect Union, which represents ATC staff. He held the position of National Treasurer for the Controllers section managing a budget of approximately £70,000 for several years.

Callum Wernham and Neil Carr, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialists, and Anne Hunter, Democratic and Electoral Services Lead Specialist, provided guidance and administrative support to the Panel.

Background and National Context

4. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations, which came into force in 2003, stated that Independent Remuneration Panels, established by local authorities, should make recommendations in respect of the following issues:

Basic Allowance (BA) – each local authority must make provision for a basic, flat rate allowance payable to all Members.

Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) – each local authority may make provision for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances to those Councillors who have significant additional responsibilities. The Panel has to recommend the responsibilities that should be remunerated and the levels of each allowance.

Childcare and Dependants Carers' Allowance – local authorities may make provision for the payment of an allowance to those Members who incur expenditure for the care of children or dependant relatives whilst undertaking particular duties.

Travel and Subsistence Allowance – local authorities may make provision for the payment of a travelling and subsistence allowance to its Members for undertaking a list of eligible duties as defined in the current scheme.

Co-optees' Allowance – local authorities may make provision for the payment of an allowance to co-optees for attending meetings, conferences and seminars.

5. The Regulations also provide for Panels to make recommendations in respect of the following issues:
 - The cessation of payments to Members who have been suspended or partially suspended from their duties, and the repayment of allowances;
 - The backdating of allowances to the beginning of the financial year in which they are set, and provision to recommend annual adjustments by means of an index.
6. Non-Executive Director (NED) payments are made by Council-owned companies to Members who act in non-Executive roles. They are similar to SRAs but have a different legislative basis and are not included in the Council's Members Allowances Scheme. It is not within the remit of the Independent Remuneration Panel to review the level of payments to NEDs on the Council-owned companies unless a specific request for a review is made by one or more of the companies.

Terms of Reference for the 2018/19 Review

7. In 2017, the Panel agreed that, as a newly convened Panel, it should carry out a 'light touch' review. Following the Panel's successful recommendations in 2017 it was decided that the main focus of the 2018/19 IRP review be on Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs). A survey on key questions was undertaken and Members were given the opportunity to approach the Panel directly to voice their opinions.

Work Programme for the 2018 Review

8. The Panel met on the following occasions:

- 7 March 2018
- 22 March 2018
- 19 April 2018
- 17 May 2018
- 7 June 2018
- 14 June 2018
- 21 June 2018
- 12 July 2018
- 19 July 2018
- 26 July 2018
- 2 August 2018
- 28 August 2018
- 13 September 2018
- 17 September 2018

9. The Panel made reference to the following information to provide background, context and assistance in reaching its conclusions:

- Copies of the current Members' Allowances Scheme agreed by the Council in November 2017 and previous versions.
- Copies of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003;
- The summary of the South East Employers (SEEMP) Members' Allowances Survey 2016/17.

10. The Panel met Members including the Leader of the Council, the Leaders of the Opposition Groups, Members of the Opposition and a number of present and former Executive and Deputy Executive Members. The Panel also met the Data Protection Officer, the Director of Corporate Services and the Interim Chief Executive.

All Members were invited to meet the Panel. In all, the Panel met a representative cross section across all groups: 14 Conservative, 5 Liberal Democrat, 2 Labour and 1 Independent.

The Panel sent out a survey to all Members, attached at Appendix A to this report. 26 out of 54 surveys were returned (with several Members stepping down during this time) and all comments were treated confidentially. The Panel were disappointed that the number of responses to the survey was one less than in 2017, especially since this was a prime opportunity for Members to comment and present evidence from which the Panel would reach its recommendations. The Panel had specifically asked for a better response from Members this year, but despite twice extending the period (between mid-May and end July) available for interview, the Panel was similarly disappointed that only 22 members came

forward to express opinions directly to the Panel. The Panel would like to encourage more Members to participate in future engagement with the IRP.

The Panel has had to assume that the responses thus received represented a fair cross-section of Members' opinions. Reference to the information from the combined sources are referred to as 'responding Members' in the report. Any percentages are calculated out of 26. Where information was obtained from meetings, this is referred to as 'Members who met the Panel...'

11. Some Members made suggestions which fell outside the scope of the current Members' Allowances Scheme legislation and the remit of the Panel. Therefore, those suggestions have not been addressed in this report.

Remuneration

12. In considering its proposals concerning Members' remuneration, the Panel has tested each recommendation against three core principles:
 - a) Is it affordable relative to Wokingham Borough Council budget constraints?
 - b) Is it reasonably similar to the practice in other unitary authorities in the region?
 - c) Would Borough residents consider it to be fair?

Basic Allowance

13. Following the Panel's 2017 recommendations to Council, the Panel would like to reiterate the premise (which previous Independent Remuneration Panels have used) that 50% of Members' time is pro bono as the role is that of a volunteer. This is based on the premise that the other 50% was originally set at the Local Government Association's daily rate of the national male median white-collar wage. Whilst an allowance is appropriate, it is not a salary.
14. 62% (16 out of 26) of responding Members felt that the allowances scheme "fairly meets the expenses incurred". Of the remaining 38% (11 out of 26) who responded negatively to that comment, most were generally commenting not that they were out of pocket but that WBC remuneration was well below the market rate. General satisfaction with the level of Basic Allowance relative to expenses emerged from the 22 Member interviews conducted.
15. The Panel recommended to Council in 2017 a 1% increase to the time contributed element of the Member Basic Allowance, which was in line with the Officer Pay increase for that year. Subsequently, Officer Pay has been increased by 2% for the 2018/19 municipal year and as such the Panel recommends a 2% increase to the time contributed element of the Member Basic Allowance. The Panel noted that this would represent an increase of £134 per Member taking the time contributed element of the Basic Allowance from £6,684 to £6,818. This would be an increase in budget from £360,936 to £368,172. The Panel recognises the financial pressures upon the Council and the concerns of Borough residents, but it believes that it is more suitable to allow modest regular

inflationary increases to the Basic Allowance rather than a much larger single increase to “catch up” with increases after a long period of abstention.

16. The Panel reviewed the out of pocket expenses segment of the Member Basic Allowance scheme, taking in to account the £100 increase that was recommended and approved by Council in 2017. The Panel noted that some Members were concerned that the Panel’s previous report had associated this increase to £600 in the out of pocket allowance with “parking at Shute End”. The Panel would like to clarify that the increase to £600 was primarily justified because this allowance had been left at £500 for 8 years, clearly falling behind market inflationary increases.

After discussion with the Data Protection Officer, it was confirmed that Members would be charged £40 to register as a data controller under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The Panel felt that a reduction of £40 (from 1 April 2019) in the out of pocket expenses segment of the Member Basic Allowance to allow for Members to be registered by the Council would be an efficient and cost neutral way of ensuring that Members had the appropriate registration.

17. The Panel continues to recommend that Members not providing proper home office facilities, including those which allow constituents to communicate with them by email, should not be allowed to claim the £500 component of the Basic Allowance. It recommends that the Council continues with a self-certification process to reinforce this.
18. In conclusion, the Panel recommends that the Basic Allowance be increased to £7,918, backdated to 1 April 2018, comprising the following components:
 - £6,818 for time contributed; and
 - £600 for out of pocket expenses (to be reduced to £560 from 1 April 2019); and
 - £500 for IT, communication and home office.

Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)

19. The Council previously agreed that the SRA = £5,000, and individual posts attracting an SRA be assessed as a factor of £5,000.
20. The Panel’s view is that SRAs should be set against well-defined job descriptions and measurable performance criteria which are publicised with openness and transparency. The Panel recognised that the remit of particular roles could change over time and as a matter of policy.
21. In judging the relative values of SRAs granted to different posts, the Panel took into account the following:
 - The size of budget controlled (where applicable);
 - The quasi-judicial aspects (if any);

- The support and number of Officers involved;
- The risk factors to the Council and the individual Member;
- The public involvement;
- The work load (including frequency of meetings, consultations with others etc.).

22. Leader of the Council:

The Panel had given this very careful attention. The benchmarking exercise the Panel initiated identified that WBC's SRA for the Leader of the Council was at the lower end compared to other Local Authorities in the South East of England. Considering that the Leader's SRA amount (4 x SRA = £20,000) had remained unchanged since 2009, that the post is comparable to the Chairman of a multi-million pound enterprise, and that it is essentially full time, the Panel recommends that it is now appropriate (as from 1st April 2019) to increase this SRA to 4.5 x SRA = £22,500. On the uncertain assumption that no other Unitary Authority will increase its Leader's SRA in 2018/19, this would still leave the WBC Leader in 6th place out of 12 behind other Authorities in the South East such as Milton Keynes, Bracknell Forest, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Southampton.

23. Leader of the Opposition:

The Panel understands that the Leader of the Opposition should be respected and encouraged to express a strong voice in holding the Leader and the Executive to account. However, as the role does not have the decision making and business responsibilities of, for example, the WBC Leader or Members of the Executive, the Panel was of the firm opinion that the current SRA level of 1.5 x SRA = £7,500 is excessive.

The Panel recommends that there should be a new formula whereby all Opposition Group leaders with a group membership of more than 2 receive an SRA based in part on a figure of £100 per group member. In addition, if the lead opposition group has four or more members more than the next largest group, its leader should receive a further £5,000; but if the lead over the next largest group was less than 4 members the addition to the Leader of the Opposition's SRA should be reduced to £4,000. In the event that there were two or three leading opposition groups, each with the same number of members, then £5000 should be distributed equally between them as well as the £100 per group member. A condition of this formula should be that the gross cost of the SRA to all parties should not exceed £8,000 (compared to the current £7,500). In the event of any excess over £8,000 occurring, that excess should be deducted from the SRA granted to the Opposition Group leader with the fewest Members.

24. Members of the Executive and Deputy Members of the Executive:

The Panel noted that Members of the Executive oversee large budgets and have legal responsibilities. Unusually – relative to comparable Authorities – some WBC Executive Members are supported by Deputies who are also in receipt of SRAs. After considering the benchmarking data and the evidence submitted, the

Panel concluded that there was not a case for changing the SRA applied to the posts of Members of the Executive.

The Panel noted that over recent years the number of Executive Members at WBC (excluding the Leader) had varied between 7 and 9 (with 9 being the maximum permitted), while the number of Deputy Executive members had varied between 5 and 8 (with there being no legal limit to this number).

The Panel questioned whether all the Executive Member roles were always of equal weight and worthy of the same SRA, and similarly whether all of the Deputy Executive Member roles were equal, but the Panel concluded that it was impossible for it to make this detailed judgement.

However, considering the budgeted cost of SRAs granted to Members of the Executive (excluding the Leader) plus the Deputy Executive Members, the Panel recommends that the Council should accept an upper limit to this sum of £100,000 (which is the current budgeted cost covering SRAs for 9 Executive Members and 5 Deputy Executive Members).

As stated, Deputy Executive Members being in receipt of SRAs is unusual in any comparable Authority. The Panel noted that when Deputy Executive Members were first introduced with SRAs in 2013 they were ostensibly “task driven” with well-defined responsibilities. From the evidence received from Members with experience of being either Deputies or Executive Members with Deputies half (5 out of 10 members, who met the Panel) felt that there had been some “slippage” from the original concept and/or some inconsistency in the role and management of Deputies. For example, the defined responsibilities of some deputies had become less structured and defined over time.

25. Chairman of the Audit Committee

The Panel concluded that the Audit Committee had a significant responsibility in respect of the Council’s finances. Therefore the Panel recommends that no changes be made to the Chairman’s SRA of 0.5 x SRA = £2,500.

26. Chairman of the Licensing and Appeals Committee

The Licensing and Appeals Committee is quasi-judicial and there is significant public involvement. However, the Panel judged that the business of this Committee is to some significant degree Officer led. On balance, the Panel concluded that the Chairman’s SRA of 0.5 x SRA = £2,500 should remain unchanged.

27. Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Panel received evidence from some senior experienced Members who had direct experience with WBC’s Overview and Scrutiny functions, from which it appeared that there had been some uncertainty as to how successfully WBC had engaged with Overview and Scrutiny, and whether the practice at WBC had become too concerned with reviewing after the event rather than with scrutinising policy proposals before the event.

The Government had published its report on Overview and Scrutiny in local government in December 2017 and was planning to issue new Statutory Guidance to local authorities at the end of 2018. The Panel therefore recommends that there should be no changes to the SRAs relating to the four Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairmen before the WBC Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has had the opportunity to respond in detail to the new Statutory Guidance at the beginning of 2019.

28. Chairman of the Personnel Board

The general view from Members that met the Panel was that the Personnel Board's workload was sometimes light with infrequent meetings, but that it is currently much heavier. The Panel concluded that over the course of a Chairman's tenure on the Personnel Board the workload was likely to even out and therefore does not recommend a change to the current Chairman's SRA of $0.25 \times \text{SRA} = \text{£}1,250$.

29. Chairman and Members of the Planning Committee

WBC is the only comparable Local Authority that remunerates its Planning Committee Members in addition to its Chairman with an SRA. However, there was near unanimity amongst all Members interviewed that there are positive reasons for remunerating Planning Committee work at the higher end of the scale of SRAs, namely the quasi-judicial aspects of the role, the considerable workload including regular site visits and the vociferous public involvement. The Panel recommends that the SRA of the Chairman of the Planning Committee be increased to $1.2 \times \text{SRA} = \text{£}6,000$, and that the SRA for Members of the Planning Committee be increased to $0.3 \times \text{SRA} = \text{£}1,500$, from April 2019. In addition, the Panel recommends a maximum budget of $\text{£}18,000$ for Chairman and Members of the Planning Committee, from April 2019.

30. Chairman of the Standards Committee

The Panel noted that the workload of the Standards Committee fluctuated between years and that part of the Chairman's role involved working on behalf of the Standards Committee outside of Committee meetings. The Panel therefore does not propose any changes to the current Chairman's SRA of $0.25 \times \text{SRA} = \text{£}1,250$.

Travel and Subsistence Allowance

31. The Panel recommends a change relating to Members' expenses on meals, refreshments and hotel accommodation on days away from Shute End on WBC business, namely:

- (i) Overnight approved absence (from normal place of residence):
Bed and breakfast as charged by no higher than a 3 star hotel (with the exception that, if an approved conference takes place in a 4 star hotel with the expectation that attendees will stay at the same hotel, 4 star bed and breakfast is allowed);
- (ii) Daily subsistence (for more than four hours away from normal place of residence covering any meals or refreshments), up to a maximum of $\text{£}25$ receipted expenditure.

Please note that receipts are required when claiming any of the above.

Children and Dependant Carers Allowance

32. The Panel does not propose any change to the upward revision to these allowances as agreed by Council last year. The Panel would like to reiterate from previous years' recommendations that Members should feel confident about claiming for expenses that they are entitled to.

Transparency relating to Members' remuneration

33. The Panel's previous recommendation adopted by Council last year for transparency of Members' remuneration on the WBC website resulted in a distinct and noticeable improvement. The Panel now recommends one further improvement, namely that a single document be created and made accessible via an easy to find hyperlink, which would show for each Councillor all WBC related remunerations (Basic Allowance, SRA, NED remuneration and Outside Body (namely the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority) remuneration) received by that Member.

Mayor and Deputy Mayor

34. The remuneration of these posts does not currently come within the remit of the IRP, but the Panel concluded that the allowances are similar to SRAs and should therefore be reviewed similarly by the IRP. The Panel therefore recommends that the Council should consider that a review of the Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral allowances be included within the IRP's remit for the future.

NEDs and "Outside Bodies"

35. The Panel wishes to remind Members that it is not within the IRP's remit to make recommendations concerning the levels of remuneration to WBC Members as Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) on WBC-owned companies or as members of boards of "outside bodies". However, the Panel has concluded that it would be remiss of it not to report on its findings in this area of WBC Councillors' remuneration.

Out of 54 Members, this IRP Panel has interviewed 25 over a two year period including a representative cross section of the political groups. The Panel has noted that 7 of these Members (= 28% of those interviewed and 13% of total membership), all fairly senior, long-serving Members, have expressed concern over the apparent power of patronage used by the Leader of WBC over many years. This referred to the appointment of Members from the leading political group not only to WBC posts rewarded by SRAs, but also to paid NEDs on Council-owned companies and to paid positions on the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA). The suggestion made to the Panel was that this had been used as a means of securing political loyalty.

The Panel felt that these comments could not be treated as unjustified criticism about a long-accepted practice from a disaffected minority but rather they had to be taken seriously: the Council should not only be doing the right thing, but should be seen to be doing the right thing, and the Panel's view and its assessment of Wokingham Borough's residents' view (in so far as the residents might be fully informed) is that this does not look right.

The fundamental issue is how many separate special allowances should be in the gift of the Leader of the Council. At present there are three categories referred to above: (i) SRAs connected to posts within the Council, which apart from the Leader's can be as high as £10,000 (ii) Non-Executive Directorships of WBC-owned companies, which can be as high as £6,095 and (iii) Membership of the Board of the RBFA (which is required to be politically balanced), which can be as high as £7,777.

The Panel appreciates that amongst WBC Members there is a spectrum of attitudes on this matter: at one end there are those who consider that being a Councillor is a voluntary civic contribution ("giving something back to the community"), which should not generate income over and above the Basic Allowance; at the other end are those, who refer to the serious decisions and time-consuming responsibilities undertaken by some Members, and believe it is necessary to give extra reward to these Members in recognition of the extra responsibilities they take on and the extra talent they contribute. This leads on to the opinion that, if the rewards available from the above three categories were to be limited, the Council would cease to recruit sufficiently able Members to carry out its work effectively.

The Panel cannot agree with this last opinion. In the view of the Panel there would always be sufficient Members able and willing to take on the extra responsibilities regardless of the absence of extra rewards. One piece of evidence supporting this view is the number of Members who met the Panel (11 out of 25 = 45%) who said, without prompting, that remuneration for their work as Councillors was never a consideration before they were elected or since. The Panel also notes that the Council has moved its position somewhat in this matter by ruling that, whilst a Member might hold two Non-Executive Directorships, they should only receive payment for one.

The Panel is not in a position to make a recommendation for change in this matter, but the Council is; and the Panel submits that it would be good practice for the Council to adopt a new Constitutional rule whereby a Member, having the option of serving in a WBC post, which provides an SRA, and a NED paid post on a WBC-owned company, and a paid post on the Board of the RBFA (or any other external body to which the Leader might appoint a WBC Member) might take up all three or two of such posts but would only take remuneration from one (the one chosen by the Member).

Council voting on IRP Recommendations

36. The Panel acknowledges that this matter is not within the remit of the IRP, but the Panel respectfully requests that the Council should allow for the Panel's

recommendations to be voted upon item by item, where Members consider it appropriate.

MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2018/19

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INDEPENDANT REMUNERATION PANEL

The Panel recommends to the Council that:

- (1) The time contributed component of the Basic Allowance be increased by 2% in line with the 2018/19 increase in Officer pay, and backdated to 1 April 2018;*
- (2) The £500 component of the Basic Allowance for the provision of IT should continue to be claimed only by those Members who provide facilities which allow constituents and Officers to communicate with them by e-mail and the self-certification process be continued;*
- (3) The out of pocket expenses component of the Basic Allowance be reduced by £40 to allow for the mass registration of Members to the Information Commissioners Office by Wokingham Borough Council, from April 2019;*
- (4) The Leader of the Council's SRA be increased to 4.5 x SRA = £22,500, from April 2019;*
- (5) The Leader of the Opposition SRA be restructured via a new formula whereby all opposition group leaders with a membership of more than 2 receive an SRA based in part on a figure of £100 per group member. In addition, if the lead opposition group has four or more members more than the next largest group, its leader should receive a further £5,000; but if the lead over the next largest group was less than 4 members the addition to the Leader of the Opposition's SRA should be reduced to £4,000. In the event that there were two or three leading opposition groups, each with the same number of members, then £5000 should be distributed equally between them as well as the £100 per group member*

A condition of this formula should be that the gross cost of the SRA to all Groups should not exceed £8,000 (compared to the £7,500 now), and that in the event of any excess over £8,000 occurring, that excess should be deducted from the SRA granted to the Opposition Group leader with the fewest Members. These changes are recommended to be implemented from April 2019;

- (6) The budgeted cost covering SRAs for Executive Members and Deputy Executive Members be capped at the current level of £100,000;*
- (7) The Chairman of the Planning Committee's SRA be increased to 1.2 x SRA = £6,000, and the SRA for Members of the Planning Committee SRA be increased to 0.3 x SRA = £1,500, from April*

2019. A condition be agreed whereby there be a maximum budget of £18,000 for Chairman and Members of the Planning Committee;

- (8) The Members Subsistence Allowance and Overnight Accommodation Allowance be amended as follows:**
- (i) Overnight approved absence (from normal place of residence): Bed and Breakfast as charged by no higher than a 3 star hotel (with the exception that, if an approved conference takes place in a 4 star hotel with the expectation that attendees will stay at the same hotel, 4 star bed and breakfast is allowed).**
- (ii) Daily subsistence (for more than four hours away from normal place of residence covering any meals or refreshments) up to a maximum of £25 receipted expenditure;**
- (9) The publication of Members' remuneration on the WBC website be reviewed with the intention that a single document be created and be accessible via an easy to find hyperlink, which would show for each Councillor all WBC related remunerations (Basic Allowance, SRA, NED remuneration and Outside Body (namely the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority) remuneration) received by that Member;**
- (10) The Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral Allowances be included within the IRP's remit, from April 2019;**
- (11) No changes be made to the current Childcare and Dependant Carers Allowance;**
- (12) Apart from the above recommendations, no further adjustments to Members' Remuneration are necessary until the next review by the Independent Remuneration Panel.**

Members' Allowances Survey 2018

Q1 Name:

Q2 Please tell us when you were elected to Wokingham Borough Council

Q3 Are you:

- Employed
 Unemployed
 Self-employed
 Retired

Q4 Please indicate the number of hours you spend on average each month on your duties as an elected member

	No time	1 to 5 hours	6 to 10 hours	11 to 15 hours	16 hours or more
Ward work (surgeries, visits, emails phone calls etc)	<input type="radio"/>				
Preparation/attendance at full council meetings	<input type="radio"/>				
Preparation/attendance at other WBC meetings	<input type="radio"/>				
Preparation/attendance at other meetings (such as town or parish councils or outside bodies)	<input type="radio"/>				

Please tell us about any other WBC related duties you undertake (including an estimate of the time spent on them in an average month)

Q5 How would you rate the amount of time you spend on WBC work?

Minimal Excessive

Could you explain your answer

Q6 Do you feel the current members' allowances scheme fairly meets the expenses you incur in performing your duties?

- Yes
- No

Could you explain your answer

Q7 In previous years, members allowances have been increased in line with local government pay awards. Do you agree that this link is appropriate?

- Yes
- No

Could you explain your answer

Q8 Do you have any other comments on the WBC members' allowances scheme such as the level of allowances (basic, childcare and travel) or the SRA roles and Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) payment levels

Q9 The Independent Remuneration Panel would like to meet members to amplify the information arising out of this survey. Would you be prepared to meet the panel?

- Yes
- No

Q10 Do you receive a SRA payment?

- Yes
- No

Q11 For which role do you receive a SRA payment?

Q12 Please give details of any SRA roles you carry out which are not remunerated

Q13 Please indicate the number of hours you spend on average each month on your SRA roll

	No time	1 to 5 hours	6 to 10 hours	11 to 15 hours	16 hours or more
Attending WBC meetings	<input type="radio"/>				
Attending external meetings	<input type="radio"/>				
Meeting WBC officers / members	<input type="radio"/>				
Meeting external stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>				
Preparation/ research	<input type="radio"/>				

Other, please specify (including an estimate of the time spent during an average month)

Q14 Please give details of the external contacts involved in your role (such as partner organisations, Government departments and national/regional bodies)

Q15 Please give details of any training / seminars / conferences attended which enable you to carry out your SRA role?

Q16 Do you consider the level of your SRA payment to be appropriate for the role?

- Yes
- No

If no, please give any comment / reasoning

Q17 Do you have any other comments on your SRA role or payments for other SRA roles

Thank you for taking part in this survey

TITLE	Wokingham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Council on 22 November 2018
WARD	None Specific;
DIRECTOR	Director of Corporate Services - Graham Ebers

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

To adopt the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy as approved by the Wokingham Wellbeing Board, to enable the vision to be projected across the Borough and begin to positively impact the community.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the revised Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and accompanying focused Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) chapters to allow for implementation of the engagement plan and creation of an action plan.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The Wokingham Wellbeing Board has been going through a process of 'refreshing' and agree that the proposed strategy be in place from 2018 to 2021.

The overarching vision of the strategy is "Creating healthy and resilient communities"

The key priorities are:

- Creating physically active communities
- Reducing social isolation and loneliness
- Narrowing the health inequalities gap

The significant findings in Wokingham for the above priority areas are:

Creating physically active communities:

- Only 16% of teenagers achieve the recommended physical activity level of one hour of moderate to physical activity every day.
- In October 2017, 8,350 patients in Wokingham CCG were on the GP Obesity Register. This was 6.6% of the population aged 18 or over, which was lower than the comparator CCG Group but significantly lower than the national figure of 9.7%. We know that obesity is seriously under-reported by GPs.
- Wokingham's Local Transport Plan aims to achieve 60% of all pupils traveling to school by walking or cycling by 2026 and to improve cycle parking by schools.
- The Reception year (aged 4-5) prevalence of overweight (including obese) children in Wokingham for 2016/17 was nearly a fifth (18%).
- The year 6 (aged 10-11) prevalence of overweight (including obese) children in Wokingham for 2016/17 was 26.6%.

Reducing social isolation and loneliness:

- Living alone is strongly associated with social isolation. The estimated number of elderly population living alone in Wokingham borough is 10,442. This number is estimated to increase by 25% by 2025.
- Adults who are users of social care can be quite socially isolated; less than half (48%) had as much social contact as they wanted.
- Adults who provide unpaid care to friends and relatives are also at risk of isolation. Just over a third (36%) of adult carers had as much social contact as they wanted.
- 7.3% of children and young people in Wokingham are estimated to have a diagnosable mental health disorder. This would equate to 1828 children and young people.
- There are around 443 children and 465 adults in Wokingham who need support for learning disabilities. It is estimated that 85% of young disabled adults from the 18-34 year old age group feel lonely. (Scope, 2017).
- Over 1 in 10 mothers are thought to be affected by post-natal depression which can be exacerbated by social isolation. It is estimated that around 300 mothers in Wokingham are affected each year.

Narrowing the health inequalities gap:

- Wokingham is the least deprived Borough in Berkshire and is the 2nd least deprived out of 326 local authorities in the country – but inequalities still exist!
- Men among the most deprived 10% of the Borough can expect to live an average of 4.5 fewer years than the least deprived and over 7 fewer years in full health. For women the gap is wider at 5.5 years.
- As well as the deprivation gap, inequalities in health outcomes also exist according to ethnicity, age, gender and sexual identity, disability and mental health.
- Health in pregnancy and early years is generally good, however, only half of children receiving free school meals are 'ready for school' aged five compared with over three quarters of their peers.

Background

The Wokingham Wellbeing Board is currently undergoing a refresh and development process. It has developed this strategy for 2018 – 2021. The underlying vision of the strategy is to “create healthy and resilient communities” by focussing on the three key priorities:

- Creating physically active communities
- Reducing social isolation and loneliness
- Narrowing the health inequalities gap

With regards to the priority ‘Creating physically active communities’, the aim is to get people of all ages and abilities more physically active by getting people outside and using green and blue spaces, promoting more active travel and encouraging more children to get at least one hour of physical activity every day.

For the priority ‘Reducing social isolation and loneliness’, the aim is to reduce these issues particularly in older people, people with mental illness and carers, in order to improve their overall mental and physical wellbeing.

Finally, for the priority ‘Narrowing the health inequalities gap’, the aim is to close the gap between what a child who was born today in the most deprived areas and those in the least deprived areas would experience over their life time.

The Board has taken into consideration the good practice from the Bicester Healthy New Town Programme and on the 8th November 2018, the Wokingham Wellbeing Board considered and supported the proposed strategy. The strategy is in the form of a presentation which is intended for distribution after sign off from the Council with the intention that a range of partner organisations in Wokingham Borough will also adopt it.

Analysis of Issues

This is the latest iteration of the Health and Wellbeing strategy that has been agreed by the Board. The three priorities are explored and analysed in the accompanying focused Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Chapters.

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)	No impact	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	No impact	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	No impact	N/A	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
N/A

Cross-Council Implications
Council wide adoption and integration with current strategies.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers
Wokingham's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2021 Focused Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) chapters

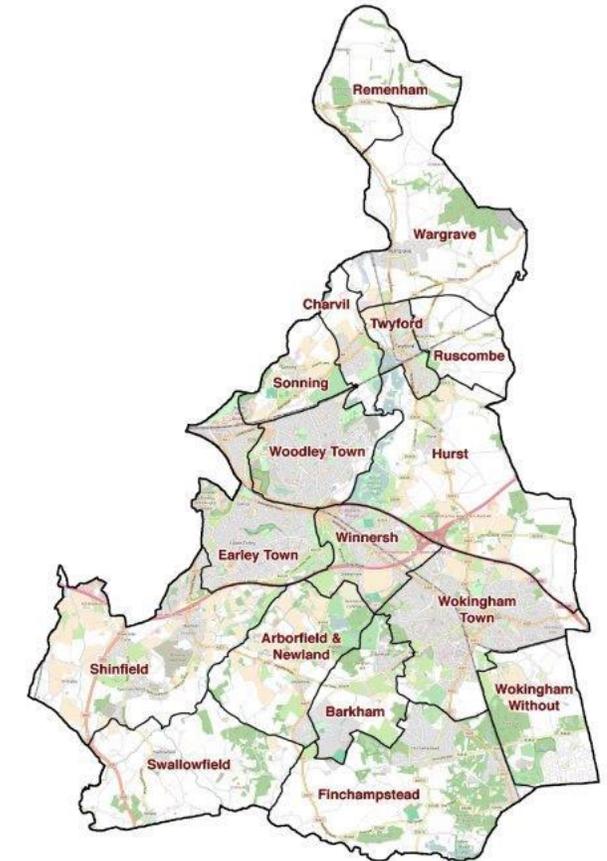
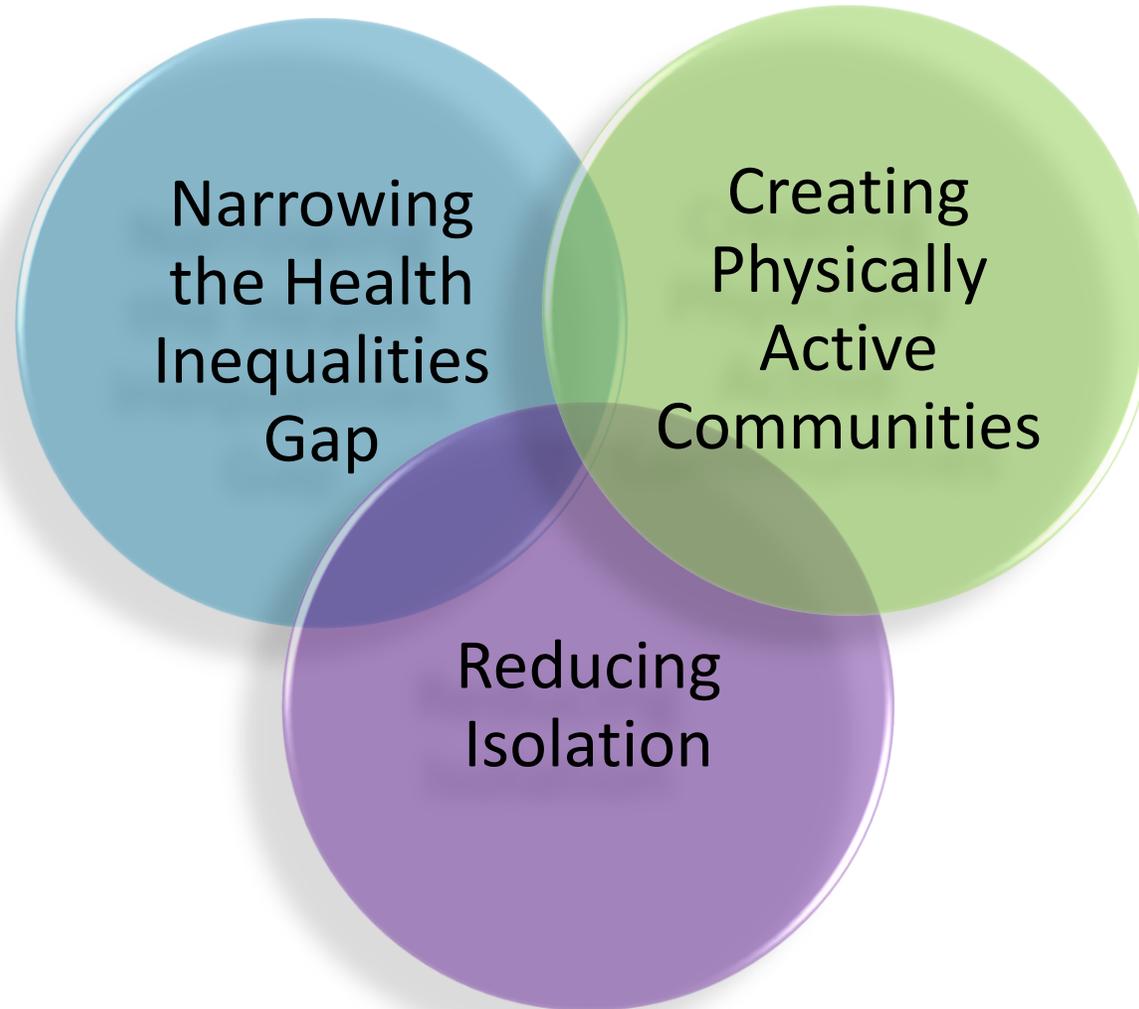
Contact Charlotte Seymour	Service People Commissioning
Telephone No Tel: 0118 974 6050	Email charlotte.seymour@wokingham.gov.uk

Wokingham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018 - 2021



Creating Healthy & Resilient Communities

80
Key Priorities





**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Other organisations will be added if they choose to adopt the strategy

Priority 1: Creating Physically Active Communities

Aim: To get people of all ages and abilities more physically active by:

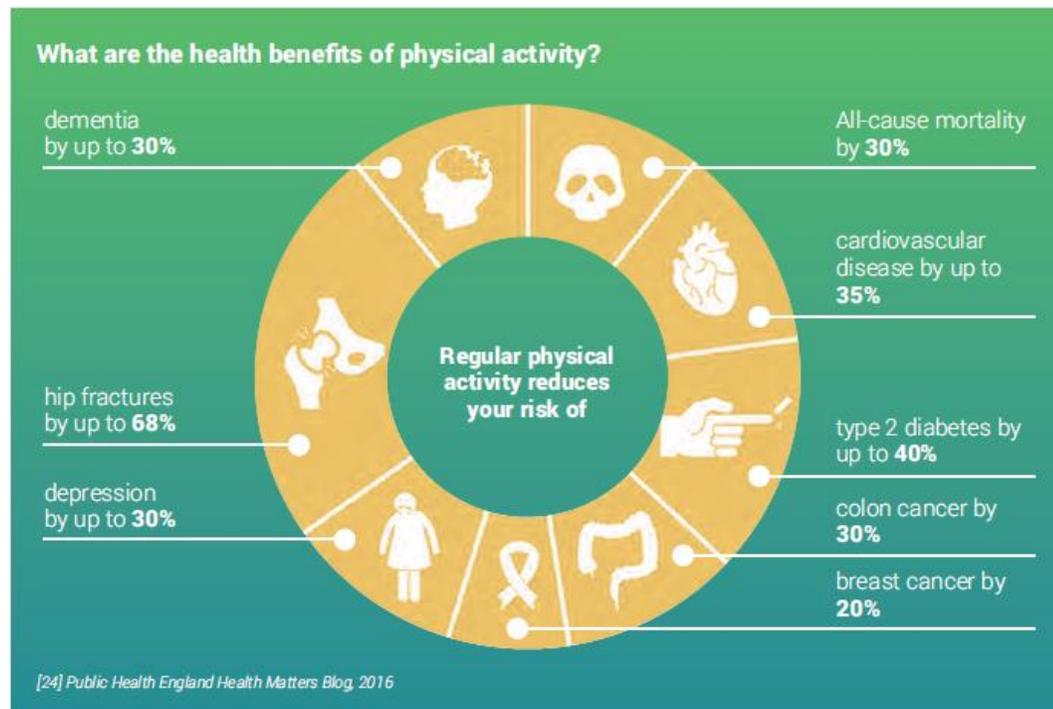
- ❖ Getting more people out and using green and blue spaces
- ❖ Promoting more active travel
- ❖ Encouraging more children to get at least one hour of physical activity every day

Outcomes:

- ❖ Improved physical and mental health for all ages
- ❖ Full utilisation of new green and blue spaces
- ❖ Supporting and partnering with local sports clubs
- ❖ Lower percentage of overweight people

Current Situation & Targets:

- ❖ % of adults physically inactive (completing less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week) = 17.3%.
Target = 14% by 2021
- ❖ % of teenagers with an average sedentary time of over 7 hours per day = 63%.
Target = 52% by 2021



Priority 1: Creating Physically Active Communities

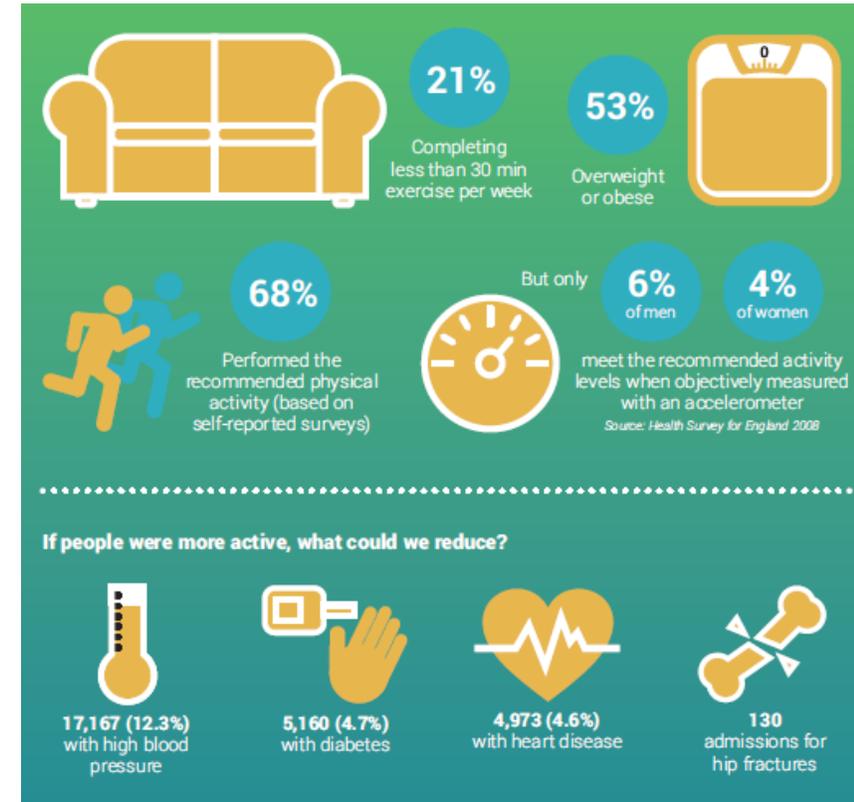


Borough wide campaign to help and inspire resident to travel by alternative modes. Promotes local events for all ages and abilities.

- ❖ Better points – gain rewards for travelling!
- ❖ Cycle streets route planner

A wide variety of sports and leisure facilities and activities for all abilities.

Wealth of green and blue space in the Borough.



13.8% of 10-11 year olds in Wokingham are considered obese (2016/17)

Only 16% of Wokingham's young people were physically active for 1 hour per day
2014/15 YOUth Survey

Being more physically active can reduce the risk of diabetes

Priority 2: Reducing Social Isolation

Aim: To reduce social isolation and loneliness in:

- ❖ Older people
- ❖ People with mental illness
- ❖ Carers

in order to improve their mental and physical wellbeing.

Outcomes:

- ❖ Creating resilient communities
- ❖ Linking up with the new development programme to ensure information on activities and group activities are correctly distributed

Current Situation & Targets:

- ❖ % of adult carers who had as much social contact as they wanted = 42.2%.
Target up to = 46% by 2021
- ❖ % adult social care users who had as much social contact as they wanted = 44.5%
Target up to = 48% by 2021



1 in 3 older people in England are affected by loneliness

25% of people in Wokingham live alone

Loneliness is linked to poor mental and physical health



Priority 2: Reducing Social Isolation

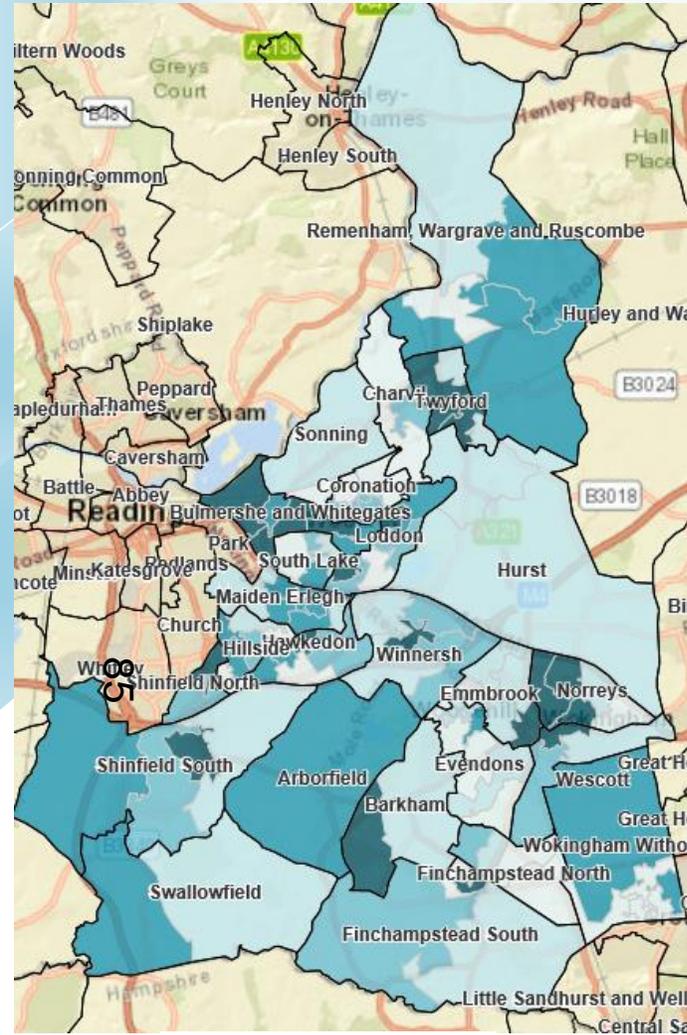
These are some of the ways we are currently tackling social isolation



The Government has brought in a [new strategy for tackling loneliness](#) with the vision is for this country to be a place where everyone can have strong social relationships. The strategy marks a turning point in how we see and act on loneliness in society.

Wokingham library is tackling loneliness with a list of books perfect for people struggling with their mental health with the Reading Well scheme.

Wokingham's Link visiting scheme is a perfect example of how we can join together as one community to eradicate social isolation for the elderly.



Risk within this authority

- Very low risk
- Low risk
- Medium risk
- High risk
- Very high risk



the **Link**
visiting scheme



Source: [AgeUK, 2016](#)

Priority 3: Narrowing the Health Inequalities Gap



Aim: To close the gap between what a child who is born today in the most deprived areas and those in the least deprived areas will experience over their life time.

Outcome:

- ❖ Those most deprived will enjoy more years in good health
- ❖ Greater access to health promoting resources

Current Situation & Targets:

- ❖ Gap in employment rate between those in contact with secondary mental health services and the overall employment rate = 66%
Target = 60% by 2021
- ❖ Gap in attainment of 5 A*-C GCSEs between those in receipt of Free School Meals and those not = 11%
Target = 8% by 2021

Health inequalities are linked to deprivation, illness and protected characteristics. Wokingham is the least deprived borough in Berkshire but inequalities still exist!

Early years of life are key to reducing health inequalities

Children in receipt of free school meals do not reach the same levels of attainment at various stages of their school careers

Income deprivation in Wokingham (2015) was 5.2%



Priority 3: Narrowing the Health Inequalities Gap



Wokingham Your Way is a community mental health support service which is tailored to suit individual needs. This service is available to anyone in the borough aged 18-70 who has a diagnosed mental health problem or is concerned about their mental health.

Preventing Ill Mental Health

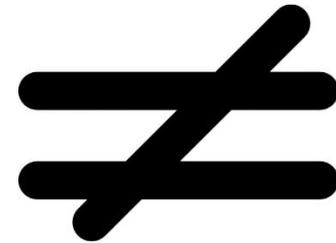
- ❖ It has been shown that exposure to natural environments can reduce stress, anxiety, blood pressure and anger
- ❖ There is an approximately 20-30% lower risk for depression and dementia for adults participating in daily physical activity.
- ❖ Investment in community support and transport services to keep people connected

Average Life Expectancy in Wokingham (years)

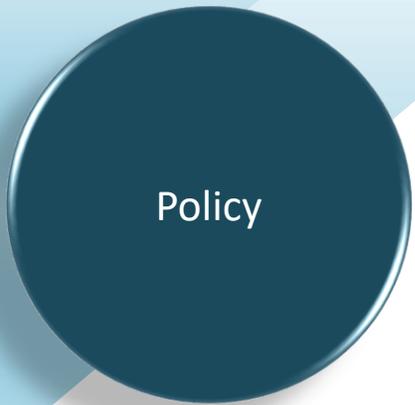
Male	Female
81.6	85.1

The difference in life expectancy between most affluent and most deprived tenth of the population:

Male	Female
5.5	4.5



How the Health and Wellbeing Board can influence these Priorities



<p>What is currently happening?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Wokingham Borough Plan ❖ HWB Strategy Action Plan in development 	<p>What is currently happening?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ New housing and infrastructure (roads, schools, parks) 	<p>What is currently happening?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Berkshire West 10 Integration Board 	<p>What is currently happening?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Community engagement 	<p>What is currently happening?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Significant positive progress made in areas such as smoking
<p>What needs to change?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Partnerships in Health and Wellbeing Board ❖ Commitment to priorities ❖ Improved Governance 	<p>What needs to change?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Need to include Housing ❖ Development of local plans linked with HWB overarching aims 	<p>What needs to change?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Encouraging greater Board membership ❖ Review of current Partners – what is their role? What do they deliver? 	<p>What needs to change?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Encouraging town and parish councils to promote the HWB priorities – Councillor champions for promoting health and wellbeing! 	<p>What needs to change?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Enhanced engagement with community support ❖ Raising awareness of available services

Accompanying this strategy are 3 specific JSNA chapters, one for each priority:

- Creating physically active communities
- Reducing social isolation and loneliness
- Narrowing the health inequalities gap



Focused Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

191 “Creating Healthy and Resilient Communities”
2017/18

Public Health Intelligence

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What is a Health and Wellbeing Board?

Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, each local authority is required to establish a Health and Wellbeing Board.

We are responsible for identifying the current and future social care and health needs of the local area through a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and setting strategies which influence decisions taken in the Council and health services.

The Board meetings are held in public and the public can submit questions to be Board so long as they are following the Council regulations for submitting questions.

93 Our vision

Creating healthy and resilient communities

Our Priorities

- Creating physically active communities
- Reducing social isolation and loneliness
- Narrowing the health inequalities gap

Underlying Principles of the Health and Wellbeing Boards

Shared leadership of a strategic approach to the health and wellbeing of communities that reaches across all relevant organisations.

A commitment to driving real action and change to improve services and outcomes.

Parity between board members in terms of their opportunity to contribute to the board's deliberations, strategies and activities.

Shared ownership of the board by all its members (with commitment from their nominating organisations) and accountability to the communities it serves.

Openness and transparency in the way that the board carried out its work.

Inclusiveness in the way it engages with the local people



1. Creating physically active communities

Key Messages

- Only 16% of teenagers achieve the recommended physical activity level of one hour of moderate to physical activity every day.
- In 2016/17, 71.2% of adults aged 19 and over in Wokingham achieved at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week in accordance with the recommended guidelines. This was significantly better than the England figure of 66.0% and similar to the deprivation decile average of 70.0%.
- In 2017, 8,350 patients in Wokingham CCG were on the GP Obesity Register. This was 6.6% of the population aged 18 or over, which was lower than the comparator CCG Group but significantly lower than the national figure of 9.7%.
- Wokingham's [Local Transport Plan 3](#) aims to achieve 60% of all pupils traveling to school by walking or cycling by 2026 and to improve cycle parking by schools.
- The reception year (aged 4-5) prevalence of overweight (including obese) children in Wokingham for 2016/17 was 18%.
- The year 6 (aged 10-11) prevalence of overweight (including obese) children in Wokingham for 2016/17 was 26.6%.

1.1 Introduction

Physical inactivity is a global health crisis, responsible for an estimated 5 million deaths worldwide. Around 16.8 million adults in England are insufficiently active, putting them at a significantly greater risk of heart and circulatory disease and premature death. In contrast, physical activity contributes to a wide range of health benefits and can improve health outcomes irrespective of whether individuals achieve weight loss. Research shows that doing regular physical activity can reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke by as much as 35%. Keeping physically active can also reduce the risk of early death by as much as 30%.

Being physical active is important across the life course, from the youngest children to the oldest adults, all people benefit from moving more; especially those who face barriers to being more active including people with disabilities. Reducing inactivity in the population can deliver cost savings for health and social care services but the benefits of physical activity extend further to improved productivity in the workplace, reduced congestion and pollution through active travel, and healthy development of children and young people, including diversion from anti-social behaviour.

Sedentary behaviour is an independent risk factor to physical inactivity. It refers to a number of individual behaviours in which energy expenditure is very low and sitting or lying is the dominant mode of posture. The [BHF](#) estimates that the average man in the UK spends the equivalent of 78 days each year sitting. The average woman in the UK spends around 74 days each year sitting

Related to physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour is the issue of overweight and obesity. The UK is experiencing an epidemic of obesity and there is concern about the rise of childhood obesity and the implications of obesity persisting into adulthood.. The government's [National Child Measurement Programme](#) (NCMP) measures the heights and weights of children in Reception (aged 4-5) and Year 6 (aged 10-11) in state schools for population monitoring of child BMI and in order to engage parents in discussions about their child's weight. The total NCMP participation rate in Wokingham was 97% in 2016/16.

Young people in Wokingham live comparatively healthy lifestyles compared to other areas, but there is little room for complacency as overall lifestyle risks in England contribute to around 40% of ill health and early death. There are predictions that the generation who are children now will have shorter life expectancies than their parents if current trends in physical activity and obesity continue on their current trajectory.

We also know that access to green spaces considerably increases people's likelihood of being physically active. Wokingham Borough Council Countryside Services look after 381 hectares of countryside sides, which includes 217 hectares of country parks, 105 hectares of nature reserves and 59 hectares of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs).

The built and natural environment in which we live strongly influences our behaviour, including our travel patterns and physical activity levels as well as our social connectivity. Wokingham is in the process of going through some major developments in terms of new housing. By 2026 there will be in excess of 13,500 new homes in the Wokingham Borough. This presents an opportunity to plan new spaces that promote healthy behaviours including physical activity.

1.2 Starting Well

Early Years

The government [guidelines](#) for those under the age of 5 is that physical activity should be encouraged from birth, particularly through floor-based play and water-based activities in safe environments. All under 5 year olds should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary for extended periods of time.

The benefits of movement include:

- Development of motor skills
- Improves cognitive development
- Contributes to a healthy weight
- Enhances bone and muscular development
- Supports learning of social skills

Source: [Department of Health and Social Care, 2011](#)

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Preschool Age

Children of preschool age who are capable of walking unaided should be physically active daily for at least 180 minutes (3 hours) spread throughout the day. Most UK pre-school children currently spend 120-150 minutes a day in physical activity, so achieving this guideline would mean adding another 30-60 minutes a day.

The benefits of being active for at least 180 minutes a day include:

- Improved cardiovascular health
- Contributes to a healthy weight
- Improved bone health
- Supported learning of social skills
- Developed movement and co-ordination

Source: [Department of Health and Social Care, 2011](#)

Obese Young Children

Around one in five (18%) children aged 4 to 5 (Reception year) in Wokingham were overweight or obese in 2016/17. Wokingham had one of the lowest prevalence's of obese children aged 4-5 years in 2016/17 with 6%. This was lower than the South East region with 8.5% and the prevalence in England of 9.6%.

Source: [NHS Digital, National Child Measurement Programme](#)

1.3 Developing Well

Children and Adolescent Lifestyle

The government guidelines for physical activity state that young people aged 5-18 years should have 60 minutes and up to several hours every day of moderate to vigorous intensity activities. Vigorous intensity activities, including those that strengthen muscle and bone, should be incorporated at least three days a week.

Source: [Department for Health and Social Care, 2011](#)

Being regularly physically active is vital for a child's development and will help to lay the foundations for a healthy and active life. There are many physical benefits for children such as improving cardiovascular fitness, assisting with the development of fine motor skills and helping to establish connections between different parts of the brain.

Physical activity also has important benefits for wider wellbeing; research has shown that regular physical activity can help children to concentrate better at school, learn skills in cooperating and improve their mental health. Exercise has been found to have a positive effect on creating mentally healthy children by releasing feel-good brain chemicals that may ease depression.

Source: [Healthline, 2017](#)

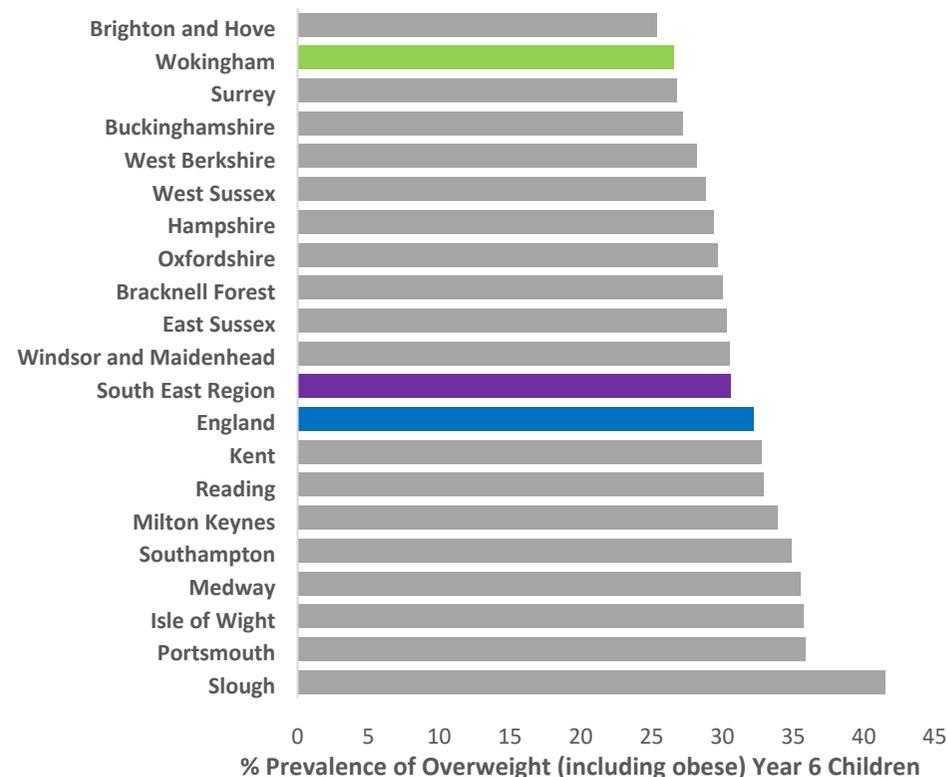
In Wokingham, the [percentage of 15 year olds that are physically active for at least one hour per day seven days a week](#) is just 15.5%. Although this is greater than England at 13.9%, it is around the average for the whole of the South East Region.

Moreover, when looking at sedentary time (somewhat inactive), the [percentage of 15 year olds with a mean daily sedentary time which is over 7 hours per day](#) is at 62.9%. This is lower than both England (67.8%) and the South East region (68.6%) and is among the lowest in the region which is between 76.3% and 60.8%.

Obesity in Children and Adolescents

Around one in four (26.6%) children aged 10-11 (Year 6) in Wokingham were either overweight or obese in 2016/17. This is among the lowest rate in the South East Region and lower than the England prevalence of 34.2%.

Figure 1 Prevalence of overweight (including obese) Year 6 children in the South East



Source: [NHS Digital, National Child Measurement Programme, 2016/17](#)

Children with Disabilities

It can be more challenging for children and young people with physical or learning disabilities to meet physical activity recommendations than it is for other children. Research shows that many barriers to participation exist for children with disabilities. Understanding and removing these barriers is crucial to ensuring all children enjoy the many health benefits of being physically active.

Parents of children with a disability report that one of the biggest barriers to participation in sports is social stigma. The children’s charity Variety fund that nationally, over a third (36%) of parents reported that their child had experienced negative social attitudes to their health problem or disability in relation to sport.

Source: [Variety, The Children’s Charity](#)

Taking part in physical activities with others of similar ability could help to boost confidence and social interaction. There has been countless research papers highlighting the positive impact that physical activity can have on the mental wellbeing of a person of any age, for example a paper written by the [Mental Health Foundation](#) in 2013.

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Travel to School

An important contributor to our level of activity is how we get about day-to-day. If children (or adults) do not regularly walk anywhere, they are missing one of the fundamental activities which contributes to health. The same factors apply to wheel-chair users or others with impaired mobility – using one’s own body to provide the energy to get around. Travel to school is a good marker of children’s active travel patterns.

Wokingham Picture

Opportunities for walking are well developed in the urban areas of the Borough. Footways are generally well surfaced, lit and connected by a range of crossing paths. This is reflected by the overall numbers of children that walk to school. The latest school census data regarding travel to school was collected in 2012.

Table 1. How pupils travel to Wokingham Schools (2012)

	Walk	Cycle	Car	Car Share	School Bus	Public Bus	Train	Taxi	Other
2010	46.53%	6.31%	31.89%	4.19%	5.36%	1.82%	1.19%	0.7%	0.47%
2011	48.24%	5.87%	30.83%	4.42%	5.14%	1.68%	1.17%	0.75%	0.22%
2012	49.50%	5.50%	30.0%	4.40%	5.27%	1.72%	1.15%	0.64%	0.12%

Source: [Wokingham Borough Council](#)

This latest data shows that walking to school has increased by nearly 3% between 2010 and 2012 and travel by car reduced by almost 2%. Wokingham’s [Local Transport Plan 3](#) aims to achieve 60% of all pupils traveling to school by walking or cycling by 2026 and to improve cycle parking by schools.

Wokingham Services

Wokingham Children’s Centre play sessions are aimed at improving the physical health of children. The activities are planned to help children achieve their developmental milestones. Children are also encouraged to eat healthy between play sessions. The centre also provides ‘cooking healthy on a budget’ and ‘cooking from scratch’ programs to targeted families which are offered in partnership with Bracknell and Wokingham College.

The Kicks programme aims to encourage young males and females, who may otherwise be difficult to reach, to be a part of a team and uses physical activity to bring them together. The scheme offers free football sessions and offers a number of additional workshops on a range of topics including bullying, healthy eating and substance misuse.

The government’s physical activity [guidelines](#) for adults (aged 18-64) is to have at least 150 minutes, over a week, of moderate to vigorous intensity activity. It is

also advised that adults should undertake physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week.

Research suggests the benefits of being active on a daily basis include:

- Reduces risk of a range of diseases e.g. coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes
- Helps maintain a healthy weight
- Helps maintain ability to perform everyday asks with ease
- Improves self-esteem
- Reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety.

The cost of inactivity has consequences for health and also places a substantial cost burden on health services through the treatment of long-term conditions and associated acute events such as heart attacks, strokes and falls.

Wokingham Picture

In 2016/17, 71.2% of adults aged 19 and over in Wokingham achieved at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week in accordance with the recommended guidelines. This was significantly better than the England figure of 66.0% and similar to the deprivation decile average of 70.0%.

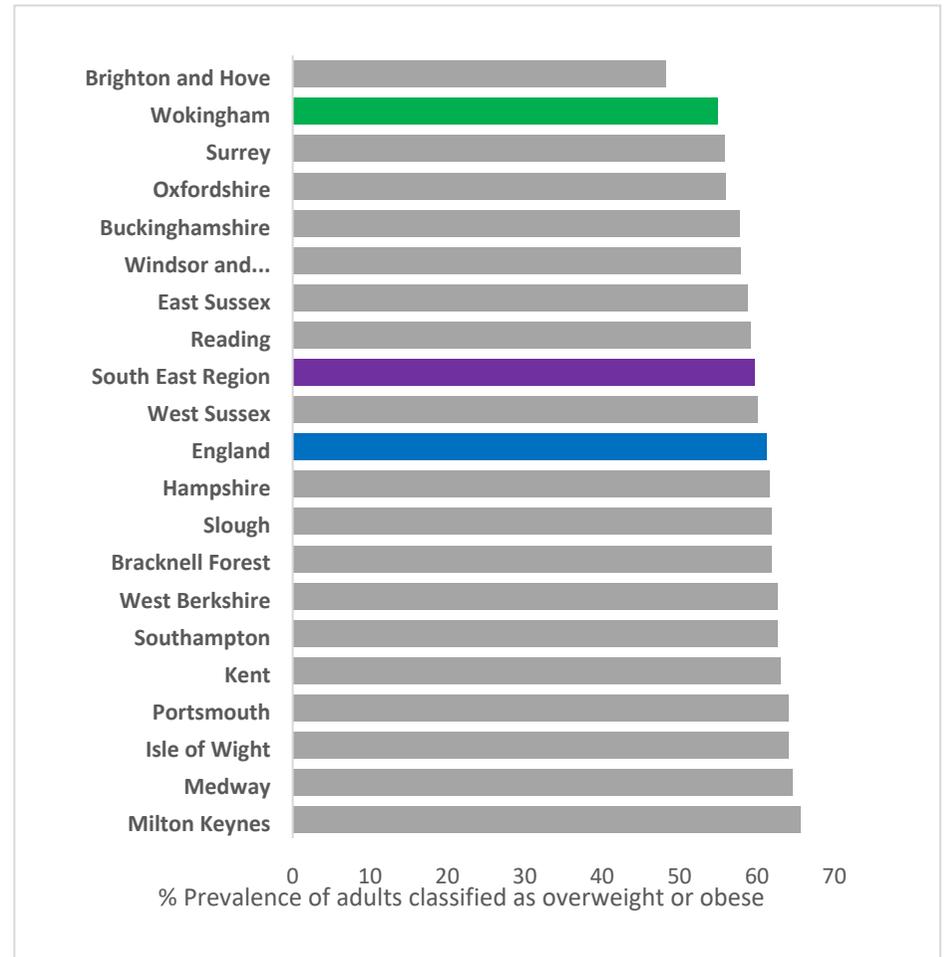
In 2016/17, 17.3% of adults aged 19 and over in Wokingham completed less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week and were therefore defined as 'physically inactive'. This was significantly better than the England figure of 22.2% and similar to the deprivation decile average of 18.4%.

Source: Public Health England (based on Active Lives Survey, Sport England) 2016/17

Overweight and Obesity in Adults

Over half (55%) of adults in Wokingham are either overweight or obese. Though Wokingham has one of the lowest rates of overweight and obesity in the region, this is a significant proportion of the adult population at greater risk of preventable long term illness and reduced life expectancy.

Figure 2 Prevalence of adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese in the South East Region



In October of 2017, 8,350 patients in Wokingham CCG were on the GP Obesity

Register. This was 6.6% of the population aged 18 and over, which was lower than the national figure of 9.7% (QOF, 2017)

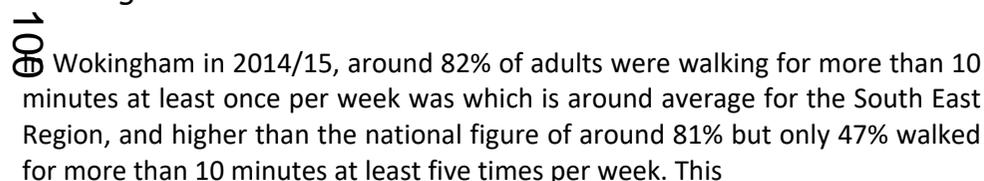
Transport

Transport across the U.K is monitored by the Department for Transport (DfT). Transport includes travel by car, bus, tram, rail, air, walking or cycling. As a local highways authority, Wokingham Borough Council has a responsibility to monitor how people commute to work in or through the borough.

Walking and cycling, also known as 'active travel' not only provide health benefits to the individual through increasing physical activity, but also have positive impacts on the wider community including reducing air pollution, and increases the number of people of all ages out on the streets, making public spaces seem more welcoming and providing opportunities for social interaction.

([PHE working together to promote active travel](#))

Wokingham Picture

 Wokingham in 2014/15, around 82% of adults were walking for more than 10 minutes at least once per week which is around average for the South East Region, and higher than the national figure of around 81% but only 47% walked for more than 10 minutes at least five times per week. This

Wokingham has the second highest percentage of adults who do any cycling at least once a month at 23.3% with the South East Region at 16.8% and England only 14.7%. Around 8% of adults in Wokingham cycle at least three times per week.

Source: [Department for Transport, Active People Survey, Sport England, 2014/15](#)

With excess of 13,000 new homes in development in the Wokingham Borough, there is plenty of opportunity for utilisation of new green spaces.

Wokingham Services

My Journey Wokingham is a borough-wide sustainable travel campaign that aims to help and inspire Wokingham residents, employees and students to travel by alternative modes. My Journey helps residents and employees of Wokingham borough, travel by modes other than single car use. This is done through a range of projects including creating maps, attending community events, organising cycle training, led walks & bike maintenance sessions and producing personalised travel packs for residents.

1.5 Ageing Well

According to [NICE guidelines](#), in order to stay healthy or to improve health, older adults need to do two types of physical activity each week. These are aerobic and strength exercises. It also advises that older people should be exercising in a safe environment for 30 minutes a day (which can be broken down into 10 minute bursts) on at least 5 days a week; this could be shopping, doing housework, gardening, walking or cycling for example.

Older adults at risk of falls, such as people with weaker legs, poor balance and some medical conditions, should do exercises to improve balance and co-ordination on at least two days a week. This could be doing yoga, tai chi or dancing.

Physical activity in older age has benefits to physical health, in particular musculoskeletal health and reducing risk of falls as well as having a positive effect on mental health and wellbeing, and increasing social contact.

1 in 5 people are over 65 and this is set to rise to 1 in 3 by 2033. The number of "oldest old" (over 85) has doubled in the past decade and the percentage of people dying before 65 has remained constant for the past 20 years.

Wokingham Picture

Wokingham Borough Council offer two sports and leisure services specifically designed for people aged over 60. These are SHINE and Steady Steps. SHINE offer 67 classes and 19 different activities such as aquacise, bowls, line dancing, pilates and many more. In January 2018 there were 1,261 active service users.

In Wokingham there were around 570 hospital admissions due to falls in those aged over 65 in 2016/17. This represents around 2% of adults over 65 in the area and is a similar rate to the England average. Around 130 adults over 65 who fell suffered a hip fracture a rate of 0.47%, lower than the England average of 0.58%.

Source [Public Health Outcomes Framework](#)

The Steady Steps, Falls Prevention exercise programme 60+ currently has 519 names on the database; of these 88 are currently active participants and 21 on a waiting list. There are 3 venues with 9 sessions running a week under this service. The table below breaks down the Steady steps participants by age group. The highest number of participants comes from the 81-90 age group.

Table 2: Participants in the Steady Steps falls prevention programme (2018)

Age group	Number
60 - 70	36
71 - 80	164
81 - 90	243
90+	31
Total	474

Source: Wokingham Borough Council, 2018

There are also a number of transport services that assist the older people of Wokingham in getting out and about and giving them the opportunity to visit other areas of the borough as well as attend any medical appointments or simply to go shopping.

Wokingham Services

The Earley Volunteer Driver Bureau (EVDB) is a local charity who use volunteer drivers to provide lifts in their private cars for elderly and/or mobility-restricted Earley residents to places such as the hospital, dentist or to other medical appointments. They also undertake trips to clubs, shops and day centres. Keep Mobile provides transport for elderly and people with disabilities within the Wokingham and Bracknell boroughs. Keep Mobile can also offer a passenger assistant to travel with them if needed.

1.6 The Environment

The environment can shape our behaviour, so there is opportunity to design the neighbourhoods and towns with activity in mind. The links between access to green space and levels of physical activity are well-established in research, which

shows higher levels of physical activity in areas with more green spaces ([Ellaway et al. 2005](#)).

The ways in which the natural environment can improve health are complex and intertwined with many factors. These are broad themes that have appeared from the research in this field, namely:

- Stress reduction
- Improved environmental quality
- Greater social cohesion
- Increased physical activity

Source: [WHO, 2016](#)

Wokingham Picture

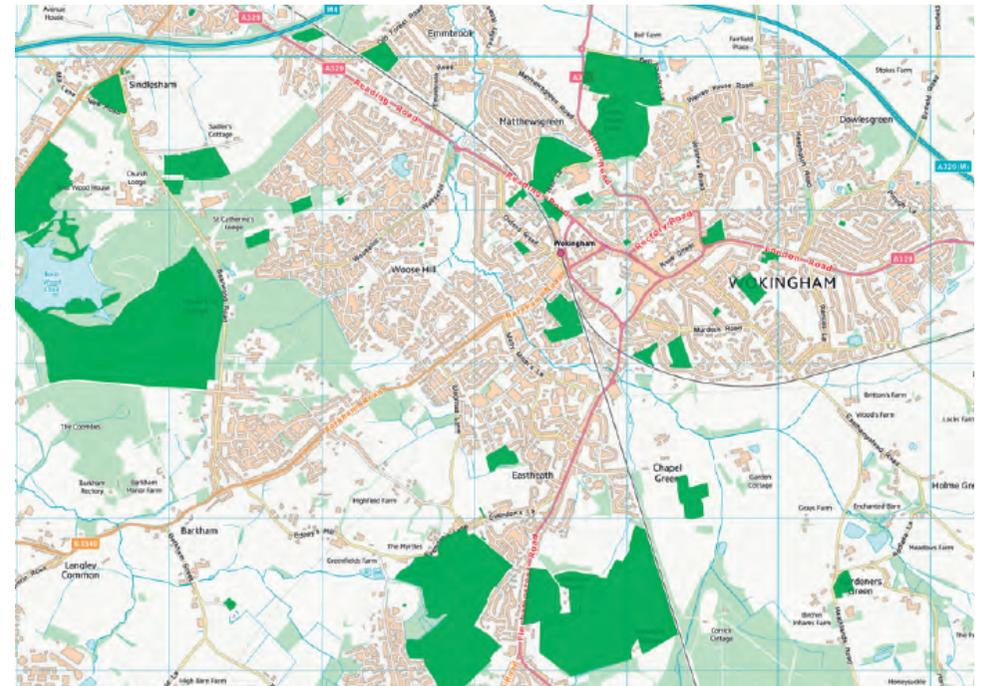
Wokingham Borough had 96,100 registered cars in 2017, equivalent to approximately 1.5 cars per household. This was the third highest out of all of the Berkshire authorities. As Wokingham is a more urbanized borough (classed as predominantly urban), the roads are classed as less rural than neighbouring authorities such as West Berkshire. As a result, our residents are exposed to more roads than other local authority populations.

Wokingham, benefits from a well-connected rail network, with easy access to Reading, a major rail hub, Gatwick airport, one of the U.K's busiest airports and the capital city London. Having easy access to reading ensures Wokingham rail users are never far away from getting to any destination in the U.K.

Local Transport Plan setting out the long-term transport strategy for the borough; particularly for the four new communities being created to accommodate the majority of the construction of over 13,000 new homes in the borough as identified in the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. A big part of the local strategy is to improve the quality of life for residents by having transport in the borough that is inclusive and enhances the economic, social and

environmental prospects of the borough whilst promoting the safety and health and wellbeing of the residents that use it. ([WBC Local transport plan 2011-2026](#))

Figure 3 showing the current green space in Wokingham town centre



Source: [Ordnance Survey OpenData \(2018\)](#)

Wokingham Borough has a number of country parks that are enjoyed by those within the borough and people who travel a distance to visit them, such as:

- California Country Park
- Dinton Pastures Country Park
- Aldermore Nature Reserve
- Highwood Nature Reserve

- Healthlake – Special Scientific Interest Site
- Rook's Nest Wood Country Park
- Charvil Country Park
- Keephatch Park Nature Reserve
- Lavell's Lake Nature Reserve

2. Reducing Social Isolation and Loneliness

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- Adults who are users of social care can be quite socially isolated; less than half (48%) have as much social contact as they would like.
- Adults who provide unpaid care to friends and relatives are also at risk of isolation. Just over a third (36%) of adult carers have as much social contact as they would like.
- 7.3% of children and young people in Wokingham are estimated to have a diagnosable mental health disorder; this equates to a total of 1,828.
- There are around 443 children and 465 adults in Wokingham who need support for their learning disabilities. It's estimated that 85% of young disabled adults aged 18-34 feel lonely. (Scope, 2017).
- Over 1 in 10 mothers are thought to be affected by post-natal depression which can be exacerbated by social isolation. It is estimated that around 300 mothers in Wokingham are affected each year.

Key Messages

- Living alone is strongly associated with social isolation. The estimated number of elderly population living alone in Wokingham borough is 10,442. This number is estimated to increase by 25% by 2025.

2.1 Introduction

Social isolation is about separation from social or familial contact, community involvement or access to services, whilst loneliness is a subjective feeling which may or may not relate to observable isolation. People can be isolated without

feeling lonely, and can be lonely without being isolated, although the two often go together.

Social relationships and interactions are vital to human health and wellbeing, and without them the stress response triggered can have a significant impact on both physical and mental health.

[Research suggests](#) that weak social connections carry a health risk that is more harmful than not exercising, twice as harmful as obesity, and is comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes. A [report](#) collating evidence of the effects of loneliness and isolation found that socially isolated people are:

- 3.4 times more likely to suffer depression
- 1.9 times more likely to develop dementia in the following 15 years
- 1.8 times more likely to visit a GP
- 1.6 times more likely to visit A&E
- 1.3 times more likely to have emergency admissions
- 3.5 times more likely to enter local authority funded residential care.

Though often associated with ageing, social isolation and loneliness does not just affect the older population; anyone of any age can suffer. Groups that are more vulnerable to social isolation include people who:

- Live in rural communities or deprived urban communities
- Live alone; widowed or divorced;
- Are retired or not employed
- Are struggling financially
- Are in poor health physical or mental health,
- Have limited mobility, visual or hearing impairment
- Have a change in life e.g. new baby or family bereavement

By the very nature of these issues the scale of the suffering is often hidden. Social isolation can be measured by asking the population about the frequency of their

social contacts, also by measuring participation in social activities and. Loneliness is usually assessed by asking questions about experience of feelings, for example: “How often do you feel you lack companionship?”

The likelihood of people experiencing social isolation and loneliness can also be measured by identifying risk factors for social isolation in the population, including those characteristics listed above.

2.2 Starting Well

The arrival of a baby can leave new parents feeling isolated. While pregnancy does offer opportunities to create new social networks, for example through

antenatal groups, [surveys](#) suggest that around one in five mothers feel they don't have friends or family or friends nearby who they can turn to.

Social isolation is a known risk factor for postnatal depression and is associated with poor self-rated health in mothers. Postnatal depression is thought to affect around 1 in every 10 women within a year of giving birth, though some [surveys](#) suggest the figure might be closer to 3 in 10. It can also affect fathers and partners, although this is less common.

Perinatal mental health refers to the mental health of mothers during pregnancy and after birth of the child. Postnatal depression and anxiety are common perinatal mental health issues. Other less common but serious conditions include postpartum psychosis and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Table 2. Estimated incidence of perinatal mental health issues in Wokingham

Total number of live births (2016)	1,809
Estimated number of cases each year of:	
depression and anxiety (mild-moderate)	270
depression (severe)	55
Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)	55
Postpartum psychosis	5

Source:
Perinatal

Mental Health Profiles, Public Health England

Health Visitors have a crucial role in assessing and promoting perinatal mental health. Face-to-face contact with a health visitor offers an opportunity to assess and provide support to mothers struggling with mental health issues.

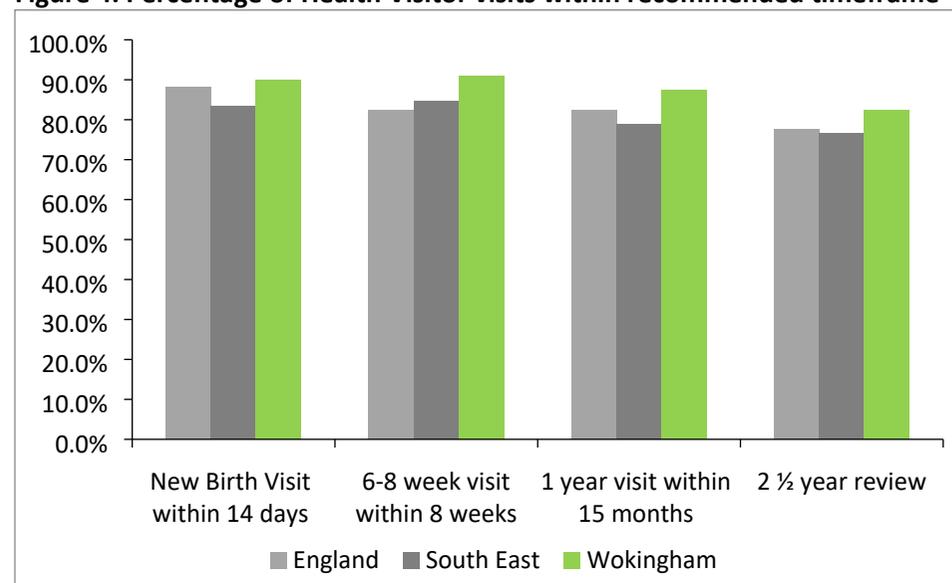
Health Visitors typically have five points of contact with mothers and babies from before birth to age 2½ years. Around 37% mothers in Wokingham received a first face-to-face contact with a health visitor before birth of the baby during 2016/17, compared to the average in England of approximately 40%.

Coverage of visits after the birth is much higher; 90% of women and children receive a face-to-face New Birth Visit (NBV) within 14 days which is higher than

the national average; 91% of infants received a 6-8 week review by the time they were 8 weeks old, also higher than the national average.

Around 7% of mothers are referred onwards following a maternal mood assessment at the 6-8 week review. This equates to 123 mothers from Wokingham

Figure 4. Percentage of Health Visitor visits within recommended timeframe



Source: [Health visitor service delivery metrics 2016 to 2017](#)

Maternal depression can severely impact early childhood development, and development in early childhood in turn has a significant impact on factors such as educational attainment, employment and health and wellbeing.

Social disadvantage is a risk factor for postnatal depression; the impact of which can exacerbate health inequalities over the life course and lead to disadvantage across generations.

Wokingham Services

The National Childbirth Trust (NCT) is a national charity with branches in Wokingham and in Crowthorne and Sandhurst, providing new parents support and impartial advice so that they can decide what is best for their family, also introducing them to a network of local parents to gain practical and emotional support.

Home Start is a family support charity. Home Start offers visits and free support to young families with at least one child under five years old; this can involve emotional support, practical help with getting to appointments or shopping or information and links to other organisations including health and educational services.

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2.3 Developing Well

Children and young people can become socially isolated due to adverse life events

or circumstances, including experience of abuse and neglect, domestic violence or substance misuse in a parent.

Having a long term condition or a disability or being a carer are also risk factors for having less social contact. An estimated 85% of disabled young adults from the 18-34 year old age group feel lonely ([Scope, 2017](#)).

Young people may also become socially isolated as a result of bullying. Bullying is often related to socially ascribed identities, such as those related to gender, ethnicity, sexuality or physical appearance.

Homophobic and racially motivated bullying and harassment are common in schools, as well as bullying related to weight. Nearly half of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans young people have been bullied for being LGBT at school and more than 16,000 young people miss school due to bullying ([NSPCC Bullying statistics](#)).

Social isolation in childhood is associated with poor mental health. Children who experience social isolation are more likely to have poor educational attainment and lower incomes in adulthood; they are also at greater risk of smoking, obesity and psychological distress in adulthood. (PHE [Reducing social isolation across the life-course](#))

Wokingham Picture

In 2017 there were 443 children with a learning disability known to schools in Wokingham borough. This equates to a rate of around 15 per 1,000 children which is significantly lower than the England rate of 35 per 1,000 children. Around 2,800 children were assessed to have special educational needs (SEN).

There were 20 children in Wokingham with parents in treatment for alcohol addiction and 16 children with parents in treatment for drug addiction, with around 230 children aged under 16 providing unpaid care for friends and relatives in 2011/12.

Around half of 15 year olds in Wokingham reported having been bullied in 2015/16 compared with the 57% average across the South East. School absenteeism rates are significantly lower in Wokingham than the England average, though even with low rates over 2015/16 there were around 680 primary and around 970 secondary school children persistently absent from school (missing more than 10% of classes).

(Source: [Public Health England Child and Maternal Health Profiles](#))

Children in Need

A 'child in need' is a child who requires support of local authority social services to support health or development. This includes children on child protection plans or who are looked after, children who are young carers as well as children with disabilities. There were a total of 667 children assessed to be in need of local authority support in Wokingham in 2017.

Table 3. Children in Need in Wokingham according to type of need (2017)

Primary need identified	Number
Abuse or neglect	193
Child's disability or illness	157
Family dysfunction, stress or absent parenting	128
Parent's disability or illness	30
not stated	158

Around a third of children in need in Wokingham (33%) are persistently absent from school (defined as missing more than 10% of classes) compared to the national average of 30%. Absence from school can lead children and young people to having fewer social contacts and becoming more isolated.

(Source: [Department for Education characteristics of Children in Need \(2016/17\)](#))

Prevalence of mental health problems

Poor mental health is both a risk factor for and a potential outcome of social isolation in children and young people. Measuring the true prevalence of mental health problems in the population is challenging but for this age group is especially difficult. Estimates are largely from national and local surveys and from records of service use.

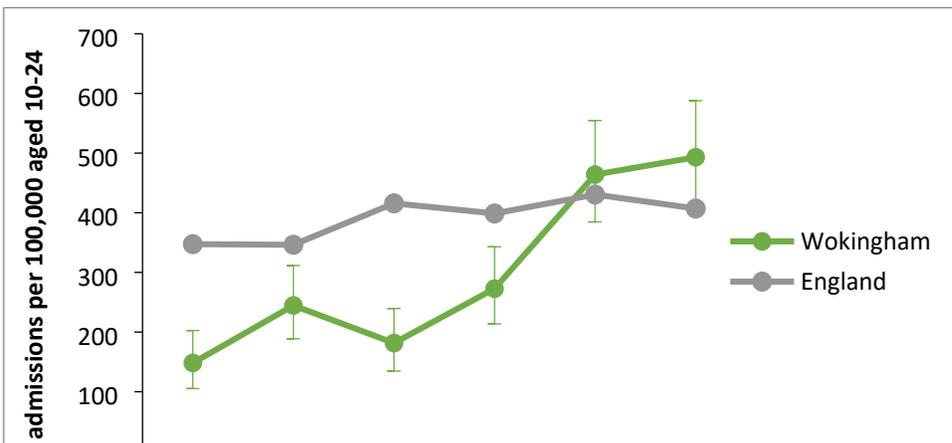
Based on surveys of mental health of children and young people it is estimated that 7.3%, of those aged 5-16 (around 1,800 children) in Wokingham have a mental health disorder. This is lower than the estimates for the South East (8.5%) and England (9.3%).

Conduct disorders (including aggression and anti-social behaviour) are the most common type of mental health disorder affecting an estimated 4.1%. Around 730 children (2.9%) are thought to have an emotional disorder (anxiety and depression) and a further 1.1% have hyperkinetic disorders.

(Source: [Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Profile](#), PHE)

Figure 5. Hospital admissions due to self-harm in those aged 10-24*

Source: [Public Health England, 2015](#) *data quality concerns



population, higher than the England average of 407 per 100,000 (Figure 2). There are some concerns over the quality of the data and so these figures should be interpreted with caution.

The Mental Health Services Dataset reports data on use of mental health services. These reports show that as of March 2017 there were 1,315 active referrals to general mental health services for those aged up to 18 and 2,825 open referrals to children's and young people's mental health services.

(Source: [Mental Health Services Monthly Statistics](#), NHS Digital)

Wokingham Services

Relax Kids helps children, young people and families to manage stress, anxiety and difficult feelings whilst boosting self-esteem, confidence and improving sleep whilst in a relaxed environment. Relax Kids provides classes that focus on mindfulness for children whilst encouraging creativity, confidence and calm, and promoting healthy habits. They also run a Story Massage stand-alone session as part of a group or 1:1 which involves combing the benefits of positive touch with the creativity of words.

More Arts is an independent arts development charity that champions all art forms. More Arts fund workshops at Wokingham Hospital and workshops via Soulscape which all use the medium of art to enable children to freely express themselves and live in the moment.

SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service) is a free, confidential service that is offered for parents, carers, children and young people. SENDIASS provides impartial information, advice and support relating to all aspects of SEN and Disabilities, including health, social care, and personal budgets to children and young people up to the age of 25 with SEND and their parents/carers.

ASD Family Help charity is a 'User Led' independent and voluntary group that offers support, advice and activities for individuals on the autistic spectrum, their parents, carers and professionals within Wokingham and West Berkshire Boroughs in Berkshire. Support can include activities for autistic children and young people, life and relationship skills for teens and social activities to include siblings and young carers.

Building for the Future provides play, therapy and support for children with additional needs and their families. This includes multiple leisure activities in their specially adapted community centre. Parents and carers can also find support and socialise.

Berkshire Vision is a charity for the blind and visually impaired. For visually impaired children and their families, Berkshire Vision have organised events approximately once a month which is supported either by staff members of volunteers. The charity has a sports programme which delivers specially adapted activities for visually impaired adults.

2.4 Living and Working Well

Adults aged 16-64 are thought to be less likely to experience loneliness or social isolation, though loneliness is less well studied in this age group. We do know that men at greater risk of social isolation and tend to have fewer local social connections.

Life transitions are also important and can lead to isolation. Loss of employment or housing or breakdown of a relationship can all have a significant effect on social connectedness.

Being in work protects against social isolation both through providing income and access to social networks. Employment rates in people with long-term health conditions, disabilities, and in people with mental health disorders are lower than for others in the population, increasing risk of isolation in these groups.

As well as the association between isolation and deprivation, there is also a link between isolation and various social identities. People who identify as black or ethnic minority (BME) are at greater risk of social isolation and are more likely to be diagnosed with mental condition. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are also at increased risk of being socially isolated.

(Source: PHE [Reducing social isolation across the life-course](#))

Both people who *receive* social care support and those who *provide* unpaid care for friends or relatives may lack the social contact and support that they would like. Providing care and support can also have a direct impact on health and wellbeing independent to the effect of social isolation.

Almost three quarters of respondents to Carers UK's the [State of Caring 2018 survey](#) who are currently providing care said they had experienced stress or depression as a result of caring, while over half said their physical health had worsened as a result of caring.

Wokingham Picture

Adults with a disability or long term physical or mental health conditions

Around 18,000 people in Wokingham responding to the 2011 census reported having a long term physical or mental health condition or a disability.

GP records also provide a useful source of data on health needs, though often underestimate true population needs as they only measure those seeking care. GP records over 2016/17 show that in Wokingham there are around 8,600 adults (7.8% of the adult population) recorded as having a diagnosis of depression. This is significantly lower than England average (9.1%). Around 780 people were recorded as having a diagnosis of schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder or other psychoses.

(Source: [Public Health England: Mental Health and Wellbeing JSNA](#))

In Wokingham in 2016/17 there were around 480 people of all ages recorded on GP Practice registers as having a learning disability. Estimates based on the Health Survey for England suggest that around 11,500 adults in Wokingham had a physical disability (2012). A total of 2,120 working age people in Wokingham were in receipt of Disability Living allowance as of 2014.

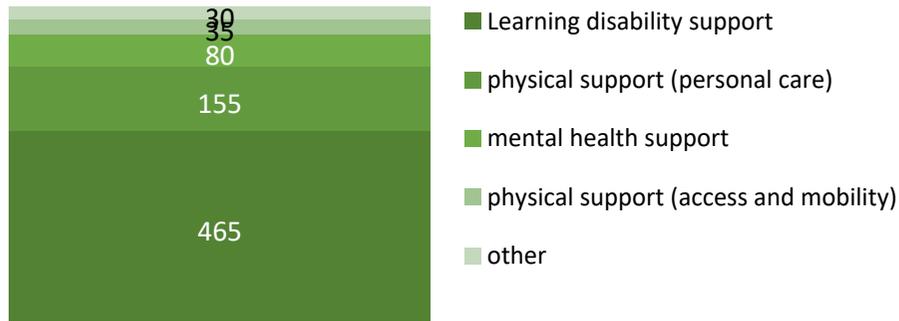
Adults supported by local authority adult social care services

Adult social care services in Wokingham received over 4,600 requests for support from new clients in the 2017/18 financial year. A quarter of these requests (1,145) were from adults aged between 18 and 64. Of the 1,145 working age adults requesting support, around 14% (165) received long term care, 5% received short term care, 8% received low level support and 50% were signposted to universal services.

A total of 765 adults in this age group were accessing long term social care support over 2017/18. The majority of these adults (60%) required support for a learning disability [Figure 6].

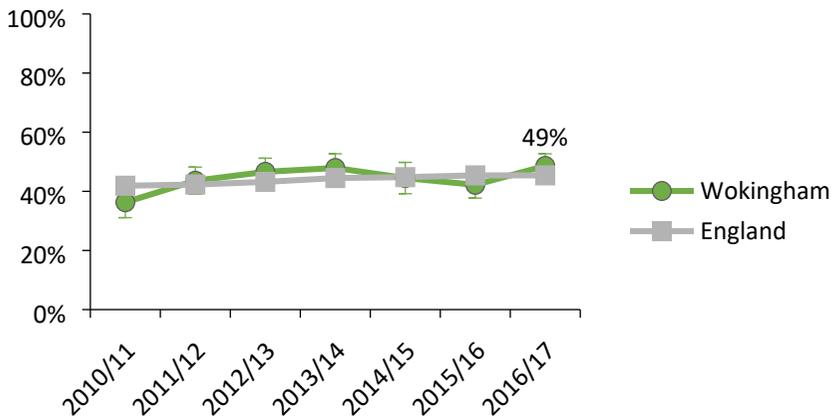
(Source: [Adult Social Care Activity and Finance Report](#), NHS Digital)

Figure 6. Adults aged 18-64 accessing long term social care support according to primary support need 2017/18



The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) measures how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to people. The ASCOF draws on data collected as part of Adult Social Care Survey. This asks service users about their experiences of care, including their experiences of social connectedness. Figure 4 shows that only around half of service users in Wokingham felt they had as much social contact as they would like.

Figure 7. Proportion of adult social care users who have as much social contact as they would like (2016/17) Source: [Adult Social Care Survey – England \(NHS digital\)](#)

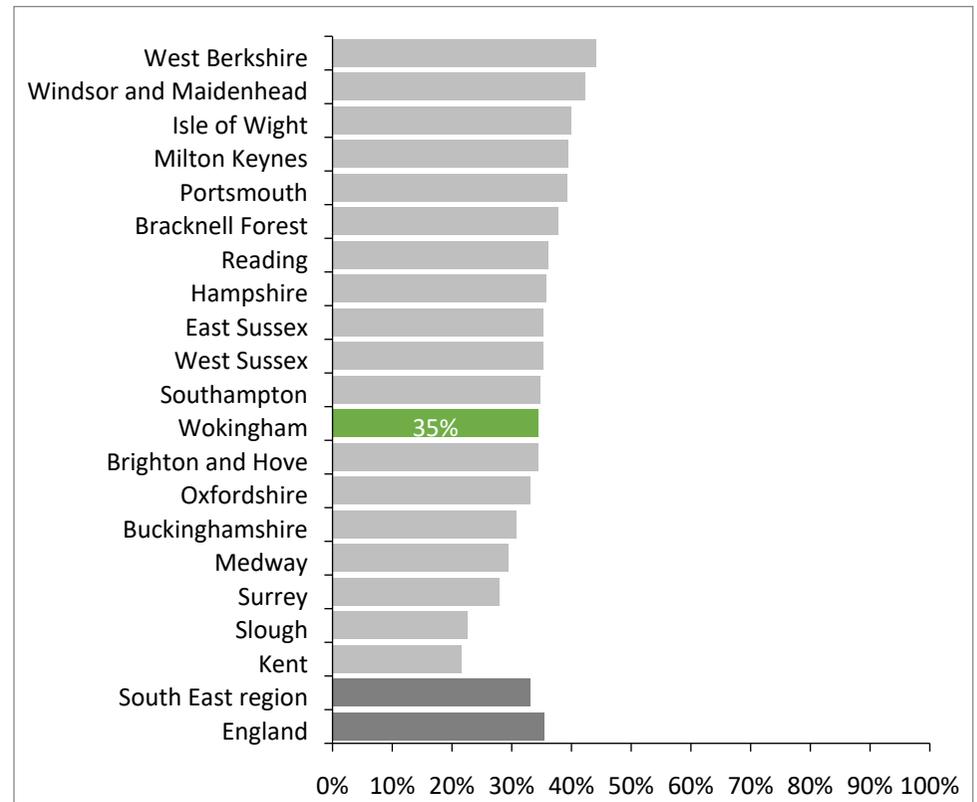


Adults providing unpaid care

The 2011 census estimated that around 2,300 adults in Wokingham were providing unpaid care for friends or relatives. The Personal Social Services Survey focuses on a smaller group of carers; those who provide unpaid care to adult social care service users. Figure 5 shows that only 35% of carers surveyed in Wokingham have as much social contact as they would like. This is similar to the national average.

Figure 8. Proportion of adult carers (age 18+) who have as much social contact as they would like (2016/17)

Source: [Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers \(NHS digital\)](#)



Wokingham Services

Unlock Your Wellbeing provides training in mental health first aid, wellbeing, stress management, resilience, happiness, mental health recovery and life coaching.

Depression Xpression holds a monthly support group which is run by peers, for anyone who is affected by depression or anxiety.

The Berkshire MS Therapy Centre provides information and support alongside a wide range of therapies to help local people living with MS and their families and carers.

Parity for Disability provides developmental day services for people with profound and multiple disabilities aged 18 and over. They also provide a music therapy service.

CLASP (Caring, Listening and Supporting Partnership) is a self-advocacy group for people with learning disabilities in the Wokingham Borough. CLASP runs a weekly drop in coffee shop and offer a signposting service and support for adults. The group develop independence plans with their members based on their specific needs.

Dementia Care is a service provided to Wokingham residents aged 65 and over with a dementia diagnosis, their carers and families. They also provide support groups and an Understanding Dementia course for carers.

SEAP have an IMHA (Independent Mental Health Advocacy) service which helps people who have been detained under the Mental Health Act which includes compulsory treatment orders in the community.

Crossroads Care provides 1:1 home based respite breaks to support carers who provide unpaid care to a family member or friends who are suffering illness, disability, frailty, a mental health problem or an addiction. The care worker will take over the carer's responsibilities to give them a break. Crossroads Care also provides cover for carers to attend any health related appointments or any hospital admissions.

The MS Society has a support group for carers of people with MS, who meet on the monthly at various venues to have a couple of hours of respite from caring and enjoy a lunch in the company of others who understand the problems of caring.

2.5 Ageing Well

For older adults, retirement and/or unemployment can result in losing connections with colleagues and friends which can lead to social isolation. Retirement may also mean living on a lower income, which can also have an impact on likelihood of participating in social events.

Living alone is strongly associated with social isolation. Older people living alone are particularly vulnerable to social isolation if they also have a long term physical or mental health condition, reduced mobility or a visual or hearing impairment. People who live alone are not always visible to services and may be hard to reach to provide advice and support.

Older people are particularly affected by transport links; a report by the International Longevity Centre found that 12% of older people would like to visit their family more often and over three quarters cited transport or mobility issues as the reason for not being able to do so. Assisted travel arrangements can provide a means for older people with restricted mobility to get out and about.



Wokingham Picture

The number of people aged over 65 in Wokingham borough is estimated to increase by 17% between 2018 and 2025 from 29,600 to 34,514.

(Source: [ONS](#))

People in Wokingham live long and comparatively healthy lives. Life expectancy at 65 in Wokingham is 22.3 years for females and 19.7 years for males; this is higher than both England and the South East. Healthy life expectancy is an estimate of how many years a person might live in a 'healthy state'. For Wokingham, healthy life expectancy a 65 is 14.1 years for females and 13.4 years for males.

(Source: [Public Health England Outcomes Framework](#))

People with long term conditions and disabilities

The Health Survey for England has been used to estimate the prevalence of sensory impairment:

- 27,929 people are estimated to have some hearing loss. 64.3% of these people are aged 65 and over.
- 2,576 people aged 65 and over are estimated to have a moderate or serious visual impairment.

While it has been found that generally older people report higher levels of happiness than those of working age or younger (Measuring National Well-being Programme conducted ONS April 2018), mental health problems including dementia are an important cause of ill health.

As shown by the table, the estimated prevalence of dementia and depression amongst those aged 65 and over is going to increase; this is also likely to be linked with the anticipated growth of the number of older people in Wokingham.

Table 4. Number of estimated population aged 65 and over with dementia and depression: *Source: POPPI, June 2018*

	2017	2020	2025	2030	2035
Wokingham: Total Population aged 65+ and predicted to have dementia	2,013	2,212	2,682	3,204	3,726
Wokingham: Total Population aged 65+ and predicted to have severe depression	784	843	977	1,098	1,117
Wokingham: Total Population aged 65+ and predicted to have depression	2,485	2,656	2,965	3,363	3,670

People living alone

In 2017 it was estimated that there were 10,442 people aged 65 and over in the Wokingham borough who lived alone which is equal to 36% of this population group (Source: POPPI). This number is estimated to increase by 25% by 2025 which would be around 13,099 older people living alone.

Table 5. Estimated numbers of Wokingham population aged 65 and over who live alone by gender and age group *Source: POPPI, June 2018*

	2017	2020	2025	2030	2035
Males aged 65-74	1,500	1,520	1,580	1,820	1,920
Males aged 75 and over	1,938	2,210	2,686	3,026	3,434
Females aged 65-74	2,490	2,550	2,520	2,880	3,120
Females Aged 75 and over	4,514	5,063	6,283	7,015	7,747
Total population aged 65-74	3,990	4,070	4,100	4,700	5,040
Total population aged 75 and over	6,452	7,273	8,969	10,041	11,181

The 2011 census showed that Bulmershe and Whitegates and Twyford wards had the highest proportion of one-person households aged 65 and over.

People accessing social care services

During the year 2016/17, 415 people aged 65 and over in the Wokingham borough accessed support met by a nursing or residential care setting funded by Wokingham Borough Council.

During 2016/17, only 48% of Wokingham service users aged 65 and over reported that they felt that they had as much social contact as they would like. This can be compared against the average for England of 43%. Although Wokingham has a slightly higher percent than the England average, this still shows that over half of service users in Wokingham aged 65 and over do not have as much social contact as they would like.

In a residential care setting in 2016/17, 56.9% of people reported having as much social contact as they want with the people that they like, 32.5% reported that they had adequate social contact with people, 8.7% felt they had some social contact but not enough and 1.9% felt they had little contact and felt socially isolated. For those in a nursing care setting, these were 50.5%, 34.5%, 11.5% and 3.5% respectively.

Wokingham Services

Wokingham Volunteer Centre runs a Transport Scheme which provides residents of the borough a means to attend a wide range of destinations for all types of medical appointments and treatments. Volunteer drivers stay with the client for the duration of their appointment, acting as a companion.

Crowthorne Community Minibus provides a social amenity bus for the disabled and elderly residents of Crowthorne; enabling them to get out and about with likeminded people and enjoy a variety of trips.

The Earley Volunteer Driver Bureau (EVDB) is a local charity who use volunteer drivers to provide lifts in their private cars for elderly and/or mobility-restricted Earley residents to places such as the hospital, dentist or to other medical appointments. They also undertake trips to clubs, shops and day centres.

Keep Mobile provides transport for elderly and disabled people within the Wokingham and Bracknell boroughs. Keep Mobile can also offer a passenger assistant to travel with them if needed.

COATS (Crowthorne Old Age to Teen Society) is a charity that seeks to promote the welfare of the older people in and around the Crowthorne area. Run at Pinewood Avenue, the charity provides companionship and services for local older people. At the centre, professional staff provide healthy freshly prepared lunches, teas and stimulating activities in a warm and friendly environment.

Men's Shed is a project charity aimed at older men in the Wokingham borough. The Project aims to shares skills and interests including woodwork and furniture restoration, tool renovation, milling and gardening.

St Sebastian's Church run the Jubilee club which is a weekly group for the over 60s. The group holds talks, games, outings and tea and cake. The club also offers home communion to house-bound members of the congregation. There is also a 'Friends' group which is run to encourage friendships between people with similar interests and situations who are on their own.

3. Narrowing the Health Inequalities Gap

Key Messages

- Wokingham is the least deprived borough in Berkshire and is the 2nd least deprived out of 326 local authorities in the country – but inequalities still exist!
- Men among the most deprived 10% of the borough can expect to live an average of 4.5 fewer years than the least deprived and over 7 fewer years in full health. For women the gap is wider at 5.5 years.
- As well as the deprivation gap, inequalities in health outcomes also exist according to ethnicity, age, gender and sexual identity, disability and mental health.
- Health in pregnancy and early years is generally good, however, only half of children receiving free school meals are 'ready for school' aged five compared with over three quarters of their peers.
- Wokingham's average KS4 results (GCSE equivalent) are among the top 10% in the country, however, young people receiving free school meals are scoring almost 40% lower than their peers.
- Despite one of the lowest rates of smoking in the country, routine and manual workers are twice as likely to smoke as those in other occupation groups
- Compared with other local authorities in the South East employment rates across all sectors in society are good in, however, big gaps in employment remain for the most vulnerable in society.
- Availability and affordability of housing in Wokingham is a challenge. In winter heating costs are a significant burden for the 4,446 of households that are classified as fuel poor.

3.1 Introduction

Health inequalities are avoidable differences in health outcomes between different groups in the population, that arise due to the social and environmental conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age.

The Marmot Review '[Fair Society, Healthy Lives](#)' commissioned by the Department of Health and published in 2010 described the health inequalities facing England, and identified actions that were likely to have the biggest impact on reducing those inequalities:

1. Give every child the best start in life
2. Enable all children and young people to maximise their capabilities
3. Create fair employment and good work for all
4. Ensure healthy standard of living for all
5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention

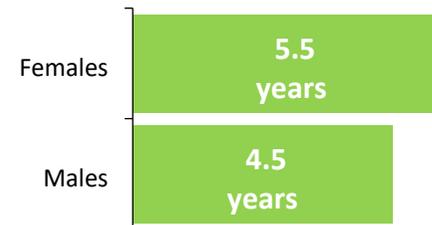
¹ Marmot also described how reducing inequalities will not be achieved by focusing solely on the most disadvantaged in society. We need to address the social and environmental determinants of health for the whole population, but actions should be at “*a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage*”.

As well as the deprivation gap, inequalities in health outcomes also exist according to ethnicity, age, gender, disability, gender identity and sexual identity.

The life expectancy gap

Men among the 10% least deprived in Wokingham are expected to live 4.5 years longer than those among the 10% most deprived. The difference in life expectancy for women between the most and least deprived in Wokingham is 5.5 years. Both men and women in these most affluent areas are expected to live an extra 7.1 years of full health compared with those in the most deprived

Figure 9. Wokingham's Deprivation Gap in Life Expectancy



(Source: [PHE Public Health Outcomes Framework 2014-2016](#))

Breakdown of the Life Expectancy Gap by Cause of Death

In Wokingham the gap in life expectancy between most deprived fifth and the least deprived fifth of the population is due in large part to cancer deaths, which accounts for 41% of the gap in life expectancy.

This is followed by circulatory disease (in males just over 25% and in females around 15% of the difference is due to circulatory diseases and respiratory diseases (in males around 11% and in females around 18% of the difference is due to respiratory diseases.

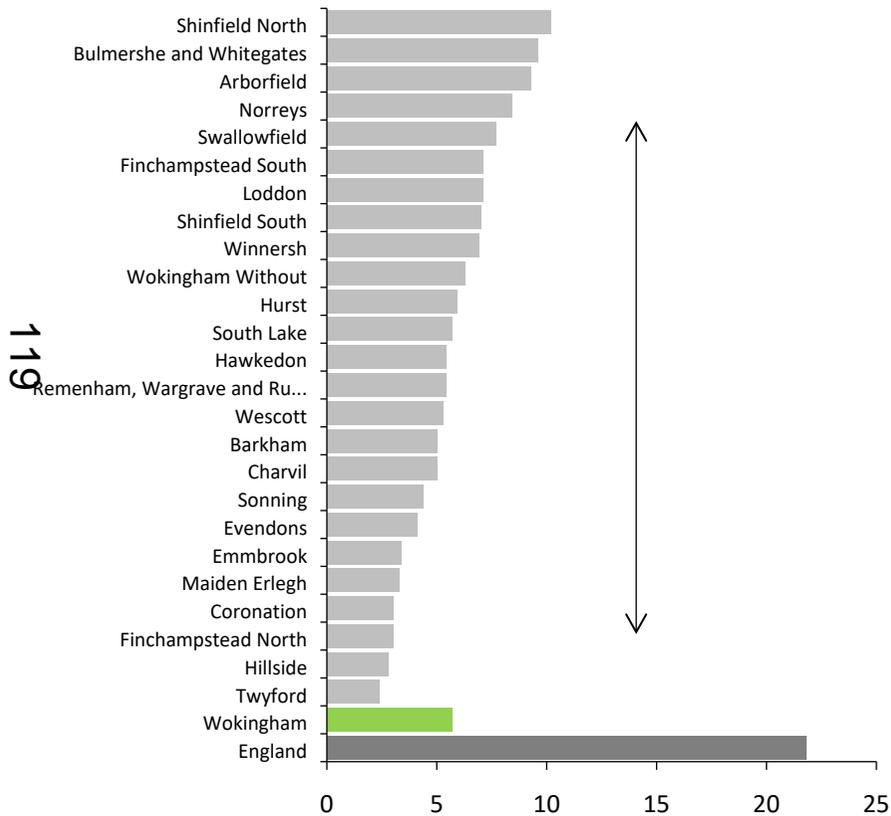
All of these conditions are collectively known as “non-communicable diseases” and share many of the same behavioural risk factors including unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, smoking and excess alcohol consumption.

(Source: [PHE Segment Tool](#))

3.2 Measuring Deprivation

In order to understand how social disadvantage or deprivation affects health and wellbeing it is important to be able to describe it and measure it.

Figure 10. Wokingham wards according to deprivation score (IMD 2015) (Source:



[PHE](#))

Deprivation relates not only to the amount of money you have, but also your access to resources and services. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures relative deprivation for small areas across England across seven domains of deprivation including; Income; Employment; Education, Skills and

Training; Health Deprivation and Disability; Crime; Barriers to Housing and Services; and Living Environment. According to IMD scores Wokingham is the least deprived borough in Berkshire and the second least deprived out of 326 local authorities in the country.

Local Deprivation Analysis

In 2017 Wokingham United Charities (WUC) produced a local analysis of deprivation by very small area – the lowest level at which data is available – the Lower Super Output Area. They used the national ranking of IMD 2015 for the nine wards within the five parishes which cover the charity’s “areas of benefit”. When they ranked the LSOAs the three wards that contained Wokingham’s most deprived small areas were Wokingham Without, Norreys and Finchampstead South.

The table below shows these wards according to their ranking in each domain and suggests that employment, child education, child income and geographical barriers as the greatest challenges in these wards.

(Source: Wokingham United Charities)

Table 6. Deprivation domain ranking in three deprived wards in Wokingham

Ward Name	Wokingham Without		Norreys		Finchampstead South	
LSOA	Wokingham 020A		Wokingham 013C		Wokingham 018D	
Overall Deprivation	4		4		5	
Lowest Score ↑ ↓ Highest Score	Employment	2	Geographical Barriers	2	Child Income	3
	Child Education	3	Employment	3	Geographical Barriers	3
	Geographical Barriers	4	Child Income	3	Crime	4
	Adult Income	5	Adult Income	4	Employment	4
	Health and Disability	5	Crime	4	Adult Income	5
	Crime	6	Health and Disability	6	Health and Disability	8
	Child Income	7	Outdoors Environment	10	Outdoors Environment	8
	Outdoors Environment	7	Child Education	10	Child Education	9
	Adult Skills	8	Adult Skills	10	Indoors Environment	10
	Indoors Environment	8	Wider Barriers	10	Wider Barriers	10
	Wider Barriers	9	Indoor Environment	10	Adult Skills	10

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Key: Top 30% nationally Bottom 30% nationally

3.3 Starting Well

Children in poverty

Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) measures the proportion of children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families. In Wokingham 6.8% (a total of 2,176) children under 16 were living in income deprived families which is significantly lower than the England average ([PHE 2018a](#)). Analysis by the charity End Child Poverty suggests that when housing costs are taken into account a total of 3,718 children were living in poverty in Wokingham, with rates ranging from 4.1% in Hurst to 17.6% in Swallowfield and 24% in Bulmershe and Whitegates [See Appendix A]

(Source: [End Child Poverty Percentage of children in poverty, July-Sept 2017](#))

Pregnancy and Birth

A healthy woman is more likely to give birth to a healthy baby. Factors such as smoking, alcohol consumption, obesity, social isolation and stress can have a significant impact on the health of both the mother and the unborn child.

These factors in pregnancy may lead to babies being born early or at very low birth weight. Low birth weight in babies (defined as weight at birth <2.5kg) can be an indicator of poor health in later life. Disadvantaged mothers are more likely to have low birth weight babies than mothers from less deprived backgrounds.

Wokingham Picture

Wokingham has the lowest low birth weight rate in Berkshire at 4.8% which is significantly lower than the average for England. In 2016 there were 81 babies born weighing less than 2.5kg in Wokingham.

Over 2016/17 only 3.8% of mothers in Wokingham were smokers at the time of delivery. This is amongst the lowest rate in the country, however, performance

hasn't always been this good – in 2011/12 there were over double the number of women still smoking at the time of delivery.

(Source: [PHE Child and Maternal Health Profiles](#))

Early Years

Approximately 80% of brain development takes place by the age of 3. These early years in a child's life are crucial in shaping physical, social, emotional and educational development.

(Source: [Wave Trust. 2013. From Conception to Age Two: the Age of Opportunity.](#))

Health Visiting teams lead and deliver the Healthy Child Program for all children aged 0-5. This is a service that delivers screening, immunisations, health and development reviews, and advice around health, wellbeing and parenting.

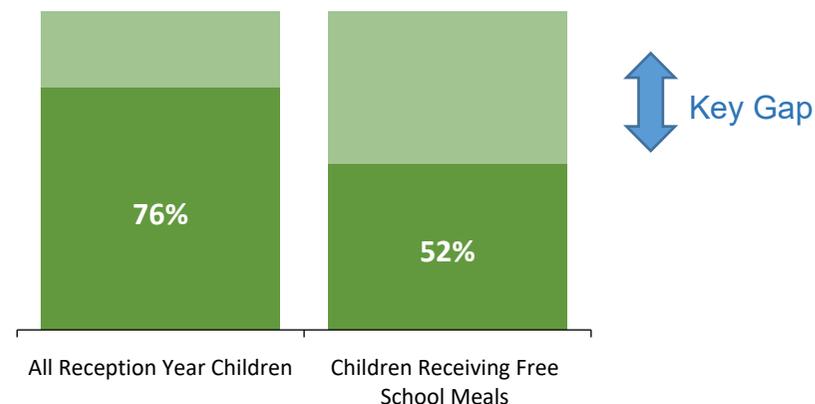
Child development including communication and language; physical, personal, social and emotional development; literacy; and mathematics is also measured in Reception Year of School. This measure is known as "school readiness".

Wokingham Picture

Over three quarters of five year olds in the academic year 2016/17 achieved a "good level of development" on assessment at the end of Reception year compared with 52.3% of children receiving free school meals.

Despite having amongst the highest levels of school readiness across the South East, the levels of school readiness in those receiving free school meals is among the poorest in the South East.

Figure 11. School Readiness of 5 year-olds in Wokingham



Wokingham Services

Stop smoking services in Wokingham supported 5 pregnant women to quit over the last year.

Wokingham Children's Centre gets children ready for school by offering support to targeted families via workshops and programs which help with this significant transition in a child's life.

Wokingham has a high uptake in health visiting reviews, compared to other local authorities in the South East region and in England as a whole. 87.2% of new birth visits by Health Visitors were conducted within first 14 days – similar to the England average.

3.4 Developing Well

Looked After Children

Children under the care of local authorities (looked after children) often have greater health needs, in particular emotional and mental health needs, than those of their peers. They are also less likely to have their needs met by health services and suffer poorer health outcomes than their peers.

(Source: [Local Government Association](#))

As of March 2017, there were 77 children and young people in the care of Wokingham Borough Council, the majority aged 11 years or older. Wokingham has a rate of children in care of 20 per 10,000, significantly lower than the England average of 60 per 10,000 and the South East average of 48 per 10,000.

(Source: [Wokingham Borough Council](#))

Children in Need

22 A child in need is one who has been assessed by children's social care to be in need of services. These services can include, for example, family support (to help keep together families experiencing difficulties), leaving care support (to help young people who have left local authority care), adoption support, or disabled children's services. The rate of children in need in Wokingham was 175.40 per 10,000 in 2017 and the trend is increasing.

Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

In January 2018, of the approximately 2,800 children and young people assessed to have a special educational need in Wokingham, 867 had a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. This was an increase on figures from January 2017 when there were 802 statements or plans in place. The majority of children and young people with statements/plans are placed in Special schools (22.7%); followed by Post 16 education (17.1%).

(Source: [Local Government Association](#))

Children Eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)

Free school meals (FSM) are available in England to children who receive, or whose parents receive various benefits.

Since September 2014, state funded schools in England have been required to also provide free lunches to all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, who are not otherwise entitled to benefits-related free school meals. Data related to children eligible for FSM only relates to those children entitled to benefits-related FSM.

Wokingham has the lowest proportion of primary school children eligible for FSM in the South East Region at 5.1% compared with 6.6% in neighbouring Bracknell Forest and over 18% in Southampton.

Childhood Obesity

Children who are overweight are more likely to be overweight or obese in adulthood. Obese adults are at twice the risk of dying prematurely than the rest of the population. Evidence also shows that at the time of leaving primary school children from the most deprived 10% areas in England are three times as likely to be obese than those from the least deprived.

(Source: [National Obesity Observatory](#) and [Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action](#))

On leaving primary school around a quarter of children in Wokingham are either overweight or obese. This is significantly lower than the average in England (one in three children) and is among the lowest in the South East though remains a significant number of children at risk of poor health.

Education and Training

As of January 2018 there were a total of 80 schools in Wokingham. 53 of these are state-funded Primary schools, 10 are state-funded Secondary Schools, and 2 are state-funded Special Schools. Nearly 30,000 pupils attend schools in Wokingham.

Success in education brings many advantages for health and wellbeing and improving educational outcomes across the social gradient, including in children from the most deprived families, is crucial to reducing health inequalities.

Studies have shown that in young people, the time spent not in education employment or training (NEET) can have a detrimental effect on physical and mental health, and increase the likelihood of unemployment, low wages, or low quality of work later on in life

(Source: [Parliamentary Report Young People Not in Education Employment or Training](#))

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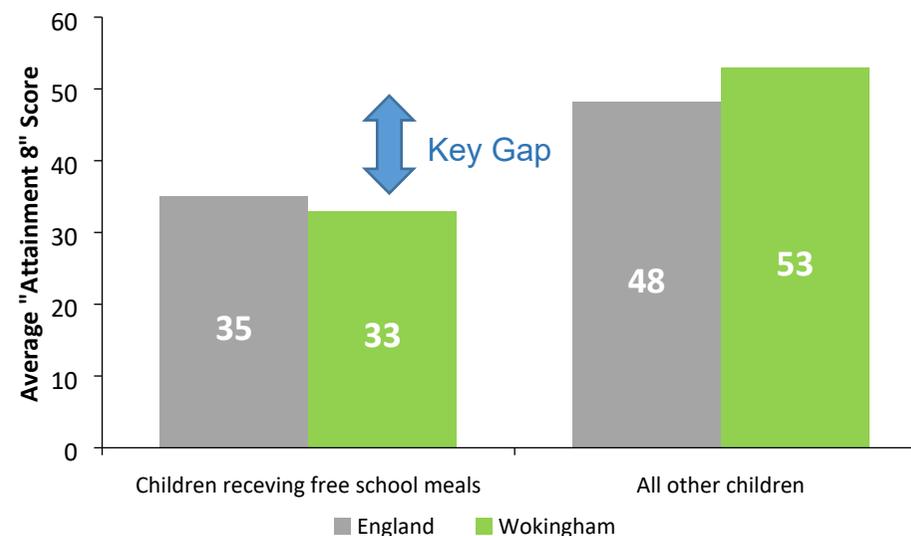
Wokingham Picture

The results of GCSEs or equivalent qualifications are measured as “Attainment 8 Scores” a measure of average performance across 8 topics including Maths and English. In 2016/17 the average Attainment 8 Score for all children in Wokingham was 51.7, while children eligible for free school meals achieved an average score of 33.3 (non FSM eligible scored an average 53) and children in care achieving 28.3.

In 2016 almost all (96%) State school pupils completing key stage 4 (GCSE or equivalent) in Wokingham went on to an education or employment/training destination. Percentages are lower for disadvantaged pupils (88%). This means that in 2016 there were a total of 140 teens aged 16-17 in Wokingham not in education, employment or training (NEET).

(Source: *Department for Education, 2018*)

Figure 12. Average GCSE or equivalent scores across 8 subjects in 2016/17



Wokingham Services

ABC to Read provides schools with volunteer reading mentors, train parent helpers so they have the skills and understanding to support children and train parents to enable them to help their own children to read at home. ABC to Read provide 1:1 support within primary school settings for children that struggle to read and lack confidence.

3.5 Living and Working Well

Severe Mental Illness

As well as the gap in life expectancy associated with deprivation there is also an important gap in life expectancy associated with severe mental illness. Those with a severe mental illness (SMI) have around a 5 times greater risk of death in middle age than the rest of the population.

Over the year 2016/17 there were 892 people registered with Wokingham CCG GPs who were recorded as having serious mental illnesses including schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses. This is equivalent of 0.55% of the population, significantly lower than 0.81% of the population affected across the South East.

(Source: [NHS Digital](#); Qof 2016/17)

Physical and Learning Disability

People with physical and or learning disabilities are more likely to experience poor health than others in the population. They are also more likely to experience barriers to access to services including health care services.

The [Understanding Society Survey](#) demonstrated that people with a learning disability were more likely to experience socioeconomic disadvantage including poor employment, low income and poor or insecure housing, than those without a learning disability.

In 2015/16 there were 480 adults in with a learning disability getting long term support in Wokingham and around 18,000 people according to the 2011 census who considered themselves to have a disability or a long term health problem.

(Source: [Wokingham Health Profile 2017](#) and [PHE Learning Disability Profiles](#))

Smoking

Smoking is the biggest single cause of preventable death in England and is an important contributor to the gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived groups in the country. Smoking causes nearly a fifth of all cancer cases in the UK.

(Sources: [PHE Health Matters](#) and [Cancer Research UK](#))

Smoking doesn't just affect the individual; it can also impact on the wider household. Research by the Royal College of Physicians estimates that around 300,000 GP visits and around 9,500 hospital admissions in the UK each year are due to childhood illnesses related to second-hand smoke exposure.

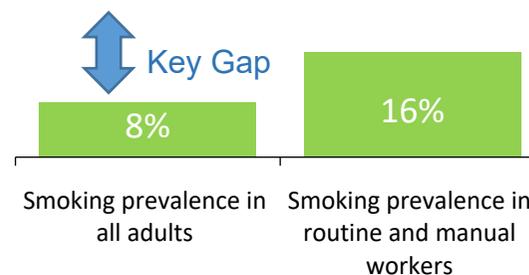
Wokingham Picture

In 2107 the rate of cigarette smoking in Wokingham (8.1%) was significantly lower than the England average, and the lowest across the East Region. Despite this relatively low rate there are still over 10,000 people in Wokingham who are current smokers and at risk of smoking related diseases.

Routine and manual workers in Wokingham are twice as likely to smoke as those in other occupations; this is a similar socioeconomic gap to the England average.

(Source: [PHE Tobacco Control Profile](#))

Figure 13. Prevalence of smoking (current smokers) 2017



Employment

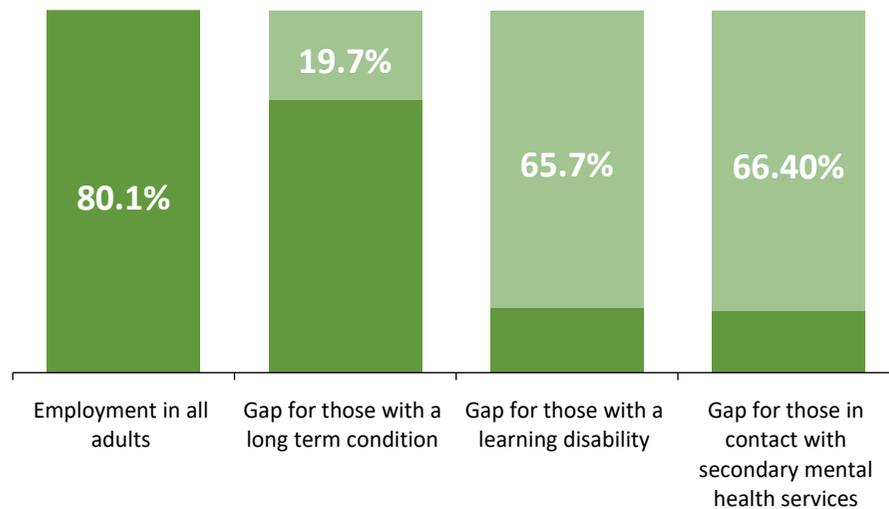
As outlined by PHE and LGA in its [Guide for Local Authorities on health and work](#) part of supporting people to achieve their potential in life is looking at how to enable them to enter the job market and maintain economic independence for themselves and their families. This is especially important for individuals with long term conditions and disabilities.

Wokingham Picture

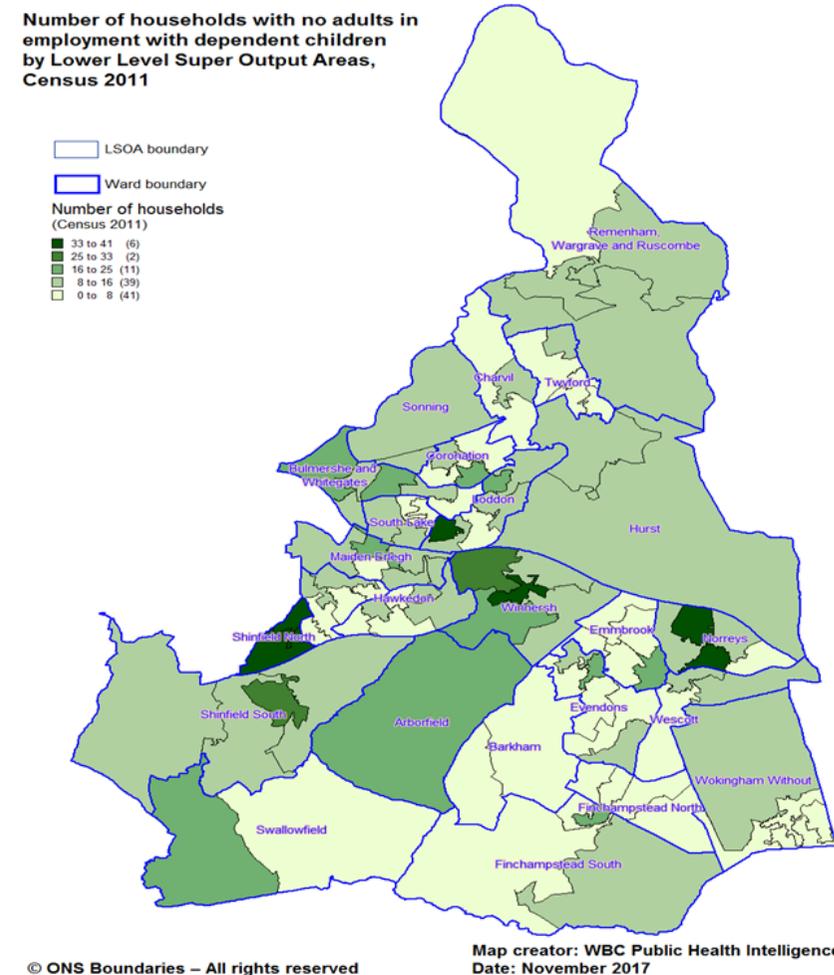
In 2016/17 over 80% of adults aged 16-64 in Wokingham were employed, among the highest employment rates in the South East.

Not all groups in the community have equal opportunities for employment; the figure below illustrates inequalities in employment for those with long term conditions, receiving secondary mental health care and with a learning disability.

Figure 14. Gap in employment between population groups and overall employment rate in Wokingham 2016/17



The map below shows the number of households with no adults in employment that have dependent children in each small area in Wokingham. This is based on 2011 Census; more recent data on household composition is not available. The areas with the highest concentration of households with no adults in employment with dependent children are Winnersh, Norreys, Shinfield North and South Lake wards (rates of 33-41%).



Housing and Homelessness

Having safe and secure housing is essential to health and wellbeing. Risks to health come from living in homes that are cold and damp, are overcrowded or inaccessible to those with disabilities, or do not provide a sense of safety and security.

Housing affordability is also a key factor. Evidence suggests that there is an association between unaffordable housing and poor mental health, over and above the effects of financial hardship on mental health. Housing affordability affects where people live and work and therefore can impact on quality of housing, community cohesion, and time spent commuting.

Wokingham Picture

The 2011 Census counted 60,332 households in Wokingham; this figure has increased to 64,409 households in 2017. The number is due to increase substantially over the next decade as Wokingham Council is required to set aside land for house building. The household mix of new housing developments is up to the developers, so it is difficult to project with any degree of accuracy. Wokingham Council uses the ONS population projections, while bearing in mind that they are broad brush, rather than precise.

Wokingham borough has two traveller caravan sites with a combined capacity of 35 caravans. The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2017) projected a need for 90 pitches in the borough by 2036.

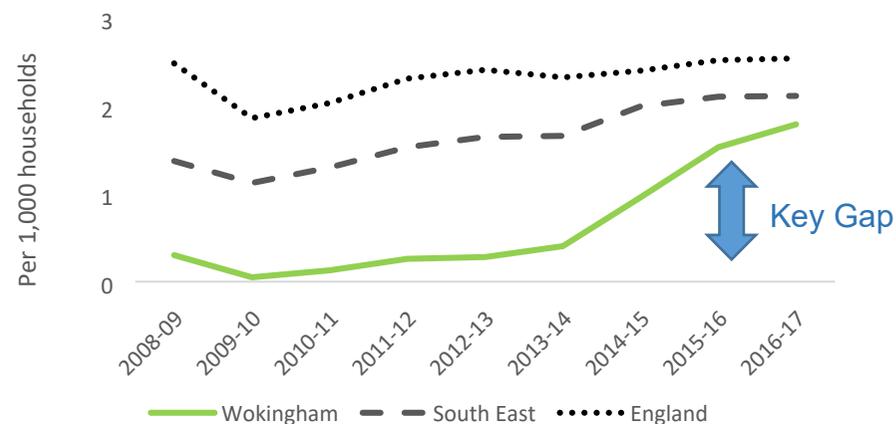
As of March 2017 there were 1,876 people on Wokingham Borough Council's Housing Register. This compares to 1,759 recorded in the previous quarter; an increase of 117 people. The majority of applicants on the register are in need of a 1 bed property (50%), with 32% in need of a 2 bed property.

The number of households in Wokingham borough becoming homeless or in priority need is rising. More temporary accommodation is now available within

Wokingham borough so that homeless households can be offered temporary accommodation locally.

Despite numbers remaining below regional and national average, there has been a rise in the number of households being accepted as homeless and in priority need in recent years. In fact, the rate of increase within Wokingham borough has been higher than national trends since 2014/15 though overall figures remain relatively low (Figure 15 below).

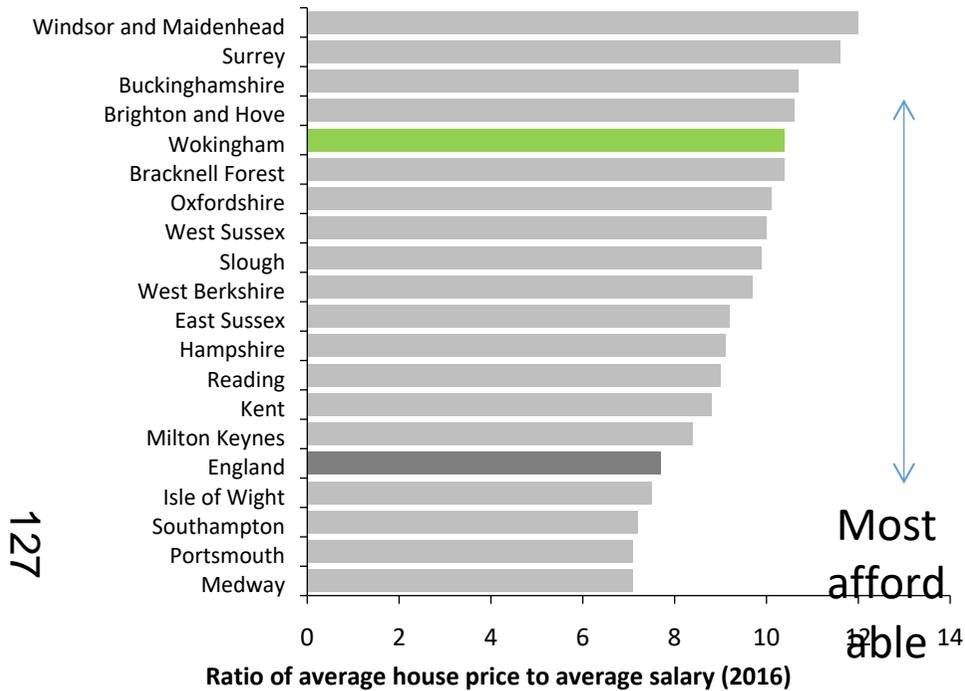
Figure 15. Numbers accepted as homeless and in priority need per 1,000 households 2008/9 – 2016/17



(Source: [Wokingham Homelessness Strategy 2014-19](#))

In 2015/16, 23% of supported working adults with learning disabilities were living in unsettled accommodation in Wokingham borough. Despite this being in-line with regional South East trends, it is above the national average. However, improvements have been made in recent years with 78% of adults with a learning disability living in stable and appropriate accommodation in 2016/17; which is better than both regional and national average.

Figure 16. Affordability of homes in the South East (Ratio of house price:salary)



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Most affordable

Wokingham Services

Berkshire West Your Way aims to make support genuinely self-directed for everyone they work with. Your Way works alongside individuals as they overcome obstacles and move forward with their life. This includes managing their mental health along with entering education, returning to work, solving housing issues or organising finances.

The Community Council Berkshire provides advice to communities that are considering community-led housing projects, including evidencing need and advice on the different models of the scheme.

Wokingham Mental Health Association serves the Wokingham locality and provides a drop-in centre for company, advice, relaxation and friendship. They also have a befriending service for those who are recovering from mental health problems.

Wokingham Children’s Centre also links in with the benefits advisor from the Troubled Families program who helps the homeless claims and any benefits they may be entitled to.

The Wokingham Direct Family Information Service, hosted by Wokingham Borough Council, signposts residents to the council tax, benefits and housing section of the WBC website and the Housing section of the services directory. Within this, WBC provide support around registering for council housing, homelessness, housing benefit, shared ownership and tenant services. The service also includes an adult directory which holds information relating to housing for the elderly, adults with a disability and vulnerable adults.

Wokingham Foodbank works with 70 Agents who support a wide variety of people in need who encompass many of the groups mentioned in the JSNA. Whilst the foodbank does not directly work with people, they indirectly help by providing food parcels and financial help with gas and electricity.

3.6 Ageing Well

Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is a state when members of a household cannot afford to keep adequately warm at a reasonable cost, given their income. This means that it's affected not only by income but also by the energy efficiency of the home, and cost of fuel. People who are vulnerable to poor health as a result of fuel poverty and cold homes are the elderly, the very young and those with a disability or a chronic illness

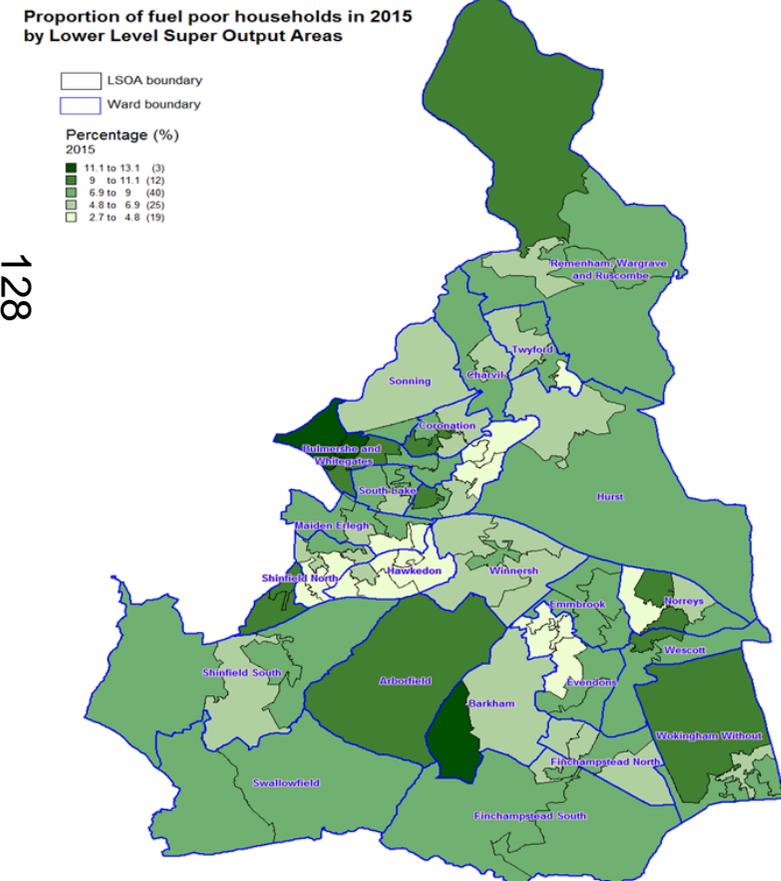
As of 2015 there were 4,446 (7.1%) households in Wokingham classified as fuel poor. This number has been increasing since 2011. The map illustrates the proportion of fuel poverty across the borough by LSOA in 2015 and shows high levels of fuel poverty in parts of Bulmershe and Whitegates as well as in parts of Barkham where between 11.5 and 13.1% of households were fuel poor. Lower rates of fuel poverty were seen in Hawkedon.

Excess Winter Deaths

Cold weather can increase the risk of heart attacks, strokes, lung illnesses, flu and other diseases, as well as risk of slips and falls for vulnerable people. The number of 'excess winter deaths', measures the number of deaths in winter above that expected according to summer death rates and is an indicator of the impact of winter conditions on population health. There were an additional 11.2% deaths in Wokingham over the winter months of 2015/16 compared to the summer months. This is similar to the average excess winter deaths in England.

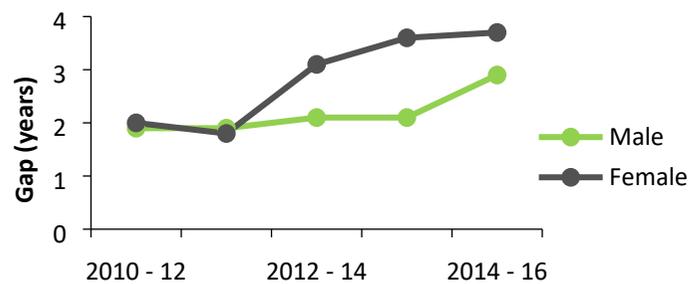
Health Status for Adults over 65

Women aged 65 years in Wokingham can expect an additional 22.3 years life expectancy and males an additional 19.7 years. The gap between life expectancy in the most and least deprived groups in Wokingham is 2.9 years in men and 3.7 years in women. Unfortunately this trend is towards an increasing gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived 20% of the borough at age 65 for both men and women as illustrated in figure 17 below.



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Figure 17. Gap in life expectancy at age 65 between most and least deprived quintiles (Source: Public Health England)



Appendix A Additional Tables and Figures

(Source: [End Child Poverty Percentage of children in poverty, July-Sept 2017](#))

Table 2 Estimated number and proportion of children in poverty by ward

Ward Name	BEFORE HOUSING COSTS		AFTER HOUSING COSTS	
	Number	%	Number	%
Arborfield	45	5.4%	73	9.0%
Barkham	26	2.9%	43	4.8%
Bulmershe and Whitegates	270	15.2%	426	24.0%
Charvil	49	6.5%	80	10.6%
Coronation	64	5.2%	107	8.6%
Emmbrook	88	5.1%	146	8.5%
Evendons	97	4.8%	161	7.9%
Finchampstead North	51	4.0%	85	6.7%
Finchampstead South	89	7.6%	145	12.5%
Hawkedon	135	6.0%	222	10.0%
Hillside	53	3.3%	88	5.4%
Hurst	17	2.5%	29	4.1%
Loddon	154	7.3%	252	11.9%
Maiden Erlegh	104	5.0%	173	8.4%
Norreys	192	10.1%	311	16.4%
Remenham, Wargrave and Ruscombe	61	5.7%	100	9.4%
Shinfield North	82	9.2%	133	15.0%
Shinfield South	132	8.0%	216	13.2%
Sonning	33	5.3%	56	8.9%
South Lake	62	6.3%	103	10.4%
Swallowfield	67	10.9%	108	17.6%
Twyford	57	4.6%	95	7.7%
Wescott	45	4.1%	74	6.8%
Winnersh	174	7.6%	284	12.4%
Wokingham Without	80	4.5%	133	7.4%
Wokingham	2,259	6.5%	3,718	10.8%

TITLE	Changes to the Constitution
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Council on 22 November 2018
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director, Governance

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Reviewing the Council's Constitution on a regular basis ensures that it is relevant and fit for purpose.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council agree the following changes to the Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group:

- 1) that Section 3.3 Freedom of Information Policy and Section 3.4 Data Protection Policy be amended as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- 2) that Section 3.5 Petition Scheme be amended as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;
- 3) that Sections 4.2.9.3 Notice of Question (Public), 4.2.10.4 Notice of Questions (Members), 5.4.27 Notice of Question (Public – Executive) and 5.4.36 Rules of Procedure for Questions by Members (Members – Executive) be amended as set out in paragraph 3 of the report;
- 4) that Sections 4.2.9.8 Supplementary Question [Public] and 4.2.10.7 Supplementary Question [Member] and Sections 5.4.32 Supplementary Question [Public - Executive] and 5.4.39 Supplementary Questions [Members – Executive] be amended as set out in paragraph 4 of the report;
- 5) that Section 4.4.23 Membership [Health and Wellbeing Board] be amended as set out in paragraph 5 of the report;
- 6) that Section 8.1 Planning Committee Terms of Reference be amended as set out within paragraph 6 of the report;
- 7) that Section 8.2.7 Speaking by Members other than [Planning] Committee members be amended as set out within paragraph 7 of the report;
- 8) that Section 11.3 Scheme of Delegation to Officers be amended as set out in Appendix 3 to the report;
- 9) that Section 13 Procurement and Contracts Rules and Procedures and Section 5.5.1 List of Items Delegated to Individual Executive Members be amended as set out in paragraph 9 of the report;
- 10) minor amendments as set out in Appendix 4 to the report.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Chapter 1.1.4 of the Council's Constitution states that the Monitoring Officer will monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure that its aims and principles are given full effect.

The report contains revisions to a number of areas in the Constitution which were agreed by the Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) at their meeting on 22 October 2018.

Background

SECTION 3 – CITIZENS AND THE COUNCIL

1. The Constitution Review Working Group considered proposals to amend Section 3.3 Freedom of Information Policy and Section 3.4 Data Protection Policy to reflect the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and an update in procedures. The revised sections can be found at Appendix 1. Changes are shown in bold.

2. The Constitution Review Working Group considered proposals to amend Section 3.5 Petition Scheme to clarify the process, particularly around the submission of electronic petitions. The revised sections can be found at Appendix 2.

SECTION 4 - THE COUNCIL MEETING AND SECTION 5 - THE EXECUTIVE

3. The Constitution Review Working Group considered proposals to amend those sections (Sections 4.2.9.3 Notice of Question (Public), 4.2.10.4 Notice of Questions (Members), 5.4.27 Notice of Question (Public – Executive) and 5.4.36 Rules of Procedure for Questions by Members (Members – Executive) within the Constitution relating to the submission of questions to Council meetings and other committee meetings by the Public and Members, to make clear that a question may be submitted on a matter included in the Public Session of the meeting's Agenda or an urgent question, up to 10am on the working day prior to the meeting.

The following changes are therefore proposed to Sections 4.2.9.3, 4.2.10.4, 5.4.27 and 5.4.36: Changes are shown in bold italics.

4.2.9.3 Notice of Question

*Questions relating to urgent matters may be submitted in writing to the ~~Democratic Services Manager~~ **Democratic and Electoral Services Lead Specialist** by no later than 10.00am on the **working** day before the meeting, and must receive the consent of the Mayor or Chairman of the relevant Committee and Member to whom the question is to be put. Questions of this nature may only relate to urgent issues which have arisen after the publication of the Agenda.*

*A question may be submitted on a matter included in the Public Session of a particular meeting's Agenda, (except in relation to 'business' matters such as approval of the minutes) provided that notice to this effect is received by the Chief Executive by no later than 10.00am on the **working** day prior to the day of the meeting.*

4.2.10.4 Notice of Questions

A Member may only ask a question under Rule 4.2.10.2 or Rule 4.2.10.3 if either

*b) if, in the Mayor/Chairman's opinion, the question relates to an urgent matter, they have the consent of the Mayor/Chairman of the meeting and Member to whom the question is to be put, and the content of the question is given to the Chief Executive by 10.00am on the **working** day prior to the meeting. Questions of this nature may only relate to an urgent issue which has arisen since the publication of the Agenda.*

*In addition, Members of the Council may submit one question on a matter included in a particular meeting's Agenda (except in relation to the approval of the Minutes and other business matters) provided that notice to this effect is received by the Chief Executive by no later than 10.00am on the **working** day prior to the meeting.*

This change will also be replicated in Sections 5.4.27 Notice of Question (Public – Executive) and 5.4.36 Rule of Procedure for Questions by Members.

4. The Constitution Review Working Group reviewed the Council meeting process and suggestions from Members for improvements to this process.

It is proposed that those asking supplementary questions at Council, other committee and Executive meetings shall speak for no longer than one minute when asking the question.

The following change is therefore proposed to Sections 4.2.9.8 Supplementary Question [Public] and 4.2.10.7 Supplementary Question [Member] and Sections 5.4.32 Supplementary Question [Public - Executive] and 5.4.39 Supplementary Questions [Members – Executive]:

4.2.9.8 Supplementary Question [Council – Public]

A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one supplementary question without notice to the Member who has replied to his/her original question but must not include any substantial new subject matter. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply. The Mayor/Chairman may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in [Rule 4.2.9.5](#) or if he/she feels that new subject matter is being introduced.

No person asking a supplementary question shall speak for longer than one minute. If the Mayor/Chairman considers that the questioner is making a statement he/she may rule that the questioner be not heard further.

4.2.10.7 Supplementary Question [Council – Member]

A Member asking a question under [Rule 4.2.10.2](#) or [4.2.10.3](#) may ask one supplementary question without notice of the Member to whom the first question was asked. The supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply and must not introduce any new subject matter. The Mayor/Chairman may reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in [Rule 4.2.10.5](#).

No person asking a supplementary question shall speak for longer than one minute. If the Mayor/Chairman considers that the questioner is making a statement he/she may rule that the questioner be not further heard.

This change will also be replicated in 5.4.32 Supplementary Question [Executive-Public] and 5.4.39 Supplementary Question [Executive – Member]

5. The Health and Wellbeing Board agreed at its meeting on 8 November 2018 to appoint the Director with responsibility for planning and localities to the Board and that

the amendment of Section 4.4.23 Membership [Health and Wellbeing Board] of the Constitution as follows, be recommended:

m) Director with responsibility for planning and localities

SECTION 8 – REGULATORY AND OTHER COMMITTEES

6. Currently the exercise of the Council’s functions under Part III (Public Rights of Way) of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 is part of the Planning Committee’s Terms of Reference. The Constitution Review Working Group considered a proposal that this be delegated to the Director Locality and Customer Services in consultation with the Borough Solicitor. The Constitution Review Working Group considered this request and the fact that it was supported by the Chairman of the Planning Committee and the relevant Officers, and felt that this would be appropriate.

The following changes are therefore proposed to Section 8.1 Planning Committee Terms of Reference and Section 11.3 Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

*8.1 The Planning Committee will carry out functions relating to town and country planning, highways and public rights of way as specified in Schedule 1 to the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (the Functions Regulations) **save for those contained in Part III of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and those which have not been delegated to the Assistant Director, Place Head of Development Delivery and Head of Development Management and Regulatory Services Assistant Director, Delivery and Infrastructure...***

Section 11.3.9 Director of Environment Locality and Customer Services [Officer delegations]

v) in consultation with the Borough Solicitor, functions in relation to Part III of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

7. With regards to the Planning Committee Terms of Reference, the Constitution Review Working Group considered a proposal to amend Section 8.2.7 *Speaking by Members other than Committee members* to further clarify Ward Member speaking rights at Planning Committee meetings and also the process for registering to speak.

The following change to Section 8.2.7 Speaking by Members other than [Planning] Committee members is therefore proposed:

Section 8.2.7 Speaking by Members other than [Planning] Committee members

‘...Members of the Council who are not Members of the Planning Committee may at the discretion of the Chairman also address the Committee. However this right will normally be restricted to Members from the Ward in which an application is situated. Local Ward Members will be allowed to speak once, for a maximum of three minutes total, shared between all registered relevant Ward Members.

Members must register their intention to speak either in support or objection to an application as appropriate with Democratic Services by 5.00pm on the day prior to the meeting.’

SECTION 11 – OFFICERS

8. Following the implementation of the 21st Century Council programme there has been a change in the Council's management structure which has resulted in some changes in responsibility for different service areas. The Constitution Review Working Group considered an amended list of delegations to the Chief Executive, Directors and a number of other senior officers which reflected these changes. The revised Section 11.3 Scheme of Delegation to Officers, can be found at Appendix 3.

SECTION 13 PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS RULES AND PROCEDURES AND SECTION 5 EXECUTIVE

9. The Constitution Review Working Group considered a number of proposed amendments to Section 13 Procurement and Contract Rules and Procedures and Section 5.5.1 Items Delegated to Individual Executive Members, which are highlighted and set out below.

The changes proposed to Section 5.5.1 and 13.3.1.1 relate to Procurement Business Cases. The proposed changes would provide for some flexibility in the governance mechanism in situations where a quick reaction is necessary to secure a beneficial business opportunity and Executive approval cannot be obtained within the required time frames. The additional change to Section 13.3.1.1 removes the requirement for a Business Case to be produced for all direct award waivers, which is not in line with the Council's Waivers Policy.

The proposed change to Section 13.2.2 is to bring the Council's Constitution in line with the current requirement of Regulation 6(19)(b) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

The proposed change to Section 13.2.3 removes the requirement for raising a waiver every time a procurement procedure is used which is not open or restricted as this is now recorded in the Procurement Business Case.

The proposed change in Section 13.3.3.2 is to bring the threshold for signing of contracts by two authorised officers in line with the threshold for legal review of contracts, following through the introduction of a standard set of terms and conditions to be used for all contracts under £100,000, implemented in March 2018. The threshold for signing of contracts by authorised officers, as opposed to involving a Solicitor, is proposed to be increased to £100,000 to match.

Section 5.5.1 Items to Delegated Individual Executive Members

5.5.1 g) Approving Procurement Business Cases and awarding of contracts that have a value of £500,000 or more up to the limits specified in section 5.1.9.4. Each Procurement Business Case for contracts exceeding the value of £500,000 should be approved by the Executive Member for the relevant Service area together with the Executive Member with responsibility for finance, unless the relevant Executive Member is responsible for finance, in which case the approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Deputy Leader of the Council, or if the Deputy Leader is the Executive Member with

responsibility for finance, in which case the approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Leader of the Council

The following Note be added as a footnote to this:

Note1: The default option is Executive approval.

In exceptional circumstances, where this is not practical and delay will have negative financial consequences, approval by two Executive Members is allowed. This will usually be the Executive Member for the relevant Service area and the Executive Member with responsibility for finance, unless the relevant Service area is Finance, in which case approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Deputy Leader of the Council, or if the Deputy Leader is the Executive Member with responsibility for finance, in which case the approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Leader of the Council. (Rule 13.3.1.1 refers). An explanation of the exceptional circumstances must be included within the Individual Executive Member Decision report.

13.3.1.1 Procurement Business Case (including options appraisal)

A formal business case is required for any procurement with a total value above £50k (refer to Rule 13.2.2 for estimating value) with the varying levels of approval shown in the table below:

	No formal business case required	Head of Service Assistant Director & Director Approval	Executive Approval (see Note1 below)
Goods and Services	< £50k	£50k - £500k	> £500k
Schedule 3 Services	< £50k	£50k - £615k	> £615k
Works	< £50k	£50k - £4,551k	> £4,551k

Note1: The default option is Executive approval.

In exceptional circumstances, where this is not practical and delay will have negative financial consequences, approval by two Executive Members is allowed. This will usually be the Executive Member for the relevant Service area and the Executive Member with responsibility for finance, unless the relevant Service area is Finance, in which case approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Deputy Leader of the Council, or if the Deputy Leader is the Executive Member with responsibility for finance, in which case the approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Leader of the Council. (Rule 5.5.1g refers). An explanation of the exceptional circumstances must be included within the Individual Executive Member Decision report.

13.2.2 Estimating Contract Value

All contract opportunities are required to state a total ascertainable value (or a value range) so that potential suppliers can assess their suitability for the opportunity and the appropriate procurement process can be utilised. The estimate includes both revenue and capital elements of any contract. There are several requirements in PCR2015 (Regulation 6) that specify how the value of the opportunity should be calculated.

Refer to the Estimate of Value document and contact Procurement for advice.

Where no definition of total value is possible, the estimated contract value shall be calculated as 24 48 x the monthly value.

13.3.1.1 Procurement Business Case (including options appraisal)

'.... The value of a Business Case shall not be distorted or split with the aim of avoiding any threshold. The exact nature of any Business Case will vary depending on the requirements of the services being procured but all should consider the elements listed above to an appropriate degree. In consultation with Procurement, Directorates may design their own templates and requirements for Business Cases, in particular where regularly recurring or rapid procurements are required.

Further guidance on the production of a Business Case is available from Procurement.

~~A Business Case must also be produced for ALL direct award waivers, adhering to the same approval levels. They must be supported with the Suppliers proposal, including terms and conditions and full quotation details in line with the Waivers Policy (see Appendix 2).'~~

13.3.2 Overview of Required Procurement Procedures

~~.. For procurements exceeding £50k, the default procedures are the Open or Restricted procedures only or the use of existing frameworks from other procurement bodies; in order to use another procedure, officers need to consult with Procurement and raise a waiver...~~

13.3.3.2 Acceptance of Tenders and Signing of Contracts:

Activity	Under £50K Up to £100,000	£50K– £100K	£100,000 to £500,000	Greater than £500,000
Acceptance of tenders (prior to contract award)	Assistant Director	Director		Director by Material Decision
Contract Signature	None if PO or Purchasing Card. Otherwise 2 Officers named on "List of Authorised Officers..."	Two Officers: 1. Head of Legal Services Lead Specialist Legal or Qualified Solicitor or Barrister 2. Any Officer in 1 or Director or a member of Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) (facilitated by Shared Legal Solutions)		Sealed as a deed.

10. The Constitution Review Working Group reviewed a number of minor changes to the Constitution. These amendments include updating references to legislation and processes for clarification purposes and are highlighted and detailed in Appendix 4.

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)	£0		
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Cross-Council Implications
None

List of Background Papers
The Council’s Constitution

Contact Madeleine Shopland	Service Governance
Telephone No 0118 974 6319	Email madeleine.shopland@wokingham.gov.uk

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CHAPTER 3.3 - FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

3.3.1 Freedom of Information Act 2000

Wokingham Borough Council notes that the Freedom of Information Act 2000 has now come fully into force. The Council considers that used in a responsible manner the rights to gain access to information conferred by the Act will enable constructive discussions to take place between the Council and its stakeholders. The Council welcomes this, although it also takes note of the provisions of the Act designed to safeguard sensitive information and to discourage vexatious or plainly unreasonable requests for information.

3.3.2 Requests

The Council expects its Officers and others working on its behalf to respond to requests for information within the applicable statutory time limit and otherwise to ensure that the Council complies with the Act's requirements. It expects its Officers to advise and assist all persons wishing to make Freedom of Information requests, in both the letter and the spirit of the Act and the Codes of Practice which have been issued in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

3.3.2.1

Officers and others working on the Council's behalf should therefore deal with requests for information on the basis that the requester has a right to the information held by the Council unless it is clear that a statutory exemption applies and, where appropriate, that the public interest in withholding information outweighs that in disclosing the information.

3.3.3 Procedure

The Council has decided that the formal responsibility for dealing with requests on its behalf is delegated to the Director responsible for the service to which the request for information relates. The Council has also introduced a procedure whereby [Customer Services Team and Localities](#) will co-ordinate the Council's response to any request which involves more than one Council service, as well as co-ordinating the Freedom of Information system within Wokingham Borough Council, generally.

3.3.4 Complaints

The Council has made available its complaints procedure for cases where there is a dispute between the requester and the Council, or where the Council has failed to respond to a request within the applicable statutory time period. [The internal review is undertaken by Shared Legal Solutions.](#) This complies with the obligation in the Act to resolve disputes locally wherever possible, before resort is made to the Information Commissioner.

3.3.5 Software

The Council has invested in software to enable members of the public to obtain information via its website, thus helping to free Officers' time to enable them to concentrate on their other responsibilities. The software also enables the progress of individual Freedom of Information requests to be tracked. The Council expects its Officers to make maximum possible use of this software.

3.3.6 Document Retention and Management

The Council recognises the importance of efficient and effective information management in enabling the Council to properly carry out its responsibilities. ~~The Council's archivist has compiled detailed guidance on document retention and management and she is available to give specific advice to Officers where necessary. The Council is also developing~~

~~policies and procedures for the proper management and security of information held electronically.~~

3.3.7 Approved Publication Scheme

As required by the Act, the Council has published an approved publication scheme. The Council intends to ensure that, from time to time, the scheme is revised ~~and re-submitted for the Information Commissioner's approval~~, to ensure that the maximum amount of information can be made available in the most efficient manner by use of the scheme rather than by way of responses to individual requests for information.

3.3.8 Charges

Whilst the Council recognises the need to comply with its obligations under the Act, it also notes that the cost of replying to complex requests or with a large number of moderately complicated requests, may be considerable. In cases which exceed 18 hours work (approximately £450) the Council may offer the applicant the choice of paying for the work to be carried out or resubmitting the request so that it falls within the appropriate time limit. ~~It has therefore been decided that requesters will be charged the maximum amount permissible under the Act, in the case of searches costing more than £20 each to deal with. The Council would expect its Officers to charge aggregated fees in cases where requests are artificially divided and in other cases permitted under the Act.~~

3.3.9 Vexatious Requests

In the small number of cases where requests for information are made vexatiously, as contemplated by the Act, the Council will support its Officers and others working on its behalf if they exercise the right to refuse to deal with any request which is vexatious within the meaning of the Act.

3.3.10 Environmental Information Regulations 2004

When the Council receives an Environmental Information Regulations 2004 request it will handle it in the same way as detailed above for Freedom of Information Requests.

The Council recognises that there are different exemptions between the two pieces of legislation and will issue a refusal notice accordingly to the relevant legislation.

CHAPTER 3.4 - DATA PROTECTION POLICY

3.4.1 Data Protection Act

The Council supports the objectives of the Data Protection Act (DPA) and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) in ensuring that manual and electronic data held by the Council relating to individuals is properly managed.

3.4.2 Personal Data

The Council intends to ensure continual compliance with its obligations under the Act and GDPR. It expects that personal data will not be processed or disclosed other than in accordance with the data protection principles set out and explained in Schedules 1-4 of the Act, and that subject access requests (whereby individuals who are the subject of data held by the Council may request disclosure to them of such data) will be responded to within the statutory response time of a month-40 days.

3.4.3 Data Protection Officer

The Council therefore expects that its Officers will co-operate with the Council's Data Protection Officer to ensure that this is done.

3.4.4 Requests

It is the responsibility of Officers Directors to notify the Data Protection Officer's team when a subject access request, is submitted the scope of which only affects their service. The Director (or delegated officer) should respond to the request, taking account of advice given by the Data Protection Officer or their team, particularly as to whether or not personal data should be disclosed, or whether, by reason of the nature of the data and the terms of the Act, disclosure must be refused. Responsibility of the Director (or delegated officer) also includes responsibility for seeking consent of any third party when necessary which may be identified in the data. In the event that such consent is refused, the Director (or delegated officer) would be responsible for determining, with advice from the Data Protection Officer or their team, whether or not disclosure should nevertheless be made on grounds of reasonableness, as contemplated by the Act.

3.4.4.1

The Council expects that cases where a subject access request is unrestricted, meaning that any data held in any part of the Council's organisation is within the scope of the search, the Director (or delegated officer) whose Service ~~receives~~ the request relates to will immediately forward it to the Data Protection Officer's team. The Council expects that all Officers will thereafter co-operate with the Data Protection Officer and their team in supplying him-them with any data held by them, so that a decision may be made as to whether or not the data must be disclosed or must wholly or partly be withheld.

3.4.5 Tender or Contract Documentation

The Council also expects that Officers preparing tender or contract documentation will ensure that, before the contract in question has been entered into, terms will have been incorporated ensuring compliance with, in particular the ~~seventh~~ sixth data protection principle (which requires appropriate technical and organisational measures to be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing, or accidental loss or destruction of, personal data).

~~3.4.6 Charges~~

~~The Council expects that all persons making subject access requests will be charged the maximum fee prescribed under Section 7 of the Act.~~

~~3.4.7.6 Information Sharing Protocols~~

The Council notes that from time to time particular Council Services handling information, usually of a sensitive nature, have concluded information sharing protocols. The Council welcomes such protocols that are compliant with the requirements of the Act and that have been concluded following appropriate advice from the Data Protection Officer ~~and / or the Head of Governance and Improvement Services (as appropriate).~~

CHAPTER 3.5 – PETITION SCHEME - PROTOCOL FOR DEALING WITH PETITIONS**3.5.1 General**

~~This Petition Scheme is in accordance with the requirements set out in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.~~

3.5.1.4 General

Any person who lives, works or studies within the Borough can sign or organise a petition. All petitions must be relevant to some matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties over or which affects the Borough.

3.5.1.1

Identities of those signing petitions may need to be verified if there are concerns as to their legitimacy and therefore those signing e-petitions need to provide their e-mail address and postcode and on paper petitions their addresses and postcodes.

3.5.1.2

The following petitions will not be accepted:

- a) if it doesn't have the required minimum number of signatories (see [Rule 3.5.1.3](#));
- b) if it is the same or substantially the same as a petition that has been received in the last six months ([Rule 3.5.1.4](#));
- c) any matter relating to a planning decision, including current or proposed planning applications and any matter under statutory consultation;
- d) any matter relating to a licensing decision, including licensing applications under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005;
- e) any matter relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual has a right of recourse or review or right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment ie where a petition is about a matter where there is an automatic right of appeal eg a planning application where there is a right of appeal to the planning inspectorate;
- f) if it is deemed to be vexatious, abusive or inappropriate;
- g) discloses information which is confidential or exempt.

The Monitoring Officer, or his/her representative, will make the decision as to whether a petition is not to be accepted under any of the above criteria. Any petition not accepted under a)-g) above will be acknowledged and an explanation of why it was not accepted provided.

Due to certain restrictions that are imposed on Councils in the period immediately before an election or referendum it may not be possible to deal with a petition and if this is the case the petition organiser will be contacted and an explanation given.

3.5.1.3

In order for a petition to be accepted it will require a minimum number of signatories. If the matter in question is specific to one ward this number will be 10. If it applies to more than one ward then 50 signatories will be required.

3.5.1.4

If a petition on the same or substantially the same matter as has been submitted in the last six months then the petition organiser will be informed that the issue has been discussed. However this will not apply if that petition did not proceed (e.g. lack of signatories).

3.5.2 How to submit a Petition

The Council welcomes paper petitions or e-petitions ~~provided they are created and submitted through the Council's website~~ in accordance with the rules set out in [Rule 3.5.5](#).

An e-petition can be run at the same time as a paper petition, by combining the two before submitting them to the Council. However once a person has been a signatory in one format they cannot sign it in another. Please note that electronic and paper petitions on the same matter should be submitted at the same time.

3.5.2.1

Paper petitions can be submitted:

- a) to an Officer of the Council;
- b) to a Councillor who can either forward it to the appropriate Officer or present it on behalf of the petition organiser to a meeting of the Council;
- c) to a meeting of the Council (for further information please contact the Democratic Services Team on 0118 974 ~~6058-6051~~ or email democratic.services@wokingham.gov.uk).

3.5.2.2

Petitions submitted to the Council must include:

- a) a clear and concise statement covering the subject of the petition and should state what outcome the petitioner(s) wishes from the Council;
- b) the name, address and contact details of the petition organiser, in order that contact can be made to explain how the petition will be responded to;
- c) the name and address and signature of any person supporting the petition, including an e-mail address and post code as specified in [Rule 3.5.1.1](#);
- d) E-petitions must also include a date for completion of gathering signatories (any time up to six months after the start date) which will be decided by the petition organiser.

If a petition does not include the details set out in a-d above the Council may decide not to do anything further with it. In that case a written explanation will be provided.

3.5.3 Action following Receipt of a Petition

An acknowledgement will be sent to the petition organiser within five working days of receipt of a paper petition or the completion date for e-petitions as specified by the petition organiser.

Local ward Members and relevant Executive Members will be kept informed of petitions which are received.

If relevant the appropriate Town / Parish Council will also be informed that a petition has been received that relates to their area.

3.5.4 Responses to Petitions

Once a petition is accepted there are several routes it can follow, which will depend on what a petition asks for and how many people have signed it, but may include one or more of the following:

- a) taking the action requested in the petition;
- b) debating the petition at a Council meeting;
- c) holding an inquiry into the matter;
- d) undertaking research into the matter;
- e) holding a public meeting;
- f) holding a consultation;
- g) holding a meeting with petitioners;
- h) referring the petition for consideration by one of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- i) calling a referendum;
- j) writing to the petition organiser setting out the Council's views about the request in the petition.

Matters relating to current or proposed planning applications will be referred directly to Customer and Localities ~~the Development Management Team~~ for consideration as part of the representations received relating to the relevant application. Matters under statutory consultation will be referred to the relevant Council department to be included as part of the consultation responses.

3.5.4.1

Once a petition has been submitted and accepted the recipient service department will write to the petition organiser setting out how the petition will be dealt with.

If the petition is to proceed to a Council or Committee meeting then the petition organiser will be informed of the date of the meeting and invited to attend. It is presumed that petitions will be heard at the next meeting of the relevant body unless the Chairman of that body or the petition organiser can provide reasons for a delay.

3.5.4.2 Debating a Petition at a Council Meeting

If the number of signatories on a petition is more than 1,500 this will trigger a debate at the next Council meeting, unless it is a petition asking for a senior Council Officer to give evidence at a public meeting in which case it will be dealt with in accordance with [Rule 3.5.4.3](#).

On some occasions, eg where there are a number of petitions already scheduled for debate, it may not be possible to debate every eligible petition at the next Council meeting and therefore a petition would be debated at the following meeting.

The following process will be followed at the Council Meeting:

- a) the petition organiser(s) will be given five minutes to present the petition (if there is more than one petition organiser then they will share this time);
- b) the petition will then be debated by councillors for a period not exceeding 30 minutes;
- c) the petition organiser(s) will have the right of reply of up to a maximum of three minutes;
- d) the Mayor will then ask for motions on how the Council wishes to respond to the Petition which may include;
 - i) taking the action or some of the action the petition requests;
 - ii) not taking the action the petition requests
 - iii) referring the petition to another body for them to consider the matter and take the appropriate action;
- e) once a motion has been put forward it will be voted on without discussion or amendment;
- f) if the motion falls then the Mayor will ask for a further motion to be put forward;
- g) if the Mayor is of the opinion that a decision on how to respond to the petition cannot be reached then he/she can decide, on behalf of the Council, not to take the action that the petition requests.

The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of this decision.

3.5.4.3 Officer giving Evidence at a Public Council Meeting

If the number of signatories on a petition is more than 750 then the petition organiser can request a senior Council Officer (Head of Paid Service and Second Tier Officers only) to give evidence at a public meeting of one of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees about something for which the Officer is responsible for as part of their role.

The Committee may also consider it appropriate to call the relevant Executive Member in addition to the Council Officer.

The petition organiser will be given five minutes to present the petition at the meeting and the petition will then be discussed by members of the Committee. Following discussion the petition organiser will have a right of reply up to a maximum of three minutes.

Members of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee will ask the questions at the meeting, but the petition organiser will be able to suggest questions to the Chair of the Committee provided they are submitted three working days before the meeting.

3.5.5 Submitting E-Petitions

E-petitions must ~~be created and submitted through the Council's website (www.wokingham.gov.uk) and need to~~ comply with the rules ~~for paper petitions set out in Rules 3.5.1 and 3.5.1.1~~. The petition organiser will need to provide their name, postal address and e-mail address and will need to decide how long the petition should be open for signatures, up to a maximum of six months from the start date.

When an e-petition is created ~~through the Council's website (www.wokingham.gov.uk)~~ it may take up to five working days before it is published online. This is due to having to check that the content of the petition is suitable before it is made available for signature.

If for any reason the petition is rejected the petition organiser will be contacted within five working days with an explanation of the reason for objection. It will then be possible to change and resubmit the petition if so wished. If this is not done within ten working days, a summary of the petition and the reason why it was not accepted will be published under the 'rejected petitions' section of the website.

When an e-petition ~~created through the Council's website~~ has closed for signature it will automatically be submitted to Democratic Services ~~by Customer Services Team~~. In the same way as a paper petition an acknowledgement will be sent within five working days.

E-petitions will ~~then~~ normally be sent to the relevant Director unless the petition organiser has requested, within ten working days of receipt of the acknowledgement that they wish to present the petition to a meeting of the Council.

A petition acknowledgement and response will be e-mailed to everyone who has signed the e-petition and elected to receive this information.

Those submitting e-petitions created outside of the Council's website should print off their completed petition, which must include all the information set out in Rule 3.5.1.1, and submit a paper copy.

3.5.5.1 Signing E-Petitions

~~All the e-petitions that are available for signature can be found through the link to petitions which can be found on the front page of the Council's website.~~

Anyone wishing to sign an e-petition will be asked to provide their name, postcode and a valid e-mail address. When an e-petition is created through the Council's website the person signing the e-petition will ~~Once this information has been~~ received an e-mail, containing a link, will be sent to the e-mail address provided. Once this link has been clicked on to confirm that the e-mail address is valid the name will be added to the petition. People visiting the e-petition will be able to see the names, in list form, of those who have signed it but not their contact details.

3.5.6 If it is felt that a Petition has not been dealt with properly

If the petition organiser feels that their petition has not been dealt with properly they have the right to request the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to review the steps that the Council has taken in response to the petition. The petition organiser

should provide a short explanation of the reasons why the Council's response was not considered to be adequate.

The relevant Committee will consider the request at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible and consideration will take place at the following meeting. The petition organiser will be advised of the date of the meeting and invited to attend. If the Committee determine that the petition has not been dealt with adequately it may use any of its powers to deal with the matter. These powers include instigating an investigation, making recommendations to the Executive and arranging for the matter to be considered at a meeting of Council.

Once the appeal has been considered the petition organiser, whether or not they attended the meeting, will be informed of the results within five working days. The results of the review will also be published on the Council's website.

11.3.4 Chief Executive

11.3.4.1

To carry out the functions of the Council as set out in [Chapter 11.1](#).

11.3.4.2.

To amend the Scheme of Delegation to Officers to enable Directors to authorise Council Officers to carry out duties in pursuance of new legislation, such power not to be exercised to carry out functions not in accordance with Council policy. Any amendments to be subsequently reported to the Council ~~on a quarterly basis.~~

11.3.4.3

Under Section 92 of the Local Government Act 2000, power to make payments or provide other benefits in cases of maladministration etc.

11.3.4.4

Ensuring compliance with the Health and Safety at Work legislation so far as it affects Council employees.

11.3.4.5

Approval of virements in accordance with the Financial Regulations as set out in Chapter 12.1.

11.3.4.6

The appointment on an interim basis of a Director who is not a statutory chief officer as an interim appointment and for a period not exceeding 12 months, pending permanent replacement.

11.3.5 All Directors

11.3.5.1

Expenditure of a routine and recurring nature which is provided for in the current year's estimates.

11.3.5.2

Virement between budgets within the limits set out in the Financial Regulations Chapter 12.1.

11.3.5.3

Incurring expenditure not within the current year's estimates arising from an emergency as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and any Regulations made thereunder or any local emergency that requires the activation of the Council's 'gold' team.

11.3.5.4

Acceptance of tenders and quotations subject to compliance with the Procurement and Contract Rules and Procedures set out in Chapter 13, and the ongoing management of contracts.

11.3.5.5

Making such visits on Council business and participating in inter-agency and other partnership working as are necessary.

11.3.5.6

Purchase, hire and sale of vehicles, plant, equipment and materials, in accordance with the Financial Regulations as set out in Chapter 12.1.

11.3.5.7

Issue of public advertisements for contractors in accordance with the Procurement and Contract Rules and Procedures set out in Chapter 13.

11.3.5.8

Service of Requisitions for Information under various enactments relative to the functions of the service concerned.

11.3.5.9

Making arrangements for the safety and security of all Council owned buildings within the purview of his/her service in accordance with the requirements of legislation and for insurance purposes, where relevant, having regard to the advice of the police.

11.3.5.10

Release of Section 106 funds in accordance with the Financial Regulations as set out in Chapter 12.1.

11.3.5.11

To respond to petitions in accordance with the Council's agreed Petition Protocol as set out in Chapter 3.5.

11.3.5.12

To safeguard the consistency and integrity of the Council's electronic public interface by providing editorial management and regulation of the web site.

11.3.5.13

To safeguard the consistency and integrity of the Council's internal electronic communications and information sharing by providing editorial management and regulation of the Intranet.

11.3.5.14

To authorise the right of entry onto land by contractors representing the Authority to carry out works and to seek appropriate recharge of costs.

11.3.5.15

To make service information and personal data available to Members, staff and the public within the provisions of the Data Protection Act [\(and the General Data Protection Regulations\)](#).

11.3.5.16

To comply with the Freedom of Information Act by making information available to Members, staff and the public within the provisions of the Act.

11.3.5.17

Approval of attendance by Members at conferences, seminars and training.

11.3.5.18

To exercise the delegated powers as set out in the Human Resources Schedule of Delegated Powers [Chapter 11.6](#).

11.3.5.19

To undertake the actions required by the Financial Regulations (see Chapter 12.1) which are necessary to assist the Chief Finance Officer in the sound management of the Council's financial affairs.

11.3.5.20

To waive Fees and Charges in accordance with the Financial Regulations as set out in Chapter 12.1.

11.3.5.21

To approve requests for purchase orders or payments in accordance with the Financial Regulations as set out in Chapter 12.1.

11.3.5.22

To take action to promote the health and welfare of young people across the Borough.

11.3.5.23

To authorise disposal of assets or write off of items, in accordance with the Financial Regulations as set out in Chapter 12.1.

11.3.5.24

To obtain specialist advice, if required. The ~~Service Manager Strategic Assets~~ Head of Estates to be consulted on any transaction where there may be strategic asset management implications.

11.3.5.25

To make ex gratia payments in respect of claims against the Council for damage or injury, subject to the limits in the budget.

11.3.6 Director Corporate Services

To exercise the functions of the Chief Finance Officer as set out in [Chapter 11.1](#).

The Director of Corporate Services is authorised to exercise or further delegate to a named Officer the Council's functions, powers or duties related to the following areas:

- a) Revenues and Benefit, including:¹
 - i) action to cover arrears relating to Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates;
 - ii) the administration of any benefit schemes adopted by the Council, including the exercise of the discretions permitted;

¹ Also delegated to Director Locality and Customer Services – see 11.3.9.u)

- iii) approving the write-off of irrecoverable Council Tax and NNDR debts and Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit overpayments in accordance with the Financial Regulations as set out in Chapter 12.1;
- b) Treasury Management, in accordance with the Council's policy statement, Treasury Management Practices and CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management;
- c) effecting of all necessary insurances and settlement of claims arising therefrom; Customer Services
- d) Informational Management Technology
- ~~e) Proper Officer under the provisions of the Registration Act 1953~~
- ~~f) Procurement~~
- ~~g) Property Services, including:~~
 - i) the granting of leases or licences of up to 14 years (including renewals and surrenders) of commercial, operational (service) and non-operational property;
 - ii) approval of Community Asset Transfers under leases of between 14-30 years following consultation with the Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning ~~Regeneration and Communities~~, the Executive Member with responsibility for the relevant service area and local Ward Members;
 - iii) making or granting of easements, wayleaves and revocable licences;
 - iv) disposing of freeholds or leaseholds of small parcels of land required by statutory undertakers for their operation purposes (eg sub station sites);
 - v) in consultation with any barrister or solicitor employed by the Council taking action on breaches of lease covenants including arrears of rent;
 - vi) maintaining an Asset Register of all properties owned by the Council, for all fixed assets valued in excess of £10,000, and to ensure that assets are valued in accordance with best practice arrangements.
- ~~h) sale of Council Houses~~
- ~~i) Human Resources, including organisational development and health and safety;~~
- ~~j) emergency planning;~~
- ~~k) Local Land Charges~~
- i) community health and wellbeing development, including management of the Council's sports and leisure facilities and oversight of any contract with an external partner for the provisions of such facilities.

j) economic development;

11.3.6.1 Further delegation to the Lead Specialist Legal Service Manager Shared Legal Solutions:

- a) institute, defend, lay information, negotiate and settle any dispute decision or any proceedings by or against the Council including taking any necessary steps in connection with such dispute decision or proceedings;
- b) instructing and obtaining the opinion of Counsel and external legal advice;
- c) the formation, negotiation and settlement of any agreement with any party that binds the Council to an obligation.

11.3.7 Director People Services – Children’s Services

To exercise the powers and duties of the Council in relation to section 18 of the Children Act 2008 and appoint and authorise Council Officers to exercise all such powers as the Council may appoint or authorise persons, Officers or inspectors to exercise, in the pursuance of the undermentioned enactments and amendments thereto and any regulations, statutory instruments, bylaws and licenses made thereunder:

- a) functions conferred on or exercisable by the Council in its capacity as Local Education Authority;
- b) functions conferred on or exercisable by the Council which are social services functions, so far as those functions relate to children;
- c) functions exercisable by the Council under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006, so far as those functions relate to children;
- d) functions conferred on the Council as a children’s services authority.

11.3.7.1

The Director People Children’s Services is authorised to exercise or further delegate to a named Officer the Council’s functions, powers or duties related to the following areas:

- a) early years;
- b) school improvement;
- c) special education needs support;
- d) safeguarding and child protection;
- e) youth services;
- f) school governor services;
- g) adoption services;
- h) fostering services;
- i) support for children, young people, looked after and care leavers,

- j) youth offending services;
- k) school admissions, including pupil place planning;
- l) school transport;
- m) adult community learning.

11.3.8 Director ~~of People Services – Health and Wellbeing~~Adult Services

To carry out the statutory duties of the Director of Adult Social Services as set out in Section 6(A1) Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and in statutory guidance.

11.3.8.1

The Director ~~of People Services – Health and Wellbeing~~Adult Services is authorised to exercise or further delegate to a named Officer the Council's functions, powers or duties related to the following areas:

- a) safeguarding vulnerable adults;
- ~~b) community health and wellbeing development, including management of the Council's sports and leisure facilities and oversight of any contract with an external partner for the provisions of such facilities;~~
- ~~eb)~~ social care support for persons aged 18 or over;
- ~~ec)~~ older people's services;
- ~~ed)~~ services for adults with a physical or mental disability;
- ~~f) provision and management of housing accommodation, including maintenance and improvement Council dwellings, associated buildings and land;~~
- ~~g) housing;~~

11.3.8.2 Delivery of Joint Procurements through the Director of Public Health

11.3.8.2.1

To arrange for the delivery of joint procurement with the other Berkshire Unitary Authorities through the Director of Public Health for the future provision of joint public health services and / or contracts.

11.3.8.2.2

In consultation with the Consultant in Public Health, to negotiate and conclude amendments to the inter-authority Public Health Agreement dated 28 March 2013 to provide for the administration, management and operation of future contracts for which joint procurement has been agreed.

11.3.9 Director Locality and Customer Services Environment

To exercise the powers and duties of the Council in relation to legislation in [Appendix A](#) that is applicable to the service area and appoint and authorise Council Officers to exercise all such powers as the Council may appoint or authorise persons, Officers or

inspectors to exercise, in the pursuance of the enactments and amendments thereto and any regulations, statutory instruments, bylaws and licences made thereunder:

The Director Environment Locality and Customer Services is authorised to exercise or further delegate to a named Officer the Council's functions, powers or duties related to the following areas:

- a) management and operation of public car parks and parking spaces administered by the Council;
- b) street naming, subject to no objections to any proposed name being received from the Parish/Town Council, Post Office or Fire and Rescue Service and the agreement of local Members;
- c) the Council as the Highways Authority, including highway inspection, minor highway repairs, winter maintenance, gritting, gully cleansing, street lighting and asset management;
- d) waste, including refuse collection, recycling, waste disposal and abandoned vehicles;
- e) transport planning and, traffic management and road safety. In relation to Traffic Regulation Orders only those where no objections have been received;
- f) Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing Services;
- g) planning policy, including the Local Development Framework;
- h) planning service, including the determination of planning applications not included in the Planning Committee's Terms of Reference;
- i) building control;
- j) libraries and Information service;
- k) cultural services;
- l) community development;
- m) assets of Community Value;
- n) countryside service, including public rights of way and tree preservation orders;
- o) Customer Services;
- p) Local Land Charges;
- q) sale of Council houses;
- r) housing; (excluding strategic housing);

- s) provision and management of housing accommodation, including maintenance and improvement Council dwellings, associated buildings and land;
- t) Proper Officer under the provisions of the Registration Act 1953;
- u) Revenues and Benefit, including: ²
 - i) action to cover arrears relating to Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates;
 - ii) the administration of any benefit schemes adopted by the Council, including the exercise of the discretions permitted;
 - iii) approving the write-off of irrecoverable Council Tax and NNDR debts and Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit overpayments in accordance with the Financial Regulations as set out in Chapter 12.1;
- v) in consultation with the Borough Solicitor, functions in relation to Part III of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

11.3.9.1

The Council's functions, powers and duties in relation to Trading Standards and Environmental Health/Licensing Services areas are also delegated to West Berkshire District Council by virtue of shared service agreements. When such shared service agreements are expired the delegations to West Berkshire District Council will cease.

11.3.10 ~~Head of Governance and Improvement Services~~ Assistant Director Governance

To carry out the functions of the Monitoring Officer as set out in [Chapter 11.1](#) and to act as Proper Officer for the functions set out in [Rule 11.3.3](#)

The ~~Head of Governance and Improvement Services~~ Assistant Director Governance is authorised to exercise or further delegate to a named Officer the Council's functions, powers or duties related to the following areas:

- a) Members' Code of Conduct, including reporting breaches by Members with respect to cases involving legal proceedings;
- b) to amend the Scheme of Delegation to Officers to reflect any changes to the Council's Officer Management Structure and to update the list of relevant Act/Regulations as detailed in Section 11 Officers Appendix A and other references to legislation within the Constitution, as appropriate;
- c) Audit and Investigation Services, ~~including effecting of all necessary insurances and settlement of claims arising therefrom;~~
- d) ~~Business Improvement;~~
- ed) Democratic ~~Services~~ and Electoral Services, including making arrangements for appeals, reviews and hearings in relation school admission, school exclusion,

² Also delegated to Director Corporate Services 11.3.6a)

home to school/college transport and in relation to the granting, revocation and conditions imposed under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005;

f) ~~Electoral Services.~~

11.3.10.1 Further Delegation to the Borough Solicitor

To carry out any of the functions delegated to the ~~Service Manager Shared Legal Solutions Lead Specialist Legal~~ as set out in [Rule 11.3.6.1.](#)

To carry out the role of Commons Registration Officer as set out in Chapter 8.8.

11.3.11 ~~Assistant Director Commercial Property Head of Town Centre Regeneration~~

The ~~Head of Town Centre Regeneration Assistant Director Commercial Property~~ is authorised to exercise or further delegate to a named Officer the Council's functions, powers or duties related to Town Centre Regeneration.

11.3.12 Strategic Director of Public Health

To have responsibility for the functions of the Strategic Director of Public Health as required by section 30 and all relevant provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and all other relevant legislation, and which shall include the following:

- a) the duty imposed upon the Council to take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in its area;
- b) any public health functions of the Secretary of State which he/she requires local authorities to discharge on his/her behalf;
- c) dental health functions of the Council;
- d) the duty to co-operate with the prison service to secure and maintain the health of prisoners;
- e) the Council's duties set out in Schedule 1 of the National Health Act 2006, which include medical inspection of pupils, the weighing and measuring of children and sexual health services;
- f) arrangements for assessing the risks posed by violent and sexual offenders.

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Updates to the Constitution Appendix 4

SECTION OF CONSTITUTION	AMENDED TEXT	REASON FOR AMENDMENT
Chapter 1 contents	Decision Making by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee now reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.
1.1.10 Publication [Constitution]	e) The Monitoring Officer will ensure that the summary of the Constitution is made widely available within the area and is updated as necessary.	Full Constitution is available on the Council's website and on request.
1.4.8 Decision Making by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1.4.8 Decision Making by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee now reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.
Section 1.5.3 Procedure for Approval of the Budget by the Council	<p>1.5.3.1 The following procedure is required in accordance with provisions of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 , and must be applied in a situation where the Council objects to the Executive's recommendations in respect of any item or items making up the annual budget.</p> <p><i>Add:</i></p> <p>1.5.3.4 Immediately after any vote is taken at a budget decision meeting regarding the budget, there must be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of that meeting the names of the persons who cast a vote for the decision or against the decision or who abstained from voting.</p>	To clarify the budget approval process, reflecting an update in the relevant legislation and the requirement for a recorded vote on budget matters at the budget decision Council meeting to be recorded within the minutes of that meeting.
Section 2 Independent Remuneration Panel terms of reference	<i>Delete sections and renumber the rest of the terms of reference accordingly.</i>	In accordance with regulations councillors are no longer entitled to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

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	<p>6 as to which Members of the Council, if any, are to be entitled to pensions in accordance with a scheme made under section 7 of the Superannuation Act 1972; and</p> <p>7 as to treating Basic Allowance or Special Responsibility Allowance, or both, as amounts in respect of which such pensions are payable in accordance with a scheme made under section 7 of the Superannuation Act 1972.</p>	
<p>3.1.4 Participation</p>	<p>The Council's constitutional arrangements will allow for the evolution of arrangements for public consultation and participation. For the time being members of the public may:-</p> <p>a) by writing to the Chief Executive, submit questions to the Council, the Executive, the Licensing and Appeals Committee, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the Personnel Board and, the Standards Committee, <i>the Audit Committee and the Wokingham Wellbeing Board</i> as outlined in the rules of procedure for each meeting;</p>	<p>Public questions may be also submitted to the Audit Committee and the Wokingham Wellbeing Board.</p>
<p>3.1.5 Consultation</p>	<p>Local authorities have a statutory obligation to consult on a range of specific issues of local and national interest .—e.g. Local Development Framework (LDF) and Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs). Wokingham Borough Council is keen to exceed its statutory obligations and consult effectively with local residents, businesses and other stakeholders on issues which affect them, to ensure they are involved in the planning, implementing and monitoring of the services offered by the Council.</p> <p>The following statement, taken from the Consultation Strategy, sets out the Council's commitment to consultation:</p> <p>“Wokingham Borough Council will consult with its residents and stakeholders to</p>	<p>Reference to Consultation Strategy is outdated.</p>

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	<p>ensure that they have a voice in the delivery, scrutiny and improvement of service delivery. These consultations and their results will be open and inclusive, and undertaken in accordance with the Council's publicised protocols and service standards."</p>	
<p>3.2.12.4 Meaning of Exempt Information</p>	<p>Information is not exempt information if it is required to be registered under: the Companies Act 1985 2011; the Friendly Societies Acts 1974 and 1992; the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965 to 1978; the Building Societies Act 1986 1997; or the Charities Act 1993 2011.</p>	<p>Updated legislation</p>
<p>Section 4 – The Council Meeting</p> <p>4.2.1 Annual Meeting of the Council</p> <p>4.2.1.1 Timing and Order of Business</p>	<p>Add the following and reorder the following letters accordingly:</p> <p>i. to receive petitions presented under Rule 4.2.19</p>	<p>Although we have always accepted petitions at Annual Council and an item has been included on the agenda it is not explicitly set out in the order of business.</p>
<p>4.2.2 Timing and Order of Business</p>	<p>...In determining that programme, the Council will set aside the February meeting to deal with the budget. Other than statutory business, recommendations from the Executive, Public Questions, receipt of petitions, and Motion of No Confidence in the Leader, no other business will be conducted at the meeting.</p>	<p>Because the focus of the February Council meeting is the Budget it was never intended for petition debates to be undertaken at this meeting. The additional wording is to clarify that petitions can only be received but not debated at this meeting.</p>
<p>4.2.2.1 Timing and Order of Business</p>	<p>Move <i>'to receive any announcements from the Mayor or the Head of Paid Service;'</i> from j) to f) and realphabetize the order of business accordingly</p> <p>Move q) <i>to deal with any questions submitted by Members in accordance with Rule 4.2.10; and r) to receive Minutes of</i></p>	<p>Following the introduction of Mayor's Awards for members of the public it is proposed that announcements from the Mayor or the Head of Paid Service be heard earlier in the agenda so that those receiving awards do not have to wait until later in the meeting.</p> <p>Constitution Review Working Group feel that it would be appropriate if Member</p>

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	<i>Committees and Sub-Committees and to deal with Ward matters, subject to the provisions of Rule 4.2.10.9; from q) and r) to n) and o) and realphabetize the order of business accordingly</i>	Questions and Ward Questions are dealt with prior to Statements from Executive Members and Statements from Directors of Council Owned Companies, on the Council agenda.
4.4.22 Health and Wellbeing Board [Wokingham Wellbeing Board]	Replace all references to Wokingham Clinical Commissioning Group to NHS Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group	Merger of Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Groups into one organisation.
5.1.9.2 Key Decisions	h) involve the approval of Best Value and Service Improvement Plans.	Updated document title.
6.2.3.2 Terms of Reference (Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee)	j) at the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee investigate matters of concern referred to it by non-Executive Members of the Council, Corporate Leadership Team, members of the public, or external organisations, including the consideration of requests made as a “Councillor Call for Action” as defined in Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Localism Act 2011;	Amended provisions under the Localism Act 2011.
6.2.4.1 Terms of Reference (Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee)	d) at the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee investigate matters of concern referred to it by non-Executive Members of the Council, Corporate Leadership Team, members of the public, external organisations or a responsible person, including the consideration of requests made as a “Councillor Call for Action” as defined in Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Localism Act 2011;	Amended provisions under the Localism Act 2011.
6.3.4 Petitions (to scrutiny committees)	Petitions can be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee subject to the requirements of the Council’s Petition Protocol described in Chapter 3.5 of this Constitution.	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. Petitions cannot be submitted to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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	Petitions may not be submitted at other Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Task and Finish Group meetings or extraordinary meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.	
6.3.7 Procedure at Overview and Scrutiny Committees	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committees will support the objectives of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee in seeking to develop less formal approaches to meetings.</p> <p>iv) Consideration of review reports prior to their submission to the Executive, relevant committee or partner authorities;</p>	Review reports may also be presented to other committees e.g. Wokingham Wellbeing Board.
9.2.1 Code of Conduct for Members	The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsmen may also regard a breach of the Code as incompatible with good administration, and may make a finding of maladministration by the Council in some circumstances.	Change of name of organisation.
Section 9 Appendix 2 Supporting Guidance on Media Relations	Replace references to Communications Unit with Communications Team	Updated name of service.
9.4.13 Effective Action (Corporate Anti Fraud and Anti Corruption Policy)	<p>Responsibility for investigating suspected fraud and corruption against the Council rests with the Shared Audit and Investigation Service. This is to ensure that the investigation is performed only by properly trained officers in accordance with the appropriate legislation as appropriate:</p> <p>a) Corruption Act 1906 Bribery Act 2010 g) Local Government Finance Act 1992-2012 i) Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 Criminal Finances Act 2017 l) Investigatory Powers Act 2016</p>	<p>Clarification of process.</p> <p>Updated legislation</p>
9.5.3 Who should I contact? (Whistleblowing)	<p>d) Director People-Children's Services and Director Adult Services If you wish to raise a concern involving vulnerable children and adults, you can contact the Director of</p>	To reflect new Council structure.

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	<p>People Children's Services on 0118 974 6205 to seek guidance on how to proceed.</p> <p><i>If you wish to raise a concern involving vulnerable adults, you can contact the Director Adult Services on 0118 974 6414 to seek guidance on how to proceed.</i></p> <p>e) Schools You should refer to the whistleblowing arrangements for the individual school. If it is not suitable for the school's Governing Body to deal with, the concern should be raised with the Director People Children's Services (contact details shown in d)).</p>	
<p>9.6.17 Public Contracts and Failure to Prevent Bribery</p>	<p>9.6.17 Public Contracts and Failure to Prevent Bribery Under the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 2015 (which gives effect to EU law in the UK), a company is automatically and perpetually debarred from competing for public contracts where it is convicted of a corruption offence. There are no plans to amend the 2006 Regulations for this to include the crime of failure to prevent bribery. Organisations that are convicted of failing to prevent bribery are not automatically barred from participating in tenders for public contracts. This organisation has the discretion to exclude organisations convicted of this offence.</p>	<p>Updated legislation.</p>
<p>9.7.1 Anti Money Laundering Policy Introduction</p>	<p>e) Money Laundering Regulations 2007 <i>The Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (information on the Payer) Regulations 2017</i></p> <p>f) <i>Anti Money Laundering Act 2018</i></p>	<p>Updated and new legislation</p>
<p>9.7.3 What is Money Laundering?</p>	<p>d) becoming concerned in an arrangement facilitating concealment, removal from the jurisdiction, transfer to nominees or any other retention or control of</p>	<p>Correction.</p>

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	terrorist property (section 18 of the Terrorist Terrorism Act 2000); or	
9.9.1 Introduction (RIPA Policy)	Drawing on the principles set out in the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998, this policy sets out the Royal Borough's Council's approach to Covert Surveillance, the use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources and the acquisition of Communications Data.	Correction.
11.3.3 Proper Officer functions	11.3.3.1 Local Government Act 1972 – Responsibility for Functions with respect to Ordnance Survey Exercised by: Director Environment Locality and Customer Services Section [Local Government Act 1972): Section 191 (as amended)	Amendment to legislation.
11.3.3 Proper Officer functions	11.3.3.1 Local Government Act 1972 – Responsibility for Receipt of notices of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or any relevant Personal Interests. Keeping records of Disclosable Pecuniary interests Exercised by Head of Governance and Improvement Services Assistant Director Governance Section 96(1) as amended by S29-34 of the Localism Act 2011 96(2) as amended by S30(3) of the Localism Act	Amendment to legislation.
12.1 Financial Regulations	Note: The term “Director” includes the post of Head of Governance and Improvement Services.	Assistant Director Governance is now a third tier position so therefore is no longer included.

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<p>12.1 Financial Regulations</p>	<p>Replace all references to WISER with Business World On</p>	<p>To reflect new system used.</p>
<p>12.1.2.3 Chief Finance Officer statutory duties</p>	<p>d) The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2014 2015</p>	<p>Updated legislation.</p>
<p>12.1.4.11</p>	<p>Director Corporate Services of Finance and Resources (Chief Finance Officer) shall ensure that the audited accounts of the Council are prepared and published in accordance with the statutory timetable which shall include the requirement for the audited Statement of Accounts to be approved by the Audit Committee and signed by the Chairman of the Audit Committee by 30th September 31st July each year.</p>	<p>Updated statutory deadline for the audited Statement of Accounts to be approved by the Audit Committee and signed by the Chairman of the Audit Committee.</p>
<p>12.1.5.10</p>	<p>... No costs associated with the disposal of land and buildings may be capitalised unless they can be shown to have enhanced the value of the asset in accordance with the Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy – Practitioners’ Guide to Capital Finance in Local Government. This will exclude any residual expenditure to secure premises, maintain utility services or the fees of legal and selling agents.</p>	<p>These are no longer required to be excluded.</p>
<p>12.1.19 Audit and Anti Fraud</p>	<p>The Director Corporate Services of Finance and Resources (Chief Finance Officer) has a statutory responsibility for maintaining an adequate and effective internal audit of the accounting, financial and other operations of the Council and its Officers.</p> <p>Internal audit highlights weaknesses in controls or unsound practice, offers advice and suggests improvements to existing arrangements and checks that financial and other systems and procedures are sound. The internal audit function is provided by the Shared Audit and Investigation Service within the Chief Executive’s Department and is independent in its planning and operation and has direct access to the Chief Executive and the Audit Committee.</p>	<p>Reflects new titles and structure following 21st century council programme</p>

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	<p>This provision includes those staff that represent the Council on the Thames Valley Strategic Coordinating Group.</p>	
<p>12.1.22.7</p>	<p>Each Director shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) notify Business Services the Employee Services and Payment Manager of all appointments, terminations or variations which may affect the pay or pension of an employee, or former employee, as soon as they are aware of them; e) check and approve through Expenses Travel Expenses on Business World On or Purchase to Pay systems, travel and subsistence claims and other allowances. f) ensure that the Employee Services & Payments Manager is Business services are notified of the details of any employee benefits in kind to enable full and complete reporting within the income tax self-assessment system. 	<p>Reflects structure following 21st century council programme</p>

Agenda Item 64.

TITLE	Approval of a Period of Absence from Meetings by Councillor Oliver Whittle
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Council on 22 November 2018
WARD	Wescott;
DIRECTOR	Director of Corporate Services - Graham Ebers

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

That Councillor Oliver Whittle remain in office as Member for Wescott Ward.

RECOMMENDATION

Council is recommended to:

- 1) note that Councillor Oliver Whittle has not been able to attend meetings of the Council due to ill-health since his attendance at Council on 19 July 2018;
- 2) extend its sympathy to Councillor Whittle and wish him a speedy recovery;
- 3) approve Councillor Oliver Whittle's non-attendance at meetings of the Council due to ill-health up to 22 May 2019 pursuant to Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Regulations state that where a Council Member fails to attend any meeting of the relevant Authority, throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of their last attendance, subject to certain exceptions, he/she ceases to be a Member of the Authority. However the Authority can approve the Member's non-attendance for specified reasons.

The report is asking Council to approve Councillor Oliver Whittle's non-attendance on the grounds of his ill-health.

Background

1. Under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 if a Member fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his/her last attendance to attend any meeting of the Council or as a representative of the Council on an Outside Body he/she shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the Council before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the Authority.
2. Due to ill-health Councillor Oliver Whittle has not been able to attend any Council or Committee meetings since his attendance at the Council meeting on 19 July 2018 and has advised that it is unlikely that he will be able to attend any meetings in the near future. A request is therefore put forward to Council to approve an extension to the usual six month rule to enable Councillor Whittle to remain in office. If this request is not approved Councillor Whittle will cease to be a member of the Council on 19 January 2019.
3. Council is therefore asked to give approval to Councillor Whittle's non-attendance by reason of ill-health. This will be reviewed in six months' time, if Councillor Whittle remains absent.

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)	£0		Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0		Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0		Revenue

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

There are no financial implications related to this report.

Cross-Council Implications

There are no cross-Council implications related to this report.

List of Background Papers

Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972

Contact Anne Hunter	Service Governance
Telephone No Tel: 0118 974 6051	Email anne.hunter@wokingham.gov.uk