



# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** will be held in David Hicks 1  
- Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on  
**WEDNESDAY 19 JUNE 2019 AT 7.00 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Parsonage', with a long, sweeping tail stroke.

Susan Parsonage  
Chief Executive  
Published on 11 June 2019

The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to provide independent “critical friend” challenge and to work with the Council’s Executive and other public service providers for the benefit of the public. The Committee considers submissions from a range of sources and reaches conclusions based on the weight of evidence – not on party political grounds.

This meeting may be filmed for inclusion on the Council’s website.

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# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Our Vision**

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

## **Our Priorities**

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

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

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

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

## **The Underpinning Principles**

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

### Councillors

Alison Swaddle (Vice-Chairman)	Jenny Cheng	Andy Croy
Richard Dolinski	Paul Fishwick	Guy Grandison
Pauline Helliar-Symons	Sarah Kerr	Abdul Loyes
Ken Miall	Ian Pittock	Malcolm Richards
Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey		

### Substitutes

Shirley Boyt	Prue Bray	Gary Cowan
Carl Doran	Lindsay Ferris	Jim Frewin
Emma Hobbs	Barrie Patman	

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
13.		<b>ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN</b> To elect a Chairman of the Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.	
14.		<b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence.	
15.		<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 May 2019.	5 - 10
16.		<b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest.	
17.		<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any public questions.  A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.  The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this committee.  Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to <a href="http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions">www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</a>	
18.		<b>MEMBER QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any Member questions.	

<b>19.</b>	None Specific	<b>FUTURE HOUSING CONSULTATION</b> To discuss proposals for a public consultation on Future Housing Numbers with the Leader of the Council and the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement.	<b>11 - 22</b>
<b>20.</b>	None Specific	<b>GRASS CUTTING DELIVERY UPDATE</b> To consider an update on the Grounds Maintenance contract following the Committee's review of the Grass Cutting service in 2018.	<b>23 - 50</b>
<b>21.</b>	None Specific	<b>LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROCESS AND INVITATION FOR COMMENTS</b> To consider the process for developing the new Local Transport Plan.	<b>51 - 56</b>
<b>22.</b>	None Specific	<b>GOVERNMENT STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY</b> To consider the Government's Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny at its implications for the Council.	<b>57 - 92</b>
<b>23.</b>	None Specific	<b>CONSIDERATION OF THE CURRENT EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME</b> To consider the current published version of the Executive Forward Programme	<b>93 - 98</b>
<b>24.</b>	None Specific	<b>COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMMES</b> To discuss the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees	<b>99 - 114</b>
<b>25.</b>	None Specific	<b>UPDATE REPORTS FROM CHAIRMEN OR NOMINATED MEMBER OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES</b> For the Chairman or nominated Member of the Committee to report back in its activities including any requests to undertake reviews.	

**Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent**

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

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## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 MAY 2019 FROM 7.00 PM TO 10.00 PM

### **Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Jenny Cheng, Andy Croy, Richard Dolinski, Paul Fishwick, Guy Grandison, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Sarah Kerr, Abdul Loyes, Ken Miall, Ian Pittock, Malcolm Richards, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey and Alison Swaddle

### **Officers Present**

Laura Callan, Strategy and Commissioning Support Manager  
Neil Carr, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist  
Susan Parsonage, Chief Executive

### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Committee considered the election of a Chairman for the 2019/20 Municipal Year. Two candidates were nominated: Pauline Helliard-Symons and Ian Pittock. Both candidates received six votes. Consequently, the Committee agreed to appoint a Chairman for this meeting and to elect a Chairman for the Municipal Year at the next meeting.

The Committee agreed that Pauline Helliard-Symons would chair this meeting.

Ian Pittock referred to the Constitutional requirement for the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to be members of the Management Committee. As the Committees had not met yet, no Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen were in place. It was confirmed that the current membership of the Management Committee had been approved by Council and that any changes arising out of the election of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen would be reported to future meetings as necessary.

Ian Pittock also referred to the fact that Deputy Executive Members had been appointed to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. It was confirmed that Executive Members were not allowed to sit on Overview and Scrutiny Committees. However, the role of Deputy Executive Member was not mentioned in the relevant legislation and, therefore, there was no reason why they could not sit on the Committees. Deputy Executive Members sat on Overview and Scrutiny Committees in 2018/19.

### **RESOLVED** That:

- 1) Pauline Helliard-Symons be appointed as Chairman for the meeting;
- 2) the Chairman for the 2019/20 Municipal Year be elected at the meeting on 19 June 2019.

### **2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Committee appointed a Vice-Chairman for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

**RESOLVED:** That Alison Swaddle be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

### **3. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee, held on 20 March 2019, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **5. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

#### **7. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

There were no Member questions.

#### **8. WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL PLAN**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 15 to 16, which updated Members on the development of the new Council Plan. The report was supported by a presentation which gave details of the public engagement process to date and the 10 key priorities identified.

Susan Parsonage (Chief Executive) and Laura Callan (Strategy and Commissioning Support Manager) introduced the item and outlined the process for taking the plan forwards. As the Council had a new Leader and new Executive Members it was important to incorporate their views into the process. It was also apparent that some of the 10 priorities were interlinked and ongoing issues, such as the Council's approach to housing numbers, were being modified and developed.

In the ensuing discussion Members raised the following points:

- It was important for Scrutiny Members to see a draft of the new Council Plan as soon as possible. It was confirmed that a draft of the new plan could be emailed to Members shortly.
- A number of issues had become more high profile (future housing numbers, climate emergency and congestion) and should be addressed accordingly in the new plan.
- Was it possible to see data on the number of residents/consultees who highlighted each of the 10 priority areas? It was confirmed that this information could be provided for Members.
- Was it possible to provide a summary of the public engagement including details of the specific community/specialist groups who were involved? It was confirmed that this information could be provided.
- Was it possible to provide a summary of the issues raised by Town and Parish Councils? It was confirmed that a separate briefing had been provided to Town and Parish Councils via the Borough Parish Liaison Forum. Details of the Town and Parish feedback could be provided for Members.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) Susan Parsonage and Laura Callan be thanked for attending the meeting to answer Member questions;

- 2) a draft of the new Council Plan be circulated to Overview and Scrutiny Members;
- 3) Members receive additional information on the number of residents/consultees supporting each Council Plan priority, the specific groups involved in the consultation and the feedback from Town and Parish Councils;
- 4) development of the draft Council Plan be considered again at the meeting of the Committee on 17 July 2019;
- 5) the 17 July meeting also receive an update on the Key Performance Indicators being developed to underpin the new Council Plan.

## **9. 2018/19 COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 17 to 64, which gave details of Council Plan performance monitoring for 2018/19.

Laura Callan and Susan Parsonage introduced the report and answered Member questions.

The report stated that, for 2018/19, 76% of key performance indicators had achieved the assigned target and were reported as Green. Ten measures (14%) performed marginally off target and were reported as Amber. Seven measures (10%) were reported as Red as the targets had not been achieved.

The Red indicators were summarised as:

- EA 7: % of infants who received a 6-8 week review within 8 weeks;
- EA9: % of children who received a 2/2.5 year review;
- EA11: 12 month rolling voluntary turnover of qualified social workers within Children's Social Care and the Early Intervention Service;
- VP1iv: Non-elective admissions;
- VP5: Number of visits to Wokingham Borough libraries;
- VP8: % of child protection visits due in the period which were completed on time (within 10 days of the previous visit)
- VP13: Number of affordable dwellings permitted.

Appended to the report was a document which set out the full list of key performance indicators which supported the Council Plan and provided supplementary performance information for each measure.

The report also provided a service narrative in response to the queries raised by the Committee in relation to the Quarter 3 performance report. It was confirmed that a Children's Services Officer was due to attend the meeting to discuss performance issues, but would now be attending the 17 July meeting instead.

In the ensuing discussion, Members raised the following points:

EA7: infant reviews within 8 weeks – part of the issue appeared to be the requirement for parents to visit health facilities for the review. Was there any potential for home visits?

EA1iii: state funded schools with a Good Ofsted rating – the table on Page 26 indicated that the direction of travel was Static, yet the RAG assessment had moved from Red to Amber.

EA11: voluntary turnover of Social Workers – Members requested a more detailed commentary on performance (this issue had been highlighted in a recent Ofsted/Care Quality Commission report).

R1: Peach Place Regeneration Project – the RAG threshold states “Amber if project is within 4-6 of programme timescales”. In light of recent delays relating to the main contractor, was “Amber” the correct assessment?

SC8: % household waste recycled from the kerbside – this indicator should be reviewed as part of the range of indicators underpinning the new Council Plan.

T4: Lower Earley Way Duelling – provide clarification that the delivered actions are accurate and up-to-date.

T5: Winnersh Relief Road Phase 2 – the scheme had slipped, so should the RAG be “Amber”? Also, the reporting periods jumped from Spring 2019 to Winter 2019/20?

T9: Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) – Number of PCNs issued – No target or RAG rating. Also, should there be broader targets relating to the original aims of CPE?

T11: Average minimum travel time – no data since 2016 – no commentary.

VP8: % of child protection visits within 10 days – to be discussed at the 17 July meeting.

VP11: % of formal homelessness decisions made within 45 working days – provide clarification on the commentary relating to decisions under the Homelessness Reduction Act (56 days).

VP14: number of affordable dwellings completed – clarify whether the number of affordable dwellings completed was a net figure, or did it include replacement dwellings?

Members felt that the performance report, in its current format, contained too much information. It was suggested that services should consider reporting on a smaller number of priority indicators, with other indicators reported by exception. Ongoing work on the new Council Plan provided an opportunity to review the KPIs to ensure that they focussed on priority areas, including priorities identified by residents.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the 2018/19 Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report be noted;
- 2) Officers be requested to provide responses to the Member questions and comments set out in the Minutes;

- 3) Council Plan Performance Monitoring be considered further at the 17 July meeting of the Committee, linked to the discussion on the new Council Plan;
- 4) an Officer from Children's Services attend the 17 July meeting to discuss the specific issues around the indicators highlighted in the report;
- 5) Council departments be asked to consider the development of a smaller number of Key Performance Indicators linked to the development of the new Council Plan.

#### **10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY - MEMBER TRAINING**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 65 to 71, which gave details of a proposed Overview and Scrutiny Member Training Session. The training session, scheduled for 26 June 2019 (7pm), would provide an introduction to Overview and Scrutiny for new Members and a refresh for more experienced Members.

It was also confirmed that a further training session would be provided, in July 2019, on Budget Scrutiny.

The report set out a draft format for the training session and sought Member views on other potential issues for discussion. The training would be provided by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

Members considered the training programme and made the following comments:

- the training session should include provision for feedback on quality/relevance, etc.;
- information should be sought on further training options from the Centre for Public Scrutiny, LGA, etc.;
- the training session should be open to all Members of the Council.

#### **RESOLVED That:**

- 1) the Overview and Scrutiny Member training session, scheduled for 26 June 2019, be confirmed;
- 2) the Member training session include provision for Member feedback on content/quality/relevance, etc.;
- 3) the proposed Budget Scrutiny training session (July 2019) be noted;
- 4) further information on Member training options be submitted to the Committee in due course.

#### **11. CONSIDERATION OF THE CURRENT EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered a copy of the Executive Forward Programme as set out on Agenda pages 73 to 76.

#### **RESOLVED That:**

- 1) the Executive Forward Programme be noted;

- 2) the Voluntary Sector Commissioning Strategy be included in the Overview and Scrutiny work programmes;
- 3) the Adult Social Care High Level Business Case be included in the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes.

## **12. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMMES**

The Committee considered its forward work programme and those of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees as set out on Agenda pages 77 to 94.

### **RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the substantive items for the 19 June meeting of the Management Committee be: Future Housing Numbers, Update on Grass Cutting and Government Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny;
- 2) the Leader of the Council, Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement and relevant Planning Officers be invited to attend the 19 June meeting to discuss the Housing Numbers issue;
- 3) the substantive items for the 17 July meeting of the Committee be: draft Council Plan and supporting performance indicators and Quarter 1 Performance Management report;
- 4) the Executive Member for Climate Emergency be invited to attend the September 2019 meeting of the Committee to discuss progress on developing proposals and an action plan.

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Future Housing Consultation</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 19 June 2019
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific;
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Leader of the Council

## **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider proposals for a public consultation on future housing numbers in Wokingham Borough.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee consider the Executive's proposals for a public consultation on future housing numbers and discuss any matters arising with the Leader and Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At its meeting on 29 May 2019, the Committee considered its work programme for 2019/20.

The Committee agreed that it wished to invite John Halsall (Leader of the Council) and Wayne Smith (Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement) to its next meeting, on 19 June 2019, in order to discuss the Council's proposals to carry out a public consultation exercise on future levels of housing in the Borough.

The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to prepare Local Plans informed by a local housing needs assessment, calculated using a standard method. The housing need figure for Wokingham Borough has varied from 752 dwellings per annum to 876 dwellings per annum, and some planning inspectors have suggested higher figures are appropriate. Local housing need currently calculates as 804 dwellings per annum.

At its meeting on 30 May 2019, the Executive considered a report which recommended a public consultation exercise aimed at gauging residents' opinions on the Government imposed housing numbers. A copy of the Executive report is attached at Annex A for information.

The matter was also considered on 30 May by the Special Council Executive Committee. A copy of the Special Council Executive Committee's Minutes (Annex B) are also attached for information.

## 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	NA	NA
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	NA	NA
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	NA	NA

### Other Financial Information

None

### Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Consultation will be undertaken in summer 2019, with exact dates to be confirmed. A postcard or letter will be sent to each household in the borough setting out the background to the consultation, including a website address where the survey can be completed.

### Resourcing and Timeline for Next Steps

It is proposed that the consultation be undertaken in summer 2019, with the exact dates to be confirmed. There is anticipated to be sufficient resource to prepare the consultation.

### Timeline for Review and Evaluation

Once the consultation has closed responses will be reviewed in order to inform the future approach with Government.

### List of Background Papers

None

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Future Housing Consultation</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	The Executive on 30 May 2019
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific;
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Leader of the Council

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)**

To approve a public consultation on future housing in Wokingham Borough.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Executive:

- 1) approve the future housing consultation, in the form set out in paragraph 3.1;
- 2) authorise a supplementary estimate of £45,000 - £80,000 to fund the consultation;
- 3) authorise the Director of Corporate Services and Director Locality and Customer Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree minor amendments, if necessary, prior to consultation.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report seeks approval from Executive to commence a consultation seeking residents' opinion on the Government's housing requirement for Wokingham Borough.

Through our engagement with residents, residents have expressed concern regarding the housing development Wokingham Borough is being asked to accommodate by Government.

The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to prepare Local Plans informed by a local housing needs assessment, calculated using a standard method. The housing need figure for Wokingham Borough has varied from 752 dwellings per annum (dpa) to 876 dwellings per annum, and some planning inspectors have suggested higher figures are appropriate. Local housing need currently calculates as 804 dwellings per annum.

This scale of requirement exceeds what Wokingham Borough has been required to accommodate previously. It is also 40-50% higher than the average growth in the number of households projected by the Office for National Statistics.

The Core Strategy sets out the council's current approach to growth, which is fully meeting the defined housing needs of Wokingham Borough. This approach enables sustainable, infrastructure rich new development, including new roads, schools and significant affordable housing provision. Despite this delivery, planning appeals have been allowed for developments outside the areas where development is planned. This fundamentally undermines the plan-led system established by the Core Strategy Local Plan, and forces communities to accept additional development that has not been planned for.

This report recommends a consultation to gauge residents' opinion on the Government's housing requirement by asking:

Do you support the government imposed housing numbers?

In order to provide a robust evidence base to support WBC's case to Government, the consultation will:

- Be easy to complete and well-publicised in order to encourage a high response rate
- Safeguard against abuse of the process through measures to reduce risk of multiple responses from individuals

It is recommended to achieve this by:

- An advanced publicity campaign to increase awareness of the consultation and to notify residents that they will receive a consultation post card in the post.
- Postcards or letter with freepost response provided to be sent directly to all households in the borough with a short explanation of the issue and the question being asked. The post card would include the web address with more information and an online survey for residents to submit their response. If a freepost option is included, this would be included in the letter sent to all households.
- Each postcard or letter would a unique reference code (URC) that residents can use when submitting responses online.
- The online survey will require respondents to input either the URC or their postal address. This will allow more than one residents from a household to take part in the consultation while allowing WBC the opportunity to investigate incidents of potential multiple responses from individuals.
- Due to timing and the additional cost implications, responses will be submitted through an online survey. However, residents will also be able to contact the council by phone in order for a hard copy of the form to be sent out.

## **BACKGROUND**

1.1 Through our engagement with residents, residents have expressed concern regarding the housing development Wokingham Borough is being asked to accommodate by Government.

1.2 Our residents' concern can be split into two primary issues:

1. The overall amount of housing being required; and
2. The allowing of developments which are contrary to our planning strategy by Government Planning Inspectors.

## **Analysis of Issues**

2.1 As a matter of statute, local authorities must prepare a Local Plan which sets out planning policies for the management of development. Amongst a wide range of issues, the Local Plan must set out the approach to housing.

2.2 Local Plans must be review and updated so they remain up to date. Where Local Plans are older, planning inspectors may give little or no weight to its policies. Our Core Strategy Local Plan was adopted in 2010 with additional policies adopted in 2014. Being more than five years since its adoption, some policies have been regarded by some (but not all) planning inspectors as out of date; a position which we are challenging.

### Overall amount of housing

2.3 The Government's planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This requires a Local Plan to be informed by a local housing needs assessment. This was previously prepared using an Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) assessment but more recently the Government has introduced a simple 'standard methodology'. Prior to these approaches, local plans were prepared to accord with a regional planning strategy which set housing requirements for each local authority.

2.4 Using the standard method, the local housing need for Wokingham Borough calculates at 804 dwellings per annum. This figure is recalculated each year meaning there is a high degree of uncertainty as to how much housing should be planned for. Over the last few years, the local housing need for Wokingham Borough has varied between 752 and 876 dwellings per annum; and some planning inspectors have suggested higher figures are appropriate. The housing requirement set out in our Core Strategy Local Plan s 662 dwellings per annum on average however under the NPPF regard must currently be had to the standard method.

2,5 The outcome of the standard method is substantially higher than the projected growth households. National projections of household growth prepared by the Office for National Statistics predict an average of around 550 new households forming each year in Wokingham Borough. The standard method thereby requires an uplift over the demographic starting point of 40-50%; currently arriving at the 804 figure.

2.6 Government policy on housebuilding is to deliver 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s. The standard method is designed to drive this level, however in doing so it takes no account of local context or the strategic impacts of doing so.

2.7 The Government have indicated they will make further changes to how housing need should be calculated. Currently no details are available.

### Unplanned developments

2.8 As an organisation, Wokingham Borough Council understands and supports the need to provide homes and the Government's desire to speed up delivery. That is why we are a proactive planning authority, seeking to shape future development through a carefully managed approach.

2.9 Our approach is enabling the delivery of sustainable, infrastructure rich new communities including £500m+ investments in new primary and secondary schools; new strategic roads, new neighbourhood and district centres, new and enhanced sports hubs, parkland and improvements to public transport, as well as over 30% affordable housing (valued at almost £500m also).

2.10 The strategy established by our Core Strategy Local Plan is working to fully meet the defined housing needs of Wokingham Borough. There should be no doubt that we have made tough choices regarding development and have placed resources towards doing our part in delivering new homes. Our last assessment found the deliverable housing land supply to be 6.83 years (5 years is required by Government policy) and performance against the new Housing Delivery Test was 157%.

2.11 Notwithstanding this record in delivery, planning appeals have been allowed for developments in locations which are outside areas where development is planned. In effect, communities are having to accept additional development coming forward in an unplanned manner. It is not acceptable for the plan-led system to be undermined in this way.

2.12 Given that the strategy established by our Core Strategy Local Plan is meeting the past and future requirements set out in the Government's NPPF, including the level of housing need calculated by the standard method, our planning policies should be found up-to-date and given full weight in decisions. Public interest is clearly engaged here, as residents are being asked to accommodate very large amounts of new housing and the plans to which they have contributed should be given a great deal of respect.

### **Recommended consultation**

3.1 To fully gauge the opinion of residents, this report recommends a dedicated consultation on future housing delivery. The proposed question is:

Do you support the government imposed housing numbers?

### Consultation process

3.2 A postcard or letter with freepost response included will be sent to every household in the borough setting out the background and purpose of the consultation. This would provide a link to a website with the online survey that asks the above question, alongside a unique identifying number that will need to be entered when completing the survey. This will allow a more detailed understanding of responses from each part of the borough. The freepost option would provide an opportunity for residents to provide a hard copy response.

3.3 The consultation will take place in summer 2019, with exact dates to be confirmed.

3.4 . The views expressed through the consultation will help us engage with the Government to get them to be more reasonable regarding expected development levels going forward.

## **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)	£45-80k	No. £45-80k	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	n/a	n/a
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	n/a	n/a

### **Other Financial Information**

None

### **Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation**

Consultation will be undertaken in summer 2019, with exact dates to be confirmed. A postcard or letter will be sent to each household in the borough setting out the background to the consultation, including a website address where the survey can be completed.

### **Resourcing and Timeline for Next Steps**

The consultation will be undertaken in summer 2019, with the exact dates to be confirmed. There is anticipated to be sufficient resource to prepare the consultation.

### **Timeline for Review and Evaluation**

Once the consultation has closed responses will be reviewed in order to inform the future approach with government.

### **List of Background Papers**

None

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
SPECIAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 30 MAY 2019 FROM 8.00 PM TO 8.22 PM**

**Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Bill Soane (Chairman), Prue Bray, Lindsay Ferris, John Kaiser and Wayne Smith

**Other Councillors Present**

Councillors: Rachel Bishop-Firth, UllaKarin Clark, Pauline Jorgensen, Stuart Munro, Gregor Murray, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Bill Soane was elected Chairman of the Special Council Executive Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

**2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Malcolm Richards was appointed Vice Chairman of the Special Council Executive Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

**3. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Halsall, Clive Jones and Malcolm Richards.

Councillor Prue Bray substituted for Councillor Jones and Councillor Wayne Smith substituted for Councillor Halsall.

**4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Special Council Executive Committee held on 14 August 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**5. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions received.

**7. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

There were no Member questions received.

**8. FUTURE HOUSING CONSULTATION**

The Committee considered a report from the Executive in relation to a proposed consultation on future housing numbers in Wokingham Borough.

Councillor Bray, whilst confirming that she was in support of the consultation which she felt should be undertaken on an all-party basis, queried what level of response would be seen as successful and what would happen if the expected number of responses were not received? Councillor Smith stated that it was difficult to predict how many responses

would be received however he hoped, given the number of people who had recently signed petitions relating to housing in the Borough and from discussions with resident groups etc that in excess of 15,000 would respond. In addition he hoped that all Members would encourage their residents to respond to the consultation.

Councillor Bray felt the proposed question was not the right one as it was only asking whether people agreed with the housing figure and didn't take account of whether people agreed with the figure because they felt it was too high or too low. She felt that if this finding was presented to the Government they could argue that the Council had not got complete validation from residents as they might have answered it the other way. Councillor Bray therefore proposed that the question be reworded to say "is the current target for the Borough too high, about right or too low" as this would give more clarity to the final outcome. A box asking "why do you think that" would be useful as this might provide additional supporting evidence that could be presented to the Government.

Councillor Ferris agreed with Councillor Bray's comments as although he believed that the sentiment of the question was right he too felt that more work was needed on the wording. He too did not want something presented to the Government that would enable them to argue against the findings. The question had to be really clear and simple in order that the answer coming out was not ambiguous.

Councillor Bray asked that information explaining how the housing targets were derived at, and who they were imposed by, should be included in the consultation preamble. This could also include an explanation of the number of houses the Council was expected to build and the number of houses that had been built so that a comparison could be shown. Councillor Smith acknowledged the point that was being made but highlighted the complicated nature of how the targets were derived at and how difficult it was to explain this which was why a single question was being proposed.

In relation to the cost of the consultation, which was shown as £45k-80k in the report, Councillor Bray queried what the breakdown of this figure was including how much the costs were for: creating the mailshot; distribution; publicity; postage replies and processing the replies as there were different ways of undertaking the consultation which would impact the costs.

Councillor Bray also queried information within the report which she felt was contradictory. In one bullet point it stated "postcards or letter with freepost response provided to be sent directly to all households..." while another bullet point stated that "responses will be submitted through an online survey". Given that it was cheaper to administer and process she felt the consultation should state that the Council would prefer people to take part in the online survey, but acknowledged that there needed to be an option for people who did not have online facilities. Councillor Smith confirmed that the Council would prefer people to respond on line but there had been a very strong feeling amongst Members that a pre-paid envelope should be provided in order to maximise the responses.

Councillor Bray put forward the idea of including the consultation on the front of the Borough News so that people could cut out the response form and return them, possibly into boxes placed in the libraries, rather than posting them back which would save postage and the cost of printing the postcards. Taking account of the fact that it was intended to include a unique reference number on the postcard Councillor Bray suggested that there were a number of online tools eg change.org or Survey Monkey that had the facility for unique responses to be made which would allow the same home address to have different

responses but not allow the same e-mail address to be used, which she believed would provide sufficient level of control. She also felt that asking residents to type in a unique reference number when completing the consultation online was adding a layer of complication that might put people off completing the consultation or could lead to errors when inputting the number.

Councillor Smith confirmed that the consultation would be included on the front page of the Borough News however the Council was unsure of how many residents actually read the Borough News and therefore a large number of residents could be missed if that was the only form of communication. He also felt that the implications of not using a unique number needed to be understood. Councillor Smith clarified that the proposal was that the letter sent to residents would include a unique number which they would use if going online and which would already be on the return slip.

Councillor Bray also asked that consideration be given to the GDPR consent wording that would be included on the consultation response form as she wanted to ensure that it would provide the requisite consent for any data arising from the Consultation to be sent to the Government and any other uses the Council might wish to use the information. She also asked that if the intention was to carry out the consultation over the summer that it not be confined to the school holiday period.

In order to make the consultation truly cross-party Councillor Bray proposed an amendment to recommendation 3 as follows:

“authorise the Director of Corporate Services and Director Locality and Customer Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council **and the Leaders of the other Groups**, to agree minor amendments, if necessary, prior to consultation.”

The amendment was agreed by the Committee.

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) the future housing consultation, in the form set out in paragraph 3.1, be approved;
- 2) a supplementary estimate of £45,000-£80,000 be authorised to fund the consultation;
- 3) the Director of Corporate Services and Director Locality and Customer Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leaders of the other Groups, be authorised to agree minor amendments, if necessary, prior to consultation.

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<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Grass Cutting Delivery Review 2019</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee on 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2019
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Parry Bath, Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Sarah Hollamby, Director of Locality and Customer Services

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

To ensure that the Grounds Maintenance Service/Contract with Tivoli is fit for purpose so that residents can enjoy well-maintained open spaces, play areas, outdoor sports facilities, amenity areas and highway verges across the Borough.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee consider the progress update report for the 2019 grass cutting programme.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The overview and Scrutiny Management Committee was asked to review the contract arrangements for the Grounds Maintenance service and this was addressed at meetings held in August, September and October 2018. A final report was prepared and considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018 which made a number of recommendations to the Council's Executive on 31<sup>st</sup> January.

A meeting was held in February 2019 where a report provided by Council Officers to advise Members of the actions and mitigations undertaken to address the recommendations in order to deliver an effective grass cutting service (appended for information). This report provides a further update now that grass cutting has commenced to review the progress made.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Council's current Grounds Maintenance Contract commenced in 2016 with a new contractor, ISS Facility Services, which was subsequently bought out by Tivoli Group Ltd in June 2018. The contract was awarded after a joint procurement exercise with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM). The contract moved away from a traditional prescriptive model (i.e. a defined number of cuts) to an output/outcomes based contract.

The contract commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 where there were some initial issues but there was a significant improvement in the service delivered by the contractor in 2017. In 2018 however further problems arose and the Council received a significant number of complaints and negative coverage in print and social media.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee asked to review the contract arrangements and this was addressed at meetings held on 1 August, 19 September and 17 October, with a final report prepared and considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Management on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2018. The recommendations from this report were presented to the Council's Executive on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 with a WBC Client Officer report being considered by The Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee in February 2019. Following this it was agreed that a review would take place in June 2019 after grass cutting had commenced in the borough to monitor the progress made.

### **Steps taken**

The previous Overview & Scrutiny report (appended) outlined the actions to be taken by both WBC Officers and Tivoli on a month by month basis, running from January to May (appendix 2). This focused on preparation leading up to the start of grass cutting, having used our risk matrix (appendix 3) and forming most likely scenarios (appendix 9) we were able to arrange for appropriate mitigation should these occur. From March once grass cutting had commenced, our emphasis was to work closely with Localities to effectively monitor Tivoli's progress and ensure that the communication going out to Members was valuable and would work over the course of the grass cutting season.

As part of the preparation and monitoring of the contract in the lead up to grass cutting commencing, fortnightly and often weekly meetings were held between Tivoli Contract Manager and WBC Place Clienting Officers to monitor the progress. In addition to these, fortnightly meetings have been in place with Sarah Hollamby, Customer & Localities Director; Clare Lawrence, Assistant Director Place; Customer & Localities Assistant Director Jude Whyte and Place Clienting Officers. This has kept all services up to date on the contracts progress and provided opportunities for joined up working. For example we were able to utilise Council resources to assist with Tivoli's recruitment and help advertise for seasonal worker positions which had not yet been filled. This used our Tenancy forums, Elevate at Wokingham Library, Optalis as well as our Community Facebook and Twitter.

The Supervisors at Tivoli lead a grass cutting planning day with their long standing employees and team leaders, to identify operational issues they had experienced in previous years and discuss efficiencies that could be made to help prevent lost time. This

helped to get operatives on board, agreeing to amend the grass cutting routes from six to two, which would allow operatives to work in teams closely together, utilise local knowledge and support each other should any problems arise. This left Operatives confident that they had everything in place to deliver a monthly cut with high profile sites receiving additional cutting as required.

### Progress to date

Since grass cutting commenced as planned in mid-March we are now on our third round of cutting for the year and have been able to sustain a 4 weekly cut with higher use parks cut more frequently. We have worked closely with our contractors and within the Council to monitor progress and escalate potential issues before they become a problem. As a result customer complaints are significantly lower year on year with 168 justified complaints received at the same point in 2018 (between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 28<sup>th</sup> May 2018) compared to 11 received to date (accurate as of 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019).

To keep Members up to date of progress, weekly updates have been sent to members since grass cutting started, outlining the towns/parishes where grass cutting has been taking place and giving details of where to expect grass cutting to take place the following week. This also provided links to the grass cutting FAQs (see appendix 7) and details of how Members and residents can report grass cutting issues via the Microsoft Dynamics System.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	Yes	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	Yes	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	Yes	N/A

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
None
<b>List of Background Papers</b>
None

<b>Contact:</b> Peter Baveystock	<b>Service:</b> Place Clienting
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<b>Date:</b> 29/05/2019	<b>Version No.:</b> 1

## Appendix

**Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Recommendations - updated**

**Appendix 2 – Action Plan – spring 2019**

**Appendix 3 – Risk Matrix**

**Appendix 4 – Current KPIs - updated**

**Appendix 5 – Proposed KPIs**

**Appendix 6 – Communications Plan**

**Appendix 7 – FAQs**

**Appendix 8 – The Customer Journey**

**Appendix 9 – Scenario Testing**

**Appendix 10 – Path of Performance Monitoring**

**Appendix 11 – Overview & Scrutiny Report February 2019**

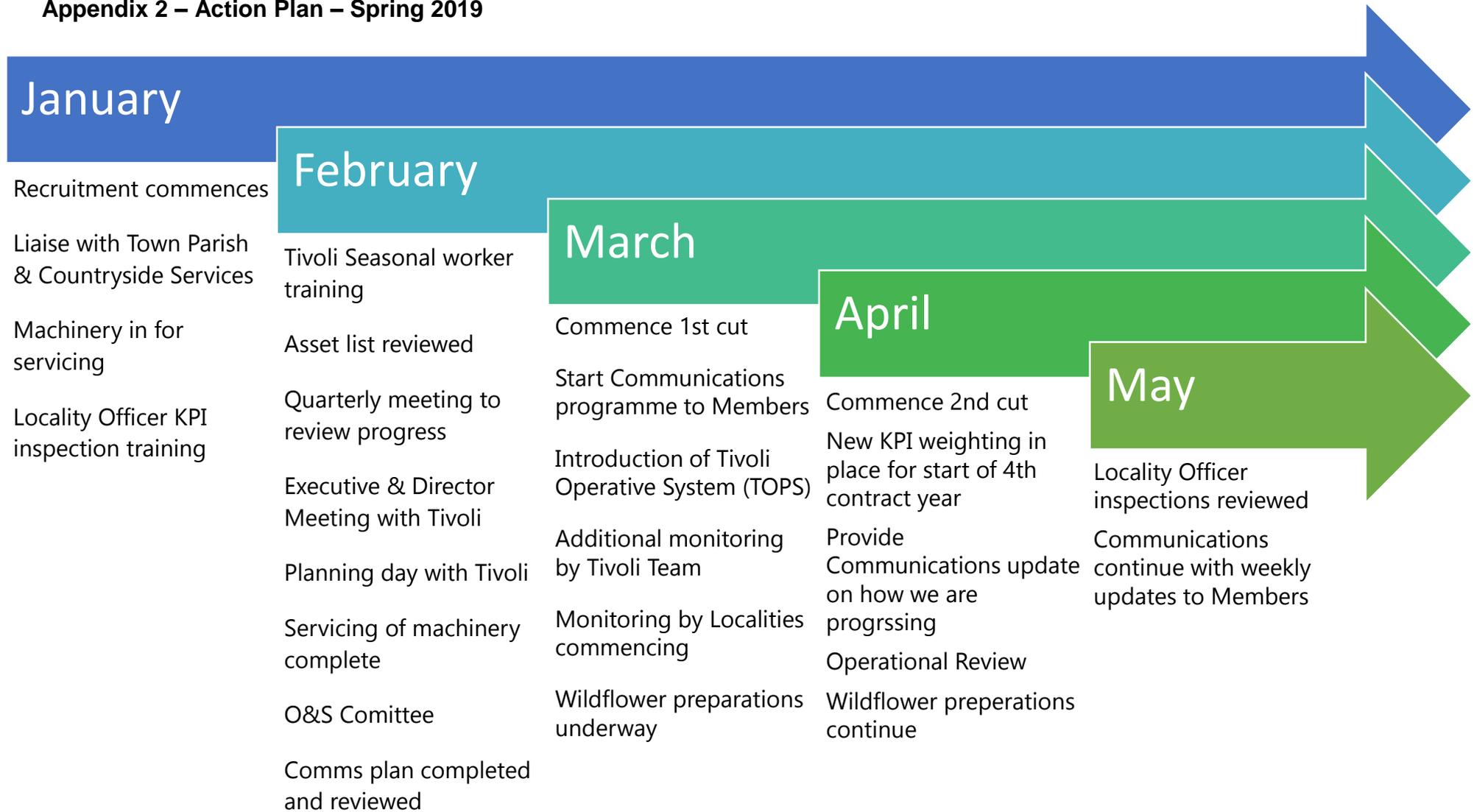
### **Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Recommendations progress update**

Recommendation	Progress Update
2.1 That the Executive Member and Director of Locality and Customer Services meet with senior management from Tivoli Group to discuss the operation of the grounds maintenance service and to emphasise the Council's expectations for service delivery in 2019.	Completed February 2019.
2.2 That the Executive Member and Director of Locality and Customer Services liaise with their counterparts at RBWM to identify areas of common interest and concern and make joint representations to Tivoli Group as necessary.	An initial informal meeting has been held and quarterly meetings will be programmed which will include other mutual Contracts.
2.3 That the Director of Locality and Customer Services review the level of WBC's client monitoring/management resource available for the beginning of the next grass cutting season – March/April 2019.	Regular monitoring of the contract is ongoing and will continue throughout the grass cutting period. This involves the Localities and Place Clienting Officers working closely together and links with the KPIs

<p>2.4 That the Director of Locality and Customer Services review the contractual options available to the Council in the event of continuing underperformance by the grounds maintenance contractor.</p>	<p>Complete (see Appendix 10)</p>
<p>2.5 That the Director of Locality and Customer Services explore options for co-location of the grounds maintenance client and contractor teams and review the weighting of Key Performance Indicators in the contract to emphasise the performance standard required for key public-facing elements of the service.</p>	<p>The co-location of Clienting staff has been considered in the possible redesign of Toutley Depot which is currently being addressed by Property Services.</p> <p>The new KPIs were agreed and are now in place for the current (fourth) contract year which commenced April 2019.</p>
<p>2.6 That the implementation of the Localities Service be used to explore opportunities for improved local intelligence and the development of local networks providing feedback on the operation of the grounds maintenance service.</p>	<p>The Localities Officers are currently monitoring grass cutting progress and feedback issues via the Dynamics System and to the contract manager.</p>
<p>2.7 That WBC Officers work with the contractor to seek input from appropriate specialist groups, including RSPB and the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) in order to inform management plans for biodiversity sites (woodland, copse and thicket) across the Borough.</p>	<p>Officers have met with WBC Biodiversity Officer and will be compiling an Action Plan to review deliverable options. Meetings have also been held with WBC's Countryside Service to discuss their approach to managing these areas.</p>
<p>2.8 That, as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council programme, opportunities for using new technology be explored in order to deliver more comprehensive, up to date information on grounds maintenance schedules, routes, performance and customer feedback.</p>	<p>Tivoli are currently progressing their mobile operating system. Our Localities team are currently trailing remote devices which support them out in the field and will help them to interact with both Customers and Contractors.</p>
<p>2.9 That the Council continue discussions with Town and Parish Councils about the potential for further asset transfers and options for mutual support in relation to the grounds maintenance service, with</p>	<p>These discussions are ongoing with Town and Parish Councils with the view to have similar arrangements with local community groups and schools to help deliver facilities that work for the public.</p>

regular updates to the Borough Parish Liaison Forum.	
2.10 That the Director of Locality and Customer Services submit a report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, at its meeting in February 2019, setting out the arrangements in place to ensure an effective grass cutting service in 2019.	Completed February 2019
2.11 That the Director of Locality and Customer Services submit a further report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, at its meeting in October 2019, setting out details of performance issues and lessons learnt during the 2019 grass cutting season.	October 2019
2.12 That the Executive instruct Officers to provide updated guidance on the Council's approach to public consultation, in line with the commitments set out in the Council's Constitution and the relevant legal principles.	<p>It is agreed to update the Council's guidance on consultations in line with the Council's Constitution and statutory requirements.</p> <p>To note - the consultation conducted prior to the development of the Grounds Maintenance contract conformed to the expected standards detailed in the report. The report identifies other consultation activity as evidence for the recommendation.</p>

Appendix 2 – Action Plan – Spring 2019



### Appendix 3 Risk Matrix

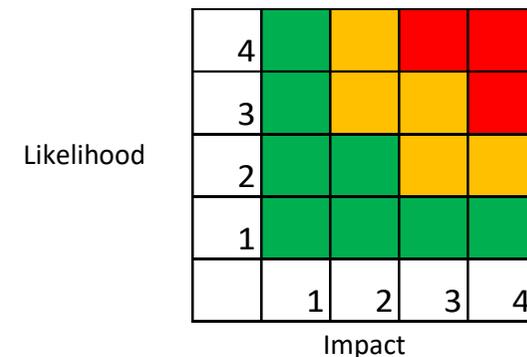
Contract Management Risks (Grounds Maintenance)	Issue in 2016	Issue in 2017	Issue in 2018	Likelihood of becoming an issue (1-4)	Impact (1-4)	Risk score
Late start due to staff training not being completed	Yes	No	No	2	4	8 - Medium
Strong early growth due to mild winter and hot spring requiring early start	Yes	No	No	4	3	12 - High
As with 2018 – severe winter conditions in March leading to late start to cutting	No	No	Yes	2	3	6 – Medium
Late start due to lack of recruitment	No	No	Yes	2	4	8 – Medium
Insufficient machinery at season start	Yes	No	Yes	2	4	8 – Medium
Lack of communication between Tivoli and WBC	Yes	No	Yes	2	4	8 – Medium
Lack of Communication between WBC, Members & Residents	Yes	No	Yes	2	4	8 – Medium
Lack of WBC monitoring resource	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	4	8 - Medium

#### Key Contract Objectives

1. Ensure sufficient staffing available to start first cut by March annually;
2. Ensure sufficient grass cutting equipment available by March annually;
3. Ensure sufficient Locality monitoring staff available as per 1 & 2 above;
4. Ensure comprehensive communications plan has been approved by Executive Member by mid-February annually;
5. Annual review of Contract to include efficiency savings

#### Assessing Likelihood and impact scoring

Impact level on delivery	Likelihood
1 – Moderate	1 – Unlikely
2 – Significant	2 – Low
3 – Serious	3 – Very likely
4 - Critical	4 – Certain/High



### Appendix 4 – KPIs to date

KPI	Description	Target	Achieved	Year 1	Achieved	Year 2	Achieved	Year 3	Year 4 Target	Achieved to date
KPI 1	Officer inspection scores	80	82	Pass	78	Fail	75	Failed	80	75
KPI 2	Independent inspection scores	80	80	Pass	80	Pass	78	Failed	80	TBC
KPI 3	Play area inspections completed and officer inspections	90	90	Pass	92	Pass	90	Pass	90	80
KPI 4	Stakeholder/customer satisfaction	80	81	Pass	85	Pass	71	Failed	85	TBC
KPI 5	Sports user satisfaction	80	77	Fail	92	Pass	78	Failed	80	TBC
KPI 6	Justified complaints – grass	24	-	-	19	Pass	298	Failed	50	11
KPI 7	Justified complaints – hedges, copse and shrubs	30	-	-	72	Fail	165	Failed	30	8
KPI 8	Justified complaints – other	37	-	-	22	Pass	69	Failed	37	7
KPI 9	Biodiversity performance (no. of projects)	6	6	Pass	6	Pass		TBC	6	TBC

**Appendix 5 – Agreed KPIs commenced Year 4 April 2019**

KPI No	KPI	Percentage change in Reward/ Penalty	Target Yr 3	Target Yr 4
1.	Average annual Cleaner and Greener inspections score	0%	80%	80%
2.	Average annual independent inspections score	-20%	80%	80%
3.	Play area inspections & maintenance	-22%	90%	90%
4.	Stakeholder/customer satisfaction	-20%	85%	85%
5.	Sports user satisfaction	0%	80%	80%
6.	No. Justified Complaint Grass (no.)	200%	24	50
7.	No. Justified Complaint hedges, copse & shrubs (no.)	0%	30	30
8.	No. Justified Complaint Other (no.)	0%	37	37
9.	Biodiversity performance (no. projects)	0%	6	6
10.	Partnership working & problem solving approach	-17%	80%	80%

<b>Management Performance Indicators linked to KPI no. 10</b>	<b>Weighting Yr 3</b>	<b>Weighting Yr 4</b>	<b>% change in weighting</b>	<b>Target Yr 4</b>
Assistance provided in preparing Management Plans (No. of plans)	15%	15%	0%	1 Plan
Support in providing Community Involvement/Projects/Volunteer hours (No. of hours)	15%	20%	33%	100 hours
Contribution to changing Customer perception – support at meetings, marketing etc. (No. of hours/ occ.)	10%	15%	50%	40 hours / 12 occasions
Assistance/support in Changing Management Regimes (No. of occasions/sites)	15%	10%	-33%	4 sites
Assistance with Sponsorship site development. (Changed from: Identifying opportunities and delivering reduced pesticide use)	5%	5%	0%	4 sites/ occasions
Sports surface quality improvement (Percentage improvement in impact/ball roll test etc.)	15%	15%	0%	As per STRI/ Pitch Strategy
Staff training – multi-skilling, bio diversity, customer perceptions/service understanding etc. (No. of hours)	10%	5%	-50%	1400 hours
No/% maps and/or Bills updated accurately	5%	5%	0%	3 examples
Savings and new income streams achieved	10%	10%	0%	3 examples

## Appendix 6 – Communications Plan

### Communications, Marketing and Engagement Plan for Grass Cutting 2019

#### Overall objective

**The grass cutting service proactively reacts to emerging issues to prevent escalation and All stakeholders and interested residents are kept informed of grass cutting programme**

#### Background:

Grass cutting has become an issue of significant public concern during some recent summers (2014, 2016 and 2018), when contractors have struggled to keep up with. Among the issues identified have been the need for contractors to react more quickly to emerging issues in order to prevent escalation and discontent and the provision of accurate and timely information to stakeholders and residents during the grass cutting season.

#### Overview

WBC will provide clear and timely information on grass cutting to residents and stakeholders in order to:

- Ensure residents and stakeholders understand the grass cutting contract including how to report any issues
- Work with Localities officers to provide an early warning system of any localised issue to stakeholders and residents and explain mitigating actions
- Provide regular updates to stakeholders (ward members and town/parish councils) on grass cutting performance

#### Outcomes - by the end of the grass cutting season:

1. WBC will have increased understanding among residents of the grass cutting contract
2. Identified emerging issues and put mitigation in place before significant public / media problems occur
3. Stakeholders will have been provided the right information at the right time on grass cutting progress
4. Any issues or delays that have arisen have been explained to stakeholders and residents along with mitigating action taken

Stakeholders	
<b>Key influencers</b> Elected members Town and Parish Councils Social media community groups Residents' Groups Local media MPs	<b>Partners and potential partners</b> Tivoli Countryside Services Town and Parish Councils
<b>Target audiences</b> All borough residents, with specific targeting to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas affected by any issues or delays arising during the grass cutting season</li> </ul>	

#### Key communications messages

- We realise the importance of maintaining public open spaces well and that there have been problems in previous years
- We have put mitigating actions into place to reduce likelihood or problems occurring and impact of them is they do
- We will use localities workers to identify emerging issues and react to them quickly
- Residents and stakeholders can help by reporting genuine issues in the right way

#### Methods

The primary method of communication will be a weekly update provided to key stakeholders (elected members and town & parish councils) and then placed online.

Other methods:

- Media release
- Updated webpages with FAQ
- Social media
- Standard response prepared for complaints

#### Activities: Communications plan for grass cutting 2019

Activity	Target stakeholders	Date	Who
<b>Briefing for all members and town and parish councils: notes to be provided to all members to set out:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations/requirements of service</li> <li>• Improvement measure put in place</li> <li>• Mitigation plans</li> <li>• Reporting mechanism for issues</li> </ul>	Ward member Town and Parish Councils		
Update webpages to include preparations for 2019 and mitigation in place – new FAQ			
Borough News article to acknowledge issues in the past and set out measures put in place for improvement and mitigation	All residents		
<b>Media release and FAQ published ahead of grass cutting season in order to:</b> Explain grass cutting contract (what residents should expect) Set out measures put in place to reduce risk of problems Set out mitigation ready to use if necessary Provide appropriate method for residents to report issues	All residents		
Localities officer to provide early warnings of any emerging local issues	Internal		
<b>Weekly updates to key stakeholders to include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cuts that took place the previous week</li> <li>• Cuts scheduled for the week ahead</li> <li>• Any issues raised and response</li> </ul>	Ward members and town and parish councils	Issued each week from XXX	
Updates placed on WBC website after circulation to stakeholders	All residents	Published each week from xxx	

<b>Social media posts to promote web updates</b>	All residents	Published each week from xxx	
<b>Media releases as required to provide general updates and deal with any specific issues</b>	All residents	Ad hoc releases	

## Appendix 7 – FAQs

### Contents

[How often is the grass cut?](#)

[Why are there designated long grass areas?](#)

[When will the grass be cut?](#)

[What should contractors be doing when they cut the grass?](#)

[Why has the edge been cut but not the middle of the grass and vice versa?](#)

[Do you collect grass cuttings?](#)

[I think an area has been missed, will they come back?](#)

[Why has an area been missed?](#)

[The grass has Dandelions and other weeds. The seed float across to my garden. Can you remove or spray the weeds?](#)

[The Quality if the cutting is poor, why is this and will the contractors come back?](#)

[Dog fouling is an issue in long grass areas](#)

[Long grass encourages ticks](#)

[Long grass exacerbates hay fever please will you cut it?](#)

### How often is the grass cut? / When will the grass be cut?

- Grass cutting should be carried out within the agreed specification standard
- Grass should be no longer than 125mm (5 inches) and no shorter than 30mm (1 inch) in general grass areas – most urban highway verges and parks where it has not been left for long grass or meadow areas.
- There is no set period of time between cuts, and times may vary according to weather conditions. Difficult conditions can often have a knock on effect when cutting is being carried out and cutting of high volumes of grass can take longer than anticipated. Alternatively prolonged periods of dry weather may make cutting unnecessary.
- We are only able to give a rough guide of 4 weeks between cuts during growing season, which is between April and September.

### Why are there designated long grass areas?

- Where suitable, large highway verges in both rural and urban areas will be left to establish into grassland habitats, but with grass cut regularly around the fringes to ensure grass does not encroach onto pathways, roads or obstruct sight lines.
- In parkland and other open spaces where appropriate we will allow margins of grassland to develop instead of cutting right up to the park boundary.
- We will avoid cutting grass right up to the bases of trees and instead allow the grass to grow to prevent possible damage to trees.

### **What should contractors be doing when they cut the grass?**

Our contractors are required to look after grass areas to provide a generally maintained appearance, which includes:

- Carrying out a uniform cut
- Giving due care and attention to grassed perimeter edges and any obstacles e.g. fence posts and trees
- Litter should be cleared from grass areas before cutting, with litter also being collected where grass areas have been cut exposing litter not previously seen.
- Paths and surrounding edges should be free of clippings

### **Why has the edge been cut but not the middle of the grass and vice versa?**

- Grass cutting crews operate in teams of 2 or 3 operators and will usually consist of 1 ride-on mower operator and 1 or 2 strimmer/blower operator/s.
- Due to the speed of the ride-on mower, the strimmer/blower can often be left behind. The distance gap between them can be up to 24 hours. Please wait at least 24 hours before contacting the Council with your concern as the contractors may already be on route.

### **Do you collect grass cuttings?**

No, this is not a service that has ever been provided by the Borough, clippings are left on site to compost down. It is not feasible to carry out this operation as it would be very labour intensive, carries excessive waste costs and is not economically viable.

### **I think an area has been missed, will they come back?**

Generally our contractors will not be able to return to cut a missed patch. We receive numerous requests for the contractors to return. If we authorise all of these requests the normal routes would be severely disrupted causing further delays to the rest of the borough.

### **Why has an area been missed?**

There are many reasons why an area of grass may have been missed. Here are some of these below.

- There are many areas where daffodil and tulip bulbs have been flowering. These areas of grass will be left uncut until 6 weeks after the flowers have finished blooming to ensure they return the following spring. The cutting will be carried out during the next round of cutting after this period of time.
- Where contractors pass areas that appear to be maintained they will not cut the area again. This is because if a resident is taking care of an area they are likely to be upset by our large machinery leaving possible damage or a poor cut to the carefully attended area. If you want the contractors to cut the grass, please do not cut it yourself and leave it to be cut during the next visit.
- We occasionally receive information of rare wildflowers, birds or animals being present in some grass areas. When these reports are received we will cease to cut around the area, for example until the end of nesting season in order to protect the species.
- Some areas of grass may suffer from standing water. If our contractors are unable to access the grass, they will leave the area and return during the next round to try again.
- If you believe an area of Council owned land has been missed, please provide exact details of the area using the nearest property address if possible and we will check the area and raise this with our contractors so it is not missed during the next grass cutting round.

**The grass has Dandelions and other weeds. The seeds float across to my garden. Can you remove or spray the weeds?**

We are not legally obliged to cut grass to stop weeds. We cannot authorise additional work to manage Dandelion or other weed seeds from dispersing.

**The Quality if the cutting is poor, why is this and will the contractors come back?**

- Our contractors are instructed to cut to a certain standard. There are some issues that can interfere with that standard.
- Scalping – where there are uneven ground levels a tyre of the mower can dip down causing the blade to scalp over lumps or slopes of uneven ground. This is not intentional and often cannot be helped. The contractors will not be sent back to rectify the damage.
- Tufts or uneven grass – where there is long grass growth, machinery will often will have problems cutting through the amount of grass and may not leave an even cut. You may see tufts or ridges of longer grass. This is due to the wheels of the machine pushing the long grass flat as they pass over. Once pushed flat it is missed by the blades. This cannot be prevented when dealing with long grass and the contractors will not be sent back to rectify the issue.
- Sending the contractors back for such issues disrupts the rounds and may cause further delays between cuts across the Borough.

**Dog fouling is an issue in long grass areas**

We believe that it is every owner's responsibility to collect their dog's waste and that the benefits of biodiverse areas outweigh the potential increase in dog fouling. It is the dog owner's responsibility to collect all waste regardless of the grass height or environment.

**Long grass encourages ticks**

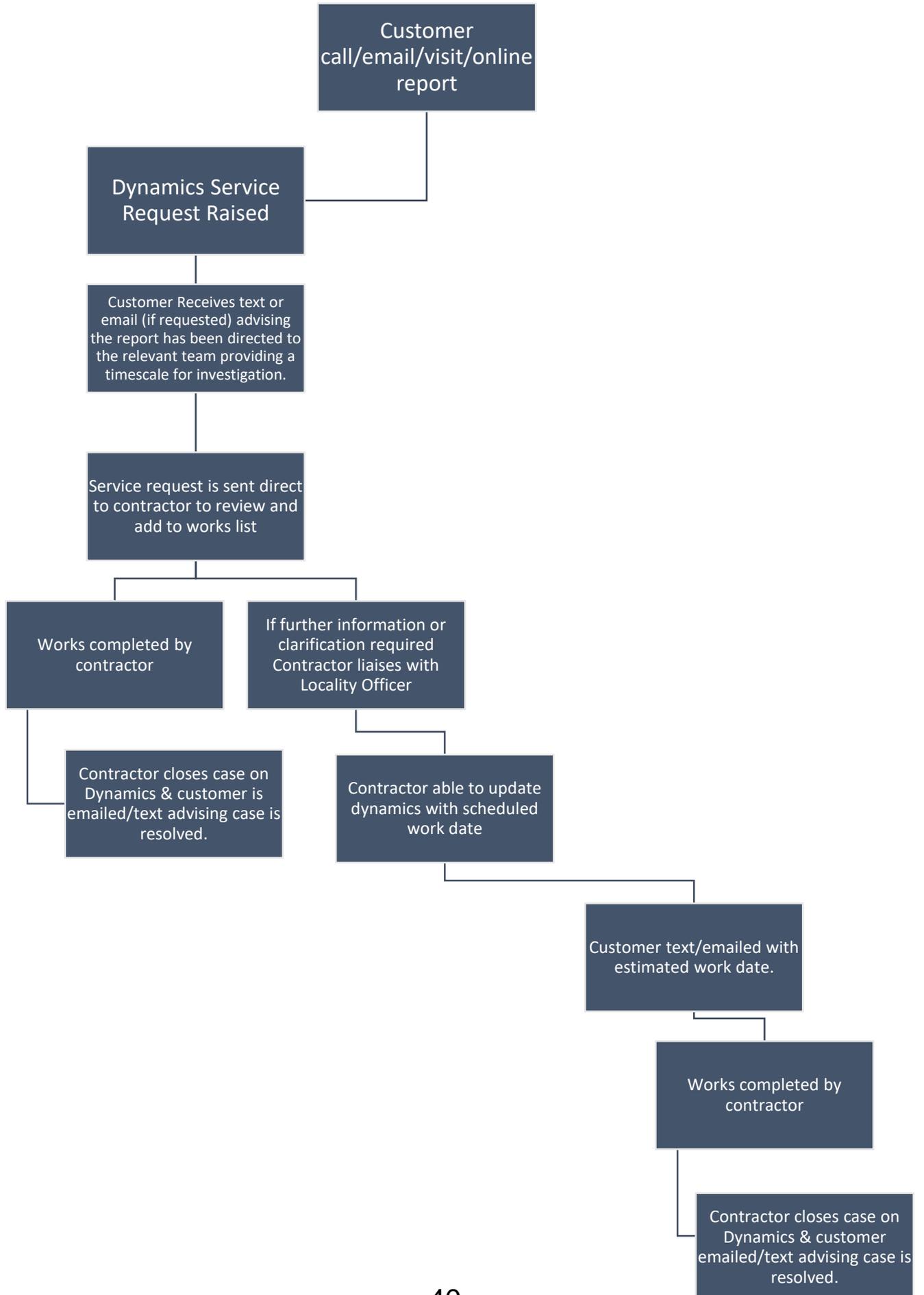
We have sympathy for dog owners and do not seek to reduce the enjoyment of walking your dog. Ticks live in areas of dense vegetation such as grassland and woodland locations, so we encourage those enjoying these environments to take care along with pet owners. Ticks are easily removed and it is important to examine your dog after a walk regardless of whether they have been taken through woodlands or grasslands. Where we have introduced long grass areas we are ensuring that there are still plenty of areas of regularly cut areas for all to enjoy. Top tips to avoid ticks include:

- Keep to footpaths where possible
- Wear long-sleeved tops and trousers when in woodland and grassland areas
- Use insect repellent on exposed skin
- Keep a look-out for ticks after being in a tick environment so any can be removed promptly

**Long grass exacerbates hay fever - please will you cut it?**

There is no legal obligation to cut the grass for hay fever purposes. We sympathise for hay fever sufferers, however studies show the wider health, wellbeing and ecosystem benefits from allowing grassland areas far outweigh the negative impact on hay fever sufferers. In grassland and meadow areas, we will time cuts of grassland areas when the pollen becomes more dense and less dispersed, this is typically outside the critical period of May, June and July.

## Appendix 8 – The Customer Journey



## **Appendix 9 – Scenario Testing**

### **Scenario 1 - Issues with Staffing**

This could include:

- Training issues
- Problems recruiting staff
- Problems retaining staff

#### **Mitigation**

- A clear recruitment timeline has been proposed by Tivoli
- Recruitment commencing in January provides ample time to train up operatives
- More embedded trainers are now available at Tivoli to train up and sign off operatives promptly
- A number of seasonal staff from last summer were retained during the winter who will already be inducted
- Sub-contractor relationships formed by Tivoli to assist should any staffing issues arise
- Tivoli are currently reviewing the incentives available to operatives to help retain staff levels
- To maximise the staffing resource during the growing season Tivoli will be introducing time off in lieu for working bank holidays and stringent holiday leave during growing season

### **Scenario 2 - Issues with Weather/Conditions**

This could include:

- Mild winter leading to early growth
- Wet hot weather leading to rapid growth
- Late/extended winter leading to late start
- Wet spring making preventing machinery to access sites

#### **Mitigation**

- Communications plan will be in place to keep Members informed (see Appendix 6)
- Tivoli will be prepared and ready to commence cutting in March regardless of conditions
- Resource and machinery in place to deliver a cut every 4 weeks to set clear expectation regardless of weather
- Clear communication regarding why areas have been missed i.e. to prevent damage to grass, bulb areas
- The Localities and Place Clienting teams will work with Tivoli on reporting any missed areas to arrange for a reactive team of operatives available to revisit these sites to carry out works without interrupting the cutting schedule.

### **Scenario 3 - Issues with machinery**

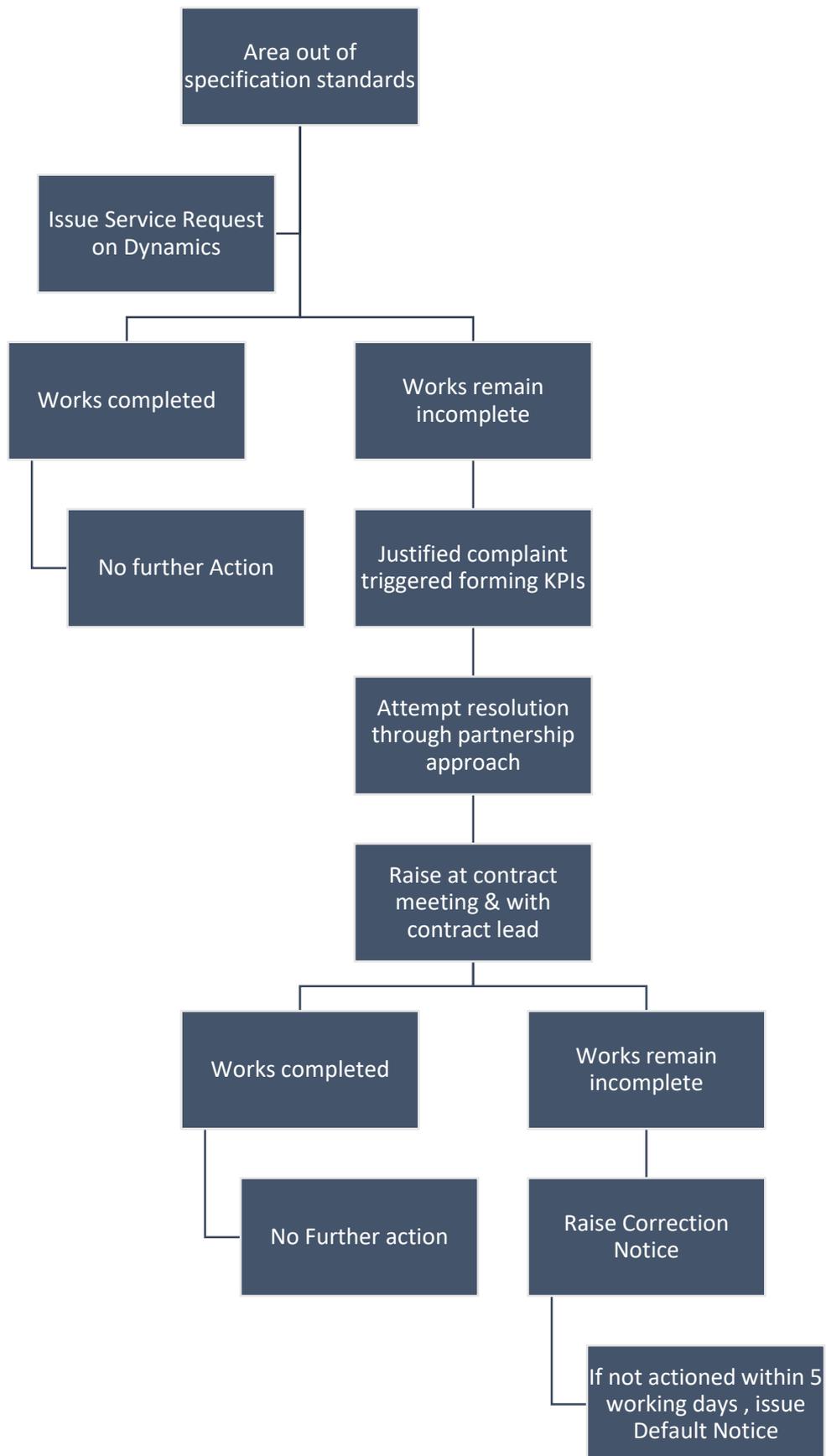
This could include

- Insufficient machinery
- Machinery breakdown

Mitigation

- Assets have been accounted for and will be reviewed prior to grass cutting season
- A clear servicing plan is in place to get machinery to commence cutting at the earliest opportunity
- Training has been set up for operatives to assist with machinery maintenance and prevent breakdowns
- Tivoli have a subcontractor set up and available to assist if required at short notice
- Other parties have been approached to see if they will be available to assist should a breakdown occur including; Countryside Services, Town Councils and our Street Cleansing contractor OCS.
- Should machinery break-down Tivoli will arrange for it to be assessed within 24 hours to determine when it will be back in use and whether alternative machinery needs to be mobilised to prevent a delay in grass cutting.

## Appendix 10 – Path of Performance Monitoring



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<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Grass Cutting Delivery Plan for Spring 2019</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee on 20 <sup>th</sup> February 2019
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	John Halsall, Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Libraries
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Sarah Hollamby, Director of Locality and Customer Services

<p><b>OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY</b></p> <p>To ensure that the Grounds Maintenance Service/Contract with Tivoli is fit for purpose so that residents can enjoy well-maintained open spaces, play areas, outdoor sports facilities, amenity areas and highway verges across the Borough.</p>
<p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Management Committee consider the Officers Response to their 12 recommendations agreed by the Executive on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 as detailed in Appendix 1.</li> <li>2. That the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Management Committee consider the actions and mitigations to deliver an appropriate grass-cutting programme in 2019 and beyond as detailed in this Report and Appendices.</li> </ol>
<p><b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b></p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee was asked to review the contract arrangements for the grounds maintenance service and this was addressed at meetings held in August, September and October 2018. A final report was prepared and considered by the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Management Committee on 21st November 2018 and this made a number of recommendations to the Council's Executive on 31<sup>st</sup> January. This report updates the OSC about the actions and mitigations undertaken to address its recommendations in order to deliver an effective grass cutting service commencing in March 2019 and then ongoing. This has focussed on working with the contract provider Tivoli to develop an action plan to address those issues which have contributed to a lower standard of service delivery in previous years, and also on identifying additional measures to ensure that the contract is effectively monitored and communicated to customers. A series of scenarios have also been tested to ensure that the measures in place are robust to help secure an effective grass cutting service going forward.</p>

## BACKGROUND

The Council's current Grounds Maintenance Contract commenced in 2016 with a new contractor, ISS Facility Services (ISS was subsequently bought out by Tivoli Group, with the handover taking place in June 2018). The contract was awarded after a joint procurement exercise with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM). The contract moved away from a traditional prescriptive model (i.e. a defined number of cuts) to an output/outcomes based contract.

The contract commenced on 1 April 2016. There were some issues in this initial year but there was a significant improvement in the service delivered by the contractor in 2017. However, in 2018 further problems arose and the Council received a significant number of complaints and negative coverage in print and social media.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee asked to review the contract arrangements and this was addressed at meetings held on 1 August, 19 September and 17 October. This review considered information about the service sought from residents, community groups and Town and Parish Councils. The committee interviewed a number of key people including the Executive Member, the WBC Client Officers and a representative of the contractor. It also considered evidence from RBWM and Bracknell Forest Borough Council (BFBC).

A final report was prepared and considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee on 21st November 2018. This made a number of recommendations that were presented to the Council's Executive on 31<sup>st</sup> January.

### Analysis of Issues

The Overview & Scrutiny Review focussed on three main areas. These are detailed below along with a summary of the response to each one:

1. *Were there problems with the structure of the Council's Grounds Maintenance contract?*

Response: Officers have reported that they feel that the Contract is fit for purpose subject to appropriate correctional aspects (addressed below).

2. *Were there problems with the way the Council's contractor was delivering the service?*

Response: Officers have concluded that there were problems in relation to available resources, especially around the ability to react quickly at times of high demand.

These issues have been addressed below.

3. *Were there problems with the way the Council monitored and managed the contract?*

Response: Officers have accepted that this contract would benefit from more comprehensive monitoring. To support this, staff from the Localities Service will conduct additional monitoring to act as an early warning system to understand where any shortfalls are being experienced so that resources can be re-allocated by Tivoli, Countryside Service or through partnerships with Wokingham and Earley Town Councils.

## **Next Steps & Action Plan**

The O&SC recommendations that were agreed by the Council's Executive are set out in Appendix 1 together with a summary of how the OSC recommendations have been addressed. This demonstrates the significant progress that has already been made against the recommendations.

An action plan has been produced by the Council working with the contactor Tivoli (see Appendix 2). The action plan focuses on the measures that will be put in place before the commencement of the next grass cutting session and then throughout this period and in future years. The action plan focusses on identifying the key risks (Appendix 3) that have impacted on the delivery of an effective service and ways these risks can be mitigated. Actions in the action plan include:-

### *Contractor Actions (Tivoli)*

- Early recruitment and training of staff
- New machinery to be commissioned ready for the start of the grass cutting season
- Existing machinery being serviced for the start of the grass cutting season
- Sub-contractor relationships to be developed as a contingency on a rapid response
- A clear communication plan from Tivoli to WBC allowing early warnings on any grass-cutting issues

### *WBC actions:*

- Development of a coherent and dynamic communications plan (Appendix 6) to include early warnings for delays or any other issues to Members, residents and Parish/Town Councils
- Development of a contingency to employ the Countryside Service to carry out work on play areas to supplement Tivoli to prevent extended delays as experienced in 2018
- Development of a contingency to work in partnership with Town Councils to employ their own staff or known third party contractors on appropriate work in their own respective areas

Works to implement the action plan commenced at the beginning of January and to date, there has been good progress against this. For example, Tivoili has confirmed that staff recruitment has commenced and that machinery is starting to be serviced and procured. In addition to the activities contained in the action plan, officers have also put in place ways to more effectively monitor the contract. The Current KPIs (Appendix 4) have been reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose, and a new set of KPI's (Appendix 5) have been produced. The main change proposed focuses on KPI 6 grass cutting. On the basis that we cut approx. 4.4million sqm grass in parks and verges across the Borough, Officers propose to double the threshold for KPI 6 from 24 bona fide complaints per annum to 50 bona fide complaints per annum. The previous KPI was not based on any technical assessment of what would be acceptable or achievable and is considered to be unrealistic. Increasing this to a more achievable and reasonable number will enable the contactor to have a meaningful target but to compensate for this, Officers propose increasing the reliance on achieving this by 200% as a reflection of its importance. This means that if this target is not reached the loss

of payment to the contractor would increase from £800 to £1,600 as opposed to £800 greater reflecting the importance of this element of the service.

Progression of the action plan throughout the grass cutting season will be closely monitored by the Council. The Council’s Localities Officers are being trained to identify any issues for early resolution and to ensure that the service is being delivered effectively. In addition, regular liaison and meetings have already been undertaken and will continue to be held between the Council’s contract team and the contractor Tivoli to hold them to account and to adhere to the formal complaints process. Also, to ensure there is an auditable complaints and default record.

The review of the grounds maintenance contact has emphasised the need to communicate more effectively with customers. In order to enable this, we have developed a communications plan (Appendix 6) and updated the FAQs (Appendix 7). In order to ensure that the contractor is responsive to address any customer concerns, the process to resolve these has been looked at and revised (see Appendix 8). The process shows the Customer Journey from first contact by a resident either by phone to Customer Delivery or on line, moving through to the Tivoli contact and then feedback to the resident upon resolution. This is the preferred way for residents to contact the Council using Microsoft Dynamics with all complaints being registered against KPI 6 (grass cutting complaints).

### **Grass Cutting Scenarios and Mitigation in Place**

In addition to the above measures, officers have reviewed the previous issues with grass cutting to identify any risks that could impact on effective service delivery even with the successful implementation of the action plan, effective monitoring, and the improved performance framework and communications plan. These risks are those things that the council has less control over, and a number of scenarios associated with these risks which relate to staffing issues, weather/condition problems and machinery issues, have been tested as set out in Appendix 9.

### **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	Yes	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	Yes	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	Yes	N/A

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
None
<b>List of Background Papers</b>
None

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<b>Date:</b> 11/02/19	<b>Version No.:</b> 1

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<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Local Transport Plan process and invitation for comments</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 19 June 2019
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific;
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

An update of the current Local Transport Plan (LTP3) will bring the current objectives up to date, removing some which have been achieved and bringing the plan in line with legislative changes and trends nationally as well as the borough's own plans and aspirations. The work is being completed in parallel with the Local Plan process to ensure a joined up approach and to provide residents and businesses assurance that Transport is being considered alongside future plans for the borough and that neither plan makes the other less achievable.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Members...

1. Support the development of a refreshed Local Transport Plan
2. Contribute the views, concerns and opinions of their electorate to enable the scope of the strategy to be determined.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

This report looks at what has changed since the adoption of Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) and proposes a programme of work to develop the next Local Transport Plan.

In order for LTP4 to be a success officers request that Members contribute to the process by submitting any particular transport issues, ideas or schemes to the Transport Planning Team for collation. In addition we will be canvassing Parish and Town Councils to establish the concerns and particular issues experienced by residents in their area. This will help us to identify the main priorities for the borough in future and also produce a delivery plan which will include a prioritised list of schemes, from major schemes to minor improvements which will then be consulted on with the public to establish support and ensure that there is support for the plan.

This report outlines the proposed process for the plan and requests feedback on both the process but also asks for input in the form of comments and priorities for Transport in the Borough which Members would like us to consider during the Plan period, which will be in line with the Local Plan Update (to run to 2036).

## Background

Every Highway Authority in the UK is required by the Local Transport Act (2008) to produce a Local Transport Plan. This sets the vision for transport in the borough along with a number of objectives and targets which the borough wishes to achieve within the plan period.

The borough's current plan is Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) and was adopted in 2011. This plan is now in need of updating following the work done to date to meet its objectives and also legislative changes including various new Acts, National Policies, Strategies and Plans which include:

- A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (Defra, 2018)
- British Road Safety Statement (DfT, 2015)
- Bus Services Act (DfT, 2017)
- Clean Air Strategy 2018 (Defra, 2018)
- Connecting the Country Planning for the Long Term (Highways England, 2017)
- Creating a Great Place for Living 2016- 2020 (Defra, 2016)
- Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon: Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen White Paper (DfT, 2011)
- Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (DfT, 2017)
- Everybody Active, Every Day (Public Health England, 2014)
- Industrial Strategy (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2017)
- National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016-2021 (IPA, 2016)
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019)
- Road Investment Strategy: for the 2015 to 2020 Road Period (DfT, 2016)
- The Road to Growth (Highways England, 2017)
- Transport Investment Strategy (DfT, 2017)
- UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations (Defra, 2017)

In addition, LTP3 includes consideration of census data from 2001, the New LTP4 will be based on the 2011 census with more recent projections and estimates for the population, demographic and travel information than LTP3.

Beneath the overall plan there are a number of daughter documents such as the Smarter Choices Delivery Plan and the Public Transport Strategy. Some of these could be reproduced or replaced following the development of LTP4.

## Analysis of Issues

A draft programme for the development of LTP4 is provided as Appendix 1, this is a draft and in order to align with the Local Plan Update (LPU) it is subject to change. The timescales for the LPU are set out in the Local Development Scheme<sup>1</sup>, however an accelerated programme is being explored. Therefore, it is likely that the daughter documents for LTP4 will follow the main Transport Plan later in 2020.

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<sup>1</sup> Available under the 'What's the Timetable?' section of the following webpage:  
<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-information/local-plan-update/>

Work is underway compiling information to support the request for schemes and issues from Parish and Town Councils and this will be shared with Ward Members so that they can also contribute.

This will include detail of some of the activities and achievements to date, completed under LTP3. LTP3 has 5 separate goals:

**1. Highways Goal**

To have a resilient, safe highway network that balances capacity for all users, enhances the economic prospects of the borough, and promotes sustainable travel

**2. Active Travel Goal**

To work with partners to promote walking and cycling as a health-enhancing physical activity for all of our residents

**3. Public Transport Goal**

To promote an integrated and inclusive public transport network that provides a convenient, acceptable, reliable and affordable alternative to car travel

**4. Smarter Choices & Demand Management Goal**

To enable people who live, visit and work in the borough to make informed, safe and sustainable travel decisions from a range of transport

**5. Strategic Projects Goal**

To manage the demand for travel in order to ensure that people have a high level of access to different destinations, with sufficient choice, whilst minimising the adverse effects of congestion

The gathering of information and views will help us to identify whether these goal areas remain valid, how they should be prioritised and what emerging issues, such as the climate emergency, should be considered. This will help to shape the approach we take and the format of the new Local Transport Plan.

## **HOW TO RESPOND**

Members are invited to submit their views on behalf of their residents to the Council's Transport Planning Team Manager through the [Transportplanning@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:Transportplanning@wokingham.gov.uk) email inbox.

The opportunity to comment will remain open until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019, following which a summary of the comments received and outline of the key issues to be addressed will be sent to all Committee members.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

*The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £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)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	n/a	n/a	n/a

### Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

The development of LTP4 has been funded through existing budgets and is part of Business as usual costs for the Transport Planning team.

### Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)

n/a

### Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

n/a

### List of Background Papers

App 1 – Draft Programme for LTP4

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# Agenda Item 22.

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Government Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 19 June 2019
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific;
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Overview and Scrutiny is one of the checks and balances which ensure that the Council and its partners make and implement effective decisions. It is a key element in the decision making process which ensures transparency and accountability. Scrutiny also enables the voice of residents and community groups to be heard more effectively as part of that decision making process.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended to consider the Government's Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny and to assess the implications for Wokingham Borough Council.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The Government has published updated Statutory Guidance on the operation of Overview and Scrutiny in local government. The Statutory Guidance is appended to the report.

The Statutory Guidance highlights the key elements that contribute to effective Scrutiny including organisational culture, resourcing, access to information and training and support for Members.

The report asks Members to consider the Government's guidance and discuss any suggestions which may strengthen the operation of Overview and Scrutiny at the Council.

## **Background**

The Government's updated Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny was published in May 2019. The guidance followed on from the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Select Committee's inquiry into Overview and Scrutiny in 2017.

The aim of the guidance is to ensure that local authorities are aware of the purpose of Scrutiny, what effective Scrutiny looks like, how to conduct Scrutiny effectively and the benefits it can deliver for the Council and local communities.

As Statutory Guidance, the Council must have regard to it when exercising its functions. This means that the guidance should be followed unless there is a good reason not to.

## **Analysis of Issues**

The Statutory Guidance emphasises the importance of organisational culture in the development of effective Overview and Scrutiny. This relates to the whole Council and requires a commitment from senior Members and Officers to encourage Scrutiny which may be challenging and potentially difficult.

The guidance also covers a range of other factors, including:

- Prioritisation – Scrutiny needs to be focussed with a carefully prioritised work programme;
- Engagement - between the Executive and Scrutiny on order to establish the “critical friend” role and ensure that Scrutiny is adding value;
- Communication – ensuring that the Scrutiny function is understood and supported both inside and outside the organisation;
- Resourcing – including Officer time and budget for training and external expertise;
- Members – including support for the Chairmen and general/specific training for Scrutiny Members;
- Information – effective Scrutiny requires the availability of relevant information in a timely manner.

Members are requested to consider the Statutory Guidance and consider any issues which could lead to improvements in the delivery of Overview and Scrutiny at the Council.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

*The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £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)	NA	NA	NA
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	NA	NA	NA
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	NA	NA	NA

<b>Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision</b>
None

<b>Cross-Council Implications</b>
Overview and Scrutiny impacts on all Council services and the work of key partners

<b>Reasons for considering the report in Part 2</b>
None

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
Government Statutory Guidance

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Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

# Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities



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# Ministerial Foreword

The role that overview and scrutiny can play in holding an authority's decision-makers to account makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy. Effective scrutiny helps secure the efficient delivery of public services and drives improvements within the authority itself. Conversely, poor scrutiny can be indicative of wider governance, leadership and service failure.

It is vital that councils and combined authorities know the purpose of scrutiny, what effective scrutiny looks like, how to conduct it and the benefits it can bring. This guidance aims to increase understanding in all four areas.

In writing this guidance, my department has taken close note of the House of Commons Select Committee report of December 2017, as well as the written and oral evidence supplied to that Committee. We have also consulted individuals and organisations with practical involvement in conducting, researching and supporting scrutiny.

It is clear from speaking to these practitioners that local and combined authorities with effective overview and scrutiny arrangements in place share certain key traits, the most important being a strong organisational culture. Authorities who welcome challenge and recognise the value scrutiny can bring reap the benefits. But this depends on strong commitment from the top - from senior members as well as senior officials.

Crucially, this guidance recognises that authorities have democratic mandates and are ultimately accountable to their electorates, and that authorities themselves are best-placed to know which scrutiny arrangements are most appropriate for their own individual circumstances.

I would, however, strongly urge all councils to cast a critical eye over their existing arrangements and, above all, ensure they embed a culture that allows overview and scrutiny to flourish.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rishi Sunak'.

**Rishi Sunak MP**  
**Minister for Local Government**

# About this Guidance

## Who the guidance is for

This document is aimed at local authorities and combined authorities in England to help them carry out their overview and scrutiny functions effectively. In particular, it provides advice for senior leaders, members of overview and scrutiny committees, and support officers.

## Aim of the guidance

This guidance seeks to ensure local authorities and combined authorities are aware of the purpose of overview and scrutiny, what effective scrutiny looks like, how to conduct it effectively and the benefits it can bring.

As such, it includes a number of policies and practices authorities should adopt or should consider adopting when deciding how to carry out their overview and scrutiny functions.

The guidance recognises that authorities approach scrutiny in different ways and have different processes and procedures in place, and that what might work well for one authority might not work well in another.

The hypothetical scenarios contained in the annexes to this guidance have been included for illustrative purposes, and are intended to provoke thought and discussion rather than serve as a 'best' way to approach the relevant issues.

While the guidance sets out some of the key legal requirements, it does not seek to replicate legislation.

## Status of the guidance

This is statutory guidance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Local authorities and combined authorities must have regard to it when exercising their functions. The phrase 'must have regard', when used in this context, does not mean that the sections of statutory guidance have to be followed in every detail, but that they should be followed unless there is a good reason not to in a particular case.

Not every authority is required to appoint a scrutiny committee. This guidance applies to those authorities who have such a committee in place, whether they are required to or not.

This guidance has been issued under section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 and under paragraph 2(9) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, which requires authorities to have regard to this guidance. In addition, authorities may have regard to other material they might choose to consider, including that issued by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, when exercising their overview and scrutiny functions.

## Terminology

Unless 'overview' is specifically mentioned, the term 'scrutiny' refers to both overview and scrutiny.<sup>1</sup>

Where the term 'authority' is used, it refers to both local authorities and combined authorities.

Where the term 'scrutiny committee' is used, it refers to an overview and scrutiny committee and any of its sub-committees. As the legislation refers throughout to powers conferred on scrutiny committees, that is the wording used in this guidance. However, the guidance should be seen as applying equally to work undertaken in informal task and finish groups, commissioned by formal committees.

Where the term 'executive' is used, it refers to executive members.

For combined authorities, references to the 'executive' or 'cabinet' should be interpreted as relating to the mayor (where applicable) and all the authority members.

For authorities operating committee rather than executive arrangements, references to the executive or Cabinet should be interpreted as relating to councillors in leadership positions.

## Expiry or review date

This guidance will be kept under review and updated as necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> A distinction is often drawn between 'overview' which focuses on the development of policy, and 'scrutiny' which looks at decisions that have been made or are about to be made to ensure they are fit for purpose.

# 1. Introduction and Context

1. Overview and scrutiny committees were introduced in 2000 as part of new executive governance arrangements to ensure that members of an authority who were not part of the executive could hold the executive to account for the decisions and actions that affect their communities.
2. Overview and scrutiny committees have statutory powers<sup>2</sup> to scrutinise decisions the executive is planning to take, those it plans to implement, and those that have already been taken/implemented. Recommendations following scrutiny enable improvements to be made to policies and how they are implemented. Overview and scrutiny committees can also play a valuable role in developing policy.

Effective overview and scrutiny should:

- Provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge;
- Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role; and
- Drive improvement in public services.

3. The requirement for local authorities in England to establish overview and scrutiny committees is set out in sections 9F to 9FI of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.
4. The Localism Act 2011 amended the Local Government Act 2000 to allow councils to revert to a non-executive form of governance - the 'committee system'. Councils who adopt the committee system are not required to have overview and scrutiny but may do so if they wish. The legislation has been strengthened and updated since 2000, most recently to reflect new governance arrangements with combined authorities. Requirements for combined authorities are set out in Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
5. Current overview and scrutiny legislation recognises that authorities are democratically-elected bodies who are best-placed to determine which overview and scrutiny arrangements best suit their own individual needs, and so gives them a great degree of flexibility to decide which arrangements to adopt.
6. In producing this guidance, the Government fully recognises both authorities' democratic mandate and that the nature of local government has changed in recent years, with, for example, the creation of combined authorities, and councils increasingly delivering key services in partnership with other organisations or outsourcing them entirely.

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<sup>2</sup> Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 1 of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## 2. Culture

7. The prevailing organisational culture, behaviours and attitudes of an authority will largely determine whether its scrutiny function succeeds or fails.
8. While everyone in an authority can play a role in creating an environment conducive to effective scrutiny, it is important that this is led and owned by members, given their role in setting and maintaining the culture of an authority.
9. Creating a strong organisational culture supports scrutiny work that can add real value by, for example, improving policy-making and the efficient delivery of public services. In contrast, low levels of support for and engagement with the scrutiny function often lead to poor quality and ill-focused work that serves to reinforce the perception that it is of little worth or relevance.
10. Members and senior officers should note that the performance of the scrutiny function is not just of interest to the authority itself. Its effectiveness, or lack thereof, is often considered by external bodies such as regulators and inspectors, and highlighted in public reports, including best value inspection reports. Failures in scrutiny can therefore help to create a negative public image of the work of an authority as a whole.

### How to establish a strong organisational culture

11. Authorities can establish a strong organisational culture by:

- a) **Recognising scrutiny's legal and democratic legitimacy** – all members and officers should recognise and appreciate the importance and legitimacy the scrutiny function is afforded by the law. It was created to act as a check and balance on the executive and is a statutory requirement for all authorities operating executive arrangements and for combined authorities.

Councillors have a unique legitimacy derived from their being democratically elected. The insights that they can bring by having this close connection to local people are part of what gives scrutiny its value.

- b) **Identifying a clear role and focus** – authorities should take steps to ensure scrutiny has a clear role and focus within the organisation, i.e. a niche within which it can clearly demonstrate it adds value. Therefore, prioritisation is necessary to ensure the scrutiny function concentrates on delivering work that is of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider authority – this is one of the most challenging parts of scrutiny, and a critical element to get right if it is to be recognised as a strategic function of the authority (see chapter 6).

Authorities should ensure a clear division of responsibilities between the scrutiny function and the audit function. While it is appropriate for scrutiny to pay due regard to the authority's financial position, this will need to happen in the context of the formal audit role. The authority's section 151 officer should advise scrutiny on how to manage this dynamic.

While scrutiny has no role in the investigation or oversight of the authority's whistleblowing arrangements, the findings of independent whistleblowing investigations might be of interest to scrutiny committees as they consider their wider implications. Members should always follow the authority's constitution and associated Monitoring Officer directions on the matter. Further guidance on whistleblowing can be found at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/415175/bis-15-200-whistleblowing-guidance-for-employers-and-code-of-practice.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415175/bis-15-200-whistleblowing-guidance-for-employers-and-code-of-practice.pdf).

- c) **Ensuring early and regular engagement between the executive and scrutiny** – authorities should ensure early and regular discussion takes place between scrutiny and the executive, especially regarding the latter's future work programme. Authorities should, though, be mindful of their distinct roles:

In particular:

- The executive should not try to exercise control over the work of the scrutiny committee. This could be direct, e.g. by purporting to 'order' scrutiny to look at, or not look at, certain issues, or indirect, e.g. through the use of the whip or as a tool of political patronage, and the committee itself should remember its statutory purpose when carrying out its work. All members and officers should consider the role the scrutiny committee plays to be that of a 'critical friend' not a de facto 'opposition'. Scrutiny chairs have a particular role to play in establishing the profile and nature of their committee (see chapter 4); and
- The chair of the scrutiny committee should determine the nature and extent of an executive member's participation in a scrutiny committee meeting, and in any informal scrutiny task group meeting.

- d) **Managing disagreement** – effective scrutiny involves looking at issues that can be politically contentious. It is therefore inevitable that, at times, an executive will disagree with the findings or recommendations of a scrutiny committee.

It is the job of both the executive and scrutiny to work together to reduce the risk of this happening, and authorities should take steps to predict, identify and act on disagreement.

One way in which this can be done is via an 'executive-scrutiny protocol' (see annex 1) which can help define the relationship between the two and mitigate any differences of opinion before they manifest themselves in unhelpful and unproductive ways. The benefit of this approach is that it provides a framework for disagreement and debate, and a way to manage it when it happens. Often,

the value of such a protocol lies in the dialogue that underpins its preparation. It is important that these protocols are reviewed on a regular basis.

Scrutiny committees do have the power to 'call in' decisions, i.e. ask the executive to reconsider them before they are implemented, but should not view it as a substitute for early involvement in the decision-making process or as a party-political tool.

- e) **Providing the necessary support** – while the level of resource allocated to scrutiny is for each authority to decide for itself, when determining resources an authority should consider the purpose of scrutiny as set out in legislation and the specific role and remit of the authority's own scrutiny committee(s), and the scrutiny function as a whole.

Support should also be given by members and senior officers to scrutiny committees and their support staff to access information held by the authority and facilitate discussions with representatives of external bodies (see chapter 5).

- f) **Ensuring impartial advice from officers** – authorities, particularly senior officers, should ensure all officers are free to provide impartial advice to scrutiny committees. This is fundamental to effective scrutiny. Of particular importance is the role played by 'statutory officers' – the monitoring officer, the section 151 officer and the head of paid service, and where relevant the statutory scrutiny officer. These individuals have a particular role in ensuring that timely, relevant and high-quality advice is provided to scrutiny.
- g) **Communicating scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider authority** – the scrutiny function can often lack support and recognition within an authority because there is a lack of awareness among both members and officers about the specific role it plays, which individuals are involved and its relevance to the authority's wider work. Authorities should, therefore, take steps to ensure all members and officers are made aware of the role the scrutiny committee plays in the organisation, its value and the outcomes it can deliver, the powers it has, its membership and, if appropriate, the identity of those providing officer support.
- h) **Maintaining the interest of full Council in the work of the scrutiny committee** – part of communicating scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider authority should happen through the formal, public role of full Council – particularly given that scrutiny will undertake valuable work to highlight challenging issues that an authority will be facing and subjects that will be a focus of full Council's work. Authorities should therefore take steps to ensure full Council is informed of the work the scrutiny committee is doing.

One way in which this can be done is by reports and recommendations being submitted to full Council rather than solely to the executive. Scrutiny should decide when it would be appropriate to submit reports for wider debate in this way, taking into account the relevance of reports to full Council business, as well as full Council's capacity to consider and respond in a timely manner. Such

reports would supplement the annual report to full Council on scrutiny's activities and raise awareness of ongoing work.

In order to maintain awareness of scrutiny at the Combined Authority and provoke dialogue and discussion of its impact, the business of scrutiny should be reported to the Combined Authority board or to the chairs of the relevant scrutiny committees of constituent and non-constituent authorities, or both. At those chairs' discretion, particular Combined Authority scrutiny outcomes, and what they might mean for each individual area, could be either discussed by scrutiny in committee or referred to full Council of the constituent authorities.

- i) **Communicating scrutiny's role to the public** – authorities should ensure scrutiny has a profile in the wider community. Consideration should be given to how and when to engage the authority's communications officers, and any other relevant channels, to understand how to get that message across. This will usually require engagement early on in the work programming process (see chapter 6).
- j) **Ensuring scrutiny members are supported in having an independent mindset** – formal committee meetings provide a vital opportunity for scrutiny members to question the executive and officers.

Inevitably, some committee members will come from the same political party as a member they are scrutinising and might well have a long-standing personal, or familial, relationship with them (see paragraph 25).

Scrutiny members should bear in mind, however, that adopting an independent mind-set is fundamental to carrying out their work effectively. In practice, this is likely to require scrutiny chairs working proactively to identify any potentially contentious issues and plan how to manage them.

### Directly-elected mayoral systems

12. A strong organisational culture that supports scrutiny work is particularly important in authorities with a directly-elected mayor to ensure there are the checks and balances to maintain a robust democratic system. Mayoral systems offer the opportunity for greater public accountability and stronger governance, but there have also been incidents that highlight the importance of creating and maintaining a culture that puts scrutiny at the heart of its operations.
13. Authorities with a directly-elected mayor should ensure that scrutiny committees are well-resourced, are able to recruit high-calibre members and that their scrutiny functions pay particular attention to issues surrounding:
  - rights of access to documents by the press, public and councillors;
  - transparent and fully recorded decision-making processes, especially avoiding decisions by 'unofficial' committees or working groups;
  - delegated decisions by the Mayor;
  - whistleblowing protections for both staff and councillors; and
  - powers of Full Council, where applicable, to question and review.

14. Authorities with a directly-elected mayor should note that mayors are required by law to attend overview and scrutiny committee sessions when asked to do so (see paragraph 44).

## 3. Resourcing

15. The resource an authority allocates to the scrutiny function plays a pivotal role in determining how successful that function is and therefore the value it can add to the work of the authority.
16. Ultimately it is up to each authority to decide on the resource it provides, but every authority should recognise that creating and sustaining an effective scrutiny function requires them to allocate resources to it.
17. Authorities should also recognise that support for scrutiny committees, task groups and other activities is not solely about budgets and provision of officer time, although these are clearly extremely important elements. Effective support is also about the ways in which the wider authority engages with those who carry out the scrutiny function (both members and officers).

When deciding on the level of resource to allocate to the scrutiny function, the factors an authority should consider include:

- Scrutiny's legal powers and responsibilities;
- The particular role and remit scrutiny will play in the authority;
- The training requirements of scrutiny members and support officers, particularly the support needed to ask effective questions of the executive and other key partners, and make effective recommendations;
- The need for ad hoc external support where expertise does not exist in the council;
- Effectively-resourced scrutiny has been shown to add value to the work of authorities, improving their ability to meet the needs of local people; and
- Effectively-resourced scrutiny can help policy formulation and so minimise the need for call-in of executive decisions.

### Statutory scrutiny officers

18. Combined authorities, upper and single tier authorities are required to designate a statutory scrutiny officer,<sup>3</sup> someone whose role is to:
  - promote the role of the authority's scrutiny committee;
  - provide support to the scrutiny committee and its members; and
  - provide support and guidance to members and officers relating to the functions of the scrutiny committee.

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<sup>3</sup> Section 9FB of the Local Government Act 2000; article 9 of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017

19. Authorities not required by law to appoint such an officer should consider whether doing so would be appropriate for their specific local needs.

#### Officer resource models

20. Authorities are free to decide for themselves which wider officer support model best suits their individual circumstances, though generally they adopt one or a mix of the following:

- Committee – officers are drawn from specific policy or service areas;
- Integrated – officers are drawn from the corporate centre and also service the executive; and
- Specialist – officers are dedicated to scrutiny.

21. Each model has its merits – the committee model provides service-specific expertise; the integrated model facilitates closer and earlier scrutiny involvement in policy formation and alignment of corporate work programmes; and the specialist model is structurally independent from those areas it scrutinises.

22. Authorities should ensure that, whatever model they employ, officers tasked with providing scrutiny support are able to provide impartial advice. This might require consideration of the need to build safeguards into the way that support is provided. The nature of these safeguards will differ according to the specific role scrutiny plays in the organisation.

## 4. Selecting Committee Members

23. Selecting the right members to serve on scrutiny committees is essential if those committees are to function effectively. Where a committee is made up of members who have the necessary skills and commitment, it is far more likely to be taken seriously by the wider authority.
24. While there are proportionality requirements that must be met,<sup>4</sup> the selection of the chair and other committee members is for each authority to decide for itself. Guidance for combined authorities on this issue has been produced by the Centre for Public Scrutiny<sup>5</sup>.

Members invariably have different skill-sets. What an authority must consider when forming a committee is that, as a group, it possesses the requisite expertise, commitment and ability to act impartially to fulfil its functions.

25. Authorities are reminded that members of the executive cannot be members of a scrutiny committee.<sup>6</sup> Authorities should take care to ensure that, as a minimum, members holding less formal executive positions, e.g. as Cabinet assistants, do not sit on scrutinising committees looking at portfolios to which those roles relate. Authorities should articulate in their constitutions how conflicts of interest, including familial links (see also paragraph 31), between executive and scrutiny responsibilities should be managed, including where members stand down from the executive and move to a scrutiny role, and vice-versa.
26. Members or substitute members of a combined authority must not be members of its overview and scrutiny committee.<sup>7</sup> This includes the Mayor in Mayoral Combined Authorities. It is advised that Deputy Mayors for Policing and Crime are also not members of the combined authority's overview and scrutiny committee.

### Selecting individual committee members

27. When selecting individual members to serve on scrutiny committees, an authority should consider a member's experience, expertise, interests, ability to act impartially, ability to work as part of a group, and capacity to serve.

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<sup>4</sup> See, for example, regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Committee System) (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/1020) and article 4 of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 (S.I. 2017/68).

<sup>5</sup> See pages 15-18 of 'Overview and scrutiny in combined authorities: a plain English guide': <https://www.cfps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Overview-and-scrutiny-in-combined-authorities-a-plain-english-guide.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Section 9FA(3) of the Local Government Act 2000.

<sup>7</sup> 2(3) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

28. Authorities should not take into account a member's perceived level of support for or opposition to a particular political party (notwithstanding the wider legal requirement for proportionality referred to in paragraph 24).

### Selecting a chair

29. The Chair plays a leadership role on a scrutiny committee as they are largely responsible for establishing its profile, influence and ways of working.

30. The attributes authorities should and should not take into account when selecting individual committee members (see paragraphs 27 and 28) also apply to the selection of the Chair, but the Chair should also possess the ability to lead and build a sense of teamwork and consensus among committee members.

Chairs should pay special attention to the need to guard the committee's independence. Importantly, however, they should take care to avoid the committee being, and being viewed as, a de facto opposition to the executive.

31. Given their pre-eminent role on the scrutiny committee, it is strongly recommended that the Chair not preside over scrutiny of their relatives<sup>8</sup>. Combined authorities should note the legal requirements that apply to them where the Chair is an independent person<sup>9</sup>.

32. The method for selecting a Chair is for each authority to decide for itself, however every authority should consider taking a vote by secret ballot. Combined Authorities should be aware of the legal requirements regarding the party affiliation of their scrutiny committee Chair<sup>10</sup>.

### Training for committee members

33. Authorities should ensure committee members are offered induction when they take up their role and ongoing training so they can carry out their responsibilities effectively. Authorities should pay attention to the need to ensure committee members are aware of their legal powers, and how to prepare for and ask relevant questions at scrutiny sessions.

34. When deciding on training requirements for committee members, authorities should consider taking advantage of opportunities offered by external providers in the sector.

### Co-option and technical advice

35. While members and their support officers will often have significant local insight and an understanding of local people and their needs, the provision of outside expertise can be invaluable.

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<sup>8</sup> A definition of 'relative' can be found at section 28(10) of the Localism Act 2011.

<sup>9</sup> See article 5(2) of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 (S.I. 2017/68).

<sup>10</sup> Article 5(6) of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

36. There are two principal ways to procure this:

- Co-option – formal co-option is provided for in legislation<sup>11</sup>. Authorities must establish a co-option scheme to determine how individuals will be co-opted onto committees; and
- Technical advisers – depending on the subject matter, independent local experts might exist who can provide advice and assistance in evaluating evidence (see annex 2).

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<sup>11</sup> Section 9FA(4) Local Government Act 2000

## 5. Power to Access Information

37. A scrutiny committee needs access to relevant information the authority holds, and to receive it in good time, if it is to do its job effectively.
38. This need is recognised in law, with members of scrutiny committees enjoying powers to access information<sup>12</sup>. In particular, regulations give enhanced powers to a scrutiny member to access exempt or confidential information. This is in addition to existing rights for councillors to have access to information to perform their duties, including common law rights to request information and rights to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
39. When considering what information scrutiny needs in order to carry out its work, scrutiny members and the executive should consider scrutiny's role and the legal rights that committees and their individual members have, as well as their need to receive timely and accurate information to carry out their duties effectively.
40. Scrutiny members should have access to a regularly available source of key information about the management of the authority – particularly on performance, management and risk. Where this information exists, and scrutiny members are given support to understand it, the potential for what officers might consider unfocused and unproductive requests is reduced as members will be able to frame their requests from a more informed position.
41. Officers should speak to scrutiny members to ensure they understand the reasons why information is needed, thereby making the authority better able to provide information that is relevant and timely, as well as ensuring that the authority complies with legal requirements.

While each request for information should be judged on its individual merits, authorities should adopt a default position of sharing the information they hold, on request, with scrutiny committee members.

42. The law recognises that there might be instances where it is legitimate for an authority to withhold information and places a requirement on the executive to provide the scrutiny committee with a written statement setting out its reasons for that decision<sup>13</sup>. However, members of the executive and senior officers should take particular care to avoid refusing requests, or limiting the information they provide, for reasons of party political or reputational expediency.

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<sup>12</sup> Regulation 17 - Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10 Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

<sup>13</sup> Regulation 17(4) – Local Government (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10(4) Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

Before an authority takes a decision not to share information it holds, it should give serious consideration to whether that information could be shared in closed session.

43. Regulations already stipulate a timeframe for executives to comply with requests from a scrutiny member<sup>14</sup>. When agreeing to such requests, authorities should:

- consider whether seeking clarification from the information requester could help better target the request; and
- Ensure the information is supplied in a format appropriate to the recipient's needs.

44. Committees should be aware of their legal power to require members of the executive and officers to attend before them to answer questions<sup>15</sup>. It is the duty of members and officers to comply with such requests.<sup>16</sup>

#### Seeking information from external organisations

45. Scrutiny members should also consider the need to supplement any authority-held information they receive with information and intelligence that might be available from other sources, and should note in particular their statutory powers to access information from certain external organisations.

46. When asking an external organisation to provide documentation or appear before it, and where that organisation is not legally obliged to do either (see annex 3), scrutiny committees should consider the following:

- a) **The need to explain the purpose of scrutiny** – the organisation being approached might have little or no awareness of the committee's work, or of an authority's scrutiny function more generally, and so might be reluctant to comply with any request;
- b) **The benefits of an informal approach** – individuals from external organisations can have fixed perceptions of what an evidence session entails and may be unwilling to subject themselves to detailed public scrutiny if they believe it could reflect badly on them or their employer. Making an informal approach can help reassure an organisation of the aims of the committee, the type of information being sought and the manner in which the evidence session would be conducted;

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<sup>14</sup> Regulation 17(2) – Local Government (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10(2) Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

<sup>15</sup> Section 9FA(8) of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 2(6) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

<sup>16</sup> Section 9FA(9) of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 2(7) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

- c) **How to encourage compliance with the request** – scrutiny committees will want to frame their approach on a case by case basis. For contentious issues, committees might want to emphasise the opportunity their request gives the organisation to ‘set the record straight’ in a public setting; and
- d) **Who to approach** – a committee might instinctively want to ask the Chief Executive or Managing Director of an organisation to appear at an evidence session, however it could be more beneficial to engage front-line staff when seeking operational-level detail rather than senior executives who might only be able to talk in more general terms. When making a request to a specific individual, the committee should consider the type of information it is seeking, the nature of the organisation in question and the authority’s pre-existing relationship with it.

**Following ‘the Council Pound’**

Scrutiny committees will often have a keen interest in ‘following the council pound’, i.e. scrutinising organisations that receive public funding to deliver goods and services.

Authorities should recognise the legitimacy of this interest and, where relevant, consider the need to provide assistance to scrutiny members and their support staff to obtain information from organisations the council has contracted to deliver services. In particular, when agreeing contracts with these bodies, authorities should consider whether it would be appropriate to include a *requirement* for them to supply information to or appear before scrutiny committees.

## 6. Planning Work

47. Effective scrutiny should have a defined impact on the ground, with the committee making recommendations that will make a tangible difference to the work of the authority. To have this kind of impact, scrutiny committees need to plan their work programme, i.e. draw up a long-term agenda and consider making it flexible enough to accommodate any urgent, short-term issues that might arise during the year.
48. Authorities with multiple scrutiny committees sometimes have a separate work programme for each committee. Where this happens, consideration should be given to how to co-ordinate the various committees' work to make best use of the total resources available.

### Being clear about scrutiny's role

49. Scrutiny works best when it has a clear role and function. This provides focus and direction. While scrutiny has the power to look at anything which affects 'the area, or the area's inhabitants', authorities will often find it difficult to support a scrutiny function that carries out generalised oversight across the wide range of issues experienced by local people, particularly in the context of partnership working. Prioritisation is necessary, which means that there might be things that, despite being important, scrutiny will not be able to look at.
50. Different overall roles could include having a focus on risk, the authority's finances, or on the way the authority works with its partners.
51. Applying this focus does not mean that certain subjects are 'off limits'. It is more about looking at topics and deciding whether their relative importance justifies the positive impact scrutiny's further involvement could bring.
52. When thinking about scrutiny's focus, members should be supported by key senior officers. The statutory scrutiny officer, if an authority has one, will need to take a leading role in supporting members to clarify the role and function of scrutiny, and championing that role once agreed.

### Who to speak to

53. Evidence will need to be gathered to inform the work programming process. This will ensure that it looks at the right topics, in the right way and at the right time. Gathering evidence requires conversations with:
  - *The public* – it is likely that formal 'consultation' with the public on the scrutiny work programme will be ineffective. Asking individual scrutiny members to have conversations with individuals and groups in their own local areas can work better. Insights gained from the public through individual pieces of scrutiny work can be fed back into the work programming process. Listening to and participating in conversations in places where local people come together, including in online forums, can help authorities engage people on their own terms and yield more positive results.

Authorities should consider how their communications officers can help scrutiny engage with the public, and how wider internal expertise and local knowledge from both members and officers might make a contribution.

- *The authority's partners* – relationships with other partners should not be limited to evidence-gathering to support individual reviews or agenda items. A range of partners are likely to have insights that will prove useful:
  - Public sector partners (like the NHS and community safety partners, over which scrutiny has specific legal powers);
  - Voluntary sector partners;
  - Contractors and commissioning partners (including partners in joint ventures and authority-owned companies);
  - In parished areas, town, community and parish councils;
  - Neighbouring principal councils (both in two-tier and unitary areas);
  - Cross-authority bodies and organisations, such as Local Enterprise Partnerships<sup>17</sup>; and
  - Others with a stake and interest in the local area – large local employers, for example.
- *The executive* – a principal partner in discussions on the work programme should be the executive (and senior officers). The executive should not direct scrutiny's work (see chapter 2), but conversations will help scrutiny members better understand how their work can be designed to align with the best opportunities to influence the authority's wider work.

#### Information sources

54. Scrutiny will need access to relevant information to inform its work programme. The type of information will depend on the specific role and function scrutiny plays within the authority, but might include:

- Performance information from across the authority and its partners;
- Finance and risk information from across the authority and its partners;
- Corporate complaints information, and aggregated information from political groups about the subject matter of members' surgeries;
- Business cases and options appraisals (and other planning information) for forthcoming major decisions. This information will be of particular use for pre-decision scrutiny; and
- Reports and recommendations issued by relevant ombudsmen, especially the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

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<sup>17</sup> Authorities should ensure they have appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the effective democratic scrutiny of Local Enterprise Partnerships' investment decisions.

As committees can meet in closed session, commercial confidentiality should not preclude the sharing of information. Authorities should note, however, that the default for meetings should be that they are held in public (see 2014 guidance on '*Open and accountable local government*':

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/343182/140812\\_Openness\\_Guide.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/343182/140812_Openness_Guide.pdf)).

55. Scrutiny members should consider keeping this information under regular review. It is likely to be easier to do this outside committee, rather than bringing such information to committee 'to note', or to provide an update, as a matter of course.

### Shortlisting topics

Approaches to shortlisting topics should reflect scrutiny's overall role in the authority. This will require the development of bespoke, local solutions, however when considering whether an item should be included in the work programme, the kind of questions a scrutiny committee should consider might include:

- Do we understand the benefits scrutiny would bring to this issue?
- How could we best carry out work on this subject?
- What would be the best outcome of this work?
- How would this work engage with the activity of the executive and other decision-makers, including partners?

56. Some authorities use scoring systems to evaluate and rank work programme proposals. If these are used to provoke discussion and debate, based on evidence, about what priorities should be, they can be a useful tool. Others take a looser approach. Whichever method is adopted, a committee should be able to justify how and why a decision has been taken to include certain issues and not others.

57. Scrutiny members should accept that shortlisting can be difficult; scrutiny committees have finite resources and deciding how these are best allocated is tough. They should understand that, if work programming is robust and effective, there might well be issues that they want to look at that nonetheless are not selected.

### Carrying out work

58. Selected topics can be scrutinised in several ways, including:

- a) **As a single item on a committee agenda** – this often presents a limited opportunity for effective scrutiny, but may be appropriate for some issues or where the committee wants to maintain a formal watching brief over a given issue;
- b) **At a single meeting** – which could be a committee meeting or something less formal. This can provide an opportunity to have a single public meeting about a

given subject, or to have a meeting at which evidence is taken from a number of witnesses;

- c) **At a task and finish review of two or three meetings** – short, sharp scrutiny reviews are likely to be most effective even for complex topics. Properly focused, they ensure members can swiftly reach conclusions and make recommendations, perhaps over the course of a couple of months or less;
- d) **Via a longer-term task and finish review** – the ‘traditional’ task and finish model – with perhaps six or seven meetings spread over a number of months – is still appropriate when scrutiny needs to dig into a complex topic in significant detail. However, the resource implications of such work, and its length, can make it unattractive for all but the most complex matters; and
- e) **By establishing a ‘standing panel’** – this falls short of establishing a whole new committee but may reflect a necessity to keep a watching brief over a critical local issue, especially where members feel they need to convene regularly to carry out that oversight. Again, the resource implications of this approach means that it will be rarely used.

## 7. Evidence Sessions

59. Evidence sessions are a key way in which scrutiny committees inform their work. They might happen at formal committee, in less formal ‘task and finish’ groups or at standalone sessions.

Good preparation is a vital part of conducting effective evidence sessions. Members should have a clear idea of what the committee hopes to get out of each session and appreciate that success will depend on their ability to work together on the day.

### How to plan

60. Effective planning does not necessarily involve a large number of pre-meetings, the development of complex scopes or the drafting of questioning plans. It is more often about setting overall objectives and then considering what type of questions (and the way in which they are asked) can best elicit the information the committee is seeking. This applies as much to individual agenda items as it does for longer evidence sessions – there should always be consideration in advance of what scrutiny is trying to get out of a particular evidence session.

Chairs play a vital role in leading discussions on objective-setting and ensuring all members are aware of the specific role each will play during the evidence session.

61. As far as possible there should be consensus among scrutiny members about the objective of an evidence session before it starts. It is important to recognise that members have different perspectives on certain issues, and so might not share the objectives for a session that are ultimately adopted. Where this happens, the Chair will need to be aware of this divergence of views and bear it in mind when planning the evidence session.
62. Effective planning should mean that at the end of a session it is relatively straightforward for the chair to draw together themes and highlight the key findings. It is unlikely that the committee will be able to develop and agree recommendations immediately, but, unless the session is part of a wider inquiry, enough evidence should have been gathered to allow the chair to set a clear direction.
63. After an evidence session, the committee might wish to hold a short ‘wash-up’ meeting to review whether their objectives were met and lessons could be learned for future sessions.

### Developing recommendations

64. The development and agreement of recommendations is often an iterative process. It will usually be appropriate for this to be done only by members, assisted by co-optees where relevant. When deciding on recommendations, however, members should have due regard to advice received from officers, particularly the Monitoring Officer.

65. The drafting of reports is usually, but not always, carried out by officers, directed by members.

66. Authorities draft reports and recommendations in a number of ways, but there are normally three stages:

- i. the development of a 'heads of report' – a document setting out general findings that members can then discuss as they consider the overall structure and focus of the report and its recommendations;
- ii. the development of those findings, which will set out some areas on which recommendations might be made; and
- iii. the drafting of the full report.

67. Recommendations should be evidence-based and SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. Where appropriate, committees may wish to consider sharing them in draft with interested parties.

68. Committees should bear in mind that often six to eight recommendations are sufficient to enable the authority to focus its response, although there may be specific circumstances in which more might be appropriate.

Sharing draft recommendations with executive members should not provide an opportunity for them to revise or block recommendations before they are made. It should, however, provide an opportunity for errors to be identified and corrected, and for a more general sense-check.

# Annex 1: Illustrative Scenario – Creating an Executive-Scrutiny Protocol

An executive-scrutiny protocol can deal with the practical expectations of scrutiny committee members and the executive, as well as the cultural dynamics.

Workshops with scrutiny members, senior officers and Cabinet can be helpful to inform the drafting of a protocol. An external facilitator can help bring an independent perspective.

Councils should consider how to adopt a protocol, e.g. formal agreement at scrutiny committee and Cabinet, then formal integration into the Council's constitution at the next Annual General Meeting.

The protocol, as agreed, may contain sections on:

- The way scrutiny will go about developing its work programme (including the ways in which senior officers and Cabinet members will be kept informed);
- The way in which senior officers and Cabinet will keep scrutiny informed of the outlines of major decisions as they are developed, to allow for discussion of scrutiny's potential involvement in policy development. This involves the building in of safeguards to mitigate risks around the sharing of sensitive information with scrutiny members;
- A strengthening and expansion of existing parts of the code of conduct that relate to behaviour in formal meetings, and in informal meetings;
- Specification of the nature and form of responses that scrutiny can expect when it makes recommendations to the executive, when it makes requests to the executive for information, and when it makes requests that Cabinet members or senior officers attend meetings; and
- Confirmation of the role of the statutory scrutiny officer, and Monitoring Officer, in overseeing compliance with the protocol, and ensuring that it is used to support the wider aim of supporting and promoting a culture of scrutiny, with matters relating to the protocol's success being reported to full Council through the scrutiny Annual Report.

## Annex 2: Illustrative Scenario – Engaging Independent Technical Advisers

This example demonstrates how one Council's executive and scrutiny committee worked together to scope a role and then appoint an independent adviser on transforming social care commissioning. Their considerations and process may be helpful and applicable in other similar scenarios.

Major care contracts were coming to an end and the Council took the opportunity to review whether to continue with its existing strategic commissioning framework, or take a different approach – potentially insourcing certain elements.

The relevant Director was concerned about the Council's reliance on a very small number of large providers. The Director therefore approached the Scrutiny and Governance Manager to talk through the potential role scrutiny could play as the Council considered these changes.

The Scrutiny Chair wanted to look at this issue in some depth, but recognised its complexity could make it difficult for her committee to engage – she was concerned it would not be able to do the issue justice. The Director offered support from his own officer team, but the Chair considered this approach to be beset by risks around the independence of the process.

She talked to the Director about securing independent advice. He was worried that an independent adviser could come with preconceived ideas and would not understand the Council's context and objectives. The Scrutiny Chair was concerned that independent advice could end up leading to scrutiny members being passive, relying on an adviser to do their thinking for them. They agreed that some form of independent assistance would be valuable, but that how it was provided and managed should be carefully thought out.

With the assistance of the Governance and Scrutiny Manager, the Scrutiny Chair approached local universities and Further Education institutions to identify an appropriate individual. The approach was clear – it set out the precise role expected of the adviser, and explained the scrutiny process itself. Because members wanted to focus on the risks of market failure, and felt more confident on substantive social care matters, the approach was directed at those with a specialism in economics and business administration. The Council's search was proactive – the assistance of the service department was drawn on to make direct approaches to particular individuals who could carry out this role.

It was agreed to make a small budget available to act as a 'per diem' to support an adviser; academics were approached in the first instance as the Council felt able to make a case that an educational institution would provide this support for free as part of its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Three individuals were identified from the Council's proactive search. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee had an informal discussion with each – not so much to establish their skills and expertise (which had already been assessed) but to give a sense about

their 'fit' with scrutiny's objectives and their political nous in understanding the environment in which they would operate, and to satisfy themselves that they will apply themselves even-handedly to the task. The Director sat in on this process but played no part in who was ultimately selected.

The independent advice provided by the selected individual gave the Scrutiny Committee a more comprehensive understanding of the issue and meant it was able to offer informed advice on the merits of putting in place a new strategic commissioning framework.

# Annex 3: Illustrative Scenario – Approaching an External Organisation to Appear before a Committee

This example shows how one council ensured a productive scrutiny meeting, involving a private company and the public. Lessons may be drawn and apply to other similar scenarios.

Concerns had been expressed by user groups, and the public at large, about the reliability of the local bus service. The Scrutiny Chair wanted to question the bus company in a public evidence session but knew that she had no power to compel it to attend. Previous attempts to engage it had been unsuccessful; the company was not hostile, but said it had its own ways of engaging the public.

The Monitoring Officer approached the company's regional PR manager, but he expressed concern that the session would end in a 'bunfight'. He also explained the company had put their improvement plan in the public domain, and felt a big council meeting would exacerbate tensions.

Other councillors had strong views about the company – one thought the committee should tell the company it would be empty-chaired if it refused to attend. The Scrutiny Chair was sympathetic to this, but thought such an approach would not lead to any improvements.

The Scrutiny Chair was keen to make progress, but it was difficult to find the right person to speak to at the company, so she asked council officers and local transport advocacy groups for advice. Speaking to those people also gave her a better sense of what scrutiny's role might be.

When she finally spoke to the company's network manager, she explained the situation and suggested they work together to consider how the meeting could be productive for the Council, the company and local people. In particular, this provided her with an opportunity to explain scrutiny and its role. The network manager remained sceptical but was reassured that they could work together to ensure that the meeting would not be an 'ambush'. He agreed in principle to attend and also provide information to support the Committee's work beforehand.

Discussions continued in the four weeks leading up to the Committee meeting. The Scrutiny Chair was conscious that while she had to work with the company to ensure that the meeting was constructive – and secure their attendance – it could not be a whitewash, and other members and the public would demand a hard edge to the discussions.

The scrutiny committee agreed that the meeting would provide a space for the company to provide context to the problems local people are experiencing, but that this would be preceded by a space on the agenda for the Chair, Vice-chair, and representatives from two local transport advocacy groups to set out their concerns. The company were sent in

advance a summary of the general areas on which members were likely to ask questions, to ensure that those questions could be addressed at the meeting.

Finally, provision was made for public questions and debate. Those attending the meeting were invited to discuss with each other the principal issues they wanted the meeting to cover. A short, facilitated discussion in the room led by the Chair highlighted the key issues, and the Chair then put those points to the company representatives.

At the end of the meeting, the public asked questions of the bus company representative in a 20-minute plenary item.

The meeting was fractious, but the planning carried out to prepare for this – by channelling issues through discussion and using the Chair to mediate the questioning – made things easier. Some attendees were initially frustrated by this structure, but the company representative was more open and less defensive than might otherwise have been the case.

The meeting also motivated the company to revise its communications plan to become more responsive to this kind of challenge, part of which involved a commitment to feed back to the scrutiny committee on the recommendations it made on the night.

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# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME

THIS DOCUMENT IS A “NOTICE” IN ACCORDANCE WITH  
THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS)(MEETINGS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION)(ENGLAND)  
REGULATIONS 2012

## Executive Forward Programme - June to September 2019

Updated 10 June 2019

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why / Explanation for any deferment of item
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### Executive Meeting 27 June 2019

WBC1043	<b>Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan Consultation</b> Purpose: To seek the Executive approval to undertake a public consultation for the review of the Council's Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)	Executive		Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby/ Andrew Fletcher	Executive Member for Environment and Leisure - Parry Bath	N/A This item was deferred from the March meeting in order to allow more time for further consultation
WBC1050	<b>Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan</b> Purpose: To approve a 6 week consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and the appointment of an independent Examiner to	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers, Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby/	Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement - Wayne Smith	N/A

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why
	examine the Plan			James McCabe		
WBC1057	<b>Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy Framework Consultation</b> Purpose: To endorse the the work carried out by Thames Valley Berkshire LEP to date on the framework document for the BLIS. To approve the responses to the consultation questions to the BLIS framework document	Executive		Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby/ Rhian Hayes	Executive Member for Business and Economic Development - Stuart Munro	N/A
WBC1058	<b>Decision Report re Adult Social Care Statutory Services</b> Purpose: To agree the future options for Adult Social Care Statutory Services	Executive		Director of Adult Services - Matt Pope/	Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services - Charles Margetts	N/A Yes - it is likely that part of the report will be considered at a private meeting of the Executive. This is because it is likely that the report will contain information which is commercially sensitive and relates to the financial and business affairs of a person
94	<b>Shareholders' Report</b> Purpose: To consider various items related to the business of the Council owned companies, including their trading position	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Kajal Patel	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser	N/A This item was deferred from the June meeting to provide an opportunity for the various Company boards to meet and consider the information that would be included in the report
<b>Executive Meeting 25 July 2019</b>						
WBC1046	<b>Shareholders' Report</b> Purpose: To consider various items related	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John	N/A

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why
	to the business of the council owned companies, including their trading position			Kajal Patel	Kaiser	
WBC1052	<b>Voluntary Sector Commissioning Strategy</b> Purpose: To consider a proposal to commission prevention services for vulnerable adults and children	Executive	Business case for procurement of services that support vulnerable adults and children within the community	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Jenny Lamprell	Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services - Charles Margetts	N/A
WBC1022	<b>The Wokingham Borough 0 to 25 Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2017 to 2019</b> Purpose: To consider a strategy that sets out the key actions necessary to improve services to children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities	Executive	The report and the strategy	Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss/	Executive Member for Children's Services - UllaKarin Clark	N/A This item was deferred from March in order that feedback from the current informal consultation could be taken into account in the version coming forward for consideration by the Executive
WBC1045	<b>Council Plan 2019/20 - 2024/25</b> Purpose: To consider the Wokingham Borough Council strategic plan which sets out the agreed vision, priorities and key actions to be delivered, in partnership, over the next five years to achieve improved outcomes for residents of Wokingham borough.	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Paul Ohsan Ellis, Louise Griffin	.Leader of the Council - John Halsall	N/A This report was deferred from the June meeting in order to enable further engagement and consultation to be undertaken
WBC1053	<b>Health and Safety Annual Report 2018/19</b> Purpose: To consider the Council's health and safety performance during 2018/19 and agree the health and	Executive	The Annual Health and Safety Report 2018-19	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Veronica Glenister	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser	N/A

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why
	safety priorities for 2019/20					
WBC1055	<b>Award of Street Cleansing Contract to Volker Highways</b> Purpose: To approve the variation of the Street Cleansing Contract to Volker Highways from 1 April 2020	Executive	Reports - Part 1, Part 2 and Appendices	Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby/ Peter Baveystock	Executive Member for Environment and Leisure - Parry Batth	N/A Yes - it is likely that part of the report will be considered at a private meeting of the Executive. This is because it is likely that the report will contain information which is commercially sensitive and relates to the financial and business affairs of a person
96 WBC1056	<b>Transport for the South East Proposal to Government Consultation</b> Purpose: To agree a response to the Transport for the South East (TfSE) who are consulting on the exact terms of a proposal to Government requesting statutory status for TfSE	Executive		Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby/ Robert Curtis	Executive Member for Highways and Transport - Pauline Jorgensen	N/A
<b>The Executive will not be holding a meeting in August therefore there are no items programmed for this month</b>						
<b>Executive Meeting 26 September 2019</b>						
WBC1047	<b>Shareholders' Report</b> Purpose: To consider various items related to the business of the council owned companies, including their trading position	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Kajal Patel	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser	N/A

**EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME  
CHANGES MADE TO PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED VERSIONS**

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	Original Schedule Date	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Explanatory notes
WBC1042	<b>Berkshire Sensory Consortia Service</b> To discuss future arrangements for the service	Executive		Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss/ Kim Wilkins	Executive Member for Children's Services - UllaKarin Clark	This item will be deleted as the current service provision is due to continue and therefore there will be no requirement for the report
WBC1042	<b>Adult Social Care (ASC) High Level Business Case</b> To consider a high level business case that looks at the options available for the delivery of ASC Statutory services.	Executive		Director of Adult Services - Matt Pope/ Sally Watkins	Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services - Charles Margetts	This item will be deleted as it has been replaced by a decision paper re Adult Social Care (WBC1058) which is due to be considered at the June Executive meeting

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**Members of the Executive:-**

John Halsall	Leader of Council
John Kaiser	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Finance and Housing.
Stuart Munro	Business, Economic Development
UllaKarin Clark	Children's Services
Gregor Murray	Climate Emergency
Parry Bath	Environment and Leisure
Charles Margetts	Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services
Pauline Jorgensen	Highways and Transport
Wayne Smith	Planning and Enforcement
Charlotte Haitham Taylor	Regeneration

**Note:**

Unless the matter has been listed as being likely to be discussed in private, copies of the reports associated with the above decisions will be available no earlier than five days before the meeting at the Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham; on the Council's website; by contacting a member of the Democratic Services Team on 0118 974 6053 or by emailing [democratic.services@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@wokingham.gov.uk)

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## **DRAFT WORK PROGRAMMES 2019/20**

**Please note that the Work Programme is a 'live' document and subject to change at short notice. The information in this Work Programme, including report titles is draft and is subject to approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.**

**The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will consider their work programmes at the first meeting in the new Municipal Year.**

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
17 July 2019	<b>Council Plan</b>	To consider the draft Council Plan and the appropriate underpinning Key Performance Indicators	Work Programme	Louise Griffin
	<b>Quarter 1 2019/20 Council Plan Performance Report</b>	To consider the Borough Plan quarterly performance report for Quarter 1 of 2019/20 and the supporting Key Performance Indicators. Children's Services to attend to discuss indicators.	Work Programme	Louise Griffin
	<b>Executive and IEMD Forward programme</b>	To consider upcoming Executive and Individual Executive Member Decision items	Standing Item	Democratic Services
	<b>Reports from O&amp;S Chairmen</b>	Standing Item	Coordination of Committees	Committee Chairmen
	<b>Work Programmes</b>	To consider the individual Work Programmes for the Committees in 2018/19	Coordination of Committees	Democratic Services

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>REASON FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER</b>
<b>18 September 2019</b>	<b>Climate Emergency</b>	To discuss progress on the development of the Council's Climate Emergency response with the Executive Member	Response to Council Motion	Neil Carr
	<b>Update on Collection of Food Waste</b>	To consider a six-month update on the collection of food waste which commenced in April 2019	Work Programme	Peter Baveystock
	<b>Street Cleansing Update</b>	To consider an update on the new arrangements for street cleansing	Work Programme	Peter Baveystock
	<b>Executive and IEMD Forward programme</b>	To consider upcoming Executive and Individual Executive Member Decision items	Standing Item	Democratic Services
	<b>Reports from O&amp;S Chairmen</b>	Standing Item	Coordination of Committees	Committee Chairmen
	<b>Work Programmes</b>	To consider the individual Work Programmes for the Committees in 2018/19	Coordination of Committees	Democratic Services

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
18 June 2019	<b>School Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports</b>	To receive information on schools' performance, and to review recent Ofsted Reports	Standing item	Jim Leivers
	<b>Children's Services Performance Indicators</b>	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing item	Carol Cammiss
	<b>Review of SEND Ofsted Inspection</b>	To inform the Committee on the outcome of the recent SEND inspection	Information report	Carol Cammiss
	<b>Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Forward Programme</b>	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services / Luciane Bowker
	<b>Schools Causing Concern – Part 2</b>	To receive information about any school(s) causing concern	Standing item	Jim Leivers

<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>REASON FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER</b>
<b>17 September 2019</b>	<b>Children's Services Performance Indicators</b>	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing item	Children's Services / Carol Cammiss
	<b>Schools Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports</b>	To receive information on schools' performance and to review recent Ofsted reports	Standing item	Jim Leivers
	<b>Continuous Improvement Plan</b>	To receive an update on the service's continuous improvement plan	Update report	Children's Services/ Carol Cammiss
	<b>CSO&amp;S Forward Plan</b>	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services / Luciane Bowker
	<b>Schools Causing Concern – Part 2</b>	To receive information about any school(s) causing concern	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers

<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>REASON FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER</b>
<b>19 November 2019</b>	<b>Children's Services Performance Indicators</b>	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing item	Children's Services / Carol Cammiss
	<b>Schools Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports</b>	To receive information on schools' performance and to review recent Ofsted reports	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers
	<b>CSO&amp;S Forward Plan</b>	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services / Luciane Bowker
	<b>Schools Causing Concern – Part 2</b>	To receive information about any school(s) causing concern	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>REASON FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER</b>
<b>21 January 2020</b>	<b>Children's Services Performance Indicators</b>	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing item	Children's Services / Carol Cammiss
	<b>School Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports</b>	To receive information on schools' performance, and to review recent Ofsted Reports.	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers
	<b>CSO&amp;S Forward Plan</b>	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services / Luciane Bowker

	<b>Schools Causing Concern – Part 2</b>	To receive information about any school(s) causing concern	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>REASON FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER</b>
<b>17 March 2020</b>	<b>Children's Services Performance Indicators</b>	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing item	Children's Services / Carol Cammiss
	<b>School Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports</b>	To receive information on schools' performance, and to review recent Ofsted Reports	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers
	<b>CSO&amp;S Forward Programme</b>	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services / Luciane Bowker
	<b>Schools Causing Concern – Part 2</b>	To receive information about any school(s) causing concern	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers

## COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
17 June 2019	<b>Parking Strategy</b>	To update the Committee on the outcome of Member comments on what the policy should address including officer comments and recommendations.	Committee Request	Martin Heath/Clare Lawrence
	<b>Market Place Road Safety Audit</b>	To consider the final road safety audit.	Committee Request	Chris Easton/Mark Cupit
	<b>Market Place Financial Audit</b>	To consider the final financial audit of the Market Place Highways improvement project.	Committee Request	Chris Easton/Mark Cupit
	<b>Work Programme</b>	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2019/20	Standing Item	Democratic Services

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
2 September 2019	<b>Budget Scrutiny</b>	To scrutinise the Council's Budget setting process and the draft Budget for 2020/21	Standing Item	Democratic Services
	<b>Work Programme</b>	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2019/20	Standing Item	Democratic Services

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DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
13 January 2020	<b>Work Programme</b>	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2019/20	Standing Item	Democratic Services

## HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
15 July 2019	Reducing loneliness and social isolation	Update	To understand the work being undertaken to reduce social isolation and loneliness	
	Health Consultation Report	Challenge item	Challenge item	Democratic Services
	Healthwatch update	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
4 September 2019	Health Consultation Report	Challenge item	Challenge item	Democratic Services
	Healthwatch update	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough

<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>REASON FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER</b>
<b>20 November 2019</b>	<b>Health Consultation Report</b>	Challenge item	Challenge item	Democratic Services
	<b>Healthwatch update</b>	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough

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<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>REASON FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER</b>
<b>20 January 2020</b>	<b>Health Consultation Report</b>	Challenge item	Challenge item	Democratic Services
	<b>Healthwatch update</b>	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
4 March 2020	Health Consultation Report	Challenge item	Challenge item	Democratic Services
	Healthwatch update	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough

**Currently unscheduled topics:**

- Draft Quality Accounts (April 2020)
  - Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
  - Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
  - South Central Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust
- Update on work of Clinical Commissioning Group
- Discharge of patients from hospital and Better Care Fund

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMMES 2019/20

### 1. Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

1.	Development of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes and coordination of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees
2.	Discussions with the Leader, Executive Members and Chief Executive to identify future priorities and monitor performance against key targets
3.	Scrutinising the development of the new Borough Plan together with the underpinning priorities and the Quarterly Performance Management Report
4.	Reviewing implementation of the Council's 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Council programme and the successor Continuous Improvement Programme
5.	Scrutinising the impact of Brexit on the Borough;
6.	Scrutinising the delivery of the Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) and progress relating to the Local Plan Update and the 5 year land supply
7.	Reviewing the Assets Review Programme and the operation of the Council's Property Portfolio Investment Fund
8.	Reviewing progress of the council's Grounds Maintenance service following the Committee's Scrutiny review in 2018;
9.	Scrutinising the Council's Housing services to ensure that the needs of local residents are being met
10.	Monitoring the operation and performance of the Council-owned companies and the Council's Shared Service arrangements
11.	Scrutinising the Council's Economic Development Strategy and the impact of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership
12.	Reviewing the Government's updated Statutory Guidance on the operation of Overview and Scrutiny and considering the implications for WBC;
13.	Scrutinising the Council's approach to public consultation and compliance with its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010
14.	Approving the annual Overview and Scrutiny report to Council
15.	Undertaking Call-In reviews of Executive decisions
15.	Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate
16.	Reviewing the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny function and the underpinning support and training provided for Officers and Members

## 2. Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1.	Monitoring the effective delivery of safeguarding services, including social worker recruitment, retention and training
2.	Reviewing services that contribute to the achievement of the Council's Vision and priorities for children and young people
3.	Reviewing progress in relation to narrowing the gap in educational attainment for children from disadvantaged backgrounds
4.	Reviewing key Children's Services performance indicators and major projects
5.	Reviewing school performance indicators and Ofsted reports
6.	Scrutinising the performance of any schools causing concern
7.	Reviewing the allocation of school places across the Borough
8.	Monitoring the impact of the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Council change programme and the successor Continuous Improvement Programme on Children's Services
9.	Scrutinising progress of key strategic initiatives such as the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
10.	Considering the annual report of the Corporate Parenting Board
11.	Reviewing the Education Vision Strategy
12.	Reviewing the Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities
13.	Input into new policies through pre-decision scrutiny of draft proposals relating to Children's Services
14.	Call-In of Executive decisions relating to Children's Services
15.	Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate

### 3. Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1.	Reviewing the work of the Community Safety Partnership, the effectiveness of local policing and fire and rescue services
2.	Exercising the Council's flood risk management responsibilities by monitoring flood risk activities and partnership working with Towns and Parishes
3.	Scrutinising the Council's Budget development process and the draft Budget for 2020/21
4.	Scrutinising the Wokingham Town Centre regeneration programme, including the Safety and Financial Audits relating to the Market Place highways project
5.	Reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's partnerships with Town and Parish Councils and the voluntary sector
6.	Scrutinising service and policy developments relating to the Council's public facing services and its in-house support services
7.	Reviewing highways and transport issues including the new highways contracts, customer service, car parking and cycling facilities
8.	Reviewing the Business Case supporting the development of the Coppid Beech Park and Ride site
9.	Scrutinising the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement across the Borough
10.	Scrutinising burial capacity across the Borough and the Council's plans to ensure future capacity
11.	Input into new policies through pre-decision scrutiny of draft proposals
12.	Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate

#### 4. Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1.	Monitoring health and social care outcomes and the performance of the local NHS Foundation Trusts
2.	Reviewing progress on the integration of health and social care services
3.	Monitoring progress relating to the development of community hubs
4.	Considering reports and updates from Wokingham Healthwatch
5.	Reviewing the provision of community mental health services
6.	Considering updates on the work of the Wokingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
7.	Reviewing access to primary care services within the Strategic Development Locations
8.	Joining West Berkshire, Reading, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Councils in joint scrutiny of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Sustainability and Transformation Plan
9.	Call-In of Executive decisions relating to adult social care
10.	Input into new policies through pre-decision scrutiny of draft proposals relating to adult social care
11.	Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate