



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **THURSDAY 23 JANUARY 2020 AT 7.30 PM**

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

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 15 January 2020

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

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WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Our Vision

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

Our Priorities

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

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

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

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

The Underpinning Principles

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

To: The Members of Wokingham Borough Council

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
43.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence	
44.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 September 2019.	19 - 58
45.		DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest	
46.		MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS To receive any announcements by the Mayor	
47.		PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice. The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of the Council Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Council or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions	
47.1	None Specific	Rebecca Walkley has asked the Leader of the Council the following question: Question What policies have been put in place by Wokingham Borough Council to ensure that their Gender Pay Gap of 13.9% for 2018/9 will be reduced to the local government national average of 6.1% or less (to keep it more in line with their neighbouring authority's Gender Pay Gaps of 2.9 % for Reading Borough Council and -0.7% for Oxford) by 2019/20?	

47.2 None Specific Louise Timlin has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Question

What advice or organisations has the Council consulted or is planning to consult, to ensure an informed action plan, drawing on best practice and research, is put in place to address Wokingham Borough Council's gender pay gap?

47.3 None Specific Bernadette Mitra has asked the Executive Members for Children's Services the following question:

Question

Does the Member for Children's Services have an idea on how many young carers we have that look after adults in their family?

47.4 None Specific Philip Meadowcroft has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Question

As evidence of the lessons which WBC have learned from both the judicial remarks about WBC's conduct as well as the critical comments contained in the Lingard Report, will the Leader of the Council please provide a precise and detailed list of the changes to WBC procedures and organisational structure which have now been made and are being implemented as a result of the collapse, before Reading Crown Court and endorsed by the Court of Appeal, of the Breach of Enforcement case against Hare Hatch Sheeplands?

47.5 None Specific Eileen Kessel has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

Our road surfaces deteriorate because of traffic and weather. Given the onset of winter and sub-zero temperatures what new, innovative and improved repair trends are currently being used to ensure that the volume and quality of repairs of potholes continues with minimal disruption to local residents and road users?

- 47.6 None Specific William Gale has asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:
- Question**
 We are in the midst of an environmental and ecological crisis. This crisis threatens the future of our planet to the extent that we may not have a liveable planet in the not too distant future for future generations to enjoy as we do. Scientists estimate that the worst effects of climate change will begin in just 10 years' time, at which point an irreversible chain reaction of disaster will be set off; yet already we are suffering in the grip of the climate emergency. 2019 was the 2nd hottest year on record on this planet, beaten in 2016 by just 0.04 degrees. In the past few weeks lots of media attention has been brought to the bushfires raging in Australia, and the floods across the UK, and the list goes on. To combat this, urgent action must be taken in the next decade. On 18th July last year, this Council declared a climate emergency, yet it continues to support the expansion of Heathrow Airport.
- To what extent do you agree that this Council's current policy of support for the Heathrow Airport expansion is in direct contradiction of its declaration of climate emergency?
- 47.7 None Specific Charlotte Ibbotson has asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:
- Question**
 You have recognised that we are in a state of climate emergency already, since declaring it as one, however it is clear that action is not taking place fast enough, and the issue is not being responded to as that of an emergency - Since Wokingham has the highest car ownership in the country, why hasn't the current agenda mentioned congestion charges or road pricing?
- 47.8 None Specific Oz Hafsa Khan has asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:
- Question**
 The climate emergency was declared last year by Wokingham Council to stop the climate temperature rising 1.5°C. You have therefore made it abundantly clear that you care about this prominent and rising issue. So I would like to ask you, how would you normally travel to meetings like these and what type of transport did you use to arrive here tonight?

47.9	None Specific	<p>Millie Rowell has asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:</p> <p>Question</p> <p>I am a student at the Bulmershe School Woodley. I am writing this because I'm concerned for the future of our planet as well as my own. I live in Reading but I have noticed that both in Reading and Wokingham our green spaces have been gradually decreasing. I know that all of you here are just as concerned as I am and will take my question into consideration. So my question to you is: how will you be able to make the greenery in our area more effective for reducing our carbon emissions in our community?</p>	
48.		<p>PETITIONS</p> <p>To receive any petitions which Members or members of the public wish to present.</p>	
49.	None Specific	<p>HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY</p> <p>To consider the proposed Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy as recommended by the Executive.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: The Executive recommends that Council approve Wokingham Borough Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024.</p>	59 - 108
50.	None Specific	<p>COUNCIL TAX BASE 20/21</p> <p>To set the Council Tax Base for 2020/21 in respect of the whole Borough and all constituent parts so that each precepting parish can subsequently set their Council Tax budgets for the year.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION: That Council agree the proposed Council Tax Base, for the whole area and by Parish, as set out in the report.</p>	109 - 114
51.	None Specific	<p>COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2020/21</p> <p>To adopt a Localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme which will ensure that all working age Borough residents who may experience financial difficulties in paying their council tax liabilities have access to a scheme of assistance, designed locally, offering financial help to them.</p>	115 - 120

RECOMMENDATION: That Council agree the proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2020/21:

- 1) a local Council Tax Reduction scheme for 2020/21 is adopted on the same basis as the 2019/2020 scheme;
- 2) that the full disregard currently allowed for War Widows and War Disability Pensions is continued from 1 April 2020 in respect of the Prescribed and Local Council Tax Reduction scheme and Housing Benefit schemes;
- 3) that funds be made available to the hardship fund, known as Section 13A, for those who cannot pay their council tax liabilities.

52. None Specific DECLARING A CLIMATE EMERGENCY INITIAL ACTION PLAN 121 - 172

To receive an update on the initial Climate Emergency Action Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council approves the Climate Emergency Action Plan. Endorsing the assessment of Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint and the initial actions proposed for Wokingham Borough Council to play a full a role as possible in achieving a zero carbon Wokingham Borough by 2030.

53. None Specific CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION 173 - 194

To consider proposed changes to the Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group.

RECOMMENDATION: That the following changes, as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group, be agreed:

- 1) the amended start and finish times for Council meetings and amendments to Sections 4.2.8 Duration of Meeting, 4.2.8.1 Consideration of Motions and 4.2.12 m) Motions without Notice as set out in paragraph 1 of the report; *(Please note that at the request of the Constitution Review Working Group this recommendation will be voted on separately)*
- 2) the following changes to the Constitution, as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group:

a) that Section 2.2.5.1 Basic Allowance be amended as set out in paragraph 2 of the report;

b) that Sections 4.2.9.1 General, 4.2.10.4 Notice of Questions [Member Questions], 5.2.25 Questions by the Public [to the Executive] and 5.4.36 Rules of Procedure for Questions by Members, be amended as set out in paragraph 3 of the report;

c) that Sections 4.2.9.9 Written Answers [Questions by the Public], 4.2.10.6 Response [Questions by Members], 5.4.34 Response [Member Questions to the Executive] and 5.4.38 Response [Public Questions to Executive], be amended as set out in paragraph 4 of the report;

d) that Sections 4.2.12 h) Motions without Notice, 4.2.13.1 No speeches until Motion seconded, 4.2.13.7 Amendments to Motions and 4.2.13.11 b) Motions which may be moved during debate, be amended as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;

e) that Section 4.2.8.1 Consideration of motions be amended as set out in paragraph 9 of the report;

f) that Section 4.2.13.4 Content and Length of Speeches be amended as set out in paragraph 10 of the report;

g) that Section 4.4.22 [Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board] Terms of Reference be amended as set out in paragraph 11 of the report;

h) that Sections 5.5.1 List of Items Delegated to Individual Executive Member Decisions and 12.1.17.3 Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Developer Contributions be amended as set out in paragraph 12 of the report;

i) that Section 13.2.2 – Estimating Contract Value be amended as set out in paragraph 13 of the report;

j) that Section 13.3.1.1 Procurement Business Case (including options appraisal) be amended as set out in paragraph 14 of the report;

k) that Sections 5.5.1 g List of Items Delegated to Individual Executive Members and 13.3.1.1 Procurement Business Case (including options appraisal) be amended as set out in paragraph 15 of the report;

l) that Sections 13.3.2.2 Schedule 3 and 13.3.2.1 be amended as set out in paragraph 16 of the report and Appendix 2 to the report.

54.	None Specific	TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS To consider the Council's proposed Timetable of Meetings for the 2020/21 Municipal Year. RECOMMENDATION: That the Council's Timetable of Meetings for the 2020/21 Municipal Year be agreed.	195 - 196
55.		MEMBER QUESTION TIME To answer any Member questions A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for Members to ask questions submitted under Notice Any questions not dealt with within the allotted time will be dealt with in a written reply	
55.1	Winnersh	Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey has asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question: Question Why is there still a problem with approving the 30 MPH speed limit on Bearwood Road to allow us to construct a much needed zebra crossing to increase safety in crossing Bearwood Road?	
55.2	None Specific	Pauline Helliard-Symons has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question: Question Is it the case that the whole lot of the black box recycling is sent to landfill if it is (a) wet or (b) contains any non-recyclable content?	

- 55.3 None Specific Andrew Mickleburgh has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:
- Question**
I welcome news that the Community Safety Partnership has been reactivated and that there is now a fulltime manager for the CSP. Could the Leader of the Council please outline the strategy and tactics that will be used to enable the reinstatement and further development of a number of important preventative activities that had been dropped in recent times, including vital work to deal with anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse?
- 55.4 None Specific Sarah Kerr has asked the Executive Members for Children's Services and Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:
- Question**
What mandatory training are social workers in adult social care and children's social care required to do on domestic violence?
- 55.5 Bulmershe and Whitegates; Wescott UllaKarin Clark has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:
- Question**
I believe that Bulmershe Leisure Centre is fast approaching delivery in the spring of 2020. Great news, but I also believe that you will start work on the Carnival Pool redevelopment soon after delivery of the Bulmershe Leisure Centre. If Bulmershe Leisure Centre is delayed what impact will this have on Carnival Pool redevelopment?
- 55.6 None Specific Maria Gee has asked the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development the following question:
- Question**
On Wednesday 9 October HM Treasury issued a statement about interest rate changes affecting new Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans. The reason given for the rate hike was that some local authorities have substantially increased their use of the PWLB in recent months, as the cost of borrowing has fallen to record lows. HM Treasury is therefore restoring interest rates to levels available in 2018, by increasing the margin that applies to new loans from the PWLB by one percentage point. This seemingly small change means that the cost of financing these loans has increased by over 50% as the typical rate

for a loan is now 2.8% instead of 1.8%. It has been widely reported that the move appears to be designed to discourage councils from borrowing to fund risky multimillion property investments.

Will the Council now confirm that it is reviewing its own risky commercial property investment strategy and will put a moratorium on such investments until it has completed research on the effects of the interest rate hike on the commercial property market in general and the financing costs of future investments in particular?

55.7 None Specific

Jim Frewin has asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:

Question

I have recently been approached by two residents with regard to our blue badge service. Both were in the later time of life and had no access to technology channels and were reliant on family members to try and apply/renew a blue badge. In fact I tried myself to assist one through the process and struggled.

As a result I met with our Blue Badge Service team and was impressed with the awareness of the service weaknesses and the planned improvements. I was also very impressed with the face to face support provided to one of my residents, service of the highest level. I am also aware of the recent significant changes relating to hidden disabilities and the pressures this must have placed on the service. This is a sensitive and vital service that can have significant impact on the lives of some of our more vulnerable residents. My question is can you advise me when service improvements will be available to our blue badge residents?

55.8 Wescott

Imogen Shepherd-DuBey has asked the Executive Member for Regeneration the following question:

Question

As part of redevelopment of Wokingham Market Place there was an agreement put in place for Wokingham Borough Council to carry out a deep clean, 6 times a year.

Why has Wokingham Borough Council subsequently failed to commit to this work and has not provided a full schedule for when this work will be carried out?

55.9 Winnersh

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

Question

The B3030 King Street Lane was resurfaced between Allnatt Avenue and its junction with A329 Reading Road (Sainsbury's junction) as part of the 2019-2020 carriageway Structural Maintenance programme during the nights of 17th to 19th September.

During this work the traffic signal detector loops were removed, but not replaced on completion of the resurfacing work. This has caused extensive congestion and delays to the travelling public using King Street Lane, Mole Road and Bearwood Road during peak times starting at 7:30 in the morning and again from 3pm.

Why wasn't the replacement of these detector loops programmed immediately following the resurfacing work?

55.10 None Specific

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

Question

The following motion was agreed at the Council meeting held on 19 July 2012:

“Under the Localism Act 2011, local authorities gained the freedom to determine for themselves whether to operate an executive system, a committee system, or other agreed governance arrangements.

This Council wishes to consider what the most appropriate governance system is for Wokingham, and therefore refers this matter for investigation to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to determine who manages the investigation, with a report on options for changing Wokingham's existing governance arrangements to be received and debated at a future meeting of the full Council.”

As 7 years have elapsed since Wokingham last reviewed its governance arrangements and many other Councils including our neighbour Reading Borough Council in that time have adopted other governance arrangements will this Council now reconsider what is the most appropriate governance system for Wokingham and if agreeable refer the matter for investigation to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee?

55.11 Bulmershe and Whitegates; Hawkedon; Hillside; Maiden Erlegh

Caroline Smith has asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

Question

With the projection of falling admission numbers over the next five years in Earley Primary Schools, is there a plan in place to help these schools over the next five years?

55.12 None Specific

Rachel Burgess has asked the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:

Question

Across the Borough the Breastfeeding Network oversee a number of infant feeding clinics, providing a vital service and support network to hundreds of new mothers and their families at a crucial time.

Once again however, the funding for this valuable service is in doubt. I raised this issue last year and a small amount of funding was subsequently provided for the clinics. However it was not enough. The funding only covered the supervision and training of current volunteers and there was no money to train new volunteers. Sadly, as a result, one of the infant feeding clinics has now closed completely. Another only meets monthly now, rather than weekly, and is also at risk of closure. It would be an absolute tragedy if the remaining clinics had to close and were no longer able to support our new mums and their babies.

While the service has already been cut back massively in recent years, the additional funding needed to enable these clinics to continue sustainably is just £6k a year. Once again I ask, will the Executive Member intervene to make sure that adequate funding is made available next year, to ensure the sustainability of these vital breastfeeding clinics?

55.13 None Specific

Shirley Boyt has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

Question

RE3 have announced that with effect from 1st February, the 'proof of residency' car windscreen sticker will no longer be accepted at the Reading or Bracknell civic amenity sites. What steps have been taken to inform residents of this change and to advise

them on which alternative forms of ID are acceptable?

55.14 Bulmershe and Whitegates

Laura Blumenthal has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

Question

It's been a few months since we visited Woodley Precinct to discuss making the pedestrianised area safer due to protruding tree roots which some residents had tripped over. Please can you share an update on plans for a solution? We agreed it was important to ensure the trees were not removed.

56.

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WARD MATTERS

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

57.

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

To receive any statements by the Leader of the Council, Executive Members, and Deputy Executive Members.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.23 the total time allocated to this item shall not exceed 20 minutes, and no Member shall speak for more than 5 minutes

58.

STATEMENT FROM COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES

To receive any statements from Directors of Council Owned Companies.

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

59.

MOTIONS

To consider any motions

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

amendment is put to the vote

59.1 None Specific

Resumption of Motion 421 submitted by Ian Pittock

Debate of Motion 421, which was adjourned at the Council meeting held on 19 September 2019 following 12 minutes of debate. The motion will be resumed at this point and will continue for a period not in excess of 18 minutes.

As Councillor Croy moved the adjournment he shall be entitled to speak first.

The wording of the motion is as follows:

This Council does not support the expansion of Heathrow Airport.

59.2 None Specific

Motion 424 submitted by Gregor Murray

Full Council on 18th July voted unanimously to declare a Climate Emergency across Wokingham Borough and to commit itself to being carbon neutral by 2030.

In order to achieve this crucial aim, and to live up to our environmental responsibilities it is essential we take immediate steps to reduce the amount of carbon we either directly or indirectly use each year.

It is clear that no responsible council can take action on climate change without seeking to drastically reduce the amount of single use plastics consumed by the Council in it's everyday operations.

We acknowledge that single use plastics can be preferential in the care and wellbeing of disabled and other vulnerable residents. However, wherever possible and practical, we should seek to remove all non-essential single use plastics from Council operations.

In face of the overwhelming evidence about the impact that single use plastics have on the environment including contributing to carbon emissions in its manufacture, Wokingham Borough Council commits to leading our residents by example by ensuring that all non-essential single use plastics are eliminated from use within the Council Shute End building, and all Council controlled environments, as soon as possible.

This would be achieved by:

- Phasing out the purchase of single-use plastic products through services commissioned by the council and as soon as practicable;
- Bringing regular reports to future Climate Emergency committee meetings, describing the Council's plans to eliminate single-use plastic from the organisation, including a timetable for doing so;
- Working with Council staff, Wokingham Borough's businesses, community groups and residents to share advice, ideas and best practice on using sustainable alternatives;
- Working with local schools to support the aspiration of Wokingham Borough's young people to eliminate plastic waste from our environment;
- Seeking to work with neighbouring councils to tackle single use plastic used across the wider Berkshire area.

59.3 None Specific

Motion 425 submitted by Rachel Bishop-Firth

EU nationals are our family members, parents, friends and colleagues. They care for our elderly and they teach our children. They are an integral part of a vibrant and thriving Wokingham.

In the Referendum campaign, we were promised that "there will be no change for EU citizens already lawfully resident in the UK and [they] ...will be treated no less favourably than they are at present".

This promise has not been honoured. Many EU27 citizens are unaware that if Brexit goes ahead, they risk deportation from their homes of many years unless they are granted settled status.

Home Office figures show that many EU nationals have not applied for Settled Status, or have applied but have been refused. We don't know how many Wokingham residents, perhaps elderly or vulnerable people, are unaware that they may become illegal immigrants. We risk a Windrush-style scandal here in Wokingham, with families broken up.

We also need to think of the 1.3 million British citizens who have made their homes in other EU countries, who may be forced to return to the UK, particularly if Brexit means they lose their access to healthcare.

Many of these people are elderly, and many have made their homes overseas because of difficulties making ends meet on their pensions. How many will come to Wokingham, needing assistance with social housing and other support?

Therefore, the Council asks that Officers urgently undertake and publish a review of the how the Council can best mitigate the effects of Brexit on local residents including:

- a) How we can promote and assist with applications for settled status particularly for residents who face language or technology barriers.
- b) What we can do to help landlords and employers to be trained on immigration status, to avoid potential discrimination against EU27 nationals.
- c) How Brexit is likely to affect EU27 nationals accessing services provided by the Council, and steps that we can take to mitigate difficulties.
- d) The likely impact on Wokingham of British citizens returning to the UK and how we can best prepare for this.

59.4 None Specific

Motion 427 submitted by Pauline Helliard-Symons

On 22nd November 2018, this Council adopted a Sprinkler Policy centered on our schools. After work by Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service, the Fire Authority's Management Committee on 22nd July 2019 adopted a wider policy which they proposed be considered by each of the Berkshire Unitaries. This goes further to support promotion of Sprinklers in their Council areas and to put pressure on Central Government to legislate on Sprinklers, following the successful introduction of legal powers in Wales.

To be specific it is proposed:

That Wokingham Borough Council supports the proposals of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority to extend the promotion of Sprinklers and to lobby central government to bring in legislation or regulations which make installations a necessary part of new builds and major refurbishments in the

categories identified. The policy agreed by the Council on 22nd November 2018 regarding schools remains, but additionally:

Wokingham Borough Council:

- a. Recognises that Sprinklers and other Automatic Fire Suppression Systems (AFSS) save lives, protect property, reduce the impact of fire on the environment, reduce interruption to business and improve safety for individuals the community in general and firefighters, especially in the case of schools.
- b. Commits to installation of sprinklers or other AFSS within its own building stock when planning for and constructing new buildings or as a retrofitted solution when undertaking major refurbishments of existing buildings where the extent of the refurbishment makes the fitting of sprinklers viable.
- c. Through the planning application or building control process, promote and support the installation of sprinklers or other AFSS for all new or refurbished buildings and particularly those that present the most significant risk to the public and firefighters.
- d. Supports the National Fire Chiefs Council position on sprinklers and will write to Central Government to express support for the creation of a legal requirement to fit sprinklers or AFSS in buildings.

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2019 FROM 7.30 PM TO 10.30 PM

Members Present

Councillors: Malcolm Richards (Deputy Mayor), Rachel Bishop-Firth, Chris Bowring, Shirley Boyt, Prue Bray, Rachel Burgess, Jenny Cheng, UllaKarin Clark, Stephen Conway, Gary Cowan, Andy Croy, Richard Dolinski, Carl Doran, Lindsay Ferris, Michael Firmager, Paul Fishwick, Jim Frewin, Maria Gee, Guy Grandison, Charlotte Haitham Taylor, John Halsall, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Graham Howe, Pauline Jorgensen, John Kaiser, Sarah Kerr, Dianne King, Abdul Loyes, Angus Ross, Tahir Maher, Charles Margetts, Adrian Mather, Andrew Mickleburgh, Stuart Munro, Gregor Murray, Ian Pittock, Daniel Sargeant, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Caroline Smith, Wayne Smith, Alison Swaddle, Simon Weeks and Oliver Whittle

31. MINUTE SILENCE

The Council stood in silence to honour the memory of PC Andrew Harper who was killed in the line of duty on 16 August 2019.

32. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Keith Baker, Laura Blumenthal, David Hare, Emma Hobbs, Clive Jones and Bill Soane.

33. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 July 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pauline Jorgensen declared a pecuniary interest in item 42.2 – Motion on the expansion of Heathrow Airport. Councillor Jorgensen stated that she would withdraw from the meeting during the consideration of this item.

35. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The first recipient was awarded posthumously to Peter Soul. Peter had played a significant role in the Earley Adopt a Street Campaign and had recruited more than 300 volunteers to help keep the streets of Earley clean and tidy. Two members of Peter's family accepted the award.

The second award went to Manu Dhaumya who had built the successful "United against Bullies" campaign in local schools over the past five years. Manu also sponsored Shinfield Cricket Club and organised local badminton events.

36. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

36.1 Daniel Hinton asked the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development the following question:

Question

What action is WBC taking to safeguard our local economy following the shameful

retaliation of a local landowner who has closed the Denmark Street car park and cut off a local amenity simply because planning consent wasn't granted for the overly expensive flats on the site?

Answer

Of course the Council is concerned about the closure of the car park last month but respects the private landowner's right to manage its property as it chooses. However, we are exploring many options to understand how the car park can be re-opened at the earliest opportunity.

Supplementary Question

Can you comment on the news that a revised planning application has been submitted for the Denmark Street site?

Supplementary Answer

I understand that the Planning Authority rejected the application first time due to complex reasons. Unless the developers have worked a miracle on their application, I suspect that it may be rejected again. Furthermore, I don't think that closing the car park just to spite the community will work in their favour.

36.2 Teresa Caswell asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

Question

What is being done to re-open the external toilets at the Wokingham Waterside Centre? These toilets are important facilities for general park users and attendees of Reading parkrun.

Answer

The Council agreed to close all of its publically accessible toilets back in 2009 and replaced them with its "Local Loo" scheme whereby the Council pay local businesses to provide a service. In respect to these toilets, shortly after the closure the Council formed a partnership with the voluntarily run Waterside Centre to continue these toilets under the guise of a "Local Loo". This meant that the toilets were operated at the discretion of the Waterside Centre, which seemed to work fine for a number of years until the demands of "parkrun" when the toilets could not cope with the new demands in relation to drainage and cleaning which were put on it.

We have now agreed a way forward with the Waterside Centre in that we have ensured that one of the toilets is now fit for their original purpose and that the opening will continue under a "Local Loo" arrangement and at the discretion of the Waterside Centre for which we will pay them as a partner. I therefore expect to have them open as soon as our new arrangement is finalised.

I would emphasise though that these toilets are not designed to take the high demand that "parkrun" places on them and the voluntary staff that operate them in such a short space of time and that alternative arrangements should be made for that event.

Supplementary Question

What is considered to be reasonable demand?

Supplementary Answer

These toilets are meant for public use, with very low usage. I don't know how many people

use the toilets during the parkrun, perhaps you can tell me (10 people per hour). I will look into the situation and we can agree a format, although the number described seems to be low anyway.

Point of Order: At this point in the meeting Prue Bray raised a Point of Order relating to the question at Minute No 36.1, under Section 4.2.9.5 of the Constitution (Scope of Questions)) which stated that “questions would not be accepted if they related to a planning or licensing application before the application had been determined by the Planning or Licencing Committee”. Councillor Bray expressed concern that by answering the question (36.1) the Council may prejudice the determination of a planning application.

The Deputy Mayor stated that Councillor Bray’s points would be noted.

36.3 Jim Swann asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:

Question

Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency in Wokingham, will the Council please confirm when they will implement a campaign to stop parked cars from idling unnecessarily, which causes local hotspot air pollution and increased emissions?

Answer

You ask a very pertinent question and raise an issue of great concern to many residents, including myself.

The problem is that, while many modern cars are fitted with stop/start technology to reduce fuel and emissions while in traffic, many older vehicles do not benefit from this. As a result, vehicles idling while stationary in traffic or parked cause unnecessary pollution which affects both our air quality and our efforts to achieve Carbon Neutral by 2030. As a Council we are hugely keen, therefore, to try and prevent this wherever possible.

I am pleased to say that Wokingham Borough Council has already started working on this specific issue. We have introduced two Air Quality Management Areas where many residents will have already seen signs advising vehicles to turn their engines off whilst sat stationary in traffic.

An extension to this scheme is currently being considered as part of our Climate Emergency Action Plan which will be published in January. This long list of ideas will work in tandem with our efforts to reduce congestion across the Borough, which are currently underway and being spearheaded by both the Leader of this Council and the Executive Member for Highways.

With regard to parked vehicles, there is some legislation available to enable us to enforce engine shut off. However, it is complex and the enforcement process would be both expensive and time consuming. Before we commit any of our residents’ Council Tax on such a scheme, I believe we first need to conduct a detailed study to understand what the actual environmental benefit would be. We can then make a decision going forwards from there. My personal belief is that the resources could be better utilised elsewhere on other environmental projects, but until we see the benefits from the survey we will never know.

Supplementary Question

My question was specifically about parked cars. I struggle to understand why that would be so complex to monitor and to resolve. Wokingham has declared a Climate Emergency.

This is an unnecessary usage of petrol beside our schools, our children and our supermarkets, where people are. I think that it would be a very good use of resources to improve air quality for Wokingham residents. It would also be a beacon for other Councils?

Supplementary Answer

As I said when I answered your question, I share your concern about this issue. We need to have a look at what we can actually do to get our residents to switch off their engines when standing in traffic and when parked. As I said, there are options available to us in terms of enforcement of those policies, but we need to understand what the true benefit will be before we take action and commit our resources to make it happen.

36.4 Anthony Walker asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

This question concerns road safety issues for children attending Floreat Montague Park School. Prior to February 2018, parents were told that a work plan had been agreed between Wokingham Borough Council and the builder, David Wilson Homes to install zebra, toucan or pelican crossings, in place for September 2018 to enable children to cross William Heelas Way on the way to and from school. None of these crossings have been installed and despite numerous requests to both WBC and the builder, no satisfactory responses have been given.

We understand that the road is un-adopted, which appears to have put us in a 'It's not my responsibility zone'. However, this is in essence a public road being used by young school children to cross from the houses to their school and their safety must be paramount. Therefore, could WBC confirm what action is being taken and give a definitive timescale for a resolution?

Answer

Many areas of the Montague Park site will be adopted by the Council in line with legal agreements that have been entered into by David Wilson Homes for various phases of the development. The site currently remains in private ownership, it is not a public road, as David Wilson Homes has not completed all of the approved works to an adoptable standard.

As the Council is not physically delivering the planned works, we cannot commit to any dates for works to be completed, but continue to push the developer to conclude the necessary works, and commit to sign these off in good time when the details are submitted to the Council for review. We have endeavoured to facilitate David Wilson's programme for these works and remain as frustrated as you with the progress that has been made to date. The Council is continuing to work with David Wilson Homes to progress these matters as soon as possible.

I understand from the site manager that David Wilson Homes intend to start work on a zebra crossing outside the school this week. I would also like to pay tribute to Gregor Murray, one of my fellow Councillors and his wife who have been working with David Wilson Homes. They also live on the estate. I understand that Mrs Murray has helped to facilitate some speed humps put in by the developer. I understand that the developer currently has a volunteer manning a crossing point. The volunteer is a member of the building staff. They have also been working with the developer on the installation of two flashing speed signs.

I can assure you that local Councillors, including Gregor Murray and his wife, have been working very hard to make sure that the estate is as safe as possible up to the point when it is adopted properly.

Supplementary Question

What planning conditions relevant to road safety need to be complied with before the school opened three years ago? If there were none, what are the responsibilities of the builders and how does the Council ensure that these responsibilities are being met and that sanctions are imposed if they are not?

Supplementary Answer

I can't answer the specific question about the planning conditions. I will be happy to give you a written answer on that. I can assure you that if builders are in breach of planning conditions, after talking to them, we will eventually take legal action. I have seen that happen in other situations. After exhausting friendly ways of dealing with builders we will take legal action if we need to. Planning is not my area. My area is highways. But I can assure you that, if necessary, we will progress the formal route with Planning. I would stress that these are not our roads. They are not adopted by us and they will not be adopted if they are not built to standard either.

36.5 John Hutt asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

Safe access paths to Floreat Montague Park School, located by the island crossing adjacent to Baker Crescent, have been arbitrarily closed by the builder, David Wilson Homes for the entire school year 2018/2019 and remain closed to date. This necessitates children taking a diversion involving the crossing of two additional roads. What actions and when can WBC ensure that the developer opens the footpaths again within a reasonable date from the, now, new school term, bearing in mind the weather and lighting conditions are going to be changing soon and thus increase the associated risk to our children?

Answer

I would largely refer you to the previous answer. I understand from communication with David Wilson Homes yesterday that they are building the first crossing at the moment. I believe that there is another crossing point which they mean and we will work as swiftly as possible with David Wilson Homes to make sure that they complete the work as soon as possible.

Supplementary Question

What responsibilities does the builder have to ensure that safe access paths remain open to children and will the Council enforce and supervise these paths, using trained personnel?

Supplementary Answer

I repeat that, until the roads are adopted, we do not have responsibility for the roads and we will not be enforcing the use of the pavements, etc. I will take advice from the Planning Authority and see what we can do to encourage them to complete the paths as soon as possible.

36.6 John Bailey asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

Question

For some time the exterior public toilets at the Waterside Centre at Thames Valley Park have not been open, causing considerable inconvenience for people visiting this popular Thameside recreational area. Please could you advise me of the plans for the cleaning, maintenance and ongoing improvement of this important facility?

Answer

The Council supports the toilet facility at the privately run Waterside Centre through the "Local Loo" scheme whereby the Council pays a nominal amount to cover the cost of the local business to provide access to these facilities for the public at their discretion.

Unfortunately, due to pressures the toilet became inoperable and was closed. This has now been resolved and the Waterside Centre is able to open this toilet to the public again during its opening times. However it remains difficult and you have been quoted a figure of 10 people every hour, but it would be nice actually if you provided a toilet facility for your parkrun, as other people do. 10 people per hour, we may be able to cope with that, but it is only a simple toilet.

Supplementary Question

What do you do, as a Council, to make sure that your arbitrary arrangements with the Waterside Centre are actually happening and they are actually keeping them clean and opening them?

Supplementary Answer

We do keep regular contact with the Waterside Centre, as we pay for this facility and we have to monitor it anyway.

36.7 Peter Dennis asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

Montague Park is a relatively new development within Wokingham, however it appears that several important infrastructure things have been neglected. For example the promised community centre is due to be handed over as an empty shell, no finish and fitting. This is not useful for anyone, the road crossing are incomplete and in poor repair (lines on road are worn) and one of which is dangerous (I nearly flattened a jogger one weekend). What is the Council doing to rectify this situation?

Answer

The infrastructure requirement for the South Wokingham SDL include new or improved local shopping parades north and south of the railway line and one community facility to be located south of the railway line.

Whilst there was no requirement for a community facility north of the railway line, the Council was successful in securing a small, additional community facility in the local centre on Montague Park funded by the developers. This facility is over and above what infrastructure contribution the developer was required to provide and unfortunately did not include a commitment to fund the fitting out of the facility. It therefore was left to the Council to identify how to fund the balance; which we are currently addressing. I'm sure we can get more information from the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure in writing if required.

In respect of the highway infrastructure elements within the site, the Council will be adopting many areas of the Montague Park site in line with legal agreements (Section 38

of the Highways Act) entered into by David Wilson Homes for various phases of the development. The site currently remains in private ownership as David Wilson Homes has not completed all of the approved works to an adoptable standard. As the Council is not physically delivering the planned works, we cannot commit to any dates for works to be completed by David Wilson Homes. We regularly meet with them and are doing our best to ensure that they maintain a safe site for residents and users. There was a mention earlier about the path not being completed yet, one of the reasons that some of the paths had closed is that David Wilson Homes are building next door to those paths, so they are closed for safety reasons. Any and all safety defects, incidences fall to David Wilson Homes during this stage and they are liable as a company should any issues arise.

The Council is continuing to work with David Wilson Homes to progress the delivery of the sites as soon as physically possible.

Supplementary Question

This is talking about the additional road surface that goes into Montague Park, which is awful and leads to a lot of noise. As I am sure that the Council can appreciate, the hot weather this year and sitting in your garden, and how the residents next to that road cannot do that due to the noise generated by the passing traffic on London Road which is part of your responsibility. Issues have been logged but were deemed not worthy of work, bearing in mind we have a whole bunch of work going across the County. Can the Council commit to work on London Road bearing in mind this is going to get busier due to the SDL going in there, and actually use some of the CIL money that the developers give us to improve the infrastructure for the local area.

Supplementary Answer

I would certainly commit to coming and meeting you on site, seeing what the problems are, bringing an Officer with me and seeing what we can do to improve the situation for the residents.

37. PETITIONS

The following Member presented a petition in relation to the matter indicated.

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

Councillor Stephen Conway	<p>Stephen Conway presented a petition containing 17 signatures relating to a request for residents’ only parking in Brook Street, Twyford.</p> <p><i>To be forwarded to the Executive Member for Highways and Transport.</i></p>
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38. PRESENTATION OF THE TENANTS' CHARTER

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 51 to 83, which set out the Wokingham Borough Tenants Charter. Members also viewed a short film which gave examples of positive feedback from residents in support of the Charter.

The report was introduced by Steve Bowers (Chairperson of the Tenant and Landlord Improvement Panel – TLIP).

The report stated that the Tenants Charter had been developed by the Borough's Involved Tenants. The Charter set out a number of aspirations relating to initiatives that would modernise the customer experience and ensure continuous improvement. These included:

- Tackling the stigma associated with being a Council tenant;
- Maximising the accessibility of Council services;
- Modernising tenant engagement to increase active involvement;
- Providing greater choice on the delivery of repairs;
- Responding to an ageing tenant population;
- Greater transparency relating to health and safety inspections.

Following the presentation of the report, Members asked questions and commended the excellent work being carried out across the Borough by TLIP.

It was moved by John Kaiser and seconded by Prue Bray that the recommendations in the report be approved.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

RESOLVED That:

- 1) the aspirations outlined in the Tenants Charter be noted and the Council and TLIP continue to work in partnership to achieve them;
- 2) progress in addressing the Charter be formally reviewed in two years' time.

39. TREASURY MANAGEMENT - OUTTURN REPORT

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 85 to 114, which summarised the Treasury Management operations during 2018/19.

The report was presented for monitoring and review purposes in accordance with the Council's Treasury Management procedures. It confirmed that the Council had adhered to all agreed Prudential Indicators during the year.

It was proposed by John Kaiser and seconded by John Halsall that the recommendations in the report be approved.

Upon being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED That:

- 1) The Treasury Management Outturn report for 2018/19 be approved;
- 2) The actual 2018/19 Prudential Indicators set out in the report be approved.

40. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Council considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 115 to 120, which gave details of proposed changes to the Council's Constitution as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group.

It was proposed by John Kaiser and seconded by Imogen Shepherd-Dubey that the recommendations in the report be approved.

On being put to the vote it was:

RESOLVED That:

- 1) Sections 4.4.23 and 4.4.43 (Wokingham Wellbeing Board) be amended as set out in Paragraph 1 of the report;
- 2) Section 5.5.7 – Arrangements for the Meeting (Individual Executive Member Decision) be amended as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report;
- 3) Additions be made to Section 13.2.1 – Application and Scope, as set out in Paragraph 3 of the report.

41. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

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

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

Question

Can the Executive Member for Highways guarantee that the works on the Winnersh Relief Road Part 2, including the roundabout for the NWDR (needed for access for residents of Woodward Close), be completed and opened first before other parts of the roads projects so Winnersh and Wokingham residents can see the benefits of the road projects, especially if they are hopefully completed on time and on budget?

Answer

The development of the Winnersh Relief Road 2 and North Wokingham Distributor Road West of Old Forest Road have been agreed by the Council as a single project and is in contract with our Major Projects delivery contractor currently. Any change will delay the contract, increase traffic disturbance and incur unnecessary costs.

Delivering the work as agreed by the Council brings huge advantages, for example resource use and deployment, material use (and inter-site material use), driving down utility diversion costs, combining the site compounds etc and completing the necessary ecological work in both areas at the same time. This work will be followed by topsoil stripping, tree/stump clearance, compound set up, utility diversion where practical, amongst other items, which will take us up to the spring of 2020. We are currently reviewing the capability of bringing the King Street Lane work forward within the programme to October/November 2019 in combination with planned advance works.

Should we undertake the roundabout work as suggested in isolation, this will increase construction cost and cause additional inconvenience to drivers as Reading Road would then be affected twice, i.e. the delivery of the Easterly roundabout for the NWDR WOFR section. Our strategy is to build the two roundabouts off-line, where possible (keeping free flowing traffic along Reading Road) and then through a quick series of 'on carriageway' works on Reading Road to connect everything up. This approach will also allow better coordination of required utility diversions within one operation, as opposed to a split

approach.

Supplementary Question

I think you have missed my question somewhere in the process. I said both roundabouts included in this, but if we had the NWDR roundabout and the Winnersh Relief Road it will help both the residents of Wokingham and the residents of Winnersh get to work easier rather than waiting for the whole of both projects to be finished all at once, because there are other parts that won't affect this quite as much.

Supplementary Answer

Maybe we should have an offline conversation about what you are suggesting. But, currently it is all one programme and to split the programme into two pieces would cost about an extra £400k. But, if we can do anything to speed things up I am happy to talk about it.

41.2 Chris Smith had asked the Executive Member for Finance and Housing the following question and as he was unable to attend the meeting the following answer was sent to him:

Question

Can the Executive Member provide an update on the annual statement of the accounts?

Answer

The Council published its draft accounts on 31 May 2019 in accordance with statutory deadlines. There then followed a period of audit by Ernst & Young (EY), the Council's appointed auditors. This was due to complete by 31 July 2019, when the audited accounts would be published. Unfortunately, due to circumstances outside of both the Council's and EY's control, concerning the audit of the Royal Berkshire Pension Fund, EY were not able to 'sign-off' the accounts by 31 July 2019. All other aspects of the audit have been completed satisfactorily.

There are no consequences or implications on the Council for this delay, which is outside of our control and will clearly impact on all Berkshire Unitary Authorities.

The accounts for 2018/19, as at 31 July 2019, have been published on the Council's website with an explanation as to why they are still unsigned.

41.3 Michael Firmager asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

Can the Executive Member for Highways provide me with a status update on the Council's plans to ease congestion?

Answer

We are very concerned about congestion and we are doing as much as we can to try and alleviate it. The Council has for a number of years worked hard to alleviate congestion across the Borough through the development of a number of new strategic roads and junctions, collaborative planning and sensitive co-ordination of street works, and effective communication with residents through the use of social media and promotion of the roadworks.org map. As part of our proactive approach, we have secured £24m for the funding of the Arborfield Relief Road. In recent months the Council has established a dedicated congestion project team which has identified four key areas of work to further

reduce the impact of congestion;

1. a review of our approach to Streetworks (including a review of sensitive streets network). Sensitive streets allow us to move road works where possible into time where they are not inconveniencing passengers or travellers on the road;
2. the development of an Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Strategy (including the use of variable messaging signs to bring drivers the latest information);
3. an improved focus on communications (including a market research survey, and improved social media interaction via the traffic team, and much better use of press releases);
4. in the longer term the use of real time traffic monitoring to help the Council to manage the local highway network.

The Council is making good progress on these work streams and has already instructed consultants to assist in the production of the ITS Strategy and the market research survey. There is lots more to do, but we are very committed to making sure that people have the right information available to be able to plan their routes; avoiding road works where possible.

To make the point, most of the roadworks within the Borough are not run by the Borough Council, they are run by utilities companies such as South West Water and Thames Water. We need to work around these utilities and provide people with the right information to plan their journeys. That's what we intend to do.

Supplementary Question

In my ward, Sonning, a couple of Thursdays back, Thames Water were digging up Thames Street, causing a long traffic jam. I was stuck in it for an hour or so just to try to get over the river. I wonder what sort of penalties we can apply to these utility companies, because they really do take liberties with our roads and our residents.

Answer

There are two things to consider here. If we have emergency roadworks relating, for example, to burst water mains or gas leaks, we cannot insist that the utilities wait for a couple of weeks to do the works when it is convenient for us. Otherwise we would all be afloat. We do have to let utility companies repair roads due to emergencies. Nevertheless, they need to communicate properly. They do need to put signage on their roadworks so we know what is going on. If they do leave signs out after roadworks, there is a small penalty. It is probably insignificant to a utility company, but the amount is set statutorily. So, we can fine people for leaving roadworks in place longer than they should but, in essence, it is probably not a lot.

41.4 Alison Swaddle asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:

Question

You have stated publicly that you intend to ask residents for their ideas on how Wokingham Borough can reach Carbon Neutrality by 2030, please can you update us on when this consultation will begin and what form it will take?

Answer

I have indeed previously stated my intention to consult all residents of Wokingham Borough and ask them for their ideas on how we can reach Carbon Neutrality by 2030 and I am very pleased to announce that this consultation will be on September 26th, a week from today, using the WBC online portal.

Residents, businesses, schools, residents groups, Town and Parish Councils and any other interested local parties will be welcome to respond to four simple questions and share with us their thoughts, feedback, ideas and suggestions on how we meet this most stretching of targets as agreed at our last full Council meeting.

I encourage anybody with an idea to share it. You may think others will have said the same thing, but repetition is a good thing as it will show us the strength of feeling behind specific ideas across the Borough.

The consultation will be widely publicised using Wokingham Borough Council's social media forums and print media. I encourage everyone to get involved and send in your ideas. Tell your family, tell your friends, your uncles and aunts, your colleagues and neighbours, your classmates and teachers and everybody else and make sure that they are contributing.

If you can't get onto the portal write to Wokingham Borough Council, write to me, write to any of the elected Members in this Chamber. We will ensure that your idea is included in the list for consideration for the Action Plan and by the cross party working group and Council Officers.

I will publish a summary of all the ideas that we receive to ensure 100% visibility and clarity.

Initially, the consultation will be open for 3 months, until the end of December, but it is my intention that, if it is successful, we will open it up and keep it as an ongoing consultation so that anybody who comes up with a great idea in five years' time, in the middle of the night, can go onto the WBC website and share that idea with us so that we can achieve our stretching target.

Supplementary Question

We are working hard to reduce, reuse and recycle. Would you agree that it is far better to reduce and reuse than to recycle. Can you tell me what the Council plans do to reduce the use of plastic?

Supplementary Answer

I have put forward a Motion for this evening and, hopefully, if time permits, we will get to it. That Motion will call on the Council to eradicate single use plastics from our operations and supply chains. We appreciate that there is a degree of essential single use plastics that the Borough has to have, for example some of our elderly residents cannot drink water without using a single plastic straw. In all other instances we are looking to remove single use plastics from our supply chain because, frankly, the impact they are having on our environment is awful. It is devastating and we need to plan our part.

Note: At this point in the meeting Andy Croy raised a Point of Order under Paragraph 4.2.9.5 (Scope of questions) on the basis that the question was frivolous. This related to the fact that the Executive Member had reported similar information to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee at its meeting on the previous evening.

The Deputy Mayor stated that the question was not frivolous and should be heard.

41.5 Graham Howe asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

Question

Food waste recycling has been in place for some months now. Can the Executive Member please update me on the progress made thus far?

Answer

It is all going very well, if I may say so. Since April 2019 a total of 1,553 tonnes of food waste has been collected and recycled. On top of this a further 214 tonnes of residual waste has been minimised from the blue bags and has, therefore, not gone to landfill. The introduction of food waste has also had an indirect impact on dry recycling which increased by 300 tonnes in the first four months of the year.

We have continued to collect 18 tonnes a day, which equates to 90 tonnes a week although tonnage has dropped slightly in July and August, probably due to school holidays. We are not complacent and continue to communicate and promote the service to maintain momentum. We are now working with managing agents and housing associations to introduce food waste collections into multi occupancies such as flats and apartments.

Every tonne of waste diverted from landfill or energy from waste to recycling saves the Council approximately £100. Diversion of 1553 tonnes has come with the saving of £155k in four months, which is reinvested back into the system to support the new collection service. I would urge everyone to support this service, which increases our recycling and reduces our carbon footprint.

Incidentally, Reading Borough Council has approached us, as a shining example, to learn from us as they are planning to introduce a food waste service from next year.

41.6 UllaKarin Clark asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question:

Question

Could the Executive Member for Planning please give me the results of the Housing Target Consultation?

Answer

We received just under 50,000 individual responses, of which 46,807 (94%), if you want the exact number, agreed with us and stated that, in their opinion, the Government housing target is too high.

We believe this was an excellent response rate and, although we have always believed residents' agreed with us on the issue, we now have clear evidence to use going forwards.

We will use this evidence and continue to use evidence moving forwards to strengthen our ongoing argument that the current system is arbitrary and this result is clear evidence that our residents think that the amount we are being asked to deliver is too much.

We are required by government policy to work within their rules and guidance in

developing our Local Plan, which we are doing. This is not a matter of choice. It is something that we have to work to and something which we have to have in place; otherwise we will get development in places that we don't want. It needs to reflect housing needs and, if we are not successful, we will be saying to Government that, if you want us to accommodate these houses, we really need your full support in working with our local MPs.

We are calling on massive up-front infrastructure funding so that the roads and other facilities needed can be provided early. We have already heard several examples this evening where housing comes after the infrastructure and we have a massive programme of up-front funding. But in some cases it does not deliver all the infrastructure that we need before the houses are finalised. We also need guaranteed protection in relation to developers who build in areas that don't fit our normal plans and guidance. We can also strengthen local support for our development. We are also asking that future developments are eco-friendly and fit within our environmental principles.

41.7 Pauline Helliard-Symons asked the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development the following question:

Question

Can you please confirm to Council, in light of the recent acquisition of the Waitrose property asset in Twyford, the performance of the Property Investment Portfolio as a whole?

Answer

The make-up and performance of the investment portfolio is disclosed in a statement on the Council's public web site as we wanted to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to being transparent about how these funds are being invested. The link to the relevant page was promoted in our recent 'Investing for Success' press release on 12th August 2019. It is easy to find:

<http://news.wokingham.gov.uk/news/investing-for-success/>

The portfolio statement (as at 31st March) is being updated in light of the latest acquisition and will be revised on the public web site.

The August press release confirmed that the rate of return on the portfolio as at 31st March (prior to Waitrose) was over 5.5%. Following the purchase of Waitrose the rate is now just over 5.25% reflecting the enhanced length and security of income from this new asset.

As a Council we are very pleased with the performance of the investment portfolio. It continues to generate an excellent return on our investment which we are already using to fund essential services for local residents.

41.8 Gary Cowan asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

How many Staff/Members have received Penalty Charge Notices since the scheme was introduced?

Answer

We are unable to answer this question as the Council does not record or issue Penalty Notices to individuals. They are issued to vehicles found to contravene restrictions with no correlation to the driver's status, whether Members, staff or visitors at any point in the CPE process.

Supplementary Question

In a way I probably worded the question incorrectly. What I was really asking was how many penalty notices have been issued to people using the Shute End car parks.

Answer

I do not have that particular piece of information, but I can tell you that the total disabled parking contraventions is 1,986, of which 1,278 PCN's were issued for on street Code 40 offences and 708 PCN's were issued for off street Code 87 offences. I will get you data on the car park here.

41.9 Charles Margetts asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

Question

Could the Lead Member for Children's Services agree to make representations to our local Members of Parliament and Government concerning the need to ensure that our schools are effectively funded?

Answer

I note that the Government has announced an additional £2.6 billion extra funding into the schools budget in 2020/21, which includes £700 million earmarked for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. However, we do not know how much Wokingham is going to get.

Bearing in mind that Wokingham is the worst funded authority in the country, I contacted John Redwood a couple of months ago. I did say to him that whatever Wokingham is going to get for our schools, it is not enough and I want more. He was very sympathetic. He agreed to make representations to the Minister for Education and the Officers are now busy preparing a business case to strengthen my request.

41.10 Abdul Loyes asked the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:

Question

How do we support the providers of care to our vulnerable adults in the Borough?

Answer

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) has a duty to understand its local market of care providers and stimulate a diverse range of care and support services to ensure that people in the Borough and their carers have choice over how their needs are met and that they are able to achieve the things that are important to them.

We recognise, however, that we cannot deliver success on our own and we value the partnerships we have formed over many years in the local market. By continuing to support our local providers we find creative and cost-effective ways to promote health and wellbeing that meet the needs of all of our residents, especially the most vulnerable.

Quality assurance is a vital part of what we do. It is a continual process by which standards are set and achievements are monitored. We are committed to ensuring that the

services people receive are of the highest quality possible and deliver what our partners and residents expect. Our Quality Assurance Team work with local providers to ensure that standards are met and outcomes for service users are achieved. Where necessary, the Team work with providers to ensure that corrective action is taken and that all quality standards are improving.

Our local providers have access to the Council's learning platform – My Learning. This provides our partners with access to training on adult safeguarding, health and safety and GDPR. Sustained ability of the adult health and social care market is of major importance to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all vulnerable adults with a range of social care needs.

To support the sustainability of the market we have invested an additional £770k in local provision. To provide support beyond that we have continued to invest in 2019/20 and beyond. We are currently working with the LGA to develop a market position statement. This is a document produced by the Authority which outlines the support and care services people need and how they need to be provided. It is envisaged that this will be completed by October 2019. We are also restarting our provider forums with the next one set for 14 October 2019.

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

Question

I understand that the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan funding only covers the Wokingham Town area. What plans are in place to cover the rest of the Borough?

Answer

We are currently undertaking a Greenway programme across the Borough and as part of the Local Transport Plan process we are compiling a list of cycling and walking requirements around the Borough. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) will build on this work and give us a formal, recognised, method of assessment which will help us prioritise works in future.

The current work being undertaken on LCWIP is being progressed following a successful bid to the Department for Transport for funding in the form of technical support, match funded by WBC. The bid was based on progressing the LCWIP in the Wokingham Town Centre area only as an initial stage due to the limited support available.

The plan is to continue the process of assessing on an area by area basis until we have covered the whole Borough. You may be aware that Reading LCWIP covers parts of our Borough and in time we aim to have a fully integrated Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan covering the whole Borough and extending into our neighbours. The exact plan and how it is funded will depend on the Local Transport Plan 4 work which is currently underway; this will identify our priorities and help us to plan all of our potential schemes and initiatives to make best use of the available funding.

I recognise, like you, that cycleways and paths do not finish at ward or town boundaries. The important thing is for people to be able to get where they need to go, regardless of boundaries.

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

Question

The 4 and X4 bus services provide a frequent and well-used service between Wokingham Town Centre and homes in Earley close to Wokingham Road. However, the absence of direct connections between most of Maiden Erlegh and Lower Earley and Wokingham Town Centre makes it very difficult for residents who depend on public transport when they need to visit the Council Offices to access services, and to use the many other facilities in Wokingham Town Centre. Is there any planning underway that would address this issue?

Answer

The Council appreciates that some residents would like a direct service to Wokingham Town from the Lower Earley and Maiden Erlegh areas. The Council is currently in the process of updating Local Transport Plan 4, which I referred to earlier. Once this has been adopted a revised Borough-wide bus strategy will be written. As part of the work undertaken for the bus strategy, demand across the Borough for bus services will be reconsidered.

It should be noted that in addition to the 4 and X4 services, there is also a regular train service departing from Earley Rail Station going to Wokingham, which I find very convenient.

Supplementary Question

Could this also be used as an opportunity to reintroduce a bus stop at Brookside Close, by the busy Brookside Surgery?

Supplementary Answer

I recognise the constant need to put bus stops in the right places. We will look at that suggestion as part of the considerations.

41.13 Sarah Kerr asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:**Question**

Along with yourself and Councillors Burgess and Croy, I attended Extinction Rebellion's first public meeting in Wokingham at the beginning of the month. You, in fact, were the guest speaker at the event. We all know the climate crisis we face. Extinction Rebellion exists to ensure we act and we act now. It makes three demands of governments:

- Tell the truth by declaring a climate and ecological emergency;
- Act now to halt biodiversity loss and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2025;
- Create and be led by a citizen's assembly on climate and ecological justice.

This Council has already declared a climate emergency and thus taken the first step towards action. Will the Executive Member for Climate Emergency consider taking the next step by giving his full support to Extinction Rebellion's ethos and all of its aims by setting up a local citizens' assembly within the next three months to inform local policy on how to tackle this crisis?

Answer

I can confirm that, on September 3rd, I spoke for approximately 5 to 10 minutes at the beginning of a presentation on the climate crisis held by Extinction Rebellion Wokingham.

I can also confirm that on August 29th I met with several members of the Extinction

Rebellion Reading organising group to discuss our approach to Climate Emergency and our path forward in the coming months.

As stated in the Extinction Rebellion Guide to Citizen's Assemblies the purpose of such assembly is to 1) Listen, 2) Learn, 3) Deliberate and 4) Decide on actions required in order to meet the objectives of net carbon zero, something Wokingham Borough Council has committed to doing by 2030 as part of our Climate Emergency Declaration.

Something else we have committed to is to establish a cross party working group to investigate and propose further recommendations to help achieve a carbon neutral Borough, reporting back in 6 months. Specifically, and I quote directly from the minutes of the last full Council meeting: "the working group will invite, consult and involve as wide a participation from our local community as possible, in order to create a broad consensus of how we contribute to the fight against the climate crisis". These are also similar to the stated objectives of the Extinction Rebellion Citizens' Assembly.

I have already announced that on September 26th we will begin a consultation with residents, asking them to feed in all of their ideas for how we tackle climate change across the Borough. These ideas will be published for all to see. They will be brought to the working group to be discussed, debated and decided upon.

We have already sought expert advice, both by opening lines of communication with Extinction Rebellion Reading, and by talking with Reading University on how we calculate our carbon footprint, and I welcome the invitation of other expert opinion to the meetings of the working group, as laid out in the minutes of the last meeting.

Once we have an action plan, elements of it will be subjected to further public and business consultation, but this cannot be done until we have a definitive list of potential actions and measures.

Resident events to discuss the climate crisis are already being organised across the Borough. Greener Wokingham has one organised for September 25th. I actively encourage input from all these organisations across the Borough.

Supplementary Question

A consultation is not really the same as a citizens' assembly. I do understand that we will be talking to residents, but can I have confirmation, yes or no, are we going to have a citizens' assembly?

Supplementary Answer

To specifically answer that question; it was the final part of my earlier answer. I understand the objectives of a Climate Emergency. I feel that everything we are putting in place in terms of inviting public input, holding it to scrutiny and inviting expert opinion means that, in the short term, we are clearly living up to the ideals and expectations of an Extinction Rebellion citizens' assembly.

Once we have an action plan in place, I will be happy to re-discuss this suggestion with Councillor Kerr and other members of the working group.

41.14 Adrian Mather asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:

Question

In order to objectively track progress towards this Council's declared goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and to be able to continuously and accurately monitor total CO₂ emission levels compared to the current base level.

Can the Executive Member confirm the current monitoring mechanisms that are in place now and include in his answer any that may need to be urgently added or upgraded to enable the Council to accurately monitor total CO₂ emission levels?

Answer

I welcome this question from Cllr Mather as an opportunity to update all Members on a few key areas of focus for the Council since we declared a Climate Emergency at our July meeting.

In order to be able to achieve Carbon Neutral by 2030 it is clearly essential that we must first calculate the starting point of what our carbon footprint currently is. Only from there can we begin to develop and implement an action plan that will both reduce and offset our carbon emissions between now and 2030.

The most recent figures published by the National Atmospheric Emissions Authority estimated the Carbon Footprint of Wokingham Borough at 771,000 tonnes in 2017. The good news is that this has tracked downwards since 2013 as a result of work already being implemented across the Borough by residents and businesses. Clearly our increased housing and population will have added to this figure.

Working from two year old data though is clearly not an ideal starting point. To enable a more accurate current figure I have established a Cross-Council 'Climate Emergency Officer Implementation Group', chaired by Graham Ebers, and that I have also attended. A key early task for this Group will be to establish a carbon footprint baseline and a framework for the ongoing monitoring and publishing of progress in reducing our carbon footprint across the Borough.

I have asked Officers to review multiple approaches to calculating our carbon footprint to ensure the baseline number that we work from is as accurate as possible. Fortunately, as part of an increasing group of Councils that have declared a climate emergency, we have access to a growing wealth of data and techniques for calculating a Carbon Footprint. We also have access to a fantastic bank of knowledge and experience at the University of Reading.

As soon as it has been calculated it is my intention to publish this baseline carbon footprint so that it is clear to all our residents just how big and important a task we have ahead of us.

Whilst I cannot be specific about any potential gaps at this stage I have asked Officers to develop a draft monitoring framework that is both robust and practicable. I will, of course, share this with the cross party working group on Climate Emergency and am also happy to share it with all Councillors and residents once the methodology is finalised.

Supplementary Question

Can the Executive Member confirm that both the construction and operating emissions of new houses, roads and commercial premises will be counted in the CO₂ emissions?

Supplementary Answer

Yes they will.

41.15 Maria Gee had asked the Leader of Council the following question. Due to time constraints the following written answer was provided:

Question

The closure of the Denmark Street Car Park at the end of the August Bank Holiday came as a surprise to residents. However, there had been rumours circulating in the media about its closure since the middle of July. This car park is used by many visitors and is preferred to multi storey car parks by wheelchair users and other blue badge holders due to its proximity to the town centre and the flat access. Its loss is therefore both the residents and the town's loss.

Given the rumours that were circulating about closure, can you please confirm the individual dates when each member of the Executive became aware of this decision?

Answer

As you state, there were rumours circulating about the closure of this car park in the media. However, Executive Members only became aware of the decision to close the car park on or around Friday 23rd August 2019 when the notice was posted at the entrance to the car park – at the same time as everyone else.

41.16 Rachel Bishop-Firth had asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question. Due to time constraints the following written answer was provided:

Question

The new estate on Montague Park has been provided with a community centre. This community centre is, unfortunately, a completely empty shell. There are no floors, toilets, or heating – never mind chairs, tables, an area to plug in a kettle or anything else which would make this community centre useable by the community.

A very dedicated church group are looking at how they could turn this empty shell into a functioning community centre. They estimate that the cost of doing so will be around £260,000. They are actively seeking grants, but raising this amount of money is clearly a major challenge for any local voluntary organisation.

If it's possible to raise this kind of money and get the building fitted out, there is then another problem. There will be substantial running costs.

The empty shell which has been provided is directly underneath flats. This means that it could be suitable for running quiet daytime events, for example a prayer group, parent and toddler group, or a coffee morning for the elderly. These groups are unlikely to raise the level of funds which would be needed to keep the centre going. The community centre would not be suitable for parties or most other evening events, which limits the amount of income that it can generate.

What does the Council now plan to do with this facility, in order to provide Montague Park residents with a community centre?

Answer

The infrastructure requirement for the South Wokingham SDL includes new or improved

local shopping parades north and south of the railway line and one community facility to be located south of the railway line.

Whilst there was no requirement for a community facility north of the railway line, the Council was successful in securing a small, additional community facility in the local centre on Montague Park funded by the developers. This facility is over and above what infrastructure contribution the developer was required to provide but unfortunately did not include a commitment to funding the fitting out of the facility.

It was left to the Council to identify how to fund the balance for the fit out of the facility; which we are continuing to address. Central to this work have been discussions with local groups to explore options on how the facility will be used and how to find the resources to get it operational. The Council has a preference for local community facilities to be operated by local community groups or organisations, which is why the majority of our work on finding a solution for Montague Park has focused on this outcome.

It is expected that the new community facility in Montague Park will be handed over to the Council sometime next summer (2020).

As with all community facilities provided by the Council, we would want them to be flexible and adaptable spaces that are able to be accessed by the local community for a wide variety of uses. The Council does not want this facility to stand empty or go unused and we are committed to finding a solution to making it operational before it is handed over to the Council next year.

41.17 Clive Jones had asked the Leader of the Council the following question. Due to time constraints the following written answer was provided:

Question

Can the Leader of the Council let us know what has happened with the responses to the Council's recent Housing Consultation whilst confirming what the next steps in the consultation process will be?

Answer

I would like to add my thanks to all the many residents who took the time to respond to the consultation.

The consultation was a standalone exercise to allow us to evidence the views of residents, and I am very pleased that we now able to clearly illustrate the strong view that the government housing target is too high.

In the answer to Councillor UllaKarin Clark's earlier question, we explained that we will use this evidence to strengthen our ongoing argument with the Government that the current system is arbitrary and that, as a result, what is being asked of this Borough is too much.

41.18 Imogen Shepherd-DuBey had asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question. Due to time constraints the following written answer was provided:

Question

We are very glad to see that the Berkshire Concrete business that was operating from

Toutley Depot, has finally moved out. This was a sub-let tenant that moved in without the appropriate planning permission and it then took WBC a year and a half of considerable effort to evict them. Please can you advise what measures Wokingham Borough Council is going to put into place to ensure that this does not happen on Wokingham Borough Council property again?

Answer

The right for the Tenant to sub-let with Landlord's consent, which is not to be unreasonably withheld, is a normal Tenant right within leases. If we were to deny this right in leases going forward it is possible that it would limit our opportunity to let properties (and therefore impact upon income to WBC). As WBC deal with a whole array of different types and uses of properties, it is necessary to allow flexibility and, therefore, enhance our opportunities of letting such properties.

Any sub-letting moving forward will need the permission of WBC and necessary planning permissions if appropriate.

41.19 Andy Croy had asked the Leader of the Council the following question. Due to time constraints the following written answer was provided:

Question

Could the Leader give me the dates of Executive or Corporate Leadership Team meetings at which the close of the private car park in Denmark Street has been on the agenda?

Answer

The rumours around the closure of the car park have only been in circulation in recent weeks during which time senior Officers and Members in various meetings have discussed and considered the impact and opportunities in relation to this car park and have been alive to this issue in the context of mitigating the impact on our community and maximising the opportunity for them.

41.20 Caroline Smith had asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question. Due to time constraints the following written answer was provided:

Question

Elevate is a service to help young adults into work, further education, training, work experience or just work - it has been surpassing all expectations in delivering on its main aim, helping 321 young adults over the last 3 years, which is great for the young adults of Wokingham.

I understand it has received some funding from the EU. Please can the Councillor concerned confirm if WBC will be keeping this very valuable service operating in the future regardless of EU funding?

Answer

Wokingham Borough Council will continue to have a responsibility to track and support young people in relation to their Education, Employment and Training, and as such there are no plans to cease the service if EU funding is not forthcoming in the future.

42. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WARD MATTERS

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

Question

We have talked tonight about Climate Change and congestion. We have two railway stations in Winnersh. All three ward Members have met with representatives of South West Railways to talk about the lack of disabled access to both stations.

There was a small pot of money to help with Winnersh Triangle. It is nowhere near enough to do anything because the station is up on an embankment and is almost unmanageable for disabled access, even though it is next to a business park. So people with disabilities or mobility problems can't use it to get to work.

Since South West Railways took over Winnersh Station they have removed the ability to have ramps at the station to help people getting off the train and up the slope as they say that the slopes are too steep, even though they were perfectly fine before they took over the franchise.

Could the Executive Member undertake to work with us to try to persuade South West Railways to do something about disabled access to these stations?

Answer

I am very much aware of this issue which causes people to have to get on at the wrong station and go backwards and forwards to Reading. There has been a recent announcement by the railways that we can bid for money to improve stations. So I have suggested to Highways that they bid for some money to improve Winnersh Triangle because its access is not good enough. I am happy to meet with you to see what we can do together to move this forwards.

42.2 Andy Croy asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

Question

Tomorrow has been declared as a day for a Climate Emergency strike. Students at a school in my ward, Bulmershe School, are planning to not be at school. I understand that headteachers have to mark tomorrow down as unauthorised absence from school. Will you join me in congratulating the young heroines and heroes who are taking part in the Climate strike and, by way of compensating them for this unauthorised absence, will you look at awarding some sort of certificate to recognise them standing up for their futures?

Answer

I can't promise you anything without discussing it with the Officers but, coming from the same country as Greta, I am sympathetic to what these children are doing. I can't say any more, as you will understand, I need to speak to the Officers.

42.3 Charles Margetts asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question:

Question

A site at Johnson Drive in Finchampstead is due to go to Planning Appeal in October. Three separate planning applications for housing have been made on this site in the past four years. Each one has been turned down by WBC. It has then been taken to appeal,

basically to the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol. On one occasion the developer withdrew the appeal on the day of the appeal. On another occasion the developer lost the appeal. The third appeal is in October. Fighting these continual appeals has cost WBC hundreds of thousands of pounds and has led to residents living with this unreasonable situation for the past four years.

Do you agree with me that developers should not be able to submit residents to repeated planning applications on the same site where there is a clear record, tested at appeal, which shows that there is little chance of the application going through?

Answer

I absolutely agree. You know what I would like to do. Get rid of Bristol and allow our Planning Officers in this Authority to run the Planning process. I am as frustrated as you. I get calls every day regarding situations like this. There have been various applications on this site and, over a period, they have reduced it from 56 houses to 40 houses, then 35 houses. I hope that we get a resolution next month. In the meantime, we will work with you, your residents and the Enforcement Team to ensure that they comply.

42.4 Rachel Bishop-Firth asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

Question

The new estate being built at Matthewsgreen has included promise of a community centre. I am concerned because the community centre at Montague Park was, as referred to earlier, delivered as an empty shell with no floors, no toilets and no heating. Can the Council confirm that the Matthewsgreen community centre will be provided in a condition whereby it can be used as a community centre?

Answer

We have approaches from several organisations seeking to run that community centre. We are still working on that. I am hoping that eventually someone will come up with a good idea and the ability to run it. So, wait and see.

42.5 Jenny Cheng asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

Can I have an update on the resurfacing work on Kingfisher Drive? I have heard that residents have concerns about the quality of the work.

Answer

I have been in a lot of conversations about Kingfisher Drive over the last few days, both on social media and with Officers. I have also seen some interesting pictures of the road. I talked to Highways Officers both last night and today. They are going to have a look at the road. I would point out that the road isn't complete yet and the state of the road is not the same as the end state will be. Nevertheless, Highways Officers will visit and confirm that the repairs are being done properly.

42.6 Shirley Boyt asked the Executive Member for Climate Change the following question:

Question

I welcome the decision by the Council to fit photovoltaic panels to all Council-owned properties. The new Bulmershe leisure centre, which is currently under construction in my ward, has a roof which is eminently suitable for a large number of such panels. However, the energy assessment submitted with the planning application states “the inclusion of photovoltaic panels is not considered at this stage”. It goes on to say that this can be revised at a later stage in the design.

Surely the inclusion of these panels, whilst still at the construction stage, is likely to cost less than retrofitting. Furthermore, the financial gains from feeding into the grid will help considerably with the running costs of the centre. Can you tell us whether the leisure centre is going to have panels and, if so, when they will be fitted?

Answer

I cannot commit to when the panels will be fitted. I would need to speak to the Officers. I completely agree with you that it would have been better to install them at the time of construction rather than retrofitting them. I will commit to having a look at it and seeing if there is an opportunity to install them sooner rather than later.

42.7 Rachel Burgess asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

My question is about disabled parking. The criteria for Blue Badge holders has recently been extended to those with hidden and non-visible conditions. However, residents in my ward are already reporting a lack of disabled parking places in certain areas in the town centre. Bearing in mind the likely increase in demand for Blue Badges with the extension of the scheme, what steps is the Executive taking to ensure that disabled parking provision in the town centre meets the demands of our disabled residents and visitors?

Answer

We have been monitoring the extra applications for disabled badges so far and, actually, the demand for the extra non-visible disability provision has not been as large as we expected or feared. However, I will be very interested in the areas that you think are short of spaces and I would be happy to talk to you about where the spaces are lacking and what we can do to improve them.

42.8 Stephen Conway asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency the following question:

Question

Would the Executive Member care to distance himself from a recent Conservative leaflet which pours scorn on the idea of a “Green Wall” in Twyford as a way to help reduce pollution at the village crossroads? This rejection of a locally generated idea has gone down very badly in Twyford and has irritated a local benefactor, the newly ennobled Conservative Peer, Lord Brownlow, who is aware of the scientific evidence in favour of a green wall and is willing to fund it.

Answer

I have not seen the leaflet that you are referring to. It is not our policy and not what we are intending to do. You and I have spoken about the green wall in the past. You know that I am an advocate of it. I would like to see it happen providing that a suitable site can be found. If you provide me with a copy of the leaflet I will look into it.

42.9 Ian Pittock asked the Executive Member for Finance and Housing the following question:

Question

Can you provide an update on the Gorse Ride project, given that the word on the street is that management changes are occurring and you now intend to reduce the amount of social housing on the estate? I would be grateful if you could dispel residents' fears on this.

Answer

As far as I am concerned, the same number of affordable units should be delivered. I have made it very clear to Members that, when we talk about affordable, we also talk about people who would like to buy part of their properties. I think that it is important as well that we give people the chance to become homeowners, especially in an area where houses are so expensive. I will be speaking more about Gorse Ride later.

42.10 Maria Gee asked the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development the following question:

Question

With the closure of the Denmark Street car park there have been a few nasty incidents in the Cockpit Path car park as there aren't many parking spaces. My residents are becoming a little disappointed with the action taken by the Council to sort out the Denmark Street car park. It has been mentioned in this meeting that avenues have been explored, but we can't see any avenues which are open to the Council. Just yesterday, the developers stated that they are going to put in a new application. What avenues have been explored by the Council and when did the Council start exploring these avenues?

Answer

We have been looking at all sorts of things. I don't intend to go into too much detail as some of them include very complex legal advice. We have been looking at this for some time. We cannot stop anyone from putting in a planning application. They can do that any time they want. I think I made that clear when I answered an earlier question. Let's wait and see what happens. I don't intend to go into detail here because it was a very complex piece of legal advice. We will do what we can as soon as we can.

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

Question

I have Wokingham train station in my ward. Around the station we have a number of streets that suffer from all-day commuter parking. We have had two petitions recently, one for Tanhouse Lane garages and one for Caroline Drive. There has also been one in the past for Meadow Road. I would like to know what the Council is doing to stop people from parking on these streets all day and why some of the requested single yellow lines have not been implemented.

Answer

I have not seen the specific requests for those roads but I would be happy to talk to you about them. Yesterday I had a meeting with Angus Ross and some residents about Crowthorne station. They have a very similar problem. The issue is that people are entitled

to park on public roads unless we put parking restrictions in and the downside is that, if we put parking restrictions in what generally happens is that they move to another road. So, it is a very difficult problem to solve but I would be happy to come and talk to you about it.

42.12 Gregor Murray asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

Question

I am sure that you are aware that recently a fire broke out in a nursery school in my ward. Can you update the residents of Norreys on the action the Council is taking to keep this vital service open for local parents and their children?

Answer

The Ashridge Nursery is not owned by the Council. It is privately owned and is run by a local management company. When we found out that there had been a fire senior Officers contacted the nursery and offered help and support and are presently negotiating an area within the Brambles, the Children's Centre, for use by the nursery. As yet, we do not know the cause of the fire. We do know that 80% of the premises suffered smoke damage. So they may be at the Brambles for some time.

42.13 Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

Question

When will the bridge in Winnersh Meadows, over the pond, be repaired? It has been broken for three years. The bridge is used by schoolchildren to look at pond life.

Answer

I wasn't aware of this. I will look into it and come back to you.

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

John Halsall, Leader of the Council

During the last three months since you honoured me as Leader of the Council, I continue to be astounded by the high quality of our Officers, their commitment and the breadth of their engagement. They are well motivated, positively addressing issues and have a can-do attitude, which is pervading everything we do. The sparks given from the blue-sky thinking is electrifying. We have been able to achieve a huge amount in a very short time. It is a compliment to Susan Parsonage and her Team and the Executive.

Only last Thursday, as UllaKarin mentioned, within hours of a fire at a private nursery we had mounted an exercise to where they could be open on the following Monday, which is a great compliment to our Officers.

Of course, we do not have the powers to do everything and cannot resolve every problem. Some of our Members who constantly criticise Officers in the Council would do well to remember that. However, the Borough is there to serve residents and improve the quality of the lives of the residents. Our Officers are fully committed to do just that and do an excellent job.

Coming around the corner – maybe or probably – will be Brexit. The merits of or not are not for here. However, we have been planning in the event of leaving without a comprehensive withdrawal agreement for some considerable time. A wide-ranging risk register has been established by a cross-functional team of Officers under the chairmanship of our Resilience Manager and are in the process of enacting robust countermeasures. The process is integrated with the national preparations. At the last time of asking these preparations are restricted, so I am unable to share them, but I will be doing so through the Leaders and the Executive if relevant as time nears. Pauline Jorgensen will be the Executive Member heading up this activity.

Bridge Farm has been in the Waste and Minerals Plan for many years and it is only now that there has been considerable local opposition. I have been frankly surprised that it was not removed many years ago particularly given the quantity of housing built nearby. However, I can confirm that it has now been removed from the Waste and Minerals Plan. I can also announce that Pauline Jorgensen will be bringing forward a paper to assemble the best legal and planning team that we can muster to contest any appeal which there may be for this and any other important appeal that there may be in the future. Because of these two vital and important activities, I will be working on highways to ensure that the momentum continues and will share this portfolio with Pauline.

Congestion is at the top of the concerns for our residents, which has been well covered by the questions. We can do only what we are doing to expand the network which is building four new roads – however this capacity will be consumed quickly. Wokingham Borough has the highest concentration of vehicles per household in the UK. We are unlikely in the short to medium term to affect this, so we must be smarter in using the roads using technology, planning and information. We are in the process of identifying the sensitive roads (which incidentally does not make the other roads insensitive). We are looking at various technological solutions for switching traffic lights and diverting traffic. In the short term, a sophisticated system is now been used to identify the impact of street works and make them off peak.

We were delighted to receive the 50,000 responses to the consultation. As Wayne said, approximately 95% were against the Government's housing target. The Government is now aware of the strength of feeling. I am very grateful to the residents and Members of this Council who encouraged responses. The next steps are to negotiate with Government our Local Plan Update. I am awaiting imminent dates to see the new ministerial team.

The Climate Change agenda is now very well advanced and including elimination of single use plastics, which we may not get to the Motion tonight. Primary health concerns are being pointed out to the CCG in a new forum of WBC, NHS and CCGs. New initiatives are being planned for fly-tipping, travellers and vandalism.

Finally, the Council response to the Heathrow consultation was the support of the Council to be conditional on the need to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases including carbon emissions, not the status quo, the need to reduce the current emissions, and to demonstrate a clear pathway to carbon neutrality by all means, which may include offsetting, it being demonstrated through monitoring that a suitable site within the Borough that any increase in the proposed number of overflights in Wokingham Borough will have no adverse effect on the health and quality of life of residents. The need for Western Rail access and associated improvements to Twyford station. As a Council we must protect

jobs and the economy as well as the environment. It is not a binary choice. We must do them all.

John Kaiser, Executive Member for Finance and Housing

Wokingham Borough Council backed Gorse Ride regeneration programme has taken a significant step forward with the start of construction of the first phase of this £8million scheme.

The former Cockayne Court care home and seven surrounding bungalows were demolished in late 2018 and these will be replaced with 46 new homes ranging from three-bedroom to one-bedroom apartments. Upon completion in late 2020, these new properties will be made available across a range of affordable housing tenures including social rent, affordable rent and shared ownership, as well as purchase by existing homeowners within the Gorse Ride community. The work forms part of a much wider community regeneration project in Finchampstead. In total, the regeneration will provide 280 new social and affordable homes whilst enhancing the community in which they sit. There is a very strong community, as we heard earlier on, within Gorse Ride and this marks the first steps in its regeneration for the existing community as well as for prospective new residents. Council Officers and staff have worked with tenants throughout the planning process. The planning application for Gorse Ride phase two is expected to be submitted in late 2019.

Having a home to live in is a basic human right and no matter what the level of homelessness in the Borough to be homeless means you are 100% homeless, coupled with the impacts of homelessness this can be devastating for individuals and families. Homelessness can affect everything that people do - health, education and employment. Reducing homelessness and rough sleeping is a key priority for the Council. Wokingham Borough is committed to supporting those at risk of homelessness and people who sleep rough. The Council has a new draft strategy. The consultation will run from 9-27 September. The strategy has four key priorities: early intervention and prevention; working towards ending rough sleeping and tackling hidden homelessness (people who are back home and sofa surfing and so on); building more affordable homes; and supporting our vulnerable residents. To address these priorities, the Council is proposing to support development of a night shelter, work with long-term rough sleepers, looking closely at the hidden homeless in the Borough and reducing its use of emergency and temporary accommodation for the homeless.

The last issue I would like to talk about is fly-tipping. It had become all too common an occurrence in parts of the Borough and I would like to announce that in conjunction with the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure, a new Council initiative to deter fly-tipping. Residents and landowners are inconvenienced. It is dangerous and unsightly, on top of which the cost to the Council in time and money to clear up fly-tipping which could be in worthwhile services such as Adult Social Care and highways. To combat this, the Council will be launching a new project; we will call it Countryside Watch, looking to reduce fly-tipping in Wokingham, working with land owners, Parish Councils, residents and the Police. With the Council's initiative, we will be looking for a range of measures which will hopefully lead to the reduction of fly-tipping and its consequences. Actions such as warning posters, the sort of 'you are being watched' message, and penalties clearly displayed, supplied to land owners and Parish Councils to display in sites which suffer from persistent fly-tipping. We will investigate the use of covert mobile CCTV; fly-tipping direct line into the Council; encourage residents to report registration numbers and fly-tipping incidents that they might witness, anonymously if they wish to. We will provide leaflets to builders' merchants and other outlets highlighting the Council's large waste

disposal service we offer; education -presenting at schools on general littering; working with the Police to stop vehicles carrying suspect loads. Any companies caught fly-tipping will be blacklisted from the Council's contract list as well as naming and shaming.

UllaKarin Clark, Executive Member for Children's Services

I am pleased to announce that Wokingham Borough Council has now completed the first phase of the expansion of Addington School in Woodley. There are now two new MUGAs (multi use games areas). Sensorial activities are crucial for brain development and therefore a new sensory path which allows for play using our five basic senses has been created. For those that do not know what it is that is touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste. We have also extended the car park. The next phase will be to build a single storey block with four class rooms, a cafe and a common room. These improvements to Addington will make it possible for the School to enrol another 50 students next year.

Once again, schools and academies across Wokingham have achieved some outstanding outcomes in external tests and exams, thus making Wokingham one of the best places in the country for children to learn and grow-up. The data in relation to progress 8 is still to be validated and will not be available until later in the year, but I can tell you some of the provisional outcomes of the statutory assessments.

- The EYFS percentage of pupils achieving a Good Level of Development was 77%.
- The Key Stage 1 percentage of pupils achieving expected level or above was:
 - Maths 81% (last year it was 76%);
 - Writing 74% (last year it was 70%);
 - Reading 80% (last year it was 75%)
- The Key Stage 2 percentage of pupils achieving expected level or above:
 - Maths 84% (last year 79%)
 - Writing 84% (last year 78%)
 - Reading 81% (last year 73%)
- Key Stage 4 percentage of pupils achieving 9-4 at GCSE:
 - English 82% (last year 62%)
 - Maths 79% (last year 60%)
 - English and Maths combined 73%
- Key Stage 4 A Level provisional outcomes:
 - A*-C 74%

I hope that you would like to join me in congratulating our children and students because this is a very, very good.

The Northern House School Trust has recently informed the Department for Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner that they would not be able to run the five schools within their Trust. This has resulted in the Regional Schools Commissioner seeking alternative providers. Wokingham has continued to use and support the local provision and currently has about 30 children placed at the school. It is intended that we will continue placing children at the school subject to a new sponsor being found. This forms part of the basis of our long term strategy to make use of local resources to support children with additional needs.

Pauline Jorgensen, Executive Member for Highways and Transport

As you may guess most of my postbag covers three topics; road resurfacing; Congestion and parking. There is a lot of it.

I am pleased to say that we have just published our next quarter's road resurfacing plans which show that we have used available funds, helped by additional Government pothole funding of £1.117m, to make some progress in resurfacing residential roads which previously have failed to meet the threshold for resurfacing in our very constrained financial environment. We also, I am pleased to say, performed 298 repairs in August alone. I am determined to continue to improve the quality of our roads as much as funds allow and we are significantly increasing the funding in the budget next year for road repairs.

John has eloquently covered some of the things that we are doing jointly on congestion so I will not go into that again.

We also recognise that dangerous and illegal parking causes particular concern, especially around school pick up and drop off and we are doing something about it. Enforcement of these transgressions, through fixed penalty notices, can only be carried out by the Police but I am pleased to announce that we have gained agreement from the Police that we can now introduce Parking Information Notices (PINs) which will allow our Officers to ticket cars that are parking on corners and on pavements. Details of locations and vehicles involved will be collected and passed to the Police to take action as they deem necessary. We will pilot a PIN scheme from October this year and review the success of this at the end of the year with the intention of continuing it if it proves successful. We will also increase the number of Parking Enforcement Officers by six in order to respond to residents' demands for improved enforcement and to allow us to improve enforcement and safety around schools in particular.

Parry Batth, Executive Member for Environment and Leisure

I would just like to draw your attention to some of the initiatives that I would like to put in place to help the residents of the Borough.

My colleague and friend, Councilor John Kaiser has already outlined an action plan for fly-tipping and I totally and whole heartedly support that. We will be putting that into action very, very soon and hoping that this action plan will go a long way to either dramatically reduce or get rid of the ugly fly-tipping in the Borough.

Food waste collections, I have already talked about. These have gone well during the first quarter and approximately 6% of food waste has added to a 56% overall recycling rate in the first quarter with tonnages holding up in the second quarter which is July and August. Plans are now being put in place to start collections in flats in a coordinated way from 1st October.

Rats, we have had quite a few problems with rats. We are aware that there are a number of areas in the Borough experiencing significant problems and we are looking to establish a cross agency approach to address this issue and are hoping to include Thames Water. The first meeting of the Officer group will take place very, very soon and we will work up an action plan about which we will brief you about in due course.

Lastly, the new Bulmershe Leisure Centre, which is taking shape very nicely. It is well on course for completion, hopefully in the Spring of next year. The new facility will be wonderful news for the Borough residents who can look forward to a six-lane 25 metre pool and ancillary facilities for the residents to enjoy.

44. STATEMENT FROM COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES

Charles Margetts, Non-Executive Director, Optalis:

I just want to update you on the progress within Optalis. The transfer of statutory services back to WBC from Optalis is running to schedule. The TUPE consultation is underway and we expect the staff to transfer on 1 November. This will create one clear care pathway for Wokingham residents and will improve the quality of service that we offer.

We are also resetting the structures of the governance of the company in agreement with our partners at RBWM. The new strategy of the company will be focused on efficiency, quality and innovation rather than growth. The governance of the company has been slimmed down to give more control to the Executive and senior officers. This is more efficient and enables the company to react quicker to changes in the market. Recruitment for a new CEO will shortly be underway. We will then begin the process of making the provider services as efficient as possible and will benchmark them against the market place to ensure that the tax payer always gets the best value for money and the resident always get the best quality of care. Plans are underway right through to 2022. These steps have created immediate, significant, in year efficiencies. Once all of this is in place we will be able to use Optalis to increase the range and diversity of care services across the Borough for all of our residents.

John Kaiser, Non-Executive Director Loddon Homes and WBC Holdings Ltd:

We are currently looking at what we are doing with the housing companies. As you will probably know, there has been a major change in all the Boards and we are including colleagues from other parts of the Council that will also be involved.

We as a Council actually deliver homes from lots of different areas, believe it or not. We have got regeneration, they deliver their own homes, we have the HRA and we have also got the housing companies. We have got three housing companies and one of them is a registered provider; one of them delivers the actual building of the houses. It does seem strange that we have three areas in the Council that actually does this so what I am trying to do at the moment is to pull together a strategy where we will be able to deliver homes. We will have one place where those homes are delivered, we have our registered provider where those homes will probably be parked which will be affordable homes, and they will be funded in various ways. My ambition with regards to this, I have been told it is too ambitious, but when we look around at what we have got in the pipeline and what we are already doing at the moment, I do not think it is. The ambition is 145. Basically that is for us to deliver a thousand homes in 4 years making a return of 5%. I believe that is perfectly possible. We have already got the houses that we are building for the town centre which is around 100 plus. We have got other sites that we are looking at and I think we are probably going to be achieving that.

It is very important that we use all the advice, all the resources that we have got within the Council. It works together. We should be using the same accountancy staff, using the same consultancy staff, even the same auditors we should be using. We really do have to have a commitment to the residents in this Borough to providing the affordable homes that we know are needed in this Borough due to the very high house prices. This will be going through and we will be starting next week at the first Board meetings at WHL. That will then filter down to Loddon Homes and Berry Brook Homes as well, so we have a very exciting future in front of us with regards to providing homes. I mean if you go to the 1950s, it was Councils that provided homes. It was the Councils that through the New Towns Development Agency, the only time 300,000 homes had been delivered was when

they were being delivered by Councils so it is not something that is unusual. We just need to get back into the habit again.

45. MOTIONS

46. MOTION 420 SUBMITTED BY PAUL FISHWICK

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Paul Fishwick and seconded by Sarah Kerr.

“National statistics indicate that emissions from transport continue to grow - increasing by four percent overall since 1990, including by six percent since 2013.

Road transport is the primary source of this increase. Whereas vehicles have become more fuel efficient this has been offset by increased travel demand.

These emissions are a key pollutant to the air that we breathe, causing major environmental and health issues. The negative impacts on the environment include the direct effects of pollutants on vegetation, and indirect effects on the acid and nutrients status of soils and ground and surface water.

In terms of health, in 2016 a landmark report published by the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health suggested that ‘...every year in the UK, outdoor pollution is linked to around 40,000 deaths’ ... and that ‘...air pollution can have a damaging effect from when a baby is in the womb and continue throughout life to older age, playing a role in many chronic conditions such as cancer, asthma, heart diseases and neurological changes linked to dementia’.

This report concluded that "Real change will only occur when everyone accepts this responsibility and makes a concerted effort."

As the Highway Authority, Wokingham Borough Council has a specific duty to bring forward measures to improve air quality.

Wokingham Borough Council has three declared Air Quality Management Areas but tackling the overall poor air quality across our Borough is the key objective.

There are significant opportunities for sustainable transport options to simultaneously support clean economic growth, increase physical activity, and reduce emissions contributing to local air pollution.

This Council commits to introduce a Low Emissions Transport Strategy that will sit under the Local Transport Plan and will include clearly stated objectives, SMART targets, strategies and tactics”.

It was moved by Gregor Murray and seconded by Pauline Jorgensen that the Motion be amended by deleting the words “Low Emissions Transport Strategy” in the final paragraph and inserting the words “Strategy to lower transport emissions”.

The amendment to the Motion was accepted by the proposer of the original Motion and, therefore, became the substantive Motion.

Upon being put to the vote, the amended (substantive) Motion was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

RESOLVED: National statistics indicate that emissions from transport continue to grow - increasing by four percent overall since 1990, including by six percent since 2013.

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These emissions are a key pollutant to the air that we breathe, causing major environmental and health issues. The negative impacts on the environment include the direct effects of pollutants on vegetation, and indirect effects on the acid and nutrients status of soils and ground and surface water.

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There are significant opportunities for sustainable transport options to simultaneously support clean economic growth, increase physical activity, and reduce emissions contributing to local air pollution.

This Council commits to introduce a Strategy to lower transport emissions that will sit under the Local Transport Plan and will include clearly stated objectives, SMART targets, strategies and tactics”.

47. CONTINUATION OF THE MEETING

At this point in the meeting, 10:10pm, in accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.12 (m), the Council considered a Motion to continue the meeting beyond 10.30pm for a maximum of 30 minutes to enable further business on the Agenda to be transacted. The Motion was proposed by Prue Bray and seconded by Lindsay Ferris.

Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was declared by the Mayor to be lost.

48. MOTION 421 SUBMITTED BY IAN PITTOCK

The Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Ian Pittock and seconded by Paul Fishwick.

“This Council does not support the expansion of Heathrow Airport”.

At this point in the meeting, 10.25pm, in accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.13.12, the Council considered a Motion to adjourn the debate on the Motion to the next meeting of the Council. The Motion was proposed by Andy Croy and seconded by Shirley Boyt.

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

49. MOTION 422 SUBMITTED BY GREGOR MURRAY

Due to time constraints this Motion was not considered.

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COUNCIL ACTION SHEET

DATE	MINUTE	QUESTIONER	SUBJECT	ACTION/RESPONSE	STATUS
19.09.19	36.2	Teresa Caswell	Waterside Centre toilet	Cllr Bathh agreed to look into the situation at the Waterside Centre. Site visit took place. Accessible toilet is now open as a Local Loo operated by the Waterside Centre. Toilet will not be available for Parkrun use due to limited drainage system. Discussions have taken place with Parkrun.	Complete
19.09.19	36.4	Anthony Walker	Montague Park road safety	Cllr Jorgensen agreed to provide a written answer on planning conditions. Meeting being set up.	Complete
19.09.19	36.5	John Hutt	Floreat school crossings	Cllr Jorgensen agreed to take advice from Planning re access paths. Meeting being set up.	Complete
19.09.19	36.7	Peter Dennis	Montague Park infrastructure	Cllr Jorgensen agreed to meet Mr Dennis on site. Meeting being set up.	Complete.
19.09.19	37	Petition	Residents' Parking – Brook Street, Twyford	Forward to Executive Member for Highways and Transport. Petition under consideration.	Complete
19.09.19	41.1	Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey	Winnersh Relief Road Part 2 - timing	Cllr Jorgensen agreed to discuss with Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey. Officer has briefed Cllr Shepherd-Dubey.	Complete
19.09.19	41.8	Gary Cowan	Staff/Member PCNs	Cllr Jorgensen agreed to forward data on Shute End car park. Data sent to Cllr Cowan.	Complete

COUNCIL ACTION SHEET

19.09.19	41.12	Andrew Mickleburgh	Bus stop - Brookside Close	Cllr Jorgensen agreed to consider the request. Being considered with Reading Buses as part of a wider discussion on services in Earley	Complete
19.09.19	41.13	Sarah Kerr	Climate Emergency – Citizens’ Assembly	Cllr Murray agreed to re-discuss with Cllr Kerr post action plan. Discussion to be held after Action Plan is published.	Complete
19.09.19	42.1	Prue Bray	Winnersh stations – access for disabled	Cllr Jorgensen agreed to meet Prue Bray to discuss. Agreement on the issues – funding being sought.	Complete
19.09.19	42.2	Andy Croy	School Climate Emergency strike	Cllr Clark agreed to discuss with Officers re recognition for strikers. Statement agreed between Cllr Clark and the director of Children’s Services.	Complete
19.09.19	42.5	Jenny Cheng	Kingfisher Drive	Cllr Jorgensen agreed that Officers would visit the site to check the work. Member/Officer site visit. Conference call between Highways and ward Member to progress.	Complete
19.09.19	42.6	Shirley Boyt	Photovoltaic panels at Bulmershe	Cllr Murray agreed to look at potential for fitting panels earlier. Initial response provided. Further updates being provided.	Progressing
19.09.19	42.7	Rachel Burgess	Disabled Parking spaces	Cllr Jorgensen agreed to talk to Rachel Burgess on spaces in town centre. Done. Awaiting response from Readibus in relation to bus stops.	Complete
19.09.19	42.11	Imogen Shepherd-Dubey	Wokingham station – commuter parking	Cllr Jorgensen agreed to meet Imogen Shepherd-Dubey to discuss	Complete

COUNCIL ACTION SHEET

19.09.19	42.13	Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey	Winnersh Meadows bridge	Cllr Batth agreed to look into the state of the bridge. Work is progressing on a replacement boardwalk. Officer group (Localities/Place and Countryside) will report to ward Members, Parish Council and the Executive Member once the detail is agreed.	Complete
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TITLE	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Council on 23 January 2020
WARD	None Specific;
DIRECTOR	Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby and Director of Corporate Services – Graham Ebers.
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser.

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To obtain Council's approval for the adoption of Wokingham Borough Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024.

The impacts of homelessness can be devastating for individuals and families. Homelessness can affect everything - health, education and employment. Homelessness can have long term consequences for those affected. Tackling homelessness and reducing rough sleeping are a key priority for the Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, as recommended by the Executive, approve Wokingham Borough Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024 sits under the framework Housing Strategy 2019-2024, which centres on four key themes: meeting need, supporting residents, improving quality and enhancing lives.

In light of the duties placed upon local authorities to prepare and adopt a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and associated Action Plan, which takes into account local conditions, Government impetus and key legislation (including the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017), the Council has prepared a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024 and Action Plan (included as Enclosure 1). An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is included as Enclosure 2.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024 has four key priorities:

1. Early intervention and prevention.
2. Working towards ending rough sleeping and tackling hidden homelessness.
3. Building more affordable homes.
4. Supporting our vulnerable residents.

Members, Officers, stakeholders and the public have had the opportunity to respond to our consultation on the draft strategy. The consultation was sent out across the Council,

to all Members, the Parish and Town Councils, the RP Partnership, TLIP, MHCLG, Homes England, partners and agencies and local charities. It was also publicised via a press release and our social media, and briefly picked up by BBC Radio Berkshire.

We received 69 responses in total, of which 66 were from residents. 96% agreed or partially agreed with the four priorities selected for the strategy. 94% agreed or partially agreed that the strategy addresses the key issues they identify as a priority, including prevention, working with vulnerable residents and engaging with rough sleepers. A separate consultation response was also received from Wokingham in Need.

The strategy aims to deliver on a variety of different actions and approaches to address the four key priorities, including supporting the development of a night shelter in the borough, working with long-term rough sleepers, looking closely at the hidden homeless in the borough and reducing our use of emergency and temporary accommodation for the homeless.

The table below shows homelessness presentations and acceptances from 2011/12 to 2018/19.

Year	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Presented	50	81	81	141	236	196	180	248
Accepted	13	20	28	70	102	111	87	91

The percentage increase in presentations from 2011/12 to 2018/19 is 396%. The percentage increase in acceptances from 2011/12 to 2018/19 is 600%.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, Wokingham Borough Council saw a total of 248 homelessness presentations (148 families and 100 singles). This is a significant increase from 180 (129 families and 51 singles) homeless presentations in 2017/18 prior to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act. This is an increase of 37.7% in overall homelessness presentations; a 14.7% increase in presentations from families and a 96% increase in presentations from singles.

From January 2019 to June 2019, the Council received 62 homelessness applications from singles and 22 of these applications were accepted. During this same period, 17 singles were offered B&B accommodation (10 accepted, 7 refused).

The implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act, including the Duty to Refer, has had a significant impact on the numbers of households presenting to the Council as homeless. The Council has seen a particular increase in single household presentations, linked to the numbers of referrals received under the Duty to Refer from other public sector organisations.

The main reasons why households declared themselves as homeless in the first two quarters of 2018/19 are recorded as 1) end of assured shorthold tenancy, 2) family eviction, 3) domestic abuse and 4) relationship breakdown.

Our annual rough sleeper count (a single night snapshot taken each November) for 2019 was 10. The figure from our 2018 count was 7, and in 2015 the figure was 14. Of the 7 individuals recorded in 2018, 6 were male, and 1 was female. 5 were UK nationals and 2 were EU non-UK nationals. All 7 were aged 26 and over. The borough rough sleeping rate (per 10,000 households) in 2018 was 1.1. Of the 7 recorded rough

sleepers in the Council's 2018 count, 2 were undergoing relationship breakdown, 1 had lost employment leading to eviction from an AST and 1 had been asked to leave by their family (3 are not recorded).

In 2018/19, we recorded 30 households without dependents who approached the Council for assistance as having no fixed abode. 5 of these households were verified rough sleepers. So far in 2019/20, we have recorded 18 households without dependents who approached the Council for assistance as having no fixed abode. 2 of these households were verified as rough sleepers.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, the Council spent £255,359 on emergency accommodation. Between January 2019 and June 2019, B&B accommodation was offered to 35 households (18 families and 17 single households). The Council is working towards reducing the use of emergency accommodation and the associated costs.

This, report which was considered by the Executive at its meeting held on 23 December 2020, seeks agreement for the adoption of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024 and the associated Action Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Council's current Homelessness Strategy covers the period 2014-19. In 2014, we set out four key priorities:

1. To help people keep a roof over their heads
2. To help people to find a settled home
3. The housing crisis – our statutory duty
4. To create opportunities for vulnerable residents

Since 2014, we have used creative solutions, innovative thinking and partnership working to support people facing homelessness, focusing particularly on families and cyclical homelessness. We have continued to offer a range of support to vulnerable residents, using early intervention and prevention methodologies wherever practical. The Housing Needs Service, Benefits & Welfare Team and Tenant Services at the Council have continued to work provide advice and assistance to our residents to sustain tenancies and support those with housing issues.

The Council has a duty to carry out a review of homelessness and homelessness service provision for their area and, in consultation with local partners and stakeholders, formulate and publish a homelessness and rough sleeping strategy based on the results of that review, at least every five years. The Council carried out a Homelessness Review in 2018 and has prepared the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024 based on those findings.

MHCLG requires local authorities to adopt updated Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategies by winter 2019. MHCLG has agreed to an extension of this deadline to January 2020 for Wokingham Borough Council.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024 sits under the framework Housing Strategy 2019-2024, which centres on four key themes: meeting need, supporting residents, improving quality and enhancing lives.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024 has four key priorities:

1. Early intervention and prevention.
2. Working towards ending rough sleeping and tackling hidden homelessness.
3. Building more affordable homes.
4. Supporting our vulnerable residents.

The Homelessness Reduction Act, which came into force on 3rd April 2018, amended the Housing Act 1996 and placed new duties on local authorities.

The key new provisions are:

- An extension of the 'threatened with homelessness' period from 28 days to 56 days.
- A duty to prevent homelessness for up to 56 days for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need.
- A duty to relieve homelessness for up to 56 days for all eligible homeless applicants, regardless of priority need.

- A duty to consider all applicants and to agree a personalised housing plan (PHP) which will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- A duty on public services to refer to the local authority.
- A duty for local authorities to provide free advice on homelessness, preventing homelessness and people's rights.

The Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy launched in August 2018 and committed to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and eliminating it altogether by 2027. Other national key drivers of change include Licensing of Homes in Multiple Occupation 2018, Social Housing Green Paper 2018 and Tenant Fees Act 2019.

BUSINESS CASE (Including Options and Evidence of Need)

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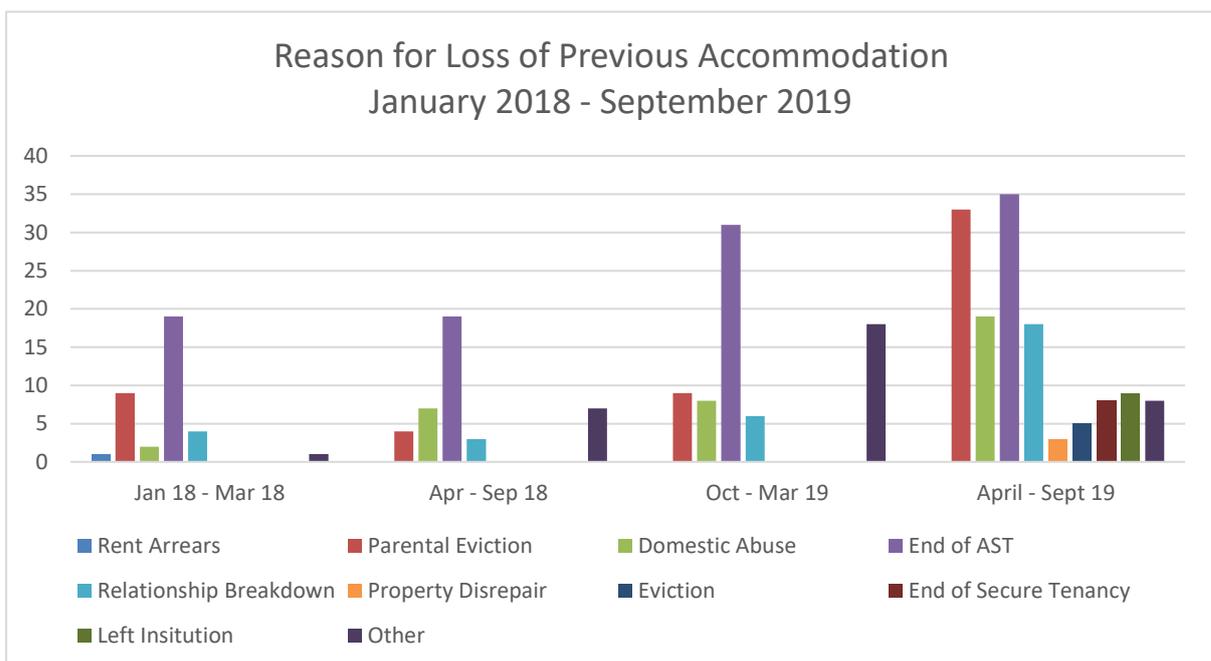
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The chart below shows the main reasons why households have declared themselves as homeless in the first two quarters of 2018/19. Assured shorthold tenancies (ASTs) ending is the biggest reason, followed closely by family evictions, then domestic abuse and relationship breakdown.



Our annual rough sleeper count (a single night snapshot taken each November) for 2019 was 10. The figure from our 2018 count was 7, and in 2015 the figure was 14. Of the 7 individuals recorded in 2018, 6 were male, and 1 was female. 5 were UK nationals and 2 were EU non-UK nationals. All 7 were aged 26 and over. The borough rough sleeping rate (per 10,000 households) in 2018 was 1.1. Of the 7 recorded rough sleepers in the Council's 2018 count, 2 were undergoing relationship breakdown, 1 had lost employment leading to eviction from an AST and 1 had been asked to leave by their family (3 are not recorded).

In 2018/19, we recorded 30 households without dependents who approached the Council for assistance as having no fixed abode. 5 of these households were verified rough sleepers. So far in 2019/20, we have recorded 18 households without dependents who approached the Council for assistance as having no fixed abode. 2 of these households were verified as rough sleepers.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, the Council spent £255,359 on emergency accommodation. The Council is working towards reducing the use of emergency accommodation and the associated costs.

Berkshire Women's Aid's helpline received 765 calls from Wokingham residents in 2018/19. In June 2018, St Mungo's reported that 9 in 10 rough sleepers need support for mental health, drug and/or alcohol issues. There are an estimated 6,000 homeless veterans in the UK, according to figures compiled in 2018.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024 has four key priorities:

1. Early intervention and prevention.

This priority focuses on being innovative and creative in stopping residents from experiencing housing crisis. The Action Plan contains targets for the delivery of advice and assistance, for example, that 100% of households presenting as homeless on the day to be offered an initial assessment that same day, or the following working day if presenting outside of office hours, regardless of whether or not the applicant has priority need.

We will be embedding the requirements and principles of the Homelessness Reduction Act, and supporting our private rented sector residents by setting up a Landlord Forum in the Borough. We will continue to offer the Rent in Advance/Deposit Loan Scheme, and look at ways of working with private rented sector landlords to improve standards and tenancy sustainment.

We will also be mapping housing pathways for key vulnerable groups, including care leavers and for specialist housing.

2. Working towards ending rough sleeping and tackling hidden homelessness.

We will support the development of a night shelter in the Borough and continue our outreach work with rough sleepers and transient communities.

We will develop a clearer understanding of the quantity and types of hidden homelessness in the Borough, and gather strong intelligence to evidence the current rough sleeping position in the Borough. We will explore options for the development of a Housing First (or similar) scheme in the Borough, with the aim of enabling entrenched rough sleepers and those with complex circumstances to sustain homes suited to their needs.

3. Building more affordable homes.

We want to ensure that the right homes are built in the right locations for those in most housing need. We will be carrying out work to analyse future demand for affordable homes in the Borough and refreshing the Council's Allocations Policy.

We will work towards a target of 1000 homes, over a 4 year period with a 5% return.

4. Supporting our vulnerable residents.

We will be continuing to work with statutory agencies to ensure that the Homelessness Reduction Act duty to refer is met, and working with none statutory agencies to adopt a similar process. We will also be enhancing the digital advice and guidance available to residents via the Council's website and other sources.

We want to ensure that vulnerable residents have access to advice and training to maximise tenancy sustainment, employment opportunities, independent living and wellbeing. We also want to make sure that resident and service user feedback is informing service delivery and improvement.

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)	-	-	-
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	-	-	-
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	-	-	-

Other Financial Information

The combined starting budget for homeless families and Housing Needs for 2019/20 was £366,719. It is important to note that these budgets are subject to review and grant funding, and may alter as a result.

Financial approval for individual projects and proposals contained within the strategy and action plan will be sought as needed.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Members, Officers, stakeholders and the public have had the opportunity to respond to our consultation on the draft strategy. The consultation was made available via the Council's website between 9 September and 27 September, with associated press release, invitations to respond and social media push.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been taken. An initial equality impact assessment has been carried out and is included as Enclosure 2.

Timeline for Review and Evaluation

Progress against this Strategy and Action Plan is principally overseen by the Council's Place Commissioning Team, Housing Needs Team and Affordable Housing Implementation Group (Member and Officer meeting).

Our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be available to view via our website (paper copies available on request), and will be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) as required.

The Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan is intended to be a working document, which will be subject to continuous review and updating to ensure it is responsive and current. We will update and publish our Action Plan annually.

List of Background Papers

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024 – Enclosure 1.
Equality Impact Assessment – Enclosure 2.
Homelessness Review 2018.

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Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 – 2024.

Summary of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024

“All residents can access well-designed, affordable and sustainable homes and effective support services in Wokingham Borough”

	Helping people keep a roof over their head	Helping people to find a settled home	Housing crises – our statutory duty	Creating opportunities for vulnerable residents
What we have delivered so far:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased homelessness preventions and reduced homelessness acceptances. Implemented Universal Credit and provided advice and support to those impacted by welfare reform. Focused on early intervention, including using creative solutions to prevent homelessness. Worked with partners to improve outcomes for families in housing need. Continued to offer a range of support to vulnerable residents. Supported people to break the cycle of recurring homelessness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to assist households with our Rent in Advance/Deposit Loan Scheme to access private rented accommodation. Built more affordable homes. A total of 482 new homes were built in 2017/18 and in 2018/19, we saw 365 affordable completions. Identified a site for our first self-build scheme. Opened new schemes including supported accommodation at Road and an extra care facility at Fosters. Updated our shared ownership scheme. The scheme is now run by Help to Buy South. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positively reduced the numbers of households accepted as homeless in the borough since 2015/16. Reduced the borough rough sleeper count from 10 in November 2017 to 7 in November 2018. Refurbished 12 mobile home units for use as temporary accommodation. Provided 14 additional units of temporary accommodation across the borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to work with numerous partners, agencies and the Housing Delivery Partnership Group, to address the wider causes of homelessness and housing need. Focused on prevention and early intervention to stop households becoming homeless. Worked with our providers to continue to create employment and training opportunities across the borough, including via programmes such as Elevate and Strive.
OZ	Early intervention and prevention	Working towards ending rough sleeping and tackling hidden homelessness.	Building more affordable homes.	Supporting our vulnerable residents.
In the next 3 years, we aim to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide effective housing advice to residents experiencing housing crisis. Focus on early intervention and prevention. Work jointly with partners to tackle homelessness and housing crisis. Support our private rented sector residents. Reduce the Council’s use of emergency and temporary accommodation. Embed a clear housing pathway for key groups, including care leavers and those in specialist accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore options for the development of a night shelter in the borough. Carry out targeted work with entrenched rough sleepers and transient communities. Develop our understanding of hidden homeless in the borough. Explore the feasibility of a pilot Housing First (or similar) scheme in the borough. Hold regular Rough Sleeper Meetings with partners. Work to address the root causes of homelessness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the right homes are built in the right locations for those most in housing need. Develop specialist housing that meets demand. Adopted a refreshed Allocations Policy. Continue to negotiate with developers to provide a percentage of all new build homes for social rent. Maximise opportunities to provide homes for key groups, including key workers and low income households. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that vulnerable residents have access to tailored advice and support to prevent and relieve homelessness. Continue to work in partnership to tackle housing crisis. Enable the provision of advice and training for residents on key topics including budgeting, employment, tenancy management, wellbeing and independent living skills. Collaborate with residents to improve services based on feedback.

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1.0 Introduction

The impacts of homelessness can be devastating for individuals and families. Homelessness can affect health, education and employment. Homelessness can have long term consequences for those affected. As a result, reducing homelessness and rough sleeping is a key priority for Wokingham Borough Council.

This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how we will, over the next three years, tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough and support residents in housing crisis.

Our actions over the next three years will be targeted across four strategic priorities:

- ❖ Early intervention and prevention.
- ❖ Working towards ending rough sleeping and tackling hidden homelessness.
- ❖ Building more affordable homes.
- ❖ Supporting our vulnerable residents.

All local housing authorities have a duty to carry out a review of homelessness and homelessness service provision for their area and, in consultation with local partners and stakeholders, formulate and publish a homelessness and rough sleeping strategy based on the results of that review, at least every five years.

The Council carried out a Homelessness Review in 2018. The review 2018 is an assessment of the levels, and future levels, of homelessness in the borough and the activities which are carried out, or contribute to:

- Preventing homelessness
- Ensuring accommodation is available for people who may become homeless
- Providing support for people who are or may become homeless, or who need support to prevent them from becoming homeless again.

Our Homelessness Review also takes account of the resources available in the borough. Wokingham Borough Council's Homelessness Review 2018 is available on the Council's website. This strategy should be read in conjunction with the findings of this review.

We will monitor our progress continually and update our action plan annually to ensure that we are responding to local and national pressures.

What is homelessness?

- People sleeping rough.
- Single homeless people living in hostels, shelters and temporary supported accommodation.
- Statutorily homeless households.
- People who are at risk of violence or abuse in their home.
- Those living in homes where the condition of the dwelling is poor.
- 'Hidden homeless' households. People who may be considered homeless but whose situation is not 'visible' either on the streets or in official statistics.

“The right to a safe home isn’t just the right to a roof over your head.
It’s the right to somewhere safe, secure and affordable”.

Shelter

2.0 National Context and Policy Framework

Nationally, incidents of homelessness have been increasing for a number of years.

Between January and March 2019, 70,430 households were initially assessed as threatened with homelessness or homeless. This is up 10.7% from 63,620 households in the previous quarter. 37,690 households were initially assessed as threatened with homelessness, up 10.2% from 34,190 in the previous quarter. 32,740 households were initially assessed as homeless, up 11.2% from 29,430 in October to December 2018.

Between January to March 2019, 31,180 households who were owed assistance for being threatened with homelessness or homeless, secured accommodation for 6 months or more. This is up 1.3% from 30,780 the previous quarter. Between January to March 2019, 7,570 households were accepted as owed a main homelessness duty. This decreased 1.4% from 7,680 during October to December 2018¹. In England in 2017/18, annual homelessness acceptances reached 56,630. This is a 41.5% increase from 2009/10.

On 31st March 2019, the total number of households in temporary accommodation was 84,740. This is a 77% increase from 31st December 2010 (48,010) when the use of temporary accommodation hit its lowest point since 2004. The 84,740 households include 126,020 children.

In November 2019, data released by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government shows that local authorities in England spent £1.1 billion on temporary accommodation for homeless households in 2018/19. This is an increase of 9% in the last year and 78% in the last five years. £344 million of the £1.1 billion was spent on emergency B&B accommodation, which is a 111% increase in the last five years.

As at March 2018, the biggest reasons for loss of last settled homes nationally were family or friends no longer accommodating (28%), end of assured shorthold tenancy (25%) and violent relationship breakdown (12%).

Figures provided by Crisis estimate that there were 2.24 million households containing concealed single persons in England in 2018, in addition to 295,000

¹ These national statistics were reported by MHCLG as experimental official statistics as at September 2019.

concealed couples and lone parents. The number of adults in these concealed household units is estimated at 3.74 million².

The total number of rough sleepers in England in autumn 2018 was recorded as 4,677. This is down 2% from the 2017 total of 4,751 and was up 2,909 people or 165% from the 2010 total of 1,768. 64% were UK nationals, compared to 71% in 2017. 22% were EU nationals from outside of the UK, compare to 16% in 2017. 3% were non-EU nationals, compared to 4% in 2017. Wokingham recorded 7 rough sleepers in the 2018 count (see page nine for further details).

Other key drivers of change include Licensing of Homes in Multiple Occupation 2018, Social Housing Green Paper 2018 and Tenant Fees Act 2019.

The **Homelessness Reduction Act**, which came into force on 3rd April 2018, amended the Housing Act 1996 and placed new duties on local authorities.

The key new provisions are:

- An extension of the 'threatened with homelessness' period from 28 days to 56 days.
- A duty to prevent homelessness for up to 56 days for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need.
- A duty to relieve homelessness for up to 56 days for all eligible homeless applicants, regardless of priority need.
- A duty to consider all applicants and to agree a personalised housing plan (PHP) which will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- A duty on public services to refer to the local authority.
- A duty for local authorities to provide free advice on homelessness, preventing homelessness and people's rights.

The **Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy** launched in August 2018 and committed to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and eliminating it altogether by 2027. Government will spend over £1 billion until 2020 to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping, part of which is the £50 million Homelessness Prevention Programme.

3.0 Local Context - homelessness and rough sleeping in Wokingham

3.1 Housing Advice

Preventing the distress and disruption caused by homelessness is a priority for the Council. Wherever possible, we will work to prevent homelessness and help people to sustain their homes.

² Crisis, Homelessness Monitor: England, 2019.

The table below shows homelessness presentations and acceptances from 2011/12 to 2018/19.

Year	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Presented	50	81	81	141	236	196	180	248
Accepted	13	20	28	70	102	111	87	91

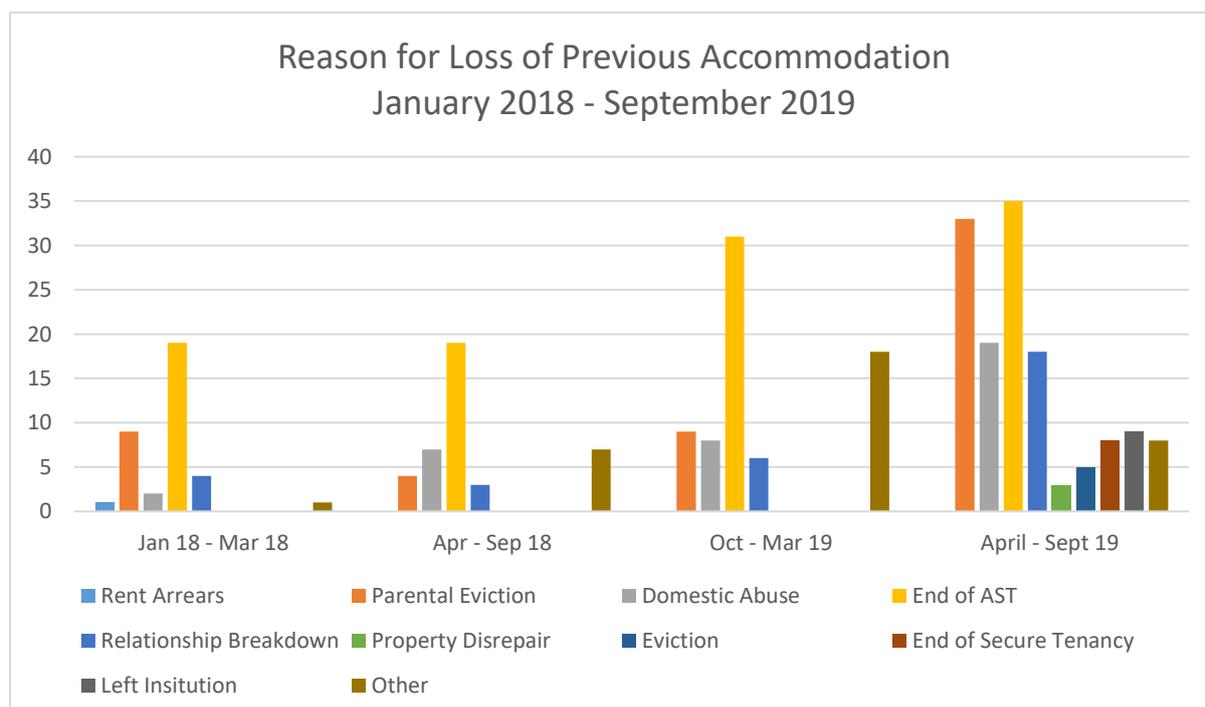
The percentage increase in presentations from 2011/12 to 2018/19 is 396%. The percentage increase in acceptances from 2011/12 to 2018/19 is 600%.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, Wokingham Borough Council saw a total of 248 homelessness presentations (148 families and 100 singles). This is a significant increase from 180 (129 families and 51 singles) homeless presentations in 2017/18 prior to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act. This is an increase of 37.7% in overall homelessness presentations; a 14.7% increase in presentations from families and a 96% increase in presentations from singles.

From January 2019 to June 2019, the Council received 62 homelessness applications from singles and 22 of these applications were accepted. During this same period, 17 singles were offered B&B accommodation (10 accepted, 7 refused).

The implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act, including the Duty to Refer, has had a significant impact on the numbers of households presenting to the Council as homeless. The Council has seen a particular increase in single household presentations, linked to the numbers of referrals received under the Duty to Refer from other public sector organisations.

The chart below shows the main reasons why households/individuals have declared themselves as homeless in the first two quarters of 2018/19. Assured shorthold tenancies (ASTs) ending is the biggest reason, followed closely by family evictions:



Over the next three years, we expect to see a reduction in acceptances and an increased in prevention and relief activities as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act. Although statutory homelessness and actual rooflessness numbers in Wokingham are comparatively low, urgent and complex housing need is an area of growing work in the borough.

Early Intervention and Prevention at Wokingham Borough Council.	
✓ Personalised Housing Plans (PHPs) agreed with each household.	✓ Links to support agencies and services.
✓ Accessible advice in person, via our website, by telephone, and in writing.	✓ Access to the Housing Register.
✓ Mediation with family and negotiation with landlords.	✓ Tenancy sustainment.
✓ Income maximisation.	✓ Rent in Advance/Deposit Loan Scheme to secure privately rented accommodation, and assistance with where and how to look for it.

Housing advice is a key part of the work we are doing to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough. We focus on practical responses, and early intervention and prevention underpinned by legislative requirements.

Wokingham Borough Council is committed to supporting vulnerable people who may be more likely to experience housing crisis in the borough. This includes care leavers, domestic abuse victims, veterans, those with mental health problems, people with learning disabilities, those with physical disabilities, older people, ex-offenders, those with substance misuse issues and people experiencing financial hardship. The Council's Homelessness Review 2018 (available via the Council's website) provides further detail regarding the support available to each of these groups across the borough.

3.2 Rough Sleeping

Our annual rough sleeper count (a single night snapshot taken each November) for 2019 was 10. The figure from our 2018 count was 7, and in 2015 the figure was 14.

Of the 7 individuals recorded in 2018, 6 were male, and 1 was female. 5 were UK nationals and 2 were EU non-UK nationals. All 7 were aged 26 and over. The borough rough sleeping rate (per 10,000 households) in 2018 was 1.1. Of the 7 recorded rough sleepers in the Council's 2018 count, 2 were undergoing relationship

breakdown, 1 had lost employment leading to eviction from an AST and 1 had been asked to leave by their family (3 are not recorded).

In 2018/19, we recorded 30 households without dependents who approached the Council for assistance as having no fixed abode. 5 of these households were verified rough sleepers. Between April and August 2019, we have recorded 18 households without dependents who had approached the Council for assistance as having no fixed abode. 2 of these households were verified as rough sleepers.

934 rough sleepers were counted in the South East during the 2018 count, which is a 17% reduction on the 2017 figure (1,119). The rough sleeping rate (per 10,000) across the South East was 2.5³.

We have identified three priority rough sleeper cohorts in the borough:

- Rough sleepers in Wokingham town centre, some with a local connection to other parts of Berkshire.
- Rough sleepers on the border with Reading.
- Rough sleepers from Wokingham sleeping in other parts of Berkshire.

The Council is committed to reducing rough sleeping in the borough. Between April 2017 and March 2018, we rehoused six residents who had become known rough sleepers.

The support and assistance provided by the Council to rough sleepers is individualised, and will include creating a personalised housing plan (PHP) which focuses on steps that the applicant should be taking to relieve their homelessness and the support that we can offer with this. Safeguarding referrals are made when required, and the Housing Needs Team link in with Adult and Children's Services regularly.

The Council is part of the Streetlink Scheme. Streetlink is a national venture which enables concerned residents to alert local authorities and other agencies to incidents of rough sleeping so that support and advice can be offered.

In 2017, the Wokingham Drop-in Centre (Sturges Road, Wokingham) was developed, funded and opened by Wokingham In Need for use by the Salvation Army to assist the homeless and vulnerable in Wokingham. Services offered here also include regular podiatrist sessions and computer training.

Wokingham Borough Council has identified two homes as resources to provide shared supported housing to young people (up to 25 years old), and particularly care leavers, in need in the borough. This accommodation will supplement the supported accommodation currently available in the borough, including at Reading Road (a

³ Gov.uk, Homelessness Statistics.

purpose built scheme that provides 16-25 year olds with a stepping stone to independence).

The Government has made further commitments to tackling homelessness by investing in private rented sector access schemes (£20million) and providing funding for Housing First pilots. As part of this movement, the Council is exploring ways of working together with local partner agencies to tackle rough sleeping.

3.3 Emergency and Temporary Accommodation

Emergency B&B accommodation is expensive, disruptive and especially difficult for families with children. Wokingham Borough Council avoids using B&B accommodation wherever possible, but where homelessness is urgent and attempts at prevention and other provision have failed, it is the last resort.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, the Council spent £255,359 on emergency accommodation. Between January 2019 and June 2019, B&B accommodation was offered to 35 households (18 families and 17 single households). The Council is working towards reducing the use of B&B emergency accommodation.

Wokingham Borough Council committed to improving temporary accommodation in the borough under the 2014-2019 Homelessness Strategy.

Temporary accommodation may be offered to homeless households as an interim measure. The following units of temporary accommodation are now owned by the Council:

- Oxford Road - 9 self-contained units (including one disabled adapted flat)
- Foxwood - 5 self-contained units (including one disabled adapted flat)
- Grovelands - 12 mobile home units at which have been renovated, including skirting to enclose the underside of the units.
- Broadway House – 10 units.
- Other council-owed stock as required and available.

The Council has a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) in place throughout the year to assist any rough sleepers in adverse weather. If the temperature is zero degrees or below for three nights or more, or reaches dangerously high temperatures, the Housing Needs Team will find temporary accommodation for anybody (regardless of eligibility, priority need or local connection). This is usually B&B accommodation.

3.4 Key Groups in Wokingham

3.4.1 Care Leavers and Young People

Young homeless people are significantly at risk of experiencing other disadvantages such as poverty, substance misuse issues and mental health problems. Early intervention, before crisis point and homelessness, is key for this cohort.

Homeless Link's sixth 'Young and Homeless' study shows that family relationship breakdown is the leading cause of youth homelessness and that support is often received too late. Care leavers, LGBTQ+ young people, those growing up in deprivation and those with poor educational experiences are at higher risk. Overcrowding, unemployment, financial difficulties and illness of a family member were identified by young people as key factors in contributing to relationship tensions and eventual breakdown.

Wokingham Borough Council is being proactive in helping young people who are struggling to access accommodation in the borough. Our Housing Needs Services can assist young people with a loan for rent in advance/deposit, offer advice and promote early intervention. Mediation services are also available to facilitate a young person remaining at home if appropriate.

Care leavers are supported by Here 4 You, Children's Services and a housing pathway plan is formed for each individual in conjunction with their overall care and support plan. Wokingham Borough Council takes a proactive approach to its corporate parenting responsibilities and has adopted a policy that allows care leavers more than one chance to sustain their own accommodation.

The Council has a Young People's Housing Strategy which aims to ensure that young people, and in particular, those leaving care and other vulnerable young people, are housed in good quality sustainable accommodation. As part of this commitment, the Council's closed Seaford Court in January 2018 and has built a new scheme that provides 16-25 year olds with a stepping stone to independence. There are seven en-suite bedrooms and two bed-sitting apartments at Reading Road, with support provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week by an on-site care support team who help young people with the transition into adulthood.

In partnership with the Housing Needs Service, Children's Services are looking at ways to improve the housing protocol for young people leaving care. This work includes exploring options to deliver more move on accommodation in the borough.

3.4.2 Single People

Provisions within homelessness legislation (Housing Act 1996 as amended) can exclude many single homeless people. However, with the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, there is a greater emphasis on helping people from all familial circumstances and the Council has seen a significant increase in single homeless presentations as a result.

The Council is aware that there are many key workers in the borough who are struggling to afford accommodation and that may present as homeless as a result. The Council is exploring ways of providing additional accommodation for key workers (those on a low income providing an essential service). Some key worker accommodation is designed for couples and families too.

Many single people opt to live in cheaper shared accommodation. On 1st October 2018, the Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)(Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018 came into force. These regulations control the size of rooms, level of occupancy and waste storage/disposal schemes for HMOs. As at 31st March 2019, there were 24 properties within mandatory HMO licenses in the borough. This number is expected to be low when compared to neighbouring authorities, particularly Reading.

There are no single person hostels in the borough, but in rare cases it may be possible to find a space in neighbouring authorities.

3.4.3 Domestic Abuse

Berkshire Women's Aid (BWA) provide a helpline, a first stage refuge and an outreach service for women experiencing domestic violence in Wokingham. They also provide support to children and young people who are living in an abusive household, or involved in an abusive relationship, either as victims or perpetrators.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, Berkshire Women's Aid (BWA) recorded 190 new referrals into the service which represents a 13% increase when compared to 2017/18 (170). The largest proportion of referrals to BWA were from clients self-referring directly to BWA for support (44%) and Children's Social Care (26%). 138 clients had children, amounting to a total of 279 children.

Of those who recorded a housing situation at referral, 12% were council tenants. Of those that records support needs at referral, 31% recorded mental health support needs, 6% recorded alcohol support needs and 3% recorded substance misuse support needs.

BWAs helpline received 765 calls from Wokingham residents in 2018/19, a 1% increase from 2017/18. BWA received 20 calls requesting refuge in 2018/19. This is an increase of 25% in comparison to 2017/18.

BWA's outreach service and helpline, and our Housing Needs Service, work together to support women experiencing domestic abuse. The Wokingham Home Refuge Scheme is a victim centred initiative, offering increased security measures for the homes of survivors of domestic abuse or hate crime in circumstances where it is deemed safe for them to stay at home (and where they wish to).

In Quarter 1 of 2019/20, BWA received a total of 63 new referrals. This is an 85% increase in victim referrals compared to the same quarter in 2018/19 and a 31% increase from Q4 2018/19. The Council is currently holding regular meetings to monitor this spike, and will be working with BWA to ensure a safe and efficient services is in place for residents.

3.4.4 People with Mental Health Problems

Housing need for those with mental health problems can often be urgent and complex. A response that recognises and provides an individual and tailored solution seems to be the most effective form of help. The Council's Housing Needs Team are able to provide this type of assistance in conjunction with Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) and a commissioned service for housing related support which is delivered by an external provider. The service offers housing related support in the form of floating support, a drop-in service and supported accommodation.

The service is available to help clients with mental health problems by:

- Looking at all possible housing options, and how they can be accessed
- Liaising (on behalf of clients) with landlords or mortgage companies to try to address arrears issues and prevent people losing their homes. The provider actively works with the Local Authority, Housing Associations, private landlords and mortgage providers.
- Finding activities and signposting clients to other organisations that can help.
- If the client had just started their first tenancy after living with family or coming out of long term care, the provider helps them settle in, set up bills, claim benefits, etc.
- The provider take a holistic approach with the client including addressing debts, signposting to employment services, health professionals and dealing with statutory and other voluntary agencies that can help the client.

The provider aims to gradually increase the independence of its clients.

Our Housing Needs Service frequently send referrals to the provider to offer support skills, including help with forms and budgeting. This is particularly useful for non-council tenants who do not have access to the Council's tenancy sustainment service.

3.4.5 People with Learning Disabilities

The Council has also been increasing and improving the accommodation available for other vulnerable groups, including people with learning disabilities. Examples include Hillside Park and Vauxhall Drive.

The Housing Needs Service will support residents with long-term disability who wish to purchase a home on a shared ownership basis to use the HOLD (housing options for the disabled) scheme.

The Council aims to reduce private sector leases for residents with learning disabilities, and is considering further provision for this key group at various

development locations. In the next 10 years, we expect the number of clients with learning disabilities requiring support from the Council to grow, particularly those with more complex needs.

3.4.6 People with Physical Disabilities

There are very few people presenting as homeless and on the Housing Register with a physical disability in Wokingham. If need be and appropriate, the Council will re-house people with physical disabilities via our Housing Register using the medical priority scheme. Wokingham has been able to create some very individual provision for some households with very specific and urgent needs. We can also request new affordable housing with full disabled access on new developments where we have a known need for this type of accommodation. This is secured via policy CP5.

Where social housing is being built on new developments, consideration is given each time to whether there is need for any specific accommodation for those with physical disabilities.

Disabled Facilities Grants are available in certain circumstances to enable people to stay at home with the help of required adaptations. Grants can be used for adaptations to give better freedom of movement into and around the home. They can also be used to provide essential equipment and make changes to the inside of a home. Only adaptations which are necessary to meet the needs of the individual are considered, and the work must be reasonable and practical. Examples of acceptable work include widening doors, installing ramps, installing a stair lift, and adapting heating or lighting controls.

3.4.7 Older People

The Council committed to improve the choice of housing options available to older people by the provision of Extra Care Housing and has delivered the following schemes as a result:

- Alexandra Place opened in 2011 as an award-winning Extra Care Housing Scheme in Woodley providing 64 apartments with on-site care and facilities. A small number of units were offered for shared ownership.
- Beeches Manor in Wokingham was built in 2012 and consists of 16 ground floor apartments for older people with dementia, with a further 8 first floor flats for clients with learning disabilities. Owner occupiers with dementia are eligible for Beeches Manor.
- Fosters Extra Care Scheme consists of 34 units
- The Birches Extra Care Scheme consists of 60 units, 50% of which are shared ownership.

3.4.8 Ex-Offenders

Often ex-offenders leaving custody have an urgent housing need even if family and friends provide temporary assistance. The Housing Needs Service has good contact with criminal justice agencies (especially the Probation Service, Police and Youth

Offending Service) and will work with agencies acting on behalf of offenders to provide advice and assistance.

The duty to refer imposed by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into effect on 1st October 2018 and we expect to see more ex-offender applicant referrals accordingly. A customer can choose which local authority they are referred to. Public authorities carrying out referrals should have mind to local connection criteria.

Homelessness legislation alone is often not a solution for ex-offenders because frequently applicants will fail to establish priority need or they will fail the intentionality test.

Working with partner agencies to find solutions has proven the most efficient way to address the housing needs of ex-offenders and solutions have included;

- Rent in advance/deposit loan scheme
- Advice and assistance with benefits
- Providing information about private sector landlords
- Direct re-housing in the most urgent and vulnerable instances

Examples of formal multi-agency working for offenders and ex-offenders in Wokingham include;

- IOM (Integrated Offender Management)
- ASB (Anti Social Behaviour)Panel
- MAPPA arrangements
- Youth Offending Service Board

3.4.9 Substance Misuse

Data from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS) for April 2018 shows that 293 people were in treatment for substance misuse in the borough. Nationally, the NDTMS report for 2018/19 shows that 11% of all new presentations to treatment had a housing problem and that 8% had an urgent housing problem. Nationally, 49,680 children were living with people starting treatment.

Wokingham has a small treatment population. Wokingham does not follow the national trend because the largest treatment cohort presenting is for alcohol misuse and opiate presentation is the second largest group. In quarter 4 of 2016-17, 43% of new presentations were for alcohol misuse. In addition to this, 40% of all those in treatment were doing so for alcohol misuse, compared with 39% for opiate misuse. Between the 1st of July 2015 and the 30th of June 2016, it was estimated that 33.6% of opiate and/or crack users in Wokingham were in the treatment system.

As of Quarter 4 in 2017, the successful completions of those in treatment who did not re-present within 6 months had increased for all clients. The percentage of local opiate clients was significantly better than the national average at 15%, non-opiate clients were similar to the nation average at 45.8% and alcohol clients were better than the national average at 50%.

Wokingham Borough Council's Drug and Alcohol Strategy 2018-2022 sets out three priorities as follows:

1. To protect and support families, carers and significant others affected by substance misuse.
2. To recognise, treat and support residents with potentially problematic alcohol use and intervene early.
3. To work in partnership to better understand the needs of the borough, including crime related substance misuse, and the emerging national trends and respond in an agile manner.

SMART delivers community based drug and alcohol treatment for adults and young people in Wokingham. They provide:

- Structure day programmes
- Support groups, including alternative therapies
- Support for community detox (drug and alcohol)
- A prescribing service
- Needle exchange services
- Supervised consumption services
- Shared care services
- Brief intervention
- Awareness raising
- An facility online to offer support and advice to adults and young people
- A dedicated young person's service
- An overdose prevention kit

Other provision in Wokingham includes:

DrugFam – A local charity, that aims to help families, friends and partners affected by someone else's drug or alcohol use; including those bereaved by addiction, or related causes. DrugFAM provides a weekly support group within the borough. The charity also provide a helpline which operates 9am-9pm that can easily be accessed by borough residents and email support.

Housing Related Support Service – While this service primarily delivers housing related support, many clients are supported who also have substance misuse needs.

Dual Diagnosis – Within the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) there is a post specifically for dual diagnosis. This worker supports clients with both substance misuse and mental health issues. The worker and SMART run joint assessments and appointments.

Rehabilitation - Wokingham Borough offers support for residents to attend rehabilitation as part of the local integrated recovery-orientated system if deemed appropriate by our local substance misuse service. The process of supporting residents to access rehabilitation is governed by robust eligibility criteria.

Regular meetings take place both locally and at a regional level. These include bi-monthly Community Safety Partnership meetings, quarterly Strategic Substance Misuse and Violence Against Women and Girls meetings and regular Public Health South East England meetings.

Appropriate and sustainable housing is a foundation for the successful rehabilitation of substance misusers. This group is typified by complex vulnerabilities and intense support is often required to prevent homelessness.

3.4.10 Veterans

The Royal British Legion estimated that there are currently 6,000 homeless veterans in the UK⁴.

Accurately identifying the number of Armed Forces community that reside in an area can be difficult, given the range and quality of data that is available. The 2011 census identified 508 people in Wokingham Borough as “usual residents aged 16 and over who are members of the Armed Forces.” The Census also identified 497 “associated persons” who are not a member of the Armed Forces, but are a spouse, same-sex civil partner, partner, child or step child of a member of the Armed Forces.

Arborfield Garrison was the only Ministry of Defence establishment within Wokingham Borough and the site closed in 2015. Nearby sites include the Territorial Army Brock Barracks, Oxford Road, Reading (Seven Rifles) and the Hermitage Denison Barracks, near Chieveley in West Berkshire.

In 2013, the Council and its partners signed a local Community Covenant with the Armed Forces Community. The Covenant’s two principles are that:

- the Armed Forces community should not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of services in the area where they live.
- special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

Veterans can access specialist advice from the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) housing advice service - the Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO) - before leaving the forces. The JSHAO also runs the MOD referral scheme which helps veterans to find housing association accommodation. Veterans also have access to a range of military charities, including Royal British Legion and Veterans Aid.

Former armed forces personnel can also access our Housing Needs Service following broadly the same process as other residents in the borough. Priority need and intentionality may be looked at as part of this.

⁴ <https://inews.co.uk/news/uk/armed-forces-veterans-homeless-crime-prison-mental-health/>

Veterans can apply to go onto the housing register of any council within the first five years of leaving the armed forces. There is no limit on the number of councils a veteran can apply to. Veterans get extra priority on the housing register if they:

- previously served in the regular forces
- have a serious injury, illness or disability relating to your current service in the regular or reserve forces.
- have to leave services family accommodation (SFA) because your husband, wife or civil partner died in service.

Veterans are also eligible to apply for our Rent in Advance/Deposit Loan Scheme, and will receive priority for shared ownership properties within the borough.

3.5 Housing Register

There is insufficient supply to meet the high demand for social rented accommodation in the borough. As at 31st March 2019, 1498 households were on the Council's Housing Register.

233 homes were let by the Council between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019, and a further 261 nominations were made to housing providers. During this same period, the number of lettings increased due to the rise in new affordable homes available in the borough.

Our Housing Register operates an Allocations Policy to prioritise applicants based on their housing need. The Council will be refreshing the Allocations Policy to ensure best use of affordable housing stock.

3.6 Affordable Housing Delivery

Wokingham Borough Council negotiates with developers to provide a percentage of all new build homes for social rent, with the Council securing nomination rights to these homes. We also work with our housing providers to create more employment and training opportunities for tenants.

During 2017/18, 482 affordable homes completed in the borough consisting of 231 homes for social rent, 162 homes for shared ownership and 89 homes for intermediate rent. We saw 365 affordable completions in 2018/19, 182 homes for social rent, 167 homes for shared ownership and 16 intermediate/affordable rented homes.

During 2018/19, 365 affordable homes completed in the borough: 182 homes for social rent, 167 homes for shared ownership and 16 intermediate/ affordable rented homes.

3.7 Private Rented Sector

The Council is keen to work with Government to explore ways to improve housing conditions in the private rented sector. The Council is committed to supporting our private rented sector (PRS) residents and to working with PRS landlords to prevent homelessness. We seek to challenge landlords and agents who are providing poor

quality accommodation. We plan to set up a Landlord Forum in the borough to facilitate a stronger working relationship with PRS landlords.

Over the next three years, the Council will explore the benefits of a Selective Licensing Scheme for private rented homes not currently covered by mandatory or additional licensing for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) to improve management and housing conditions for private renters in the borough.

3.8 Partnership Working

A joint strategic approach is essential to achieving successful outcomes for our residents in housing need. We work in partnership with agencies across the borough to share expertise, resources and best practice, and to provide a holistic service for our residents. This way of working also maximises opportunities to explore jointly funded services, which in turn provide positive joint performance outcomes.

The Council works in partnership with many local agencies, including a provider of housing related support and the Citizens Advice Bureau.

The Housing Needs Team and Adult's Services carry out monthly Housing Panel meetings to discuss complex and urgent cases. Officers also attend quarterly Homelessness Forums for the borough, and Here4U Housing Panels.

The duty to refer imposed by the Homelessness Reduction Act came into effect on 1st October 2018. There is now a duty on public bodies to refer consenting individuals who are homeless or threatened with homelessness to the Council. We must work together to prevent and relieve homelessness. This presents an opportunity to maximise partnership working in the borough.

Strategic Priority One

Early Intervention and Prevention.

What we want to achieve:

- Prevent households from experiencing housing crisis.
- Reduce homeless presentations and acceptances.
- Increase early intervention and prevention success.
- Help sustain tenancies for renters across the borough.
- Reduce the Council's use of emergency and temporary accommodation.
- Prevent and relieve cyclical homelessness.

In order to do this, we will:

- Continue to provide effective housing advice to our residents, and maximise the use of creative solutions and innovative approaches.
- Focus on early intervention and prevention.
- Work collaboratively, between organisations and across boundaries.
- Implement the requirements and principles of the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- Work with PRS landlords to prevent homelessness, and consider setting up a Landlord Forum.
- Embed a clear housing pathway for key groups, including those in specialist accommodation.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Between January and March 2019, 70,430 households in England were initially assessed as threatened with homelessness or as homeless.

Nationally, on 31st March 2019 the total number of households in temporary accommodation was 84,740.

Between April 2018 and March 2019, Wokingham Borough Council saw a total of 248 homelessness presentations (148 families and 100 singles).

Between April 2018 and March 2019, the Council spent £255,359 on emergency accommodation.

Strategic Priority Two

Working Towards Ending Rough Sleeping and Tackling Hidden Homelessness.

What we want to achieve:

- Rough sleepers and hidden homeless households are engaging with the Council for advice and support.
- The root causes of homelessness, including affordability, complex needs and relationship breakdown, are being addressed.
- A night shelter is available in the borough during the winter months.
- Targeted support for entrenched rough sleepers is available.

In order to do this, we will:

- Explore options for the development of a pilot Housing First (or similar) scheme.
- Quantify the number of hidden homeless households in the Borough, with a view to developing plans to assist hidden homeless residents.
- Explore options for the development of a night shelter in the borough, and engage with neighbouring authorities to ensure adequate provision of night shelters in the region.
- Continue outreach work with rough sleepers and transient communities.
- Hold regular Rough Sleeper Meetings with partners and consider different approaches to gathering evidence and data, to support collaborative working and enhance our evidence base.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The total number of rough sleepers in England in autumn 2018 was recorded as 4,677.

The annual rough sleeper count for Wokingham Borough recorded 10 rough sleepers in November 2019.

Figures provided by Crisis estimate that the number of adults in concealed household units is 3.74 million in England in 2018.

In Wokingham in April 2018, 8% of homeless applicants reported overcrowding as the cause, and 3% classified themselves as sofa surfing.

Strategic Priority Three

Build More Affordable Homes.

What we want to achieve:

- The right homes are built in the right locations for those most in housing need.
- Specialist housing is developed that meets demand.
- Care leavers, key workers and low income households are supported, alongside other key groups.
- The demand for affordable housing of all tenures is being met by the delivery of new homes in the borough.

In order to do this, we will:

- Develop a strong evidence base of affordable housing need and specialist housing need.
- Adopt a refreshed Allocations Policy.
- Continue to negotiate with developers to provide a percentage of all new build homes for social rent.
- Maximise opportunities to meet demand for specialist housing.
- Explore opportunities to deliver other affordable housing products, for example Rent to Buy.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

In April 2019, there were 1,498 households on the Council's Housing Register.

In April 2019, 1,470 households were on the Shared Ownership Register.

Demand is higher for some tenures and property sizes, and for some locations within the borough.

The Council is committed to providing specialist housing. This includes supported accommodation for older people.

Affordability is a significant issue for many residents in the borough.

Strategic Priority Four

Support Our Vulnerable Residents.

What we want to achieve:

- Ensure that vulnerable residents have access to tailored advice and support to prevent and relieve homelessness.
- Strong partnership working across the borough.
- Provide vulnerable residents with advice and training on key topics, including budgeting and tenancy sustainment.
- Collaboration with residents and service users.

In order to do this, we will:

- Ensure that vulnerable residents have access to tailored advice and support to prevent and relieve homelessness.
- Continue to work in partnership to tackle homelessness and housing crisis, including the wider causes and impacts.
- Enable the provision of advice and training for residents on key topics including budgeting, employment, debt, tenancy management, wellbeing and independent living skills.
- Survey residents who have engaged with the Council when in housing crisis to learn from their views, ideas and experiences.
- Ensure that residents moving into their first homes are provided with appropriate advice to promote tenancy sustainment.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The biggest reasons for loss of settled homes in Wokingham Borough continue to be recorded as the end of assured shorthold tenancies and family/friend evictions.

Berkshire Women's Aid's helpline received 765 calls from Wokingham residents in 2018/19.

In June 2018, St Mungo's reported that 9 in 10 rough sleepers need support for mental health, drug and/or alcohol issues.

There are an estimated 6,000 homeless veterans in the UK, according to figures compiled in 2018.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy forms part of our wider Housing Strategy. Progress against this Strategy and Action Plan is principally overseen by the Council's Place Commissioning Team, Housing Needs Team and Affordable Housing Implementation Group (Member and Officer meeting).

Our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be available to view via our website (paper copies available on request), and will be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) as required.

The Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan is intended to be a working document, which will be subject to continuous review and updating to ensure it is responsive and current. We will update and publish our Action Plan annually.

Contact Details

Area	Contact	Details
Housing Needs, Homelessness, Housing Advice, and Tenant Services.	Simon Price, Assistant Director, Housing, Income and Assessments.	Simon.Price@wokingham.gov.uk
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, Registered Provider Partnership, and Affordable Housing.	Rhian Hayes, Category Manager, Economic Prosperity and Place.	Rhian.Hayes@wokingham.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan

Actions						
1 - Strategic Priority One: early intervention and prevention.						
No.	Priorities	Outcomes	Actions/Targets	Lead Officer / Service Area	Anticipated Achieved By	RAG
1.1	Continue to provide effective housing advice to our residents.	Residents facing housing crisis are aware of how to access help and advice, and feel supported when they do.	100% of households who present as threatened with homelessness within 56 days to be offered an initial assessment within 5 working days.	Housing Specialists. Partners.	2021, if not before.	
			100% of households presenting as homeless on the day to be offered an initial assessment that same day, or the following working day if presenting outside of office hours regardless of whether or not the applicant has priority need.		2021, if not before.	
			Maximise the use of creative solutions and innovative approaches, including mediation and negotiation.		Ongoing.	
1.2	Focus on early intervention and prevention.	Minimisation of the disruption and harm caused by homelessness, including the wider impact on quality of life and opportunities.	5% of all Prevention Duty cases are discharged as successfully securing existing or suitable alternative accommodation for the household for 6 months. Target to increase by 5% each year as the Act becomes embedded, so that by 2024, the target is 20%.	Housing Specialists. Partners.	2024 (staged delivery).	
			An increase in early intervention and prevention success, resulting in a reduction in homeless presentations.		Ongoing.	
			Tenancy sustainment increases, resulting in a reduction in homeless presentations.		Ongoing.	

1.3	Work in partnership with key agencies across the borough to tackle homelessness and assist people at risk of losing their home.	Fewer residents experience housing crisis, particularly cyclical homelessness.	5% reduction in the number of overall homelessness acceptances. Target to increase by 5% each year, so that by 2024, the target is 20%.	Housing Specialists. Partners.	2024 (staged delivery).	
		Residents in housing crisis have access to the range of support and advice they need.	5% reduction in cyclical homelessness, increasing by 5% each year to 20% in 2024.		2024 (staged delivery).	
1.4	Implement the requirements and principles of the Homelessness Reduction Act.	Ensure compliance with legislation and meet the Council's statutory obligations.	100% of all Relief Duty cases are discharged as successfully securing accommodation for the household for 6 months.	Housing Specialists.	2021, if not before.	
			85% of PHPs are reviewed every three weeks whilst the household is under either the Prevention or the Relief Duty. This figure is not 100% to take account of non-engagement.		2021, if not before.	
			5% reduction in cyclical homelessness, increasing by 5% each year to 20% in 2024.		2024 (staged delivery).	
			Households due a main decision after the Relief Duty ends should receive this decisions within 15 working days.		2021, if not before.	

1.5	Support our private rented sector residents.	Prevent homelessness and promote tenancy sustainment in the private rented sector. Provide financial assistance and advice to residents to enable them to access the private rented sector. Ensure that private rented sector homes meet legal standards, to protect the health, safety and welfare of residents.	A Landlord Forum is set up in the borough.	Housing Specialists. Environmental Health/Enforcement.	2022.	
			To continue to provide a Rent in Advance/Deposit Loan Scheme, with homes to be inspect before agreement.		Ongoing.	
			To challenge private rented sector landlords and agents who are not meeting their obligations.		Ongoing.	
			Explore the benefits of a Selective Licensing Scheme for private rented homes not currently covered by mandatory or additional licensing for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) to improve management and housing conditions.		2024.	
1.6	Embed a clear housing pathway for vulnerable key groups, including care leavers and for specialist accommodation.	Vulnerable residents have access to services designed to support them and are prevented from becoming homeless.	Map the housing pathway for key groups, including care leavers, move on accommodation and for specialist housing.	Housing Specialists. Strategy & Commissioning – Place. Partners.	2022.	
2 - Strategic Priority Two: working towards ending rough sleeping and tackling hidden homelessness.						
No.	Priorities	Outcomes	Actions/Targets	Lead Officer / Service Area	Anticipated Achieved By	RAG
2.1	Explore options for the development of a pilot Housing First (or similar) scheme in the borough.	Rough sleepers would be provided with tailored support to sustain a tenancy. The root causes of homelessness including	Feasibility/business case/options report produced.	Housing Specialists. Strategy & Commissioning – Place. Partners.	2022.	
			To ensure sufficient provision of specialist support and accommodation for rough sleepers.		2024.	

		affordability, complex needs, substance misuse, mental health problems and relationship breakdown are addressed.				
2.2	Quantify the number of hidden homeless households in the borough, with a view to developing plans to assist hidden homeless residents.	To assist residents who are not counted in the official statistics, and may be staying in hostels, B&Bs, overcrowded accommodation or with relatives or friends.	Develop a clearer understanding of the quantity and types of hidden homelessness in the borough.	Housing Specialists. Strategy & Commissioning – Place. Partners.	2021.	
			Work with partners to develop plans for targeted work with this cohort based on a greater understanding of the issue.		2023.	
2.3	Explore options for the development of a night shelter in the borough.	A safe and secure night shelter is available in the borough for those in need.	To work with local delivery partners to explore options to deliver a night shelter in the borough. The Council will regularly review the impact and effectiveness of the night shelter.	Housing Specialists. Strategy & Commissioning – Place. Partners.	2021.	
			Engage with neighbouring authorities to ensure adequate provision of night shelters in the region.		2024.	
			A reduction in rough sleeping as a direct result of the availability of the night shelter.		2024.	
2.4	Continue outreach work with rough sleepers and transient communities.	Tailored advice and assistance is available to rough sleepers and transient communities (including tented communities and boat dwellers when relevant).	An increase in the number of rough sleepers and the hidden homeless accessing advice and support.	Housing Specialists. Partners.	2024.	
			A reduction in the number of rough sleepers in the borough.		2024.	
			Work with partners to support and promote foodbanks, and access to clothing and medical help for rough sleepers and transient communities.		Ongoing.	
2.5	Hold regular Rough Sleeper Meetings	To support collaborative working.	To ensure sufficient provision of specialist support and accommodation for rough sleepers.	Housing Specialists. Partners.	2020.	

	with partners and consider different approaches to gathering evidence and data.	To supplement information obtained at the annual count in November, and enhance our evidence base.				
3 - Strategic Priority Three: build more affordable homes.						
No.	Priorities	Outcomes	Actions/Targets	Lead Officer / Service Area	Anticipated Achieved By	RAG
3.1	Develop a strong evidence base of affordable housing need and specialist housing need.	The right homes are built in the right locations for those in most housing need.	Ensure that the tenure mix and unit type of affordable housing coming forward seeks to address demand. Analyse the Housing Register and other data sources to understand the current and future demand for affordable homes in the borough.	Strategy and Commissioning – Place.	Ongoing. 2020.	
3.2	Refresh the Council's Allocations Policy.	A fair and transparent allocations system is in place that responds to need. Homeless applicants receive appropriate priority. Residents understand their housing options, including the likelihood of being allocated social housing. The Council is able to make best use of available housing stock.	New Allocations Policy agreed and implemented.	Strategy and Commissioning – Place.	2020.	

		To that the Council continues to make fair, consistent and lawful allocations.				
3.3	Continue to negotiate with developers to provide a percentage of all new build homes for social rent.	High quality, social rented new build homes are delivered to meet housing need.	The Council secures nomination rights to new build homes for social rent in the borough. Work towards target of 1000 homes, over a 4 year period with a 5% return.	Strategy & Commissioning – Place.	Ongoing. 2023.	
3.4	Maximise opportunities to meet demand for specialist housing.	Residents have access to a range of appropriate housing options to meet their housing and care needs.	Provision of specialist housing will meet the needs of vulnerable groups.	Strategy & Commissioning – Place.	2024.	
3.5	Explore opportunities to deliver other affordable housing products, for example Rent to Buy.	The demand for affordable housing of all tenures is being met by the delivery of new homes in the borough.	To meet emerging demand for different types of affordable housing in the borough.	Strategy & Commissioning – Place.	2024.	
4 - Strategic Priority Four: support our vulnerable residents.						
No.	Priorities	Outcomes	Actions/Targets	Lead Officer / Service Area	Anticipated Achieved By	RAG
4.1	Ensure that vulnerable residents have access to tailored advice and support to prevent and relieve homelessness.	Residents experiencing housing crisis are provided with advice and assistance.	Enhance the digital advice and guidance available to residents via the Council's website and other sources. 100% of households who present as threatened with homelessness within 56 days to be offered an initial assessment within 5 working days.	Housing Specialists. Strategy & Commissioning – Place.	2021. 2021, if not before.	

			100% of households presenting as homeless on the day to be offered an initial assessment that same day, or the following working day if presenting outside of office hours regardless of whether or not the applicant has priority need.		2021, if not before.	
4.2	Continue to work in partnership to tackle homelessness and housing crisis, include the wider causes and impacts.	<p>Strong partnership working in the borough.</p> <p>The escalation of support needs for statutory services are delayed, prevented and reduced.</p> <p>Support vulnerable residents experiencing housing crisis, including those with health issues and domestic abuse victims.</p>	Continue to work with statutory agencies to ensure that the Homelessness Reduction Act duty to refer is met, and work with none statutory agencies to adopt a similar process.	Housing Specialists. Strategy & Commissioning – Place. Partners.	2021.	
			Ensure that Council actions from personalised housing plan (PHP) are effective.		Ongoing.	
			Through our partnership with a provider of housing related support, 100% of referrals to the service should be contacted within 2 days and met within 5 days, 85% of clients maintain their accommodation and 90% of clients are not accessing statutory services.		Ongoing.	
			Continue the provision of the Wokingham Home Refuge Scheme.		Ongoing.	
4.3	Enable the provision of advice and training for residents on key topics including budgeting, employment, debt, tenancy management, wellbeing and independent living skills.	<p>Provide vulnerable residents with advice and training to maximise tenancy sustainment, employment opportunities, independent living and wellbeing.</p> <p>Address underlying causes of homelessness, including unemployment, debt, and the impact of welfare reform.</p>	Work with partners to identify areas of need within the borough (e.g. budgeting and managing debt) and take pro-active steps to help address these gaps.	Strategy & Commissioning – Place. Partners.	2022.	
			Explore funding opportunities for preventative projects e.g. 'warm and well scheme'.		2022.	
			Work with housing providers and supported living providers to maximise employment and training opportunities.		2024.	
			Vulnerable people and those harder to reach or who are socially isolated are engaged in activities		2024.	

			that will promote their health and wellbeing and increase independence.			
4.4	Service improvement is informed by resident feedback.	Collaboration with residents and service users.	Survey residents who have engaged with the Council when in housing crisis to learn from their views, ideas and experiences.	Housing Specialists. Partners.	2021.	
4.5	Ensure that residents moving into their first homes are provided with appropriate advice to promote tenancy sustainment.	Residents moving into their first homes receive advice and guidance regarding budgeting, maintaining their home, complying with their tenancy agreement, living independently and how to access further help.	Tenancy sustainment increases, resulting in a reduction in homeless presentations.	Housing Specialists. Partners.	2022.	
			5% reduction in cyclical homelessness, increasing by 5% each year to 20% in 2024.		2024.	

Appendix 2 – provision of specialist support and accommodation for rough sleepers.

The Council's Homelessness Review 2018, and this Strategy were prepared by the Council in consultation with stakeholders, partners and service users to ensure a comprehensive approach that was supported by all involved in working in this field. This engagement has also further informed our operational approach to working with rough sleepers.

The number of rough sleepers in the borough is comparatively low. We provide a person centred approach to rough sleeping, and work closely with our partners to ensure that support and help is provided. Most of the entrenched rough sleepers are known to use by name and location, and all have been contacted in order to offer advice and assistance.

The Council aims to ensure that individuals can access resources and that their particular needs are considered. Where appropriate, the aim is that each rough sleeper will have their own Personalised Housing Plan that will outline who is responsible for their care, which services are working with them and the support available.

Further details of the Councils plans to provide specialist support and accommodation for rough sleepers can be found in the Action Plan above, most notably in the actions listed under Strategic Priority Two: end rough sleeping and tackle hidden homelessness.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: Initial impact assessment.

EqIA Titular information:

Date:	October 2019.
Service:	Place Commissioning.
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
Completed by:	Victoria Higgins.
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Yes.
Signed off by:	Nigel Bailey – Assistant Director Housing & Place Commissioning.
Sign off date:	10.10.2019.

1. Policy, Project or service information:

<p>What is the purpose of the project, policy change or service change , its expected outcomes and how does it relate to your services corporate plan:</p>
<p>The impacts of homelessness can be devastating for individuals and families. Homelessness can affect health, education and employment. Homelessness can have long term consequences for those affected. As a result, reducing homelessness and rough sleeping is a key priority for Wokingham Borough Council.</p> <p>This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how we will, over the next three years, tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in the Borough and support residents in housing crisis.</p> <p>Our actions over the next three years will be targeted across four strategic priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Early intervention and prevention. ❖ Working towards ending rough sleeping and tackling hidden homelessness. ❖ Building more affordable homes. ❖ Supporting our vulnerable residents. <p>All local housing authorities have a duty to carry out a review of homelessness and homelessness service provision for their area and, in consultation with local partners and stakeholders, formulate and publish a homelessness and rough sleeping strategy based on the results of that review, at least every five years. The council is pro-active in developing a number of supportive and preventative measures to help address homelessness and rough sleeping such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing tenancy support. • Negotiating with private landlords. • Providing supported housing options for vulnerable clients. • Providing a supported housing scheme for vulnerable young people aged 16 – 25 at risk of homelessness.

- Providing a range of temporary accommodation across the borough.
- Assessing housing, care and support needs and agreeing an action plan for each individual.
- Ensuring that the priority schemes (social and medical) within the Housing Register are accessible and responsive to individual need.

Outline how you are delivering your project, policy change or service change. What governance arrangements are in place, which internal stakeholders (Service managers, Assistant Directors, Members etc) have/will be consulted and informed about the project or changes:

The strategy will be widely consulted on, both internally and with external stakeholders, prior to adoption. The strategy will also be considered at Corporate Services Leadership Team, Customer & Localities Leadership Team, Executive Briefing, Conservative Group, Executive and full Council.

Outline who are the main beneficiaries of the Project, policy change or service change?

Residents who are at risk of housing crisis, homelessness and/or rough sleeping or residents experiencing any or all of these difficulties.

Groups considered to be most at risk of rough sleeping include:

- Vulnerable young people aged 16-25
- Those with high support need (mental health needs and/or addiction issues)
- Those suffering emotional and/or economic hardship

Outline any associated aims attached to the project, policy change or service change:

To support residents at risk of or experiencing housing crisis, homelessness and/or rough sleeping.

2. Protected characteristics:

There are 9 protected characteristics as defined by the legislation:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Age
- Religious belief
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership:

3. Initial Impact review:

In the table below, please indicate whether your project, Policy change or service change will have a positive or negative impact on one of the protected characteristics. To assess the level of impact, please assign each group a Positive, No, Low or High impact score:

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Race:	Positive	<p>There have been several economic migrants who are known to be rough sleeping in the borough who have told us that they are choosing to live in tented communities in order to save money.</p> <p>During the last rough sleeper count in 2018, out of 7 rough sleepers, 5 were UK nationals and 2 were not.</p> <p>The Council is aware of the need to continue to ensure that our services are accessible to all members of the community. We are able to offer a</p>

		<p>person-centred approach tailored to the needs of an individual, including a multi-agency approach where appropriate.</p>
Gender:	Positive	<p>During the last rough sleeper count in 2018, out of 7 rough sleepers, 6 of the individuals were male and 1 was female.</p> <p>The Council is aware of the need to continue to ensure that our services are accessible to all members of the community. We are able to offer a person-centred approach tailored to the needs of an individual, including a multi-agency approach where appropriate.</p>
Disabilities:	Positive	<p>Rough sleepers may have a combination of complex needs including mental illness, substance misuse/addiction.</p> <p>Our approach is individual and person-centred. If an applicant has a disability or specific health need, it is likely that the statutory homeless safety net will be available to them.</p> <p>The Council is aware of the need to continue to ensure that our services are accessible to all members of the community. We are able to offer a person-centred approach tailored to the needs of an individual, including a multi-agency approach where appropriate.</p>
Age:	Positive	<p>Lack of affordable accommodation across all tenures results in young people experiencing barriers to accessing suitable accommodation.</p> <p>Parental eviction is an issue for young people. Young people are more likely to be amongst the hidden homeless – sofa surfing etc.</p> <p>During the last rough sleeper count in 2018, all 7 were aged over 26.</p>

		<p>Where appropriate, the Council is able to provide a range of preventative measures, including family mediation. The Housing Needs Team works closely with Children's and Adult's Service to ensure a holistic service delivery.</p> <p>The Council is aware of the need to continue to ensure that our services are accessible to all members of the community. We are able to offer a person-centred approach tailored to the needs of an individual, including a multi-agency approach where appropriate.</p>
Sexual orientation:	No	<p>Whilst there was nothing of concern coming from the findings relating specifically to this characteristic, the Council is aware of the need to continue to ensure that our services are accessible to all members of the community. We are able to offer a person-centred approach tailored to the needs of an individual, including a multi-agency approach where appropriate.</p>
Religion/belief:	No	<p>Whilst there was nothing of concern coming from the findings relating specifically to this characteristic, the Council is aware of the need to continue to ensure that our services are accessible to all members of the community. We are able to offer a person-centred approach tailored to the needs of an individual, including a multi-agency approach where appropriate.</p>
Gender re-assignment:	No	<p>Whilst there was nothing of concern coming from the findings relating specifically to this characteristic, the Council is aware of the need to continue to ensure that our services are accessible to all members of the community. We are able to offer a person-centred approach tailored to the needs of an individual, including a multi-agency approach where appropriate.</p>

Pregnancy and Maternity:	Positive	<p>If pregnant females are identified as rough sleeping, they are offered accommodation under the Council's statutory homeless duties.</p> <p>The Council is aware of the need to continue to ensure that our services are accessible to all members of the community. We are able to offer a person-centred approach tailored to the needs of an individual, including a multi-agency approach where appropriate.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership:	No	<p>Whilst there was nothing of concern coming from the findings relating specifically to this characteristic, the Council is aware of the need to continue to ensure that our services are accessible to all members of the community. We are able to offer a person-centred approach tailored to the needs of an individual, including a multi-agency approach where appropriate.</p>

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Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment for any groups you have identified as having a low or high negative impact. If No impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must report on this initial assessment and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy or service change.

Initial impact assessment approved by.... Nigel Bailey – Assistant Director Housing & Place Commissioning.

Date:....10.10.2019

TITLE	Council Tax Base 20/21
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Council on 23 January 2020
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Set the Council Tax Base for 2020/21 in respect of the whole Borough and all constituent parts so that each precepting body can subsequently set their Council Tax budgets for the year. The higher the tax base the lower the tax burden.

RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked to agree the proposed Council Tax Base, for the whole area and by Parish, as set out in the report.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Council Tax Base

The council tax base is the total number of Band D equivalent dwellings liable for Council Tax after discounts, exemptions.

Local authorities must ensure their council tax base for the forthcoming financial year is approved by Council, or a delegated body, by 31st January each year. This year's tax base calculation continues to include the significant changes to the council tax base from 1 April 2013 arising from the changes to the council tax benefits system. Financial support to individuals for council tax, formerly known as council tax benefit is now offered as a discount within the council tax system, known as council tax reduction.

Following the changes in the tax base calculation back in 2015, despite financial challenges, the Council agreed to fund a £100k grant to the Parishes to help offset the impact of a reduced tax base. The grant was agreed for 5 years on an equal reducing amount to £nil grant in 20/21 allowing Parish / Town Council time to deal with the impact of the changes.

This year's tax base calculations show that with a total of 69,536 properties on the Council Tax register as at 1st October 2019, after making all relevant adjustments for discounts, exemptions, new builds, bad debts, etc. the proposed tax base of band D equivalent is 72036.5 for 2020/21.

The proposed tax base for 2020/21 reflects an increase of 2.65% on the equivalent figure for the 2019/20 financial year.

A summary of the impact of the movements on the council tax base is as follows:

(i) The Borough had 72,002.7 properties at 1 October 2019 net of the loss due to any Council Tax Reduction

(ii) The increase arising from the estimated new properties in 2020/21 and other changes is estimated at 761.3 band D equivalent properties.

(iii) The total of (i) to (ii) above is 72,764.1 properties. The bad debt provision for 2020/21 is 1% of this amount, i.e. 727.6 properties.

The net total of (i) to (iii) above is 72,036.5 properties as set out in the analysis of issues.

Background

The Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations require the billing authority (Wokingham Borough Council) to notify its major precepting bodies (The Police and Fire Authorities) and its Parishes of the tax base for the following financial year. The precepting bodies may request this information between the 1st December 2019 and 31st January 2020.

Analysis of Issues

The prescribed calculation is made as follows;

- (i) A return is made to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (form CTB1). This analyses the valuation list as at a prescribed date into the various property bands and then provides details of discounts and exemptions;
- (ii) The Band D equivalent property numbers for tax purposes for the whole of the area are broken down into each constituent Parish area;
- (iii) An adjustment is made to allow for the impact of council tax reduction grant (which reduces the Band D equivalent property numbers in each area and overall);
- (iv) An estimate of unbanded and new properties expected to be banded during 2020/21 are added;
- (v) An adjustment is then made to take account of bad debts. This has been maintained at 1.0% as in previous years.

The resultant outcome reflects the tax base for the coming financial year in accordance with the table below:

TAX BASE BY PARISH & WHOLE DISTRICT - 2020/21

	LOCAL TAX BASE 2020/21	LOCAL TAX BASE 2019/20 (last yr)	CHANGE FROM 2019/20 TO 2020/21	% CHANGE FROM 2019- 20
PARISHES				
ARBORFIELD & NEWLAND	1,304.60	1,292.30	12.30	0.95%
BARKHAM	1,830.10	1,687.10	143.00	8.48%
CHARVIL	1,417.40	1,411.90	5.50	0.39%
EARLEY	11,957.00	11,894.10	62.90	0.53%
FINCHAMPSTEAD	6,031.20	5,933.30	97.90	1.65%
REMENHAM	329.50	326.30	3.20	0.98%
RUSCOMBE	528.20	498.80	29.40	5.89%
ST. NICHOLAS HURST	1,082.70	1,064.40	18.30	1.72%
SHINFIELD	6,295.90	5,656.80	639.10	11.30%
SONNING	829.00	817.60	11.40	1.39%
SWALLOWFIELD	1,074.60	1,069.90	4.70	0.44%
TWYFORD	3,029.90	3,011.80	18.10	0.60%
WARGRAVE	2,130.20	2,119.60	10.60	0.50%
WINNERSH	4,214.20	4,117.70	96.50	2.34%
WOKINGHAM TOWN	16,032.60	15,513.80	518.80	3.34%
WOKINGHAM WITHOUT	3,290.40	3,232.40	58.00	1.79%
WOODLEY	10,659.00	10,528.80	130.20	1.24%
-				

WHOLE AREA	72,036.50	70,176.60	1,859.90	2.65%
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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	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A	Yes	Revenue

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
The revised tax base and total grant allocation will be factored in to the 2020/21 budget setting process

Cross-Council Implications
Council tax income contributes to the funding of all services.

Public Sector Equality Duty
An equalities assessments is not required in this instance as it relates to setting of the Council Tax Base and does not directly affect individuals.

List of Background Papers
None

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TITLE	Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2020/2021
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Council on 23 January 2020
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The adoption of a Localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) will ensure that all working age borough residents who may experience financial difficulties in paying their council tax liabilities have access to a scheme of assistance, designed locally, offering financial help to them.

The local CTRS does not impact pensioners who still come under the governments "prescribed scheme"

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council agree the proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2020/21:

- 1) a local CTR scheme for 2020/21 is adopted on the same basis as the 2019/2020 scheme;
- 2) that the full disregard currently allowed for War Widows and War Disability Pensions is continued from 1 April 2020 in respect of the Prescribed and Local Council Tax Reduction scheme and Housing Benefit schemes;
- 3) that funds be made available to the hardship fund, known as Section 13A, for those who cannot pay their council tax liabilities.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Each year Wokingham Borough Council has to decide a Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) that fulfils the purpose of supporting our most vulnerable residents and is contained within agreed budgets.

Wokingham Borough Council has reviewed its current CTRS, assessing its impact and effectiveness. The current scheme is the first time that a "banded" scheme has been implemented.

After the review, the CTR Scheme that WBC proposes to implement for 2020/2021 will be the same as for 2019/2020.

Background

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION - REVIEW OF 2019/2020 SCHEME

The current situation:

In April 2013 Council Tax Benefit (CTB) was abolished and replaced by Council Tax Reduction scheme (CTRS). This was accompanied by a 10% reduction in Government funding, which was equivalent to around £600k to WBC, with reductions in funding continuing since. In order to cover this loss of funding, the Council have approved new CTRS's to adapt to the decreasing funding levels, whilst retaining support for the boroughs most vulnerable residents. The main features of the current scheme are:

- an income-banded scheme;
- no provision for awarding back-dated awards, prior to the claim date;
- the minimum level of support available is set at £3.00 per week;
- the maximum level of support is 78% of council tax liability;
- claims restricted to Band D;
- a capital cut-off at £4,000

It should be noted that the local CTRS only impacts on those of working age, not pensioners who still come under the governments "prescribed scheme".

Annual review

Each year local authorities review their scheme and consider whether changes should be made. In considering a review for our CTRS, the following criteria have been considered:

- How the current scheme is working both directly for residents/recipients and administratively
- Financial impact to the council, all its residents and recipients of CTR
- Impact on council tax collection rates as an overall and broken down to recipients of CTR

Other considerations:

- Any known future changes to government legislation/schemes and funding as well as other activity at a local level
- Effectiveness of the S13a scheme (hardship fund available to assist those residents who cannot pay their council tax for a variety of reasons)
- Available fund of £100k to assist those residents in receipt of CTR who have been severely impacted by CTRS changes (claimed under S13a scheme)
- Financial status of the council and the current budget allocation for CTRS

Review findings

After investigation the following emerged:

- Generally administration of CTR has worked well and without any substantial problems or issues;
- We have had a low level of appeals and tribunals;
- Since the introduction of CTR the changes made have resulted in a reduction in caseload. Caseload as of 31st March 2013 was 5065, currently 3728

- Changes made have resulted in a reduced spend on CTR year on year:

Year	Opening spend on awards of CTR	Reduction in spend
12/13	£4,918,285	£ - (CTB spend shown for comparison)
13/14	£4,713,190	£205,095
14/15	£4,641,422	£71,768
15/16	£4,345,507	£295,915
16/17	£4,102,695	£242,812
17/18	£4,001,570	£101,125
18/19	£3,994,769	£6,081 (no changes to scheme agreed for 18/19, hence low reduction in spend)
19/20	£3,731,077	£263,692

- Overall council tax collection has remained on target despite reductions in overall CTR support;
- The services (Income & Assessments) continue to analyse the impact of the CTR banded scheme, the effect on the vulnerable and how this impacts on collection levels. From the analysis to date we are collecting slightly higher levels of council tax for those on CTR than at the same point last year. As those in receipt of CTR are a small percentage (less than 1%) of overall council tax collectable debit, the changes have not impacted on the overall collection rate.
- There are a small number of claims made to the S13a scheme each year. This scheme is discretionary and assists those residents who are unable to pay their council tax due to hardship. A policy is agreed each year under an IEMD and the scheme advertised on our website (<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-and-appeals/council-tax-discounts-and-reductions/>).

Year	Spend on S13a awards	Number of awards
13/14	£2,383.93	5
14/15	£4,766.88	10
15/16	£5,804.00	14
16/17	£8,978.22	15
17/18	£16,227.13	15
18/19	£10,682.05	11
19/20	£12,186 (to date)	11 update to latest figures before release
Total	£52,763.05	73

Council Tax Reduction Scheme 20/21

Recommendation

Due to ongoing austerity measures, the Council has managed to reduce the CTR spend year on year. We now have the opportunity to consider whether further changes would be practical in terms of collection, administration and impact on our recipients

After considering all of the above, along with the impact of the 2019/2020 CTR changes and the continued uncertainty around the impact of Universal Credit, it is recommended that no changes to the scheme are undertaken for 2020/2021.

Universal Credit remains the main change happening in Welfare Reform and its impact is still being measured across many organisations and businesses. Retaining the same scheme will also allow time for the DWP to decide on the “managed migration” of the legacy Housing Benefit (HB) caseload. This could potentially change the way we view our CTRS as there will be less resource needed to administer HB. This allows us to consider better ways to administer our CTRS.

To remain the same gives us assurances that we can stay within the budget set by finance and agreed by Members. It also gives more certainty to CTR recipients as the scheme will remain the same as the current one that they are now familiar with. The scheme still has the assurances of the additional S13a discretionary scheme for those recipients who suffer hardship, as agreed by Members when the 2019/2020 CTRS was agreed, mitigating the risk of the vulnerable being left with debts they are unable to pay.

Analysis of Issues

As a result of reviewing the current scheme and the financial circumstances of the authority, it is proposed that a local scheme is approved by Full Council on 23rd January 2020 on the same basis as the 2019/2020 scheme. This would allow for a full understanding the impact of a “banded” scheme has had on CTR recipients, any council tax arrears accumulated as a result and the ongoing impact of UC full service.

Protection to pensioners would still apply, unless the Government makes any changes to the prescribed scheme.

The Council remains aware that a relief scheme such as CTRS may exclude some claimants who, in the short term at least, are unable to improve their financial circumstances. This may present them with difficulties in paying council tax liabilities. In this respect, the provision for further discretionary reductions is to be made under Section 13A(l)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as substituted by the Local Government Finance Bill 2012.

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)	The scheme will cost approximately £3.9m	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Not known	N/A	Revenue

Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Not known	N/A	Revenue
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Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
Maintaining the current scheme enables the authority to contain spend within current resources and budget (£3.9m).

Cross-Council Implications
The administration costs to maintain this scheme can be contained within current resources and budget, whilst still supporting our most vulnerable residents.

Public Sector Equality Duty
Scheme is the same as the previous year when an equality assessment was carried out. This has been reviewed to ensure all things still remain relevant and mitigation effective.

List of Background Papers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012 No. 2885), as amended - The Welfare Reform Act 2012 - The Equality Act 2010 - The Housing Act 1996 - EQIA

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TITLE	Declaring a Climate Emergency Initial Action Plan
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Council on 23 January 2020
WARD	None specific
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, this first version of our Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council approves the Climate Emergency Action Plan. Endorsing the assessment of Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint and the initial actions proposed for Wokingham Borough Council to play a full a role as possible in achieving a zero carbon Wokingham Borough by 2030.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

At a Council meeting on 18th July 2019, Wokingham Borough Council agreed a motion declaring a climate emergency. The declaration set out the Council's commitment to play as full a role as possible in achieving a carbon-neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030. The Council agreed to report to Council within six months, setting out an initial plan of action towards becoming a zero carbon Borough and to set up a cross-party member-working group to monitor progress. With the publication of this plan, which is a live document that lays out the initial steps on our journey to net zero carbon, all of these commitments are now in place.

Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint has been calculated to create a baseline of carbon dioxide emissions. Based on government data and reported two years in arrears, Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint is **580.9 ktCO₂e** (based on 2017 data).

The Council has identified eight key priority areas (below) to focus on for reducing CO₂e

1. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Transport
2. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Domestic and Business Property - Green Bank Project
3. Generate more Renewable Energy in the Borough
4. Create a Local Plan that Specifies Net Zero Construction and Infrastructure
5. Increase the Levels of Carbon Sequestration the Borough Through Greening the Environment
6. Engage with Young People and Support Sustainable Schools
7. Reduce Waste Sent to Landfill
8. Encouraging Behaviour Change

The action plan, which has been populated with ideas from local residents, Town and Parish Councils, Council officers, and local businesses, is not exclusively limited to these areas.

The Council has committed £50 million pounds over the next three years (subject to approval at Council of the annual budget) to implement the actions in the Plan
A progress report with a fully costed up action plan with carbon dioxide emission data will be brought back to Council in July and reported annually thereafter.

Background

The Paris Agreement (2015) set out a framework to limit greenhouse gas emissions to levels that would prevent global temperatures from increasing to more than 2°C above the temperature benchmark set before the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. This was considered, at that time, to be the tipping point that would trigger extreme weather events across the world. Resulting in risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and economic growth

In autumn 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report, which advised that global warming must be limited to 1.5°C as opposed to the previous target of 2°C to avoid the devastating impacts of climate change. As the climate has already warmed by 1°C since the industrial revolution benchmark. The report warned that there are now only 12 years (to 2013) left within which to take the actions required to avert a crisis, rather than the 32 previously thought (to 2050).

In response to the claims made by the IPCC, in the autumn of 2018 Councils across the world started declaring a climate emergency starting with Durban, South Africa. To date 245 local authorities in the UK have done so with more declaring by the day.

Wokingham Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency on 18th July 2019. The declaration states that,

‘Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) believes the world is now in a climate emergency. More concerted and urgent action is needed at local, national and international level to protect our planet for future generations. As such, this Council commits to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030 and report within six months as to what actions are required’.

In declaring a climate emergency, Wokingham Borough Council committed to preparing a Climate Emergency Action Plan within six months, to report the actions that the Council will take and to set up a cross-party working group to monitor progress. With the publication of this Climate Emergency Action Plan all of these commitments are now in place. The report has been praised by external consultees including, the Wokingham Borough Business Partnership and the Energy Hub who have both endorsed.

The 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which recognize that ending poverty and deprivation must go hand-in-hand with strategies that reduce climate change. The Council recognises the importance of these goals and has decided to align the actions in the Climate Emergency Action Plan to the SDG framework. In doing so, the Council hopes to ensure that its actions lead to a socially just response to climate change.

Analysis of Issues

Wokingham Borough's Carbon Footprint

In order to assess how the borough can become net zero carbon by 2030 and to understand the scale of the activity required, the starting point has been to calculate Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint to create a baseline of carbon dioxide emissions.

The carbon footprint is based on Government data from the department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and is reported two years in arrears. Emissions are expressed in kilotons of carbon dioxide or ktCO_{2e}. Total emissions are broken down into three sectors, commercial and industrial, domestic and transport sectors.

Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint is **580.9 ktCO_{2e}** (based on 2017 data).

The carbon footprint does not include areas that are outside the Council's area of influence such as carbon dioxide emissions from motorways and from rail travel.

Analysis of the BEIS data has also identified the highest carbon emitting sectors for the borough, which has helped the Council select its eight key priority areas where focused activity will have the most impact.

The total carbon dioxide emissions for the borough are made of three sectors; transport (31.4%); industrial and commercial (26.6%), and the domestic (43%). Further analysis shows that transport is the highest emitting sector in the borough, closely followed by the use of gas in the domestic sector.

Carbon offsetting/sequestration, where trees and other plant life absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere effectively reducing overall emissions, is also reported in the BEIS data. The amount of carbon dioxide being sequestered through trees and plants in Wokingham has been steadily increasing over the period that data has been reported.

The data shows that the Boroughs Carbon Footprint has been slowly declining since 2012. The reasons for this is that; Government targets for national renewable energy generation is increasing the proportion of sustainably generated electricity in the grid electricity supply, changing behaviours of residents and businesses, more energy efficient technologies and an increased removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through carbon sequestration.

The projected trajectory of the decrease in emissions (assuming that it would continue at its current rate) would mean that the Council's carbon footprint would be 274.6 ktCO₂ by 2030. This gives an idea of the scale of reduction required to achieve the Council's target of net zero carbon by 2030.

Wokingham Borough Council as a corporate organisation has a total carbon footprint of 11,156 tCO_{2e}, which accounts for 1.45% of the total Borough's footprint. The Council aims to continue to reduce these emissions by improving renewable generating infrastructure and energy efficiency become a net zero carbon organisation by 2030.

The Council's Key Priorities for Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions to Net Zero by 2030

The analysis above has helped the Council to identify eight key priority areas (below) to focus on for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. The action plan, which has been

populated with ideas from local residents, Town and Parish Councils, Council officers, and local businesses, is not exclusively limited to these areas.

1. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Transport

The Council will seek to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from transport by using technology to help improve traffic flows, reducing congestion by optimising the use of the existing road network and increasing the number of EV charging points across the borough. The Council aims to encourage residents to take up more sustainable transport options such as walking, cycling, and bus and train travel.

2. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Domestic and Business Property - Green Bank Project

There are around 72,000 dwellings in the Borough, of which an estimated 85% use fossil-fuel based natural gas. The Council will set up the Green Bank Project to help residents and businesses pay for the cost of converting from natural gas to other low carbon forms of energy. The Green Bank will help install energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy technology into homes and businesses across the borough.

The Council will implement the necessary measures to improve the current energy usage of its own corporate properties and aims to become net zero carbon by 2030.

3. Generate more Renewable Energy in the Borough

The Council plans to develop five largescale solar PV farms throughout the Borough over the next five years. This will not only increase the production of renewable energy, but has the potential to generate an income, which will then be reinvested into delivering other carbon reduction projects.

4. Create a Local Plan that Specifies Net Zero Construction and Infrastructure

All major residential and commercial developments will be expected to deliver high sustainable construction standards. Policies to enable this will be embedded in the upcoming Local Plan Update (LPU). Major developments will embrace innovative sustainable design solutions for energy efficiency and low carbon energy generation and use.

5. Increase the Levels of Carbon Sequestration the Borough Through Greening the Environment

The Council will plant 250,000 new trees over the next five years. As well as increasing the capacity for carbon offsetting, afforestation will allow for a biodiversity net gain, an approach to development that increases levels of biodiversity at a greater rate.

6. Engage with Young People and Support Sustainable Schools

The Council will launch a sustainable schools programme. The programme aims to promote behavioural change amongst young people by engaging with schools to work with children to encourage the adoption of new 'climate-friendly' behaviours that will influence their families and communities.

7. Reduce Waste Sent to Landfill

The Council aims to achieve zero waste to landfill and 90% recycling by 2030. The Council will reach the 2020 target to reach 60% recycling of waste produced in the borough. This step-change has been achieved through encouraging people in the borough to change their

behaviour. An example is the introduction of food waste collection which has been a great success borough-wide. There remains great scope for future improvement with opportunities available regarding glass recycling and increasing the range of plastics that can be recycled.

8. Encouraging Behaviour Change

As a community leader, the Council will set an example and set high standards in becoming net zero carbon. This includes its own estate but also its policies, service delivery and investment decisions. The Council will communicate and engage with all of its residents, businesses, schools, Town and Parish Councils, charities, the University of Reading, Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the Greater South East Energy Hub and other local authorities to work together to initiate education programmes and encourage behaviour change

Finance

The Council will seek funding wherever possible to support the delivery of the actions in the Climate Emergency Action Plan. This will include bidding for funds but also some of the activities in the action plan will themselves generate income or make savings. This income will be ring-fenced to be reinvested on other projects in the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

The Council has already established a new role, the Climate Emergency Strategy Officer, and going forward has committed to investing £50 million pounds over the next three years (subject to approval at Council as part of annual budget agreement) to implement the actions in the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Governance

The Council has set a Climate Emergency Working Group. Made up of a cross party group of members and representatives from Town and Parish councils, the Working Group will provide a high level steer on policy direction in relation to carbon dioxide reduction. The Group will review the delivery and performance of key carbon reduction projects by the Council and progress toward the Council's ambition to achieve net zero carbon for Wokingham Borough by 2030

The Climate Emergency Advisory Group made up of representatives from industry, academia and charities will meet on a quarterly basis. This Group will explore how new ideas and innovative technology can help reducing carbon dioxide emissions in the borough.

The Climate Emergency Officers' Group meets monthly and is attended by officers from across the Council. The Officers' Group delivers the activities set out in the Climate Change Action Plan.

Next steps

An annual Climate Emergency Progress report will be developed and brought to Council for approval in July 2020 and annually thereafter. This report will have a fully costed up action plan with carbon saving quotas against individual projects. The report will summarise the boroughs achievements and demonstrate the benefits of becoming net zero carbon.

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)	£16,060,000	Yes – subject to approval at Council	Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£15,595,000	Yes – subject to approval at Council	Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£18,830,000	Yes – subject to approval at Council	Capital

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Funding to be approved at Council as part of annual budget process.

Cross-Council Implications

The Climate Emergency Action Plan is a Council wide project that requesting that all Council services, investments and delivery projects to review and prioritise reducing carbon dioxide emissions where possible.

Public Sector Equality Duty

An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached

List of Background Papers

Wokingham Borough Council Climate Emergency Action Plan. January 2020

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Climate Emergency Action Plan

Wokingham Borough Council

January 2020

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Message from Cllr Gregor Murray, Executive Member for Climate Emergency

Wokingham Borough's residents, businesses, schools and services contribute more than 770,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere each year. While this is a very small fraction of the planet's overall carbon footprint, it has a significant impact on the air we breathe, the water we drink, the spaces we enjoy and the wildlife we share our community with.

We create carbon emissions from almost everything we do. It's not just how we travel and distances we cover, it's also our houses and how much energy we generate, use and waste, how much food we consume or throw away, how many trees, bushes, plants and wildflowers we have surrounding us and how we go about doing business with each other.

CO₂ emissions in the U.K. have already declined by over 38% since 1990, but, at Wokingham Borough Council, we believe that more can and must be done to reduce our carbon footprint and improve our environment sooner rather than later.

This is a live document that lays out the initial steps that we intend to take on our journey to net zero carbon by 2030¹. Some actions are small, but, when taken by our nearly 170,000 residents will quickly add up. Other actions are bold but necessary initiatives that will dramatically reduce large elements of our carbon footprint once implemented.

We have been consulting with residents since we declared a Climate Emergency. Some ideas submitted are impractical at this moment in time. Others fall outside our sphere of influence, but, I am pleased to say that many of the ideas and initiatives conceived and suggested by our residents can be found in the actions and targets presented in this document.

We cannot hope to reach carbon neutral within ten years without implementing some significant actions, which is why, in this document, we are proposing to;

- Review and revise our transport network to enable more shared, electric or human-powered journeys
- Create a 'Green Bank' to help residents and businesses pay for the cost of environmentally positive improvements to homes, offices and equipment
- Construct solar farms for the generation of clean energy for our community
- Revise our Local Plan to require carbon-neutral construction and environmentally beneficial infrastructure
- Plant 250,000 new trees over the next five years
- Launch a sustainable schools programme backed up with clean, onsite energy generation
- Send zero waste to landfill, with refuse either recycled or incinerated for carbon contained heat and energy generation

¹ Net zero means that the UK's total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions would be equal to or less than the emissions the UK removed from the environment. This can be achieved by a combination of emission reduction and emission removal. Office for National Statistics

- Invest heavily into educational programmes for residents, businesses, schools, charities and other organisations to help them calculate and reduce their own carbon footprints

Climate change may be a global problem but local actions can make a difference. We can make a significant, positive impact on our environment, our quality of life and our community if we choose to act, together.

Taking the necessary steps to reach our aim of becoming net zero carbon by 2030 will not only improve the quality of life of all our residents, it will also act as an example to others, around the world, that positive environmental change can be made when individuals, groups, towns and communities decide to take action.

Cllr Gregor Murray

Background

The United Kingdom was one of first countries to ratify the Paris Agreement designed to limit greenhouse gas emissions to levels that would prevent global temperatures from increasing to more than 2°C above the temperature benchmark set before the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. This was considered, at that time, to be the tipping point that would trigger extreme weather events across the world. Resulting in risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security and economic growth

The Paris Agreement improves upon and replaces the Kyoto Protocol, an earlier international treaty designed to curb the release of greenhouse gases. Adopted in December 2015, the Agreement's central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change and to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments needed for a sustainable low carbon future.

In autumn 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report, which advised that global warming must be limited to 1.5°C as opposed to the previous target of 2°C to avoid the devastating impacts of climate change. As the climate has already warmed by 1°C since the industrial revolution benchmark. The report warned that there are now only 12 years (to 2013) left within which to take the actions required to avert a crisis, rather than the 32 previously thought (to 2050).

In response to the claims made by the IPCC, in the autumn of 2018 councils across the world started declaring a climate emergency starting with Durban, South Africa. To date 245 local authorities in the UK have done so with more declaring by the day.

Wokingham Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency on 18th July 2019. The declaration set out the commitment to play as full a role as possible, leading by example as well as by exhortation, in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030. The motion committed Wokingham Borough Council to produce a Climate Emergency Action Plan within six months, to report the actions that the council will take to achieve its target and to set up a cross-party working group to monitor progress. With the publication of this Climate Emergency Plan all of these commitments are now in place.

The UK introduced the Climate Change Act into the legislation in 2008. This seeks to reduce carbon emissions by 100%² (from where they stood in 1990) by 2050. However, 2019 marks an important milestone year as global carbon emissions have almost doubled since the Act was adopted in 2008 much soon than was originally anticipated.

Policy Context

The development of the Climate Emergency Action Plan aligns with national legislation and policy including the Climate Change Act, Industry Strategy; The Clean Growth Strategy; Road to Zero; the Future of Heating.

² The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019

The plan also aligns with the regional draft Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy (BLIS) and the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership Strategic Economy Plan.

The Climate Emergency Plan aligns with the following priorities set out in the council plan

- **Clean and green spaces** - Including becoming net zero carbon but also providing parks and green spaces
- **Keeping the borough moving** - Including encouraging active and sustainable transport modes
- **Enriching lives** - Including encouraging more people to be involved in volunteering and community activity, taking pride in their community and looking after their own wellbeing where possible and that of their families and neighbours.

One of the council’s key strategies is the Wokingham Borough Sustainable Environment Strategy 2010 – 2020. Its priorities are to

- **Engage** - Raising awareness, fostering respect for our environment and changing behaviours
- **Take action** - Minimising waste, pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Prepare** - Planning for the likely impacts of climate change and managing limited resources efficiently

This is an overarching strategy, which includes the wider environmental priorities for Wokingham Borough including biodiversity and recycling. This strategy will be reviewed and updated over the coming year and further inform the Climate Emergency Plan.

There is a clear link between the aims and objectives of the Climate Emergency Plan and other council plans and strategies. How these plans interrelate is set out below in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Climate Emergency Plan and its links to other Wokingham Borough Council Plans and Strategies

The 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development³, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which act as an urgent call for action to all countries - developed and developing – to work as a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and deprivation must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – at the same time as tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

The council recognises the importance of the United Nations’ SDGs and has decided to align the actions within the Climate Emergency Action Plan to the SDG framework. In doing so, the council hopes to ensure that its actions lead to a socially just response to climate change. The UN’s 17 SDGs are outlined in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2. United Nation’s 17 SDGs

³ [Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015.](#)

Section 1. Wokingham Borough Carbon Footprint and Targets

Carbon Footprint

Figure 1 shows Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint, which is a breakdown of carbon dioxide emissions by emitting sectors (emissions are expressed in kilotons of carbon dioxide or ktCO₂e). This footprint is based on government figures, reported two years in arrears, from the department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Total emissions are made up of three sectors; commercial and industrial, domestic and transport.

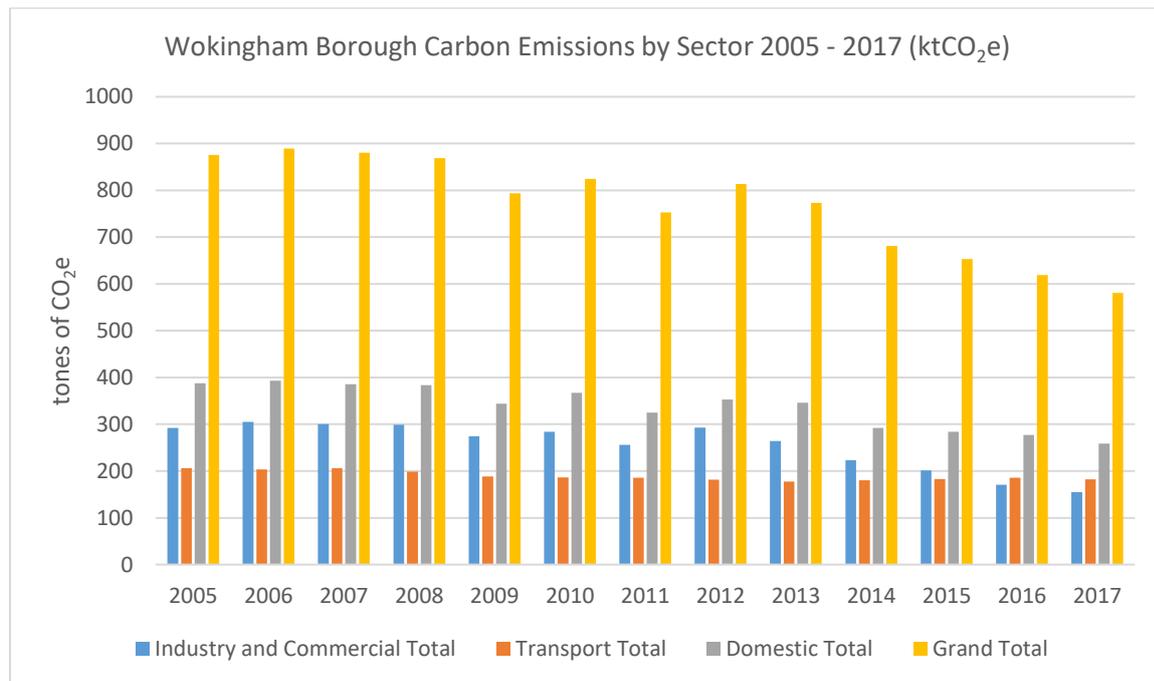


Figure 3. Wokingham Borough Carbon Dioxide Emissions 2005 -2017

Wokingham Borough's overall carbon foot print was **580.9 ktCO₂e in 2017**. This is comprised of transport emissions (31.4%), emissions from the industrial and commercial sector (26.6%), and domestic sector emissions (43%). This borough wide carbon footprint will be used as a baseline against which future carbon dioxide emissions are measured.

This figure excludes sectors that are completely beyond the council's scope of influence, namely the emissions from major transport links (M4) as well as diesel rail transport, which are managed by Highways England and national rail companies, respectively. These subsectors emit a total of 189.8 ktCO₂e. Including these figures would mean that Wokingham Boroughs carbon footprint would amount to 770.7 ktCO₂e in 2017⁴. Despite being outside the council's sphere of influence, the council will do whatever practically possible to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions generated from rail and motorway transport systems. This will include seeking to influence Government at a national level to help reduce carbon dioxide emissions from these sources.

⁴ UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2017

Trajectory for Carbon Dioxide Emissions in Wokingham Borough

Wokingham Borough's emissions have been steadily decreasing since 2012. This is partly due to:

- Central Government targets to increase the renewable energy infrastructure resulting in a higher proportion of renewable energy feeding into the electricity supply
- Technological advances leading to greater energy efficiency
- Improved awareness amongst the public and businesses of the impact of carbon dioxide emissions on the climate and resulting changes in behaviour
- Increased tree planting and afforestation rates resulting in increased sequestration of carbon

If we project the current rate of carbon dioxide emissions reduction through to 2030 Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint will be approximately 274.6 ktCO₂. However, it is anticipated that the current 'business as usual' approach emissions will eventually plateau at a much higher level well before this as most of the 'quick wins' will have already been achieved (Figure 4).

The projected reduction rate of carbon dioxide emissions required to achieve net zero carbon by 2030 is also shown in the table (Figure 4). It can be seen that large-scale carbon dioxide reduction activities, strategically targeted at the highest emitting areas will be needed to achieve the ambitious targets that the council has set itself. This includes interventions led by the council (e.g. retrofitting domestic properties and renewable energy generation projects) but also changes expected to take place on a national level (e.g. decarbonisation of the national electricity grid). To become net zero carbon, the borough will also need to invest in carbon sequestration projects – such as tree planting and the creation of carbon sinks.

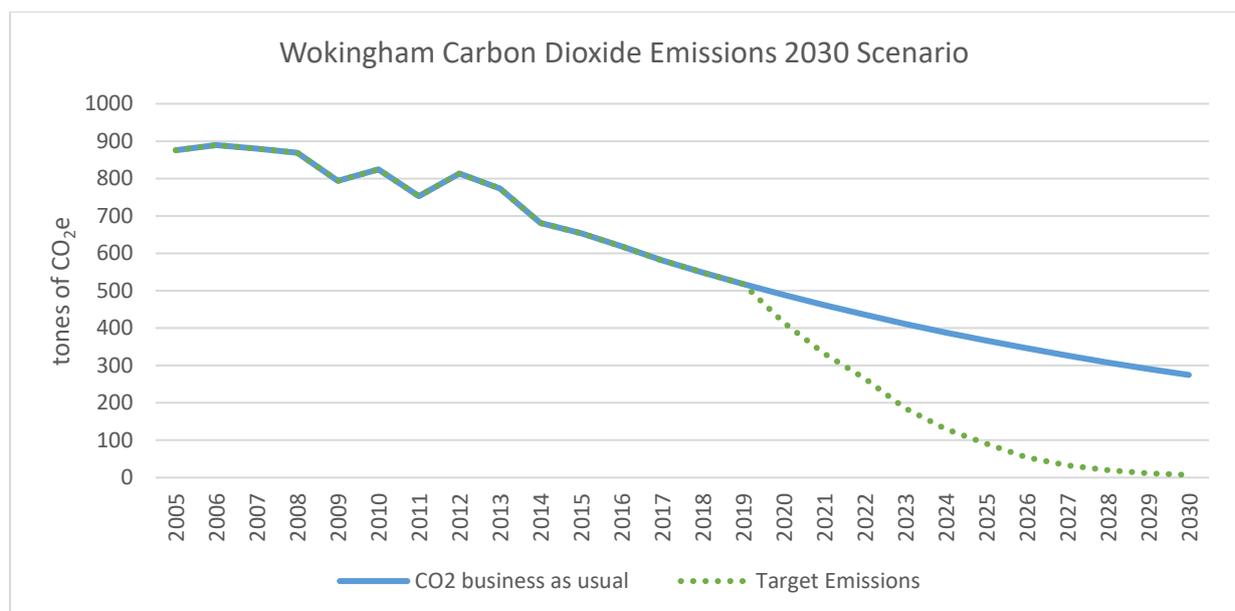


Figure 4. Projection of current rate reduction of carbon dioxide emissions to 2030 in Wokingham Borough

Council's Priority Areas for Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions with Targets

Figure 5 below gives a detailed breakdown of Wokingham Borough's carbon dioxide emissions in 2017. Our highest emitting areas are transport and the use of gas in the domestic sector. These will be key areas on which we will focus our efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. We will also seek to increase the amount of carbon sequestration in the borough.

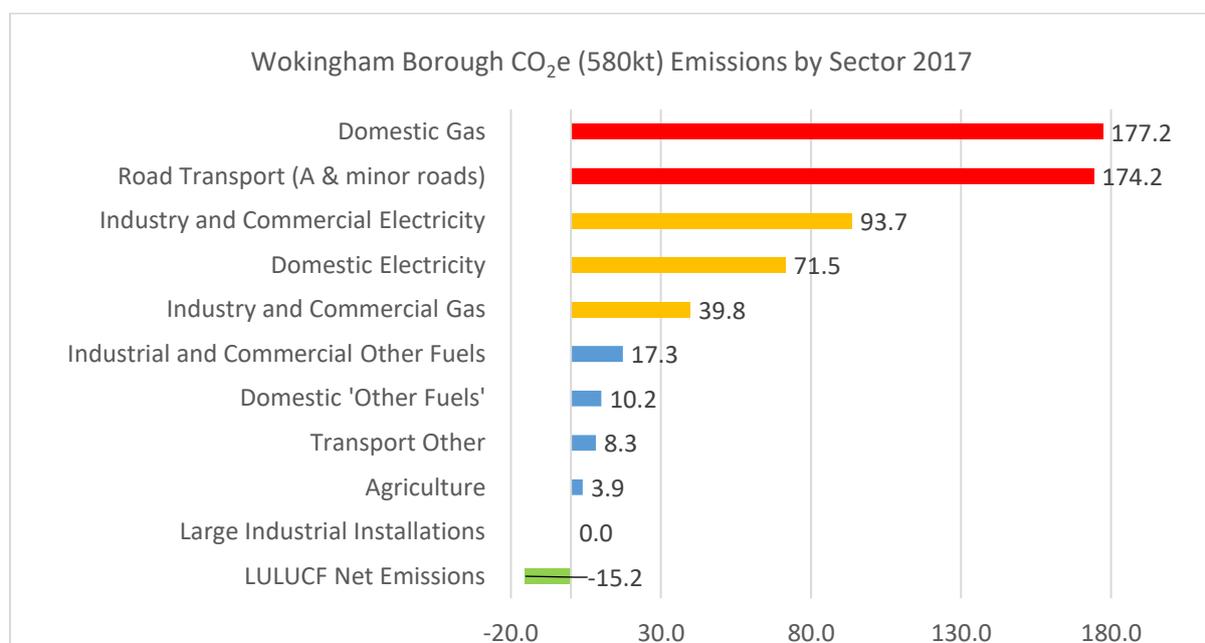


Figure 5. Detailed breakdown of Wokingham Borough Carbon Dioxide Emissions 2017⁵

Based on the BEIS data, predicted carbon dioxide emissions for 2018 and 2019 for transport, domestic gas and carbon sequestration can be seen in the table below (Table 1). Along with estimated targets for 2021 and 2025.

Emission Sector	Carbon Emissions (ktCO ₂ e)	Predicted Carbon Emissions (ktCO ₂ e)		Target Carbon Emissions (ktCO ₂ e) over the next five years	
	2017	2018	2019	2021	2025
Total Emissions	580.9	548.4	517.7	419.3	275.11
Transport	182.0	180.7	178.9	144.8	95.06
Domestic Gas	177.2	170.6	164.3	105.2	43.1
Forestry/Sequestration	-15.2	- 15.6	- 16.00	-18.5	-26

Table 1. Projected predicted and targeted emissions for WBC priority areas based in BEIS figures.

Carbon Footprint: Emissions Per Capita

Wokingham Borough is in a period of growth, seeking to develop over 13,900 homes and associated infrastructure by 2026. The Local Plan Update (LPU) is scheduled to be adopted in winter 2021 which will set out additional development targets up to 2036. Wokingham Borough Council recognises that this growth will increase carbon dioxide

⁵ Source: National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (2017)

emissions in the borough through both construction work and population growth. These additional emissions may have a negative overall impact on the council's carbon footprint even after all of the actions in the action plan have been implemented. An alternative way to measure the council's carbon footprint is on an emissions per capita basis. This will demonstrate the decrease in emissions in the context of a growing population. The aim of the LPU policies is to make the fullest contribution possible to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change and the transition to a low-carbon economy, by requiring the highest possible sustainability standards from the new development.

The per capita measure for emissions in Wokingham Borough for 2017 is **3.5 tCO₂e**.

Further analysis of the Borough's carbon footprint is provided in Appendix 2.

Carbon Off-setting/Sequestration

To become net zero carbon the borough will need to off-set some of the carbon dioxide that it emits. Off-setting is where carbon is removed from the atmosphere to help negate the emissions that are pumped into the air by human activities. Planting trees (and other foliage) is one of the best ways of doing this as plants store carbon and release oxygen into the atmosphere. Presently, the borough offsets 15.2 ktCO₂e a year through forestry and natural land use (labelled as LULUCF in Figure 4). These levels have been steadily increasing with an average annual increase in carbon capture of 0.4 ktCO₂e. Converting improved grassland (grassland makes up most of the WBC landholding) to woodland would sequester 7.83 tCO₂e ha⁻¹ yr⁻¹ in the first year, which would raise to 13.7 tCO₂e ha⁻¹ yr⁻¹ in subsequent years⁶ (assuming 1000 trees by hectare are planted). The council aims to increase the current afforestation rate to expand our carbon sequestration rate.

Wokingham Borough Council's Carbon Footprint

As an organisation the council produces 7,098 tCO₂e per annum from electricity and a further 4,058 tCO₂e per annum from Gas. This total carbon footprint (11,156 tCO₂e) accounts for 1.45% of the total Borough's footprint. The council aims to continue to reduce these emissions by improving energy efficiency and increasing renewable energy generation to become a net zero carbon organisation by 2030.

Section 2. Challenges

Wokingham Borough is an affluent, semi-rural area with a wide range of open spaces, agricultural land and several country parks. Over the last ten years, the Borough's population has grown by more than 10%, and is expected to reach 180,900 by 2037⁷. In 2018, there were over 67,000 dwellings in Wokingham⁸, and steady growth is projected into the future. Without significant compensatory action, this ongoing growth will inevitably add to the carbon footprint and is a substantial challenge to achieving overall net zero carbon.

⁶ Carbon storage by habitat: Review of the evidence of the impacts of management decisions and condition of carbon stores and sources. Natural England Research Report

⁷ Office for National Statistics (2013) NOMIS – Census 2011

⁸ Department of Communities & Local Government (2019)

In addition, to the expected high levels of growth, the greatest challenges to becoming net zero carbon, within the local sphere of influence, are:

- Wokingham is a historic borough with many older houses, which are not built to high-energy efficiency standards - often lacking insulation and double glazing for example, making retrofitting difficult. In 2017, 6.7% of households in Wokingham experienced fuel poverty, this compares to 8.7% in South East England, 7.2% in West Berkshire and 7.8% in Windsor and Maidenhead⁹. Our challenge to achieve carbon neutrality is subject to progress on retrofitting existing homes which requires a significant policy shift and injection of funding at a national level.
- Wokingham is a rural borough, which means that some of the settlements are remote and not easily accessible through public transport. This means private transport is heavily relied upon.
- There are high levels of car ownership (around 53.2% of households have 2 cars or more).¹⁰
- Many people feel unsafe, or do not feel confident to take up cycling, in the borough. The high speed limits and widths available on the country lanes in particular make cycling in these areas less attractive to many.¹¹
- There are 8,865 businesses in the Borough, a high proportion of which are office based service industries¹². Although, office based industries tend to use less energy than the manufacturing sector they still use energy to heat and light large areas of open space. Commuting to work also by private car contributing to congestion and carbon dioxide emissions.
- The area is prosperous so residents tend to be relatively liberal with their energy consumption in terms of use of appliances and heating.

Section 3. Opportunities

By taking a proactive approach to becoming net zero carbon by 2030, Wokingham Borough residents can look forward to a low-carbon future. Wokingham Borough is fortunate in that it has a number of opportunities that will help reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

- The council is able to use its own land holdings and assets to increase the contribution of renewable energy to the grid electricity supply through the creation of solar farms and the installation of solar panels on buildings where possible. The adoption of renewable energy generation and storage projects can provide greater energy security, lower our energy bills and has the potential to generate revenue to fund further carbon saving opportunities.
- The council has a wealth of expertise in-house that can improve energy efficiency in homes and businesses across the borough. This will contribute to a reduction in energy bills and fuel poverty rates.

⁹ Public Health Outcomes Framework 2018

¹⁰ Licensed vehicles by Local Authority: 2018. Department for Transport statistics.

¹¹ WBC travel patterns survey, April 2019

¹² <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157290/printable.aspx>

- The initiatives for tackling the carbon dioxide emissions might also help to reduce congestion, which is a cause for concern for the Borough's businesses and residents alike. The awareness of the impact on the climate emergency has put this issue under further scrutiny with more improvements to traffic management being introduced.
- Changes implemented to reduce transport emissions such as encouraging active and sustainable transport modes can also contribute to health benefits including reductions in cardiovascular conditions such as heart disease
- With the introduction of strategies such as, the Local Transport Plan 4 there are new opportunities to support the transition to Electric Vehicles (EV), as well as to enable mode shift to public transport, walking and cycling. Where new development takes place there are opportunities to construct sustainable transport infrastructure from the outset.
- As the LPU is in the process of being developed there is an opportunity to implement sustainable planning policies that will help all new major development to be built to net zero standards that will take effect in the near future.
- There are numerous opportunities for implementing carbon-offsetting initiatives by planting trees and creating carbon sinks within the borough. Trees can also help to fight flooding, reduce pollution, nurture wildlife and make our landscapes more resilient. Being a semi-rural borough, Wokingham has a plentiful supply of open spaces to implement forestry projects, and there is also potential to implement smaller scale 'scattered' woodland planting schemes on existing public spaces.
- Wokingham Borough Council has the opportunity to lead by example and make sure that we are ahead of the game in achieving net zero carbon on our own estate.

Finally, the council recognises the magnitude of achieving the 2030 net zero carbon target and understands that it cannot achieve the ambitions for the borough working alone. We need to connect with residents as well as partners both within the borough and across the region turning their concern and fear for the future into hope and successful action.

The council has started to engage and create strong partnerships with residents, businesses, charities, Town and Parish Councils as well as with schools and young people. Working with other local authorities across Berkshire the council has been able to deliver projects such as the Cross-Berkshire Cycle Route, which is being delivered by four local authorities across the county. The council will also engage closely with Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership and support their efforts in delivering a low carbon economy in Berkshire, as well as and the Greater South East Energy Hub and the University of Reading.

Section 4. What Wokingham Borough Council have already done – Looking back

Prior to declaring a climate emergency on July 18th 2019, the council was already committed to reducing carbon dioxide emissions and caring for the environment across the borough. The Sustainable Environment Strategy adopted in 2010 has the priorities to reduce, reuse and recycle. Over the lifetime of this Strategy, the council has seen a reduction of 42% on its carbon dioxide emissions from energy and transport. Some of the council's key actions and achievements are set out below.

The council has sought to reduce the energy use of its own state over the years to become more efficient. Some of the highlights of this work include:

- As of 2018, 25% of the energy purchased by the council is generated from renewable sources.
- Installing solar panels on council buildings where possible. The council has 31 solar sites of varying scale;
- Over 15 council sites have had minor energy reduction measures installed;
- investment in green technology by installing the most energy efficient plant and equipment in council buildings;
- Low energy lighting has been fitted in over 30% of council buildings, which has saved an estimated 11% in electricity consumption;
- Insulation has been installed in over 20 council buildings, saving over 3% in energy consumption;
- Other members in the community are also working towards becoming net zero carbon. St Mary's Junior School is now one of the first schools in the world to achieve the Carbon Neutral Gold Standard. The school also became a participant in the United Nations Climate Neutral Now Initiative. Their achievement will be used as an example to inform other local schools on their net zero carbon initiatives.

In terms of transport, the council has worked to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and congestion by

- Enabling and encouraging more active and sustainable travel through enhancing pedestrian, cycle and bus routes;
- Developing a 'Greenway Project' which aims to deliver an active and sustainable transport network; providing traffic-free commuting and leisure routes connecting new Strategic Development Locations with the existing settlements;
- Supporting bus usage in Wokingham Borough. Which has grown by 18% over the last financial year and 38% between 2009/10 and 2018/19 compared to a -1% decline in the same period in the South East region;
- Requiring businesses to provide Sustainable Travel Plans as part of the planning process when building new premises;
- Installing new electric vehicle-charging sites across the borough;
- Encouraging the take up of electric vehicles. Between 15/16 and 17/18 growth in the number of licenced Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) in Wokingham Borough was 456 vehicles (76.3%), compared to 30,632 vehicles (74.3%) in the South East region.¹³
- Promoting 'My Journey Wokingham', an active and sustainable travel campaign that supports Wokingham residents to travel by alternative modes. By creating journey routes, providing travel advice, attending community events, organising cycle training, guided walks, and producing personalised travel packs for residents, from 2016-2018 My Journey has seen
 - An 8% increase in the number of residents indicating that they cycle at least once a week

¹³ Vehicle licensing statistics: 2018. Department for Transport statistics.

- A 4% increase in the number of residents indicating they walk at least once a week. And
- From 2015-2018, 1,770 children were trained by Bikeability

The council has improved its recycling rates

- In 2018/19 it is estimated that 9% of household waste was sent to landfill, with 41% recycled. This is an improvement from 5 years earlier (2013/14) where 16% of household waste was sent to landfill, and 39% recycled
- As part of council plans to recycle at least 60% of all household waste by the end of 2020, residents have been recycling food waste since April 2019. 30% of all waste sent to landfill can be recycled in food waste collections (10,000 tonnes pa)

The borough has three Air Quality Management Areas and seeks to improve air quality through the actions in the Air Quality Management Plan. Such as

- Set a target to reduce Nitrogen Dioxide emissions from transport in Wokingham Town Centre
- Carried out diffusion tube monitoring out at 47 locations across the borough. The annual mean objective of 40 ug/m³ was only exceeded at 2 of the monitoring sites, 1 within the Wokingham Town centre AQMA and 1 within the Twyford Cross Road AQMA.
- Run a Clean Air Day on 20th June 2019 in Wokingham Town Centre. This annual event is focused on changing behaviours by creating awareness of the dangers of congestion in Wokingham Borough and engaging residents and businesses on the possible positive impact they can have on air quality.
- Planted 45,000 trees since 2011, throughout an accessible area of 120ha of green space in the borough.

Section 5. Wokingham Borough Council Key Priorities – Looking forward

The council has developed a Climate Emergency Action Plan that sets out the actions that will help the borough reach its target of becoming net zero carbon by 2030 from its baseline footprint of 580.9 ktCO_{2e} per annum

The priority areas of focus for the council's actions to reduce carbon dioxide emissions over the coming year are tackling carbon dioxide emissions from transport, reducing energy use (particular gas usage) in domestic properties, generating renewable energy, planting more trees and other green foliage and encouraging behaviour change. The action plan is not exclusively limited to these areas.

Below is some more detail on what we plan to do approach these nine priorities areas.

1. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Transport

- **Promoting Active and Sustainable Transport Modes**

It is a council priority to avoid the use of private cars where possible. The ongoing 'My Journey' project is a behaviour change programme aimed at encouraging walking, cycling, bus and train travel as a viable alternative to the private car. The outcomes of My Journey include reducing congestion, improving local air quality and improving both mental and physical health. The council has recently adopted the Rights of Way Plan and plans to increase the number of cycle lanes in the borough.

- **Public Transport**

Residents will be encouraged to use public transport more frequently. The council is reviewing its tendered bus network and aims to expand and improve the use of public transport. Wokingham already makes use of gas powered, hybrid and Euro VI engine buses on its contracted service. However, as technology develops the council will be looking to move to even greener vehicles.

- **Traffic Management**

Wokingham Borough Council views technology as vital in achieving the net zero carbon target and is undertaking ongoing work to look at 'Smart City' interventions that can improve traffic flows, reduce congestion and stimulate behaviour change to optimise the use of the existing road network.

- **Electric Vehicles (EV)**

The council has installed a number of EV charging points across Wokingham Borough in anticipation of the increasing take-up of EVs in the future. The council will develop an EV strategy to build on this work.

- **Air Quality**

One major challenge for Wokingham Borough is the negative impact that the emissions from transport and congestion have on air quality. Emissions from traffic include nitrogen oxide particulates as well as greenhouse gasses. Air pollution has become an increasingly significant topic because of the negative impacts on respiratory health. The council is looking into new technologies to create intelligent transport systems and prevent congestion in the future, including air circulation technology to manage air flow as well as digital signage, to alter flows of traffic.

- **Using Smart Technology to Reduce Emissions in the Borough**

Wokingham Borough Council is a partner in the Berkshire Smart City Cluster which looks at introducing smart technology to improve efficiency and the ADEPT 'Live-labs' project. Both projects are exploring smart technology solutions to reduce energy usage and improve transport efficiency.

2. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Domestic and Business Property - Green Bank Project

There are around 72,000 dwellings in the Borough, of which 85% are estimated to use fossil-fuel based natural gas. The council will set up the Green Bank Project to help residents and businesses pay for the cost of energy efficiency improvements to homes, offices and equipment.. This is run by neighbouring Windsor and Maidenhead council on behalf of the region. The scheme aims to help residents retrofit their own homes.

The council will implement the necessary measures to improve the current energy usage of its own corporate properties, and together with the planned renewable energy generation infrastructure aim to become net zero carbon by 2030.

3. Generate more Renewable Energy in the Borough

The council plans to develop five largescale solar PV farms throughout the Borough over the next five years, to ensure that all of our corporate property sites are supplied with net zero carbon energy. This will not only increase the production of renewable energy, but has the potential to generate an income, which will then be reinvested into delivering other carbon dioxide reduction projects.

4. Create a Local Plan that Specifies Net Zero Carbon Construction and Infrastructure

All major residential and commercial developments will be expected to deliver high sustainable construction standards. Policies to enable this will be embedded in the upcoming Local Plan Update (LPU). Within the statutory planning framework, Wokingham Borough Council aims to encourage, as far as possible, sustainable lifestyles that are net zero carbon. To this end, developments will enable the use of walking, cycling and public transport through ensuring that these options are central to the design and layout of new development. Major developments will embrace innovative sustainable design solutions for energy efficiency and low carbon energy generation and use.

The council expects all new major developments to be net zero carbon by building net zero carbon homes for sustainable longevity and offsetting any emissions from the construction period. Building low carbon technology into new communities will encourage sustainability in the everyday life of Wokingham Borough's residents.

The LPU will also facilitate the positive role that new developments can have in supporting the establishment of new renewable energy technologies as a key part of the development. The LPU will also require development proposals to maximise opportunities that support the expansion and efficiency of existing renewable energy schemes where it is appropriate to do so.

Additionally, embedding net zero carbon into planning policies will allow the borough to tackle emissions from domestic gas. This will build on imminent government legislation to ensure all future homes are built to be low-carbon.

5. Increase the Levels of Carbon Sequestration in the Borough Through Greening the Environment

The council will plant 250,000 new trees over the next five years. Greening the Borough is a project which will see afforestation occurring all over Wokingham. The council will encourage and support residents to plant trees in their gardens. The Local Plan Update will incorporate landscaping and net gain biodiversity principles to ensure afforestation and natural space is a prominent feature of any new development taking place throughout the borough.

Voluntary groups have been and continue to be essential in environment conservation in ways which are woven through communities. For example, community garden schemes such as the Gypsy Lane Community Garden. Encouraging these forms of grassroots conservation project, particularly where carbon saving techniques can be incorporated, is an aim for the council. Additionally, there are several Allotment sites across Wokingham Borough where communities can conserve the land as they see fit, increasing the carbon capture capability of the land. There is a new allotment site due to be open in 2020 as part of the South Wokingham SDL. The council hopes this will encourage the new communities in this development to see nature at the heart of their community and reduce their carbon dioxide emission contribution.

As well as increasing the capacity for carbon offsetting, afforestation will allow for a biodiversity net gain, an approach to development that increases levels of biodiversity to a greater state than before. This approach works in addition to mitigating biodiversity loss. This will be done in an effort toward rewilding areas to their natural state and allowing habitats to expand, a process which allows communities to reconnect with nature.

6. Engaging with Young People and Supporting Sustainable Schools

The council will launch a sustainable schools programme, to speed up the shift to clean, onsite energy generation. The programme aims to promote behavioural change amongst young people by engaging with schools to work with children to encourage the adoption of new 'climate-friendly' behaviours that will influence their families and communities.

To achieve a holistic approach to net zero carbon, this programme will be supported by a raft of clean energy generation and saving technologies such as retrofitting school buildings, better cycle routes to schools, no-idling policies etc.

Engaging with and hearing the voices of the younger generations in the borough is essential to the council's approach to the climate emergency. It is evident that climate change is a particularly significant issue for many young people and that they can be highly effective advocates for change. It is evident that climate change is a particularly significant issue for the next generation and they have already demonstrated that they can be highly effective advocates for change. School visits are seen by the partnership as essential for promoting key beneficial messages around issues such as public health and sustainable choices and allowing them to gain momentum. Raising awareness will occur in several ways, for example, through assemblies, workshops, conferences, and competitions, as well as implementing strong partnership working between schools, communities, university, businesses, the council and local charities.

7. Reduce Waste sent to Landfill

The council aims to achieve zero waste to landfill and 90% recycled by 2030. The council will reach its 60% recycling target in the borough by 2020. This step-change has been achieved through encouraging people in the borough to change their behaviour and recycle more whilst enabling them to do so. An example is the introduction of food waste collection which has been a great success borough-wide. Wood recycling from household recycling centres has also been introduced. There

remains great scope for future improvement with opportunities available regarding glass recycling and increasing the range of plastics that can be recycled.

8. Encouraging Behaviour Change

Invest into educational programmes for residents, businesses, schools, charities and other organisations to help them calculate and reduce their own carbon footprints.

- **Leading by example**

As a community leader the council will set an example and set high standards in becoming net zero carbon. Not only practically on its own estate but also across its policies, service delivery and investment decisions.

- **Wokingham Borough Council staff getting involved**

'The Green Team', is an internal team of staff who have a keen interest in the environment and climate change and are enthusiastic to roll out necessary sustainable changes across the whole staff cohort. This includes encouraging the removal of single use plastics and encouraging active and sustainable travel for both journeys to and from work and work related trips.

- **My Journey**

The My Journey team work with local communities, schools, businesses and transport providers to address the barriers to walking and cycling, and travelling by bus and train. In addressing the barriers to active and sustainable travel, the My Journey team deliver road safety and cycle training, provide advice on route planning, highlight the benefits of non-car based travel, organise led walks and cycles and provide incentive and discounts. In 2018-2019, our schools saw a 5% reduction in children driven to school compared to 2015-2016.

Section 6. Climate Emergency Action Plan

This Climate Emergency Action Plan was developed to set out the activities that will be undertaken in order to reach the 2030 carbon neutral target. This Action plan is the collective effort of consultation processes implemented since August 2019, and includes views from our members, parish councils, local schools, members of the public and the council staff. We have also consulted with consulted the following organisations in preparing the plan;

- The Energy Hub South East (Part of the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy)
- University of Reading - Sustainable Futures in the Built Environment Department
- WSP –Transport and Environmental Consultant
- Chair of WBC Business Group

There is a level of interaction between the Climate Emergency Action Plan and existing plans and strategies to which Wokingham Borough Council contributes to or manage. Key actions by the council across its various functions and as a large organisation are summarised within the Action Plan.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan is aligned with the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs give us an opportunity to create greater value for organisations and society and help us to understand these systems and how we interact with them. Appendix 1 goes into more detail on the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals and how they relate to the activities of the Climate Emergency Action Plan below. Appendix 1 also acts as a useful reference to how the SDG codes link back to the actions in the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Areas of carbon reduction	Outcomes	Actions
Transport	<p>Increase the take up of sustainable transport modes (Spatial Strategy for the Local Plan will partly influence this) (SDG11; SDG13; SDG17)</p> <p>Increase the number of electric cars in the borough (SDG7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Transport Plan (LTP4) will include consideration of the future of transport and CO₂ • My Journey to increase focus on CO₂ • Enabling mode shift to increase active and sustainable travel opportunities across the borough

Areas of carbon reduction	Outcomes	Actions
	<p>Improve air quality in the borough. (SDG3; SDG4; SDG5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and improve key routes to get maximum uptake of walking and cycling • Make public transport more convenient and greener to operate • Increase the electric vehicle charging network in the borough • Considerations to pedestrianising retail centres except to buses. • Bike storage and car clubs to be installed around the council buildings • Cross Berkshire Cycle Route • Improve air quality in areas of concern. • Introduce intelligent transport systems – traffic lights and digital signage linked to the emissions levels • Rotation of the road signage (digital signage) to increase awareness of emissions levels • Assess the effectiveness of introducing green walls, green roofs and other plantings around main roads • Banners up to encourage motorists to switch engines off whilst queuing • Introduce measures to discourage and penalise vehicle idling
<p>Green Bank Project</p>	<p>Explore opportunities to make the existing buildings net zero carbon. (SDG11) Explore alternatives to make new construction net zero carbon.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up the Green Bank Project to support reducing energy use from domestic housing and encourage switch from gas to electricity • Create a programme for retrofitting and improve insulation of buildings • All corporate sites and council housing to become net zero carbon • Considerations to an Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme for the Authority. • Move away from ‘gas provision’ for all new build council properties.

Areas of carbon reduction	Outcomes	Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with businesses to introduce and test the most sustainable new technologies
Generating Renewable Energy	Generation of renewable energy and use battery storage technology to manage renewable energy more effectively. (SGD7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility studies for new renewable installations in the borough Installation of large scale renewable energy generation technologies such as solar farms on Wokingham Borough Council land Where possible we will look at the potential of commercialising energy generation and storage
Local Plan and New Development	<p>Introduce a planning policy framework which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires all new major housing development to be net zero carbon (SDG9) All non-major residential development and non-residential development to deliver high sustainable construction standards (SDG9) Encourages retrofit improvements to existing buildings (where planning permission is required) Facilitates renewable / low carbon energy generation across the borough (e.g. ground source heating), either standalone or part of developments (SDG 7) Formalises the requirement for EV charging points as part of parking policy <p>Use the opportunity presented by key future developments to include cutting edge net zero carbon innovation (SDG9)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop suite of policies covering climate change, building standards, and energy Draft policies incorporated into Draft Local Plan Update for approval of Executive and consultation (January 2020) Final Draft policies incorporated into Pre-submission Local Plan Update for approval of Executive and consultation (July 2020) Embed climate protection in branding Incorporate smart tech solutions and latest build standards into new development master plan Adopt modern methods of construction to reduce carbon dioxide Consider energy generation and waste management Public transport oriented design to encourage modal shift Public realm design to encourage walking/cycling possibly through a cycle superhighway Transport Future Proofing through Smart Technology, Autonomous vehicle R&D, Electric vehicle charging points/filling station Green and Blue Infrastructure for biodiversity net gains Incorporate carbon offsetting projects

Areas of carbon reduction	Outcomes	Actions
Carbon Off-Setting	Realise the positive impact that the carbon capture properties of plants will have on our carbon footprint. (SDG3; SDG15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are several tree planting schemes the council is been looking at to increase overall woodland cover in the borough • Under the current Local Plan we have a further 75ha of SANGs to deliver and expect that to equate to an additional 30,000 new trees • Encourage and support residents to plant new trees in their gardens
Sustainable schools programme	Encourage the younger generations in the borough to get involved in cutting carbon dioxide emissions. (SDG4; SDG5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage schools in the borough with climate emergency • Support schools to implement onsite energy generation • Obtain feedback from school children on the Climate Emergency • Climate conference to be host for the students of secondary schools in March 2020 • Hold the Climate Competition for students to implement their own sustainable ideas • Launch an environmental awards for schools • Engage local schools with various air quality awareness programmes.
Reduce and Recycle	<p>Increase carbon savings opportunities that can be made from recycling waste. (SDG12)</p> <p>Develop an action plan to phase out single use plastic across council activities, for example parks, markets and events. (SDG12)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to Joint Central and East Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan <p>Considerations to achieve 90% recycling by 2030:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with re3 partners to reduce contamination • Work with re3 colleagues to increase recycling currently in the blue bags • Improve recycling in flats and multi occupancies especially around food waste and general contamination • Convert from a tonnage based approach to a carbon based approach to waste

Areas of carbon reduction	Outcomes	Actions
<p>Changing Behaviours - Engagement & Communications</p> <p>Activities of Council Staff</p>	<p>Introduce a culture of carbon neutrality through the council with all staff and services. (SDG12, SDG13)</p> <p>Ensure the council encourages local residents and businesses to support the ambition of becoming net zero carbon by 2030. (SDG13)</p> <p>Communicate the council’s carbon management activity by demonstrating that the council is leading in cutting carbon. (SDG13)</p> <p>Help business to develop low carbon business models, reduce their own carbon footprints and build climate resilience. (SDG13; SDG17)</p> <p>Ensure businesses allow for everyone to benefit from the prospering low carbon economy (SDG1; SDG10)</p> <p>Aid businesses and industrial process in being as sustainable as possible, particularly the prominent agricultural sector (SDG2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the theme of net zero carbon is embedded in the council operations and encourage behavioural change • Setting up a Green Team made up of staff interested in sustainability action • Encourage council staff to adopt sustainable modes of transport • Requiring carbon targets on our suppliers and taking carbon dioxide emissions into account when procuring goods and services • Establish corporate principles for internal and external operations undertaken by the council • Create a climate emergency communications plan • Consult with staff members, schoolchildren and businesses on their carbon neutral ideas as part of a wider engagement programme • Carry out a consultation with residents to gather ideas on reducing the Borough’s carbon dioxide emissions • Engage with the charity and voluntary sector to aligned their efforts with the climate emergency strategy • Raise awareness of the benefits of active and sustainable travel through the My Journey social media feeds, in presentations to school children and businesses, at events. • Arrange a Fit for Business event to support business in becoming net zero carbon and educate entrepreneurs in sustainable practices • Create partnerships with local business and provide the opportunities for the delivery of new and/or green technologies which will allow the low carbon economy to grow in the borough

Section 7. Finance and Resource

The council will seek funding wherever possible to support the delivery of the actions in the Climate Emergency Action Plan. This will include bidding for funds and applying for crowdfunding where applicable.

Some of the activities in the action plan will generate income or make savings. This funding will be ring-fenced to be reinvested on other projects in the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

The council has already established a new role, the Climate Emergency Strategy Officer, as a commitment to the work that needs to be carried out in delivering the Climate Emergency Action Plan to help Wokingham Borough become net zero carbon by 2030.

The council will make the financial provision shown in table 2 to implement the actions in the action plan over the next three years (subject to approval at council).

Table 2. Wokingham Council Budget between 2020 and 2023

Project Name	Project Description (for MTFP)	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Public Rights of Way Network	Investment in all public rights of way and other non-motorised routes to support the needs of all types of users	612	737	737
Wokingham Borough Cycle Network	Investment in current/future cycle networks in the Borough	500	500	1,000
Greenways	A network of quiet commuting and leisure routes for pedestrians and cyclists	610	874	742
South Wokingham Railway Crossings (Foot and cycle)	New Foot and cycle structures in the borough	0	0	1,500
Byways	Foot/bridal/cycle ways enhancements or new build in the borough	100	100	0
Winnersh Triangle Parkway	Transport infrastructure enhancement in the borough	3,100	0	0
Coppid Beech Park and Ride	Transport infrastructure enhancement in the borough	2,700	0	0
Transport infrastructure enhancement in the borough	Bus Stop Infrastructure Works to Support North Arborfield SDL Bus Strategy	54	0	0

Renewable Energy Infrastructure projects	Renewable energy generation infrastructure. i.e. solar farms (fields of solar panels) feeding into a battery or grid arrangement.	3,500	6,500	8,000
Waste Schemes - Recycling	The purchase of brown bins, paper sacks and recycling boxes to enable the Borough to continue their waste/recycling scheme	89	89	89
Support Services Energy Reduction Schemes	Investment in energy reduction schemes through various mechanisms e.g. lighting, insulation and improvements; which is envisaged to deliver demonstrable energy bill savings	250	250	250
Food Waste Collection	To provide food waste containers	20	20	20
Wokingham Biodiversity Capital Projects	A rolling programme of capital projects aimed at enhancing the biodiversity value of various sites and other assets	25	25	0
Managing Congestion and pollution	Investment in future road building/enhancement across WBC road network (including new relief roads)	3,000	5,000	5,000
Energy Reduction Projects	Expenditure on a wide range of energy efficiency projects at existing properties to improve energy efficiency. These include, installing LED lighting, Cavity Wall, loft insulation boiler controls etc, all to make the property 'consume' less energy	1,500	1,500	1,500
Climate Emergency		16,060	15,595	18,838
Grand Total between 2020 and 2023		£50 million		

Section 8. Governance and Monitoring

The **Climate Emergency Working Group**, made up of a cross party group of members, has been established to investigate and propose further recommendations to help achieve a net zero carbon Borough. The Working Group will undertake its role by:

- i. Reviewing, monitoring and contributing to the delivery of the actions set out in the Wokingham Borough Council Climate Emergency Action Plan
- ii. Providing a high level steer on policy direction in relation to carbon reduction
- iii. Reviewing the delivery and performance of key carbon reduction projects by the council
- iv. Reviewing and monitoring progress toward the council's ambition to achieve net zero carbon for Wokingham Borough by 2030 against the council's baseline carbon footprint.
- v. Liaise with and assist the Town and Parish Councils in implementing measures locally.

A **Climate Emergency Advisory Group** made up of representatives from industry, academia and charities. This group will meet quarterly to explore what new ideas and cutting edge technology can bring to reducing carbon dioxide emissions in the borough.

A **Climate Emergency Investment Board** will be established to assess each action in the CEAP in terms of carbon saved, income generated and costs to decide which actions will be invested in by the council.

The **Climate Emergency Officers Group** meets monthly and is attended by officers from across all of the departments in the council. The officers group delivers the activities set out in the CEAP.

We will set up working subgroups to work on specific areas to support the delivery of the action plan.

An annual Climate Emergency Progress report will be developed and brought to council for approval in July 2020 and annually in July thereafter. This report will have a fully costed up action plan with carbon saving quotas against individual projects. The report will summarise the boroughs achievements and demonstrate the benefits of becoming net zero carbon.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan can be called in for overview of scrutiny committees.

The Wokingham Borough Council Economic Prosperity and Place Team will lead on the implementation and monitoring of the CEAP.

Appendix 1. Climate Emergency Action Plan Key Actions and the UNs Sustainable Development Goals

Wokingham Borough Council and the Sustainable Development Goals

The Local Government Association (LGA) passed a motion in July 2019 declaring a climate emergency. At the same time offering a unified voice for local government to assist in delivering the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the table below each goal has been assigned an SDG number. For example, Good Health and Wellbeing is SDG3 and links back to the appropriate action in the Climate Emergency Action Plan demonstrating how Wokingham Borough are supporting the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Wokingham Borough Council recognises that, as a local authority, we are in the best position to raise awareness and to influence in the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals.

No poverty SDG1	Although Wokingham is an affluent borough, we will work hard to ensure the Climate Emergency action plan creates a sustainable, carbon neutral economy that will achieve economic justice as well as economic growth.	
Zero hunger SDG2	As a rural borough, sustainable agricultural practice is of high importance as well as promoting sustainable eating in the borough through the action plan which focuses on cutting down on meat consumption.	
Good health and wellbeing SDG3	We will be encouraging sustainable transport such as cycling and converting to electric vehicles through our action plan to ensure we maintain our high level of well-being across the borough	
Quality of education SDG4	The youthful population are a large part of our action plan to meet our 2030 net zero carbon target and we aim to promote sustainable lifestyles throughout our schools and ensure we hear the voices of our children.	
Gender equality SDG5	We hope the women and girls in the borough will take part to make the action plan the most effective in everyday situations like reducing waste and single use plastics.	
Clean water and sanitation SDG6	There is a strong focus on reducing water waste in the Borough which will comply with the sustainable management of water targets sat beneath this SDG.	
Affordable and clean energy SDG7	We are determined to roll out sustainable energy generating methods through the implementation of solar panels, particularly in our SDLs, which are both clean and affordable in the long term.	

Decent Work and economy growth SDG8	Wokingham Borough benefits from a below average unemployment rate and bringing more sustainable enterprises to the borough will only enhance our working population further.	
Industry, innovation and infrastructure SDG9	A large section of our action plan is dedicated to ensuring our new developments are net zero carbon through sustainable infrastructure and that we promote sustainable living within these new communities.	
Reduce inequalities SDG10	The UK suffers from vast disparities in wealth but this can also be seen on a local scale within the Borough. We aim to work the Climate Emergency action plan with economic development in mind to ensure we achieve economic equality throughout the borough.	
Sustainable cities and communities SDG11	Wokingham Borough is lucky to have an existent community that is resilient, inclusive and safe. We aim to build on this and strengthen this through the action plan to promote the same characteristics for the communities created in the new developments.	
Responsible consumption and production SDG12	The themes of this goal are woven throughout the action plan to promote and encourage a change in lifestyle of the residents in the borough starting with the council staff through the work of the Green Team.	
Climate action SDG13	By working towards our 2030 net zero carbon borough target we have been able to put in place Officer groups and projects that reflect the targets under our action plan and enforce action to combat climate change.	
Life below water SDG14	Protecting our bodies of water is essential for us as they are facilities for residents to enjoy in green space for non-polluting recreational activities	
Life on land SDG15	Protecting our greenspace as a rural borough is of huge significance and is reflected in the action plan, as we aim to preserve the land as a carbon sink or sustainably develop on land in a way that allows the whole borough to reap the sustainable rewards.	
Peace, justice and strong institutions SDG16	As an influential institution in the borough, we take our role in combating climate change very seriously and will show our respect of our communities through public consultation and incorporating resident's ideas throughout our action plan.	
Partnerships for the goals SDG17	Creating partnerships are an essential aspect of our action plan, especially one which is tackling such a global problem. Partnerships, especially with the businesses in the borough, will allow us to achieve more.	

Appendix 2: Further Analysis of Wokingham Borough's Carbon Footprint

Analysis

National Comparison

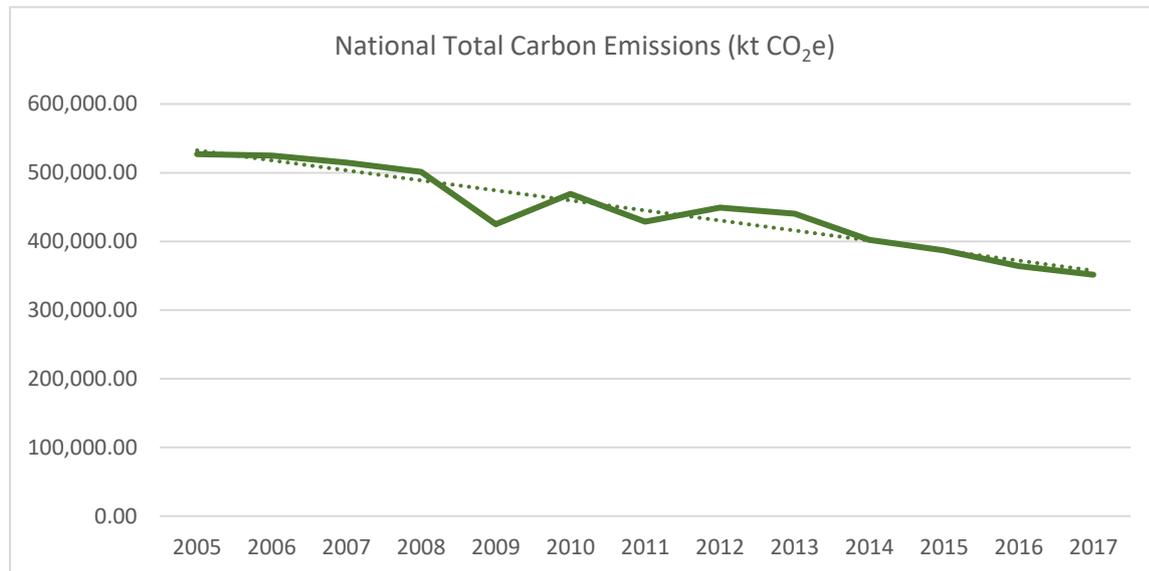


Figure 2 National Total Carbon Dioxide Emissions (kt CO₂e)

Wokingham Borough has followed very similar peaks and troughs experienced nationally. This suggested there are no key issues where Wokingham Borough went 'off-track' and should be in a good position to begin making significant moves to meet the 2030 net zero carbon target.

Surrounding Area Comparison

The local authorities surrounding Wokingham will be used throughout this section to further illustrate the borough's emissions and put them in perspective. The graph overleaf (figure 3) shows total carbon dioxide emissions of each local authority. Wokingham sits in the middle of the areas with similar emissions in 2017 to Slough. West Berkshire has very high emissions relative to the surrounding areas and this is mostly due to high private car travel and the resulting road emissions, as it is such a rural area. Bracknell on the other hand, has the lowest emissions due to a well-used public transport system and many new and energy efficient homes.

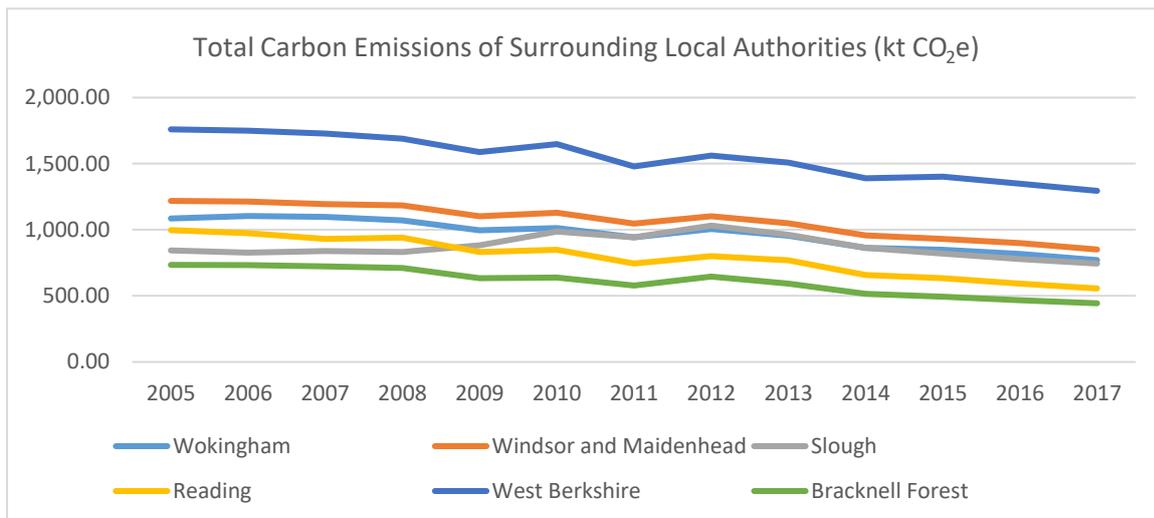


Figure 3 Total Carbon Dioxide Emissions of Surrounding Local Authorities (kt CO₂)

Per capita emissions (figure 4 below) is another method of illustrating an areas carbon dioxide emissions by dividing total emissions by the population. This then represents how much carbon each person is responsible for emitting. In Wokingham the per capita emissions are 3.5 tCO₂e. This is one of the lowest relative to surrounding areas. Reading has the lowest per capita emissions which is likely to be due to good public transport infrastructure, as a city. West Berkshire has the highest per capita carbon dioxide emissions due to the reasons discussed above. The emitting sectors, as already discussed, are broken down further and analysed separately below.

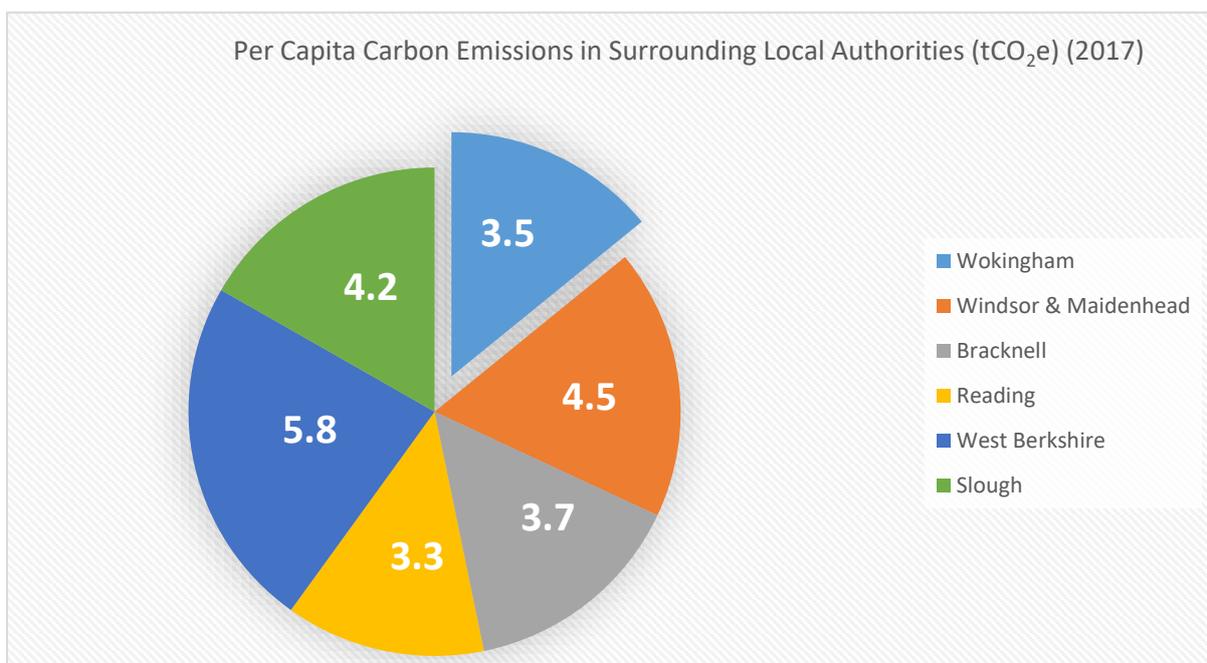


Figure 4 Per Capita Carbon Emissions in Surrounding Local Authorities (tCO₂e) (2017)

Transport

Transport contributes almost a third (31%) of the borough's total carbon dioxide emissions. Of the subsectors within transport, the greatest contributor to carbon dioxide emissions is minor roads emitting 88.7 ktCO₂e. Emissions from A-roads are slightly lower at 85.5 ktCO₂e. Both sectors have been increasingly emitting carbon dioxide in the years leading up to 2017, but decreased slightly in 2017 itself. With both sectors dropping by around 2 ktCO₂e. Further research will need to be done to understand what drove this recent slight decrease.

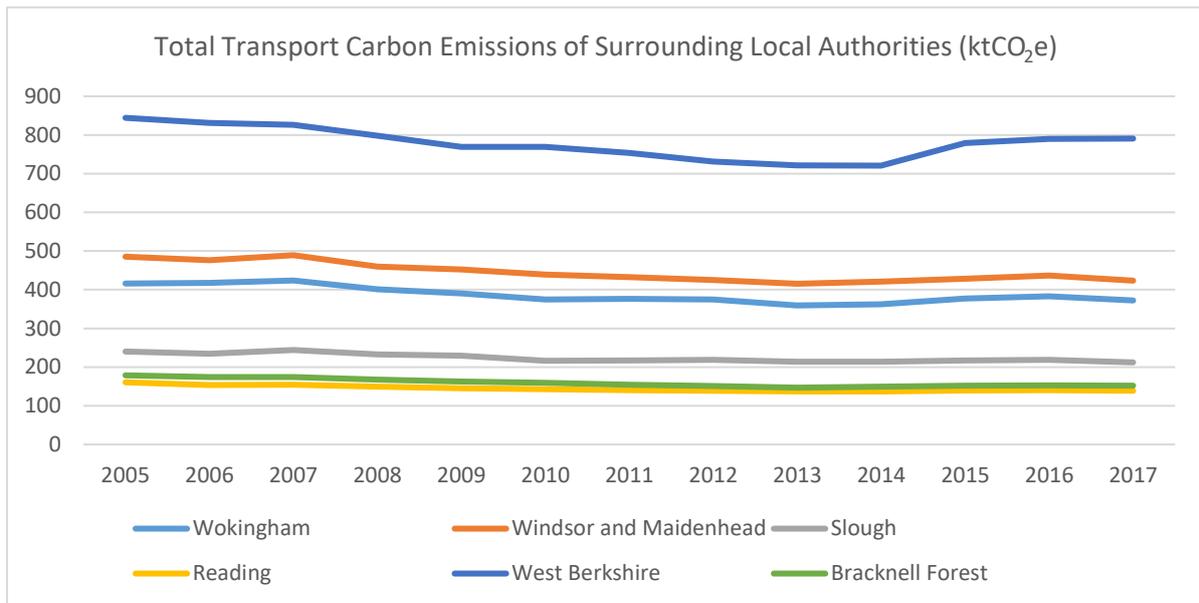


Figure 5 Total Transport Carbon Dioxide Emissions of Surrounding Local Authorities (ktCO₂e)

Two characteristics of Wokingham Borough are a factor in this large proportion. Firstly, the semi-rural nature of the area means many residents must drive for everyday activities, such as their commute and the school run. Many feel unsafe cycling on the country lanes and public transport in the borough is not easily accessible to those situated away from the main towns. This means private transport is heavily relied upon and is, of course, a damaging lifestyle in terms of carbon dioxide emissions. This can be seen in the above chart at West Berkshire has the highest levels of transport emissions because it is such a rural area.

Secondly, the affluence in the borough leads to high numbers of cars per household and also cars with larger engine sizes which are bigger polluters. Congestion has been a large cause for concern in Wokingham for years but the realisation of the impact on the climate emergency has put this issue under a new lens with further ideas and scope for improvement being realised.

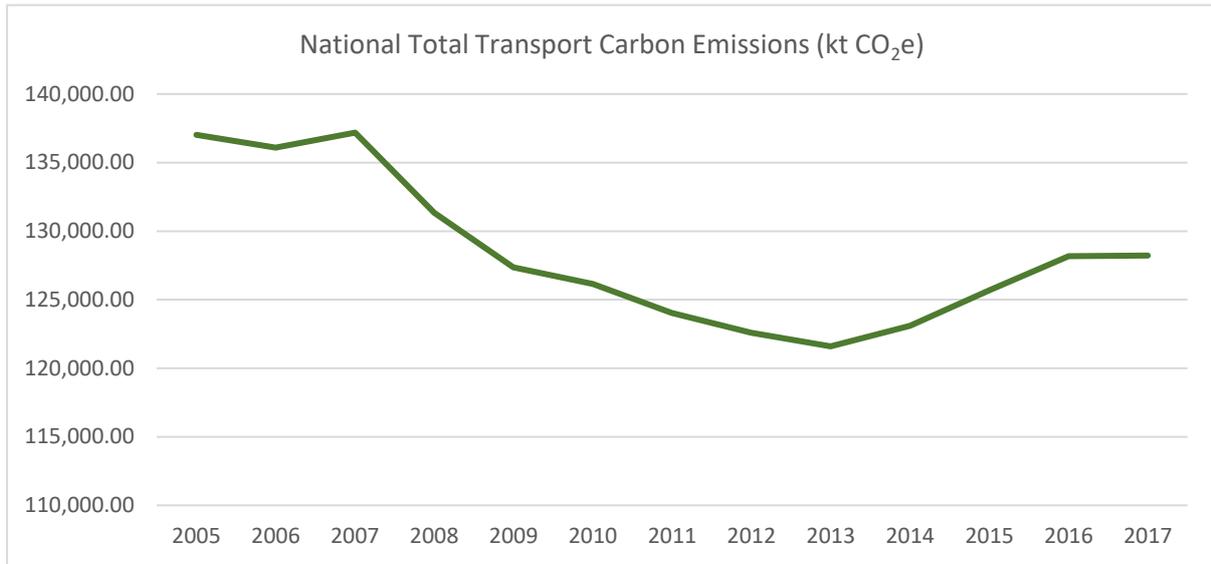


Figure 6 National Total Transport Carbon Dioxide Emissions (kt CO₂e)

Domestic/Residential

This is the largest emitting sector, contributing 43% of Wokingham Borough’s total carbon dioxide emissions. Wokingham is a historic town with many older houses which, do not lend themselves to be energy efficient, a lacking in insulation and double glazing. Domestic Gas contributes 68.4% of all Domestic Emission and 30.5% towards the overall carbon footprint. Therefore, retrofitting existing homes to become more energy efficient, away from gas as fuel will be key to reducing domestic emissions. Domestic gas emissions have remained relatively stable over the period set out below from 2005. This is because there has been very little mitigation in residential buildings and the boroughs older houses are not well insulated or efficient.

On the other hand, domestic electricity emission have been decreasing since 2012 and in 2017, carbon dioxide emissions from electricity stood at half of what they were in 2012. As mentioned above, energy sources for electricity supply have become increasingly renewable since 2012 as solar, wind and hydroelectric energy infrastructures began to supply larger amounts of the UK’s renewable energy generating capacity. Furthermore, the UK Government’s Renewable Obligations required 10.4% of the country’s energy to be renewably sourced by 2012. With other targets along the way, the next is a 20% target in place for 2020-2021.

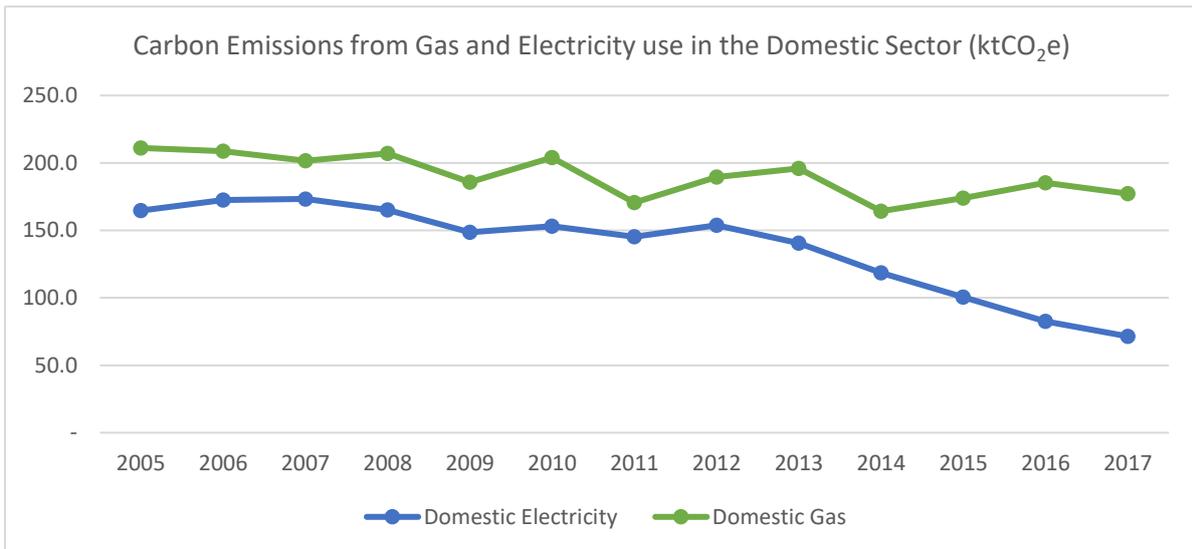


Figure 7. Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Gas and Electricity use in the Domestic Sector (ktCO_{2e})

The trends in the surrounding areas are very similar to Wokingham Borough's due to the nature of the energy sector being dictated by government policies on energy sources. Currently domestic carbon dioxide emissions reduction is mostly from energy efficient homes, particularly gas emissions. The levels of emissions vary suggesting the local authorities with newer buildings as the lowest such as Bracknell and Slough, and the more historic and rural areas are at the top including Wokingham which follows very similar trend to Windsor and Maidenhead.

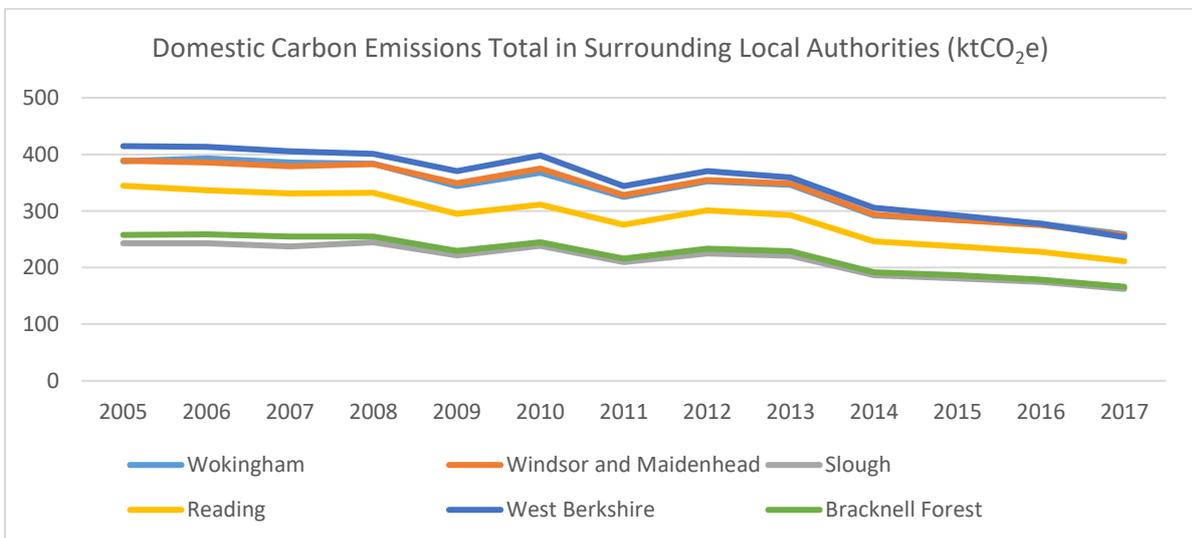


Figure 8 Domestic Carbon Dioxide Emissions Total in Surrounding Local Authorities (kt CO_{2e})

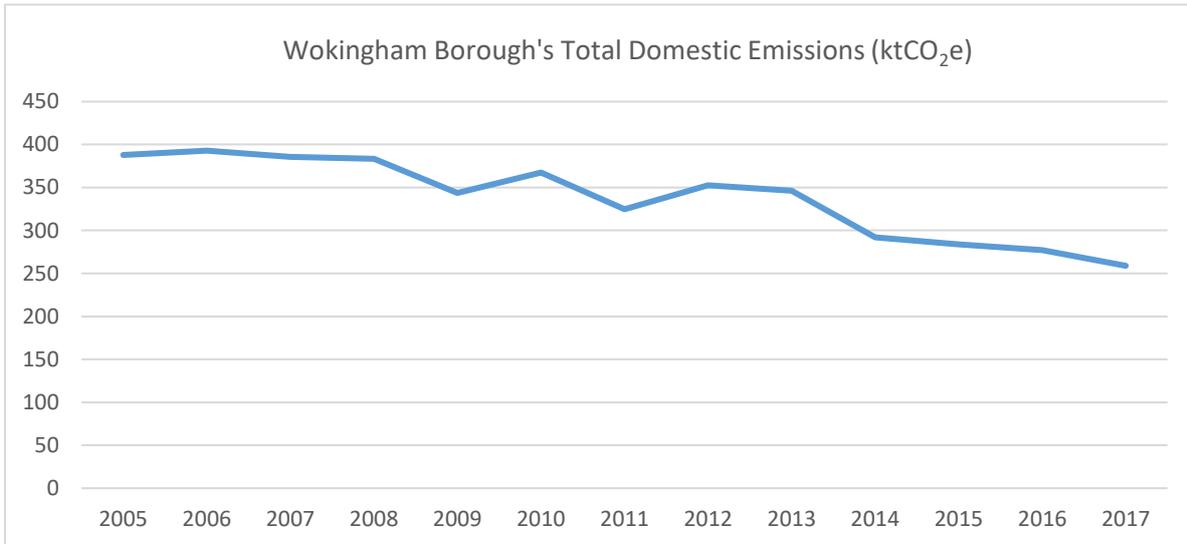


Figure 9 Wokingham Borough's Total Domestic Carbon Dioxide Emissions (ktCO₂e)

Likewise, Wokingham Borough's domestic emissions follows national trends. This further supports the idea that these emissions are part of national energy policy as there is such little variation across the immediate area and across the country.

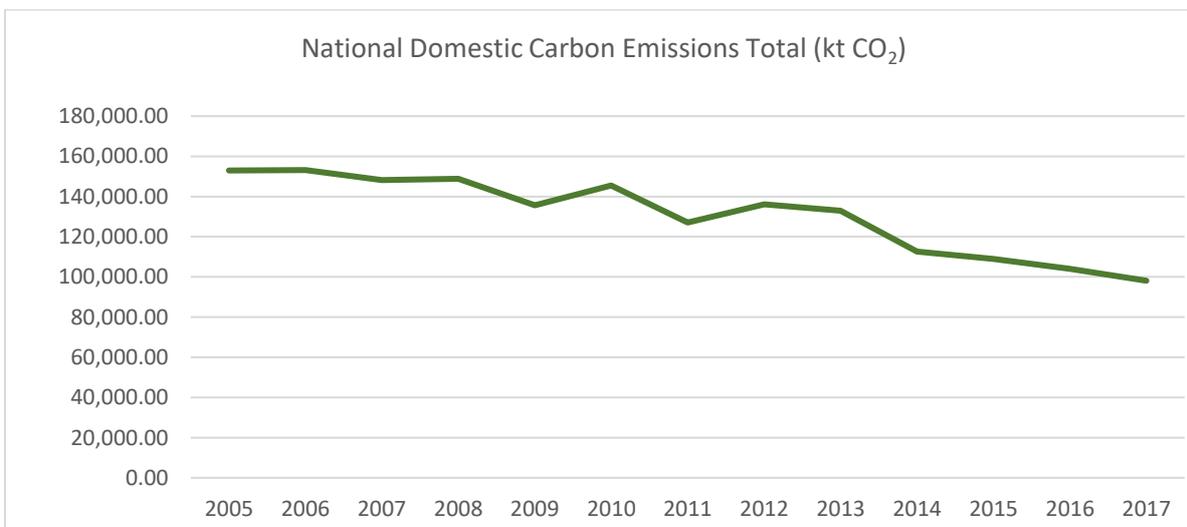


Figure 10 National Domestic Carbon Dioxide Emissions Total (kt CO₂)

Industry and Commercial

Similarly to domestic emissions, industrial and commercial buildings also emit through gas and electricity consumption. Contrary to domestic emissions, electricity contributes a much larger proportion of industrial and commercial emissions, contributing 60.5% of total industry and commercial emissions. However, emissions from electricity use have been decreasing at a relatively rapid pace since the previous increase in 2012. Industrial and commercial gas emissions account for a quarter of the sectors total.

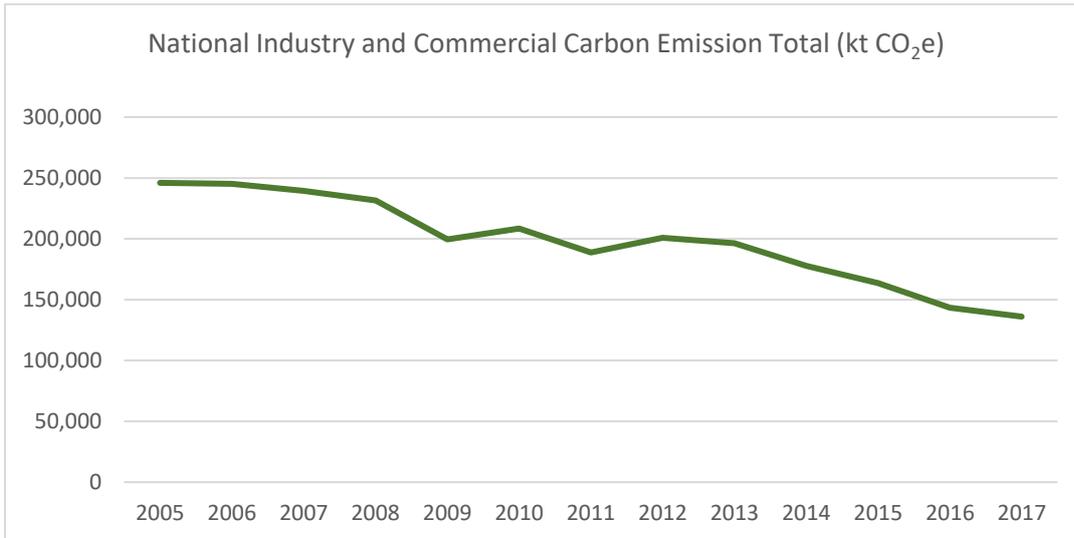


Figure 11 National Industry and Commercial Carbon Dioxide Emission Total (kt CO₂e)

Nationally, carbon dioxide emissions from the industry and commercial sector have also been decreasing. Again this has occurred since 2012, likely due to the increase in renewable energy supplying electricity as outlined in the domestic section above. Additionally, the UK has continued to move further away from the production sector and into the services sector which is less polluting due to the lack of industrial processes taking place which can cause high carbon dioxide emission rates.

This shift is true for Wokingham as a Borough located in the prospering South East. The borough has almost 9,000 enterprises active of all sizes from micro to large, most of which are low emitting office based organisations. The economic climate is changing as the low-carbon economy is rapidly growing in the UK as consumers are beginning to demand sustainability from their purchases, particularly in affluent areas like Wokingham Borough.

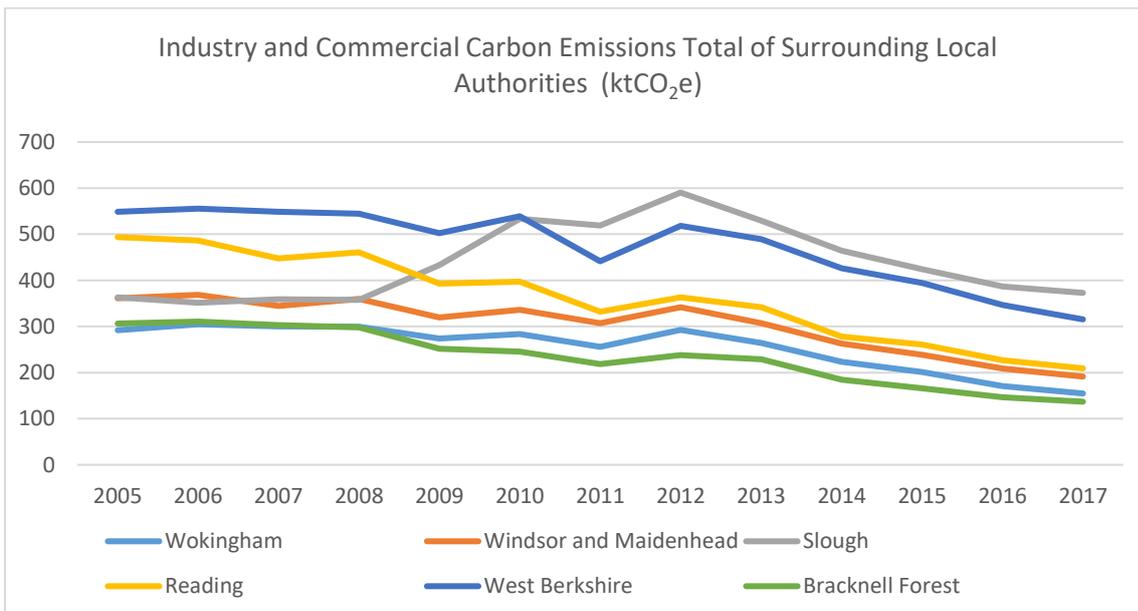


Figure 12 National Industry and Commercial Carbon Dioxide Emission Total (kt CO₂e)

In the surrounding areas, each local authority has seen a downward trend since 2012. This trend is starting to level out in the least emitting boroughs such as Bracknell Forest and Wokingham. Wokingham is the second lowest due to the nature of the industries that operate in the borough. Generally, these are office-based operations which mainly relies on electricity which can be supplied through renewables, rather than gas or any other form of energy which cannot.

Offsetting

Offsetting carbon is very important in order for the borough to grow in a sustainable way, as to reach net zero carbon the borough can only emit what it offsets. Presently, the borough offsets 15.2 ktCO₂e a year through forestry and land use. These levels have been steadily increasing over the data period with an average annual increase in carbon capture of 0.4 ktCO₂e. Wokingham sequesters a middling level in terms of surrounding local authorities. Although the carbon captured has increased over the data period, there is a large range through the region. Rural West Berkshire offsets 65.5 ktCO₂e while Slough and Reading as more built up areas only sequester 3 ktCO₂e through forestry and land use. Nationally, recent figures suggest that 11323.4 ktCO₂e is offset through this sector, this amount has been increasing in the 5 years up to 2017.

There is a large scope for improvement in this sector as Wokingham is a semi-rural borough with a lot of open space. Thousands of trees have already been and continue to be planted in Wokingham Borough. More tree planting is part of Wokingham Borough Council's future planning policies where a quota for offsetting construction with trees can be set. Conserving our current trees is very significant, as mature trees sequester a much higher amount of carbon than new trees which take years to reach the same level of maturity depending on the tree type.

Carbon Budgets

The Tyndall Centre from the University of Manchester¹⁴ have created a projection based on the borough's maximum carbon budget of 5.0 MtCO₂, to stay within Paris Agreement Requirements, until the end of the century. At current consumption rates, Wokingham Borough would use this budget in seven years. This allocated carbon budget is middling in terms of surrounding local authorities with West Berkshire having the highest budget of 8.2 MtCO₂ and Bracknell allocated the lowest at 3.0 MtCO₂. Minimum average annual reduction rates to keep within these budgets in the area are all between 12.3-13.7%. Across the whole South East Region this percentage in 13.3% and in Wokingham specifically it is just under this regional reduction rate at 13.1%. This again confirms that Wokingham Borough Council is on track with the rest of the region in terms of a carbon reduction pathway. However, the Tyndall Centre has created this reduction until the end of the century, therefore the council's projection to net zero emissions by 2030 is significant. This will allow the council to prioritise and map the Action Plan accordingly to meet the 2030 target.

¹⁴ <https://carbonbudget.manchester.ac.uk/reports/E06000041/>

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: Initial impact assessment

If an officer is undertaking a project, policy change or service change, then an initial impact assessment must be completed and attached alongside the Project initiation document.

EqIA Titular information:

Date:	13/01/2020
Service:	Place Commissioning
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Climate Emergency Action Plan initial Report
Completed by:	Rhian Hayes
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	No
Signed off by:	Nigel Bailey
Sign off date:	13/01/2020

1. Policy, Project or service information:

This section should be used to identify the main purpose of the project, policy or service change, the method of delivery, including who key stakeholders are, main beneficiaries and any associated aims.

What is the purpose of the project, policy change or service change , its expected outcomes and how does it relate to your services corporate plan:

The purpose of the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) is to set out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. This is a new priority for the council from which everyone should benefit

The Climate Action Plan comprises:

- An assessment of the carbon footprint for Wokingham Borough. This is based on government data and reported two years in arrears, Wokingham Borough's carbon footprint is **580.9 ktCO₂e** (based on 2017 data). The assessment for the borough identifies the key priorities to

be address to become net zero carbon. These include carbon dioxide emissions from transport (31.4%); industrial and commercial (26.6%), and the domestic (43%).

- Challenges the Borough faces to become net-zero carbon include
- Key priority areas to focus on for reducing carbon dioxide emissions to net zero by 2030
 1. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Transport
 2. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Domestic and Business Property - Green Bank Project
 3. Generate more Renewable Energy in the Borough
 4. Create a Local Plan that Specifies Net Zero Construction and Infrastructure
 5. Increase the Levels of Carbon Sequestration the Borough Through Greening the Environment
 6. Engage with Young People and Support Sustainable Schools
 7. Reduce Waste Sent to Landfill
 8. Encouraging Behaviour Change
- An annual Climate Emergency Progress report will be developed and brought to council for approval in July 2020 and annually thereafter. This report will have a fully costed up action plan with carbon saving quotas against individual projects. The report will summarise the boroughs achievements and demonstrate the benefits of becoming net zero carbon.
- The Paris Agreement (2015) set out a framework to limit greenhouse gas emissions to levels that would prevent global temperatures from increasing to more than 2°C above the temperature benchmark set before the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. In autumn 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published a report, which advised that global warming must be limited to 1.5°C as opposed to the previous target of 2°C to avoid the devastating impacts of climate change. As the climate has already warmed by 1°C since the industrial revolution benchmark. The report warned that there are now only 12 years (to 2013) left within which to take the actions required to avert a crisis, rather than the 32 previously thought (to 2050).
In response to the claims made by the IPCC, in the autumn of 2018 councils across the world started declaring a climate emergency. Wokingham Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency on 18th July 2019.

Outline how you are delivering your project, policy change or service change. What governance arrangements are in place, which internal stakeholders (Service managers, Assistant Directors, Members ect) have/will be consulted and informed about the project or changes:

The Wokingham Borough Council Economic Prosperity and Place Team will lead on the implementation and monitoring of the CEAP.

A Climate Emergency Action Plan to help achieve this new council priority of becoming net zero carbon by 2030. The plan will help us understand the scope of the carbon reduction required to reach our target, set initial budgets, set a carbon footprint and explore some of the actions requires to become a Net-Zero carbon borough by 2030

The **Climate Emergency Working Group**, made up of a cross party group of members, has been established to investigate and propose further recommendations to help achieve a net zero carbon Borough. The Working Group will undertake its role by:

- i. Reviewing, monitoring and contributing to the delivery of the actions set out in the Wokingham Borough Council Climate Emergency Action Plan
- ii. Providing a high level steer on policy direction in relation to carbon reduction
- iii. Reviewing the delivery and performance of key carbon reduction projects by the council
- iv. Reviewing and monitoring progress toward the council's ambition to achieve net zero carbon for Wokingham Borough by 2030 against the council's baseline carbon footprint.
- v. Liaise with and assist the Town and Parish Councils in implementing measures locally.

A **Climate Emergency Advisory Group** made up of representatives from industry, academia and charities. This group will meet quarterly to explore what new ideas and cutting edge technology can bring to reducing carbon dioxide emissions in the borough.

A **Climate Emergency Investment Board** will be established to assess each action in the CEAP in terms of carbon saved, income generated and costs to decide which actions will be invested in by the council.

The **Climate Emergency Officers Group** meets monthly and is attended by officers from across all of the departments in the council. The officers group delivers the activities set out in the CEAP.

We will set up working subgroups to work on specific areas to support the delivery of the action plan.

An annual Climate Emergency Progress report will be developed and brought to council for approval in July 2020 and annually in July thereafter. This report will have a fully costed up action plan with carbon saving quotas against individual projects. The report will summarise the boroughs achievements and demonstrate the benefits of becoming net zero carbon.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan can be called in for overview of scrutiny committees.

Outline who are the main beneficiaries of the Project, policy change or service change?

The main beneficiaries of the project are all of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough.

Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.

Outline any associated aims attached to the project, policy change or service change:

The Council's Key Priorities for Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions to Net Zero by 2030

The analysis above has helped the council to identify eight key priority areas (below) to focus on for reducing carbon dioxide emissions. The action plan, which has been populated with ideas from local residents, Town and Parish councils, council officers, and local businesses, is not exclusively limited to these areas.

1. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Transport

The council will seek to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from transport by using technology to help improve traffic flows, reducing congestion by optimising the use of the existing road network and increasing the number of EV charging points across the borough. The council aims to encourage residents to take up more sustainable transport options such as walking, cycling, and bus and train travel.

2. Reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Domestic and Business Property - Green Bank Project

There are around 72,000 dwellings in the Borough, of which an estimated 85% use fossil-fuel based natural gas. The council will set up the Green Bank Project to help residents and businesses pay for the cost of converting from natural gas to other low carbon forms of energy. The Green Bank will help install energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy technology into to homes and businesses across the borough.

The council will implement the necessary measures to improve the current energy usage of its own corporate properties and aims to become net zero carbon by 2030.

3. Generate more Renewable Energy in the Borough

The council plans to develop five largescale solar PV farms throughout the Borough over the next five years. This will not only increase the production of renewable energy, but has the potential to generate an income, which will then be reinvested into delivering other carbon reduction projects.

4. Create a Local Plan that Specifies Net Zero Construction and Infrastructure

All major residential and commercial developments will be expected to deliver high sustainable construction standards. Policies to enable this will be embedded in the upcoming Local Plan Update (LPU). Major developments will embrace innovative sustainable design solutions for energy efficiency and low carbon energy generation and use.

5. Increase the Levels of Carbon Sequestration the Borough Through Greening the Environment

The council will plant 250,000 new trees over the next five years. As well as increasing the capacity for carbon offsetting, afforestation will allow for a biodiversity net gain, an approach to development that increases levels of biodiversity at a greater rate.

6. Engage with Young People and Support Sustainable Schools

The council will launch a sustainable schools programme. The programme aims to promote behavioural change amongst young people by engaging with schools to work with children to encourage the adoption of new 'climate-friendly' behaviours that will influence their families and communities.

7. Reduce Waste Sent to Landfill

The council aims to achieve zero waste to landfill and 90% recycling by 2030. The council will reach the 2020 target to reach 60% recycling of waste produced in the borough. This step-change has been achieved through encouraging people in the borough to change their behaviour. An example is the introduction of food waste collection which has been a great success borough-wide. There remains great scope for future improvement with opportunities available regarding glass recycling and increasing the range of plastics that can be recycled.

8. Encouraging Behaviour Change

As a community leader, the council will set an example and set high standards in becoming net zero carbon. This includes its own estate but also its policies, service delivery and investment decisions. The Council will communicate and engage with all of its residents, businesses, schools, Town and Parish Councils, charities, the University of Reading, Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the Greater South East Energy Hub and other local authorities to work together to initiate education programmes and encourage behaviour change

2. Protected characteristics:

There are 9 protected characteristics as defined by the legislation:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Age
- Religious belief
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy/Maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership:

To find out more about the protected groups, please consult the EQIA guidance.

3. Initial Impact review:

In the table below, please indicate whether your project, Policy change or service change will have a positive or negative impact on one of the protected characteristics. To assess the level of impact, please assign each group a Positive, No, Low or High impact score:

For information on how to define No, low or high impact, please consult the EQIA guidance document.

If your project is to have a positive impact on one of the protected groups, please outline this in the table below.

For details on what constitutes a positive impact, please consult the EQIA guidance.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Race:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.

Gender:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Disabilities:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Age:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Sexual orientation:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Religion/belief:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Gender re-assignment:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate

		Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.
Marriage and civil partnership:	No/Neutral	All of the residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by this new aim of Wokingham Borough being net Zero-carbon by 2030. Adopting the Climate Emergency Action Plan fulfils the criteria required for Wokingham Borough Council to declare a climate emergency. A working document, the Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the initial steps Wokingham Borough can take towards becoming net zero carbon by 2030, including positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment for any groups you have identified as having a low of high negative impact. If No impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must report on this initial assessment and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy or service change.

Initial impact assessment approved by....

Nigel Bailey: Interim Assistant Director Housing & Place Commissioning

Date: 13th January 2020

TITLE	Changes to the Constitution
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Council on 23 January 2020
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director, Governance

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Reviewing the Council's Constitution on a regular basis ensures that it is relevant and fit for purpose.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1) agree the amended start and finish times for Council meetings and amendments to Sections 4.2.8 Duration of Meeting, 4.2.8.1 Consideration of Motions and 4.2.12 m) Motions without Notice as set out in paragraph 1 of the report; (*Please note that at the request of the Constitution Review Working Group this recommendation will be voted on separately*)
- 2) agree the following changes to the Constitution, as recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group:
 - a) that Section 2.2.5.1 Basic Allowance be amended as set out in paragraph 2 of the report;
 - b) that Sections 4.2.9.1 General, 4.2.10.4 Notice of Questions [Member Questions], 5.2.25 Questions by the Public [to the Executive] and 5.4.36 Rules of Procedure for Questions by Members, be amended as set out in paragraph 3 of the report;
 - c) that Sections 4.2.9.9 Written Answers [Questions by the Public], 4.2.10.6 Response [Questions by Members], 5.4.34 Response [Member Questions to the Executive] and 5.4.38 Response [Public Questions to Executive], be amended as set out in paragraph 4 of the report;
 - d) that Sections 4.2.12 h) Motions without Notice, 4.2.13.1 No speeches until Motion seconded, 4.2.13.7 Amendments to Motions and 4.2.13.11 b) Motions which may be moved during debate, be amended as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
 - e) that Section 4.2.8.1 Consideration of motions be amended as set out in paragraph 9 of the report;
 - f) that Section 4.2.13.4 Content and Length of Speeches be amended as set out in paragraph 10 of the report;
 - g) that Section 4.4.22 [Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board] Terms of Reference be amended as set out in paragraph 11 of the report;

- h) that Sections 5.5.1 List of Items Delegated to Individual Executive Member Decisions and 12.1.17.3 Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Developer Contributions be amended as set out in paragraph 12 of the report;
- i) that Section 13.2.2 – Estimating Contract Value be amended as set out in paragraph 13 of the report;
- j) that Section 13.3.1.1 Procurement Business Case (including options appraisal) be amended as set out in paragraph 14 of the report;
- k) that Sections 5.5.1 g List of Items Delegated to Individual Executive Members and 13.3.1.1 Procurement Business Case (including options appraisal) be amended as set out in paragraph 15 of the report;
- l) that Sections 13.3.2.2 Schedule 3 and 13.3.2.1 be amended as set out in paragraph 16 of the report and Appendix 2 to the report.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Chapter 1.1.4 of the Council's Constitution states that the Monitoring Officer will monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure that its aims and principles are given full effect.

The report contains revisions to a number of areas in the Constitution which were agreed by the Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) at their meeting on 8 January 2020.

Background

Timing of Council Meetings

1. At its meeting on 8 January 2020, the Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) considered the following proposals to amend the start and finish times of Council meetings.

- Currently:
 - Ordinary meetings 7.30-10.30 (can be extended to 11.00)
 - Budget Council 8.00-10.30 (can be extended to 11.00)
 - Annual Council – 7.30-9.00 (can be extended to 9.30)

- Proposal:
 - Ordinary meetings 7.00-10.00 (can be extended to 10.30)
 - Budget Council 8.00-10.30 (can be extended to 11.00)
 - Annual Council – 7.00-9.00 (can be extended to 9.30)

It was proposed that the timings for Budget Council remain unchanged and that the finish time of Annual Council remain unchanged in order to ensure that the business was concluded within the meeting. All other Council meeting would commence and finish half an hour earlier. This proposal would bring Council meetings in line with other Committee meetings.

Due to the fact that the start and finish times affect all Members, the Constitution Review Working Group have asked for the recommendation to be voted on separately from the other recommendations.

The following changes are therefore proposed to Sections 4.2.8, 4.2.8.1 and 4.2.12 m): Changes are shown in bold italics.

4.2.8 Duration of Meeting

*Unless the majority of Members present vote for the meeting to continue, any meeting that has not concluded by ~~10.30pm~~ **10pm** will adjourn immediately. In respect of the Annual Council Meeting the conclusion time at which the meeting will adjourn is 9.00pm. **In respect of Budget Council the conclusion time at which the meeting will adjourn is 10.30pm.** If, once a Motion to continue the meeting under see Rule 4.2.12(m) has been proposed and seconded, (which can only be done up to 30 minutes before the conclusion time of the meeting) the majority of Members present vote to continue, the meeting will continue for a further period not exceeding 30 minutes from the specified conclusion time of the meeting ie until ~~11.00pm~~ **10.30pm** or 9.30pm for Annual Council **or 11.00pm for Budget Council.** Remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Mayor/Chairman. This does not include motions, which will be deemed to have fallen if time does not permit consideration of them, see Rule 4.2.8.1. If the Mayor/Chairman does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting, unless there is agreement between the Group Leaders that there are no matters for decision outstanding.*

4.2.8.1 Consideration of motions

*If at the time the meeting is due to conclude, be it ~~10.30pm~~ **10pm** or ~~11.00pm~~ **10.30pm**, a Motion is under discussion, the debate on that Motion will cease immediately and the Mayor will put the Motion to the vote without further discussion.*

If a Motion listed on the Agenda has not been moved it will be deemed to have fallen and will not be further considered unless it is re-submitted at the next meeting.

4.2.12 Motions Without Notice

The following Motions may be moved without notice:

- m) to continue the meeting beyond ~~10.30pm~~ **10pm** in accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.8;*

SECTION 2 - COUNCILLORS

2. At its meeting on 8 January 2020, the Constitution Review Working Group agreed that the reference to the out of pocket expenses component of the Members Basic Allowance being reduced by £40 to allow the Council to mass register all Members, as data controllers under the General Data Protection Regulations, with the Information Commissioner, be removed as it was no longer relevant.

The following amendment is therefore proposed.

2.2.5.1 Basic Allowance

~~*‘...the amount set out in a) above will be reduced by £40 to allow for the Council to mass register all Members, as data controllers under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), with the Information Commissioners’ Office.’*~~

SECTION 4 - THE COUNCIL MEETING

3. At its meeting on 8 January 2020 the Constitution Review Working Group reviewed whether a word limit for questions should be introduced or if the number of questions that could be submitted to a meeting should be limited. It was proposed that Public and Member Questions submitted to Council and Executive be limited to no more than 200 words.

The following changes are therefore proposed:

4.2.9.1 General

.....The total time allotted to questions from the public will be limited to 30 minutes.

No question to Council should contain more than 200 words. This word limit does not apply to other committees of Council.

4.2.10.4 Notice of Questions [Member Questions]

.....All questions processed in (a) above shall be listed in full on the agenda for the meeting of the Council in the order in which they are to be put. Questions shall be dealt with in the order they are received.

No question to Council should contain more than 200 words. This word limit does not apply to other committees of Council.

This change will be replicated in Sections 5.2.25 Questions by the Public [to the Executive] and 5.4.36 Rules of Procedure for Questions by Members.

Time limit in which to respond to questions in writing

4. The Constitution Review Working Group considered proposed amendments to Sections 4.2.9.9 Written Answers [Questions by the Public], 4.2.10.6 Response [Questions by Members], 5.4.34 Response [Member Questions to the Executive] and 5.4.38 Response [Public Questions to Executive]. These amendments are to clarify that whilst an answer to pre submitted Public or Member questions that cannot be answered during the meeting should be provided in writing within seven working days of the meeting, this deadline does not apply to the answers of supplementary questions, which could take longer to respond to, due to the often complex subject matter.

Proposed amendments are in bold italics.

4.2.9.9 Written Answers [Questions by the Public]

*Any question which cannot be dealt with during public question time, either because of lack of time, because of the non-attendance of the Member to whom it was to be put or because the Member answering the Question requires further information not available at the time, will be deemed to have been put, and shall be the subject of a written reply within seven working days to the person asking the question. The answer shall also be recorded in the Minutes of the meeting. **Please note this deadline does not apply to supplementary questions, which can take longer to respond to, due to the often complex nature of the subject matter.***

4.2.10.6 Response [Questions by Members]

An answer may take the form of:

- a) *a direct oral answer;*
- b) *where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or*
- c) *where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, (including where such an answer would require the disclosure of exempt information) a written answer circulated later to the questioner within seven working days of the meeting, and included in the Minutes of the meeting. **Please note this deadline does not apply to supplementary questions, which can take longer to respond to, due to the often complex nature of the subject matter.***

No person answering a question shall speak for longer than two minutes.

This proposed change will be replicated in Sections 5.4.34 Response [Member Questions to the Executive] and 5.4.38 Response [Public Questions to Executive].

Motions on Notice

5. The Constitution Review Working Group considered a number of proposals regarding Motions on Notice.

Amendment to Motion:

6. Members were of the view that it should be clarified that amendments to Motions could not be put until the proposer of the Motion and seconder (if not reserving their right to speak) had made their speech(es). It is proposed that Sections 4.2.12 h) Motions without Notice, 4.2.13.1 No speeches until Motion seconded and 4.2.13.11 b) Motions which may be moved during debate, be amended to reflect this as set out in Appendix 1.

7. The Working Group were of the view that it should be clarified that if the proposer of the original Motion accepts the proposed amendment it becomes his/her Motion (i.e the substantive Motion) to which further amendments can be moved, and that no vote was required in such cases.

8. It is also proposed that any amendments to Motions should, wherever possible, be provided to Democratic Services in advance of the Council meeting, in order to facilitate the meeting process.

It is proposed that Section 4.2.13.7 Amendments to Motions, be amended to reflect this (Appendix 1).

Consideration of Motions:

9. Currently there is no time limit for when the debate of submitted Motions can begin at Council meetings.

It is proposed that a Motion cannot be moved if there is only 15 minutes remaining before the meeting is due to conclude.

The following amendment to the Constitution is therefore put forward.

4.2.8.1 Consideration of motions

...If a Motion listed on the Agenda has not been moved it will be deemed to have fallen and will not be further considered unless it is re-submitted at the next meeting.

A Motion cannot be moved if there is only 15 minutes remaining before the meeting is due to conclude, be it 9.45pm or 10.15pm. Discussion must cease at the time the meeting is due to conclude and the Mayor will then put the Motion to the vote without further discussion. A Closure Motion (4.2.13.12) cannot be used if this process is followed.

10. At present proposers have up to 5 minutes in which to put their Motion forwards. The Constitution Review Working Group considered and agreed a proposal that this be reduced to up to 3 minutes. Seconders and other Members debating a Motion currently have 3 minutes in which to speak.

The following amendment is therefore proposed.

4.2.13.4 Content and Length of Speeches

Speeches must be directed to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or point of order. No speech, except with the consent of the Council under [Rule 4.2.12g](#), may exceed 3 minutes except in the case of

- ~~a) a Member proposing a Motion who shall speak for no more than 5 minutes;~~
- ~~b) the Leader of the Council or an Executive Member making a statement at Council who shall speak for no more than 5 minutes.~~
- ~~e) b) at the Budget Council meeting the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition shall speak for no more than 12 minutes each on the budget agenda item. The Leader of the Council will also have the opportunity to exercise his / her right of reply as set out in [Rule 4.2.13.5](#)~~

4.4.22 [Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board] Terms of Reference

11. At the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board meeting on 10 October 2019 the Board agreed to the request that Thames Valley Police be removed from the Board's membership due to capacity issues.

The following amendment is therefore proposed:

4.4.23 Membership

The membership of the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board will be as follows.....:

- ~~e) **Representative from Thames Valley Police**~~

SECTION 5 – EXECUTIVE AND SECTION 12 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

12. At the Executive meeting on 31 October 2019, it was agreed that future spend approval of available S106 developer contributions in relation to the Council's My Journey travel programme would be approved via Individual Executive Member Decision.

The following addition to the Constitution is therefore proposed.

5.5.1 List of Items Delegated to Individual Executive Member Decisions

- o) future spend approval of available S106 developer contributions in relation to the Council's My Journey travel programme**

As a result of this it is proposed that the following addition be made to Section 12.1.17.3 - Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Developer Contributions.

12.1.17.3 Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Developer Contributions

The utilisation (including the creation of new projects in the capital programme) of all CIL and Section 106 Developer Contributions, and other funding from developers received under specific legislation, up to £25,000 are to be agreed by the Resources

Manager (CIL/S106) and the relevant Head of Service. Between £25,000 and £100,000 to be agreed by the Director Corporate Services (this authority has been delegated by the Director Corporate Services to the Assistant Director Delivery and Infrastructure and by the Assistant Director Delivery and Infrastructure to the Lead Specialist Infrastructure Delivery and Projects); the Service Manager Strategic Assets; and the Executive Member responsible for the area spending the CIL/S106 money. Above £100,000 will require approval from Executive quarterly as part of the capital programme.

In instances, where the S106 / CIL money relates to the Council's My Journey travel programme, delegated approval can be achieved through Individual Executive Member Decisions.

SECTION 13 PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACT RULES AND PROCEDURES

13. The Constitution Review Working Group considered a number of proposed amendments to Section 13 Procurement and Contract Rules and Procedures and Section 5.5.1 Items Delegated to Individual Executive Members, which are in bold italics and set out below.

The proposed change to Section 13.2.2 will improve alignment of the core Procurement and Contract Rules and Procedure with the Procurement and Contract Regulation 2015 (PCR2015) and will aid Officers in meeting their obligations under PCR2015 by highlighting this area, where decision-making has been weak.

13.2.2 – Estimating Contract Value

All contract opportunities are required to state a total ascertainable value (or a value range) so that potential suppliers can assess their suitability for the opportunity and the appropriate procurement process can be utilised. The estimate includes both revenue and capital elements of any contract. There are several requirements in PCR2015 (Regulation 6) that specify how the value of the opportunity should be calculated.

Refer to the Estimate of Value document and contact Procurement for advice.

Where no definition of total value is possible, the estimated contract value shall be calculated as: 48 x the monthly value.

Where service contracts are regular in nature (multiple contracts of similar type - aggregation), the calculation of the estimated contract value shall be based on the total actual value of the successive contracts of the same type awarded during the preceding 12 months. The calculation must take account of the changes in quantity and value that would occur during the 12 months following award of the initial contract.

14. The proposed addition to Section 13.3.1.1 Procurement Business Case (including options appraisal) will ensure that Officers proposing to undertake procurement exercises are aware of the levels of scrutiny and approval required of business cases at all levels of expenditure.

Section 13.3.1.1 Procurement Business Case (including options appraisal)

	No formal business case required	Assistant Director & Director Approval	Executive Approval (see Note 1 below)	Full Council Approval
Goods and Services	< £50k	£50k - £500k	> £500k	Annual Value >£5M or TAV >£25M (if Capital >£15M)
Schedule 3 Services	< £50k	£50k - £615k	> £615k	
Works	< £50k	£50k - £4,551k	> £4,551k	

15. 5.5.1 List of Items Delegated to Individual Executive Members

The following changes are proposed to Section 5.5.1 g) List of Items Delegated to Individual Executive Members.

*g) Approving Procurement Business Cases ~~and awarding of contracts~~ that have a **total ascertainable** value of £500,000 or more up to the limits specified in Rule 5.1.9.4. **The default option is Executive approval. In exceptional circumstances, where this is not practical and delay will have negative financial consequences, approval by two Executive Members is allowed. Each Procurement Business Case for contracts exceeding the value of £500,000 should be approved by This should be the Executive Member for the relevant Service area together with the Executive member with responsibility for Finance, unless the relevant Executive Member is responsible for Finance, in which case the approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Deputy Leader of the Council, or if the Deputy Leader is the Executive Member with responsibility for Finance, or if they are unavailable, in which case the approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Leader of the Council. An explanation of the exceptional circumstances must be included within the Individual Executive Member Decision Report.***

~~*The default option is Executive approval. In exceptional circumstances, where this is not practical and delay will have negative financial consequences, approval by two Executive Members is allowed. This will usually be the Executive Member for the relevant Service area and the Executive Member for Finance, unless the relevant Services area is Finance, in which case approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Deputy Leader of the Council, or if the Deputy Leader is the Executive Member with responsibility for Finance, in which case approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Leader of the Council (Rule 13.3.1.1). An explanation of the exceptional circumstances must be included within the Individual Executive Member Decision Report.*~~

The replacement of the wording "...a value..." by "...a total ascertainable value..." tightens the limit of approval by this route, since total ascertainable value is concerned with the maximum potential expenditure across the lifetime of a contract. The proposed change ensures continuity between Chapters 5 and 13 of the Constitution.

The proposed alterations to Section 5.5.1 g) also renders the footnote superfluous.

In addition PCR2015 does not allow modification of a procurement at the final award stage; the only options are to approve the winning tenderer or to abandon the procurement and start again. It is therefore essential that Members are involved at the Business Case stage, so that the Council's strategies are put into action, larger

procurements receive proper scrutiny by Members whilst they can still be modified and resources are not wasted. The proposed changes clarifies this.

As a result of these amendments it is proposed that the following addition be made to Section 13.3.1.1 - 13.3.1.1 Procurement Business Case (including options appraisal), to ensure continuity between Chapters 5 and 13 of the Constitution.

13.3.1.1 Procurement Business Case (including options appraisal)

Note 1 *The default option is Executive approval.*

*In exceptional circumstances, where this is not practical and delay will have negative financial consequences, approval by two Executive Members is allowed. This will usually be the Executive Member for the relevant service area and the Executive Member with responsibility for Finance, unless the relevant service is Finance, in which case approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Deputy Leader of the Council, or if the Deputy Leader is the Executive Member with responsibility for Finance, **or is unavailable**, in which case the approval must be carried out in conjunction with the Leader of the Council (Rule 5.5.1 g). An explanation of the exceptional circumstances must be included within the Individual Executive Member Decision report.*

16. 13.3.2.2 Schedule 3

The following proposed change (Appendix 2) to Section 13.3.2.2 clarifies that the Quick Quotes process cannot be utilised for procurements exceeding £50k in value. It also removes reference to Relationship Managers, as this role has been removed. It is proposed that the reference to Relationship Managers in Section 13.3.2.1 also be removed.

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)	£nil	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£nil	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£nil	Yes	Revenue

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Cross-Council Implications
None

List of Background Papers
The Council's Constitution

Contact Madeleine Shopland	Service Governance
Telephone No 0118 974 6319	Email madeleine.shopland@wokingham.gov.uk

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4.2.8.1 Consideration of motions

If at the time the meeting is due to conclude, be it **10.00pm** ~~10.30pm~~ or **10.30pm** ~~11.00pm~~, a Motion is under discussion, the debate on that Motion will cease immediately and the Mayor will put the Motion to the vote without further discussion.

If a Motion listed on the Agenda has not been moved it will be deemed to have fallen and will not be further considered unless it is re-submitted at the next meeting.

A Motion cannot be moved if there is only 15 minutes remaining before the meeting is due to conclude, be it 9.45pm or 10.15pm. Discussion must cease at the time the meeting is due to conclude and the Mayor then puts the Motion to the vote without further discussion. A Closure Motion (4.2.13.12) cannot be used if this process is followed.

4.2.11 Motions on Notice

4.2.11.1 Notice

Except for motions which can be moved without notice under [Rule 4.2.12](#), written notice of every Motion, signed by the Member of the Council giving the notice must be delivered to the Chief Executive no later than 10.00am on the seventh working day before the meeting (excluding the day of the meeting). These will be dated and numbered in the order which they are received and will be open to public inspection.

Only one Motion which should contain no more than 350 words may be submitted per Member per meeting. For the purposes of this Rule, e-signatures will be acceptable.

4.2.11.2 Motion of No Confidence

Motions of no confidence in the Leader must be signed by ten Members and must be delivered to the Chief Executive no later than 10.00am on the seventh working day before the meeting (excluding the day of the meeting).

The wording of the Motion shall be "That this Council has no confidence in the Leader" No amendments will be allowed to the Motion at the meeting where the matter is discussed.

Motions of no confidence can be accepted at any Council meeting, including Annual and Budget Council meetings.

If following a Motion of no confidence the majority of Members of the Council vote to remove the Leader a Motion, under [Rule 4.2.12u](#), to nominate a new Leader may be moved without notice. If a Motion to nominate a new Leader is not moved then the election of the Leader of Council will take place at the next Council meeting.

4.2.11.3 Motion set out in Agenda

Motions for which notice has been given will be listed on the agenda in the order in which notice was received, unless the Member giving notice states, in writing, that they propose to move it at a later meeting or withdraw it.

Motions shall be dealt with in order they are received.

A maximum period of 30 minutes will be allowed for each Motion to be moved, seconded and debated, including dealing with any amendments. At the expiry of the 30-minute

period debate will cease immediately, the mover of the Motion or amendment will have the right of reply before the Motion or amendment is put to the vote.

4.2.11.4 Scope

Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the Wokingham Borough.

Motions will be rejected if:

- a) they are not matters the Council has responsibility for or affect the Borough;
- b) they are defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
- c) they are substantially the same as a Motion considered at the meeting or at a meeting of Council in the last 6 months.

4.2.12 Motions Without Notice

The following Motions may be moved without notice:

- a) to appoint a Mayor/Chairman of the meeting at which the Motion is moved;
- b) in relation to the accuracy of the Minutes;
- c) to change the order of business in the agenda;
- d) to refer something to an appropriate body or individual;
- e) to appoint a Committee or Member body arising from an item on the summons for the meeting;
- f) to receive reports or adopt recommendations of Committees or Officers and any resolutions following from them;
- g) to withdraw a Motion;
- h) to amend a Motion ***in accordance with Rule 4.2.13.1;***
- i) to proceed to the next business in accordance with [Rule 4.2.13.12;](#)
- j) that the question be now put in accordance with [Rule 4.2.13.12;](#)
- k) to adjourn a debate in accordance with [Rule 4.2.13.12;](#)
- l) to adjourn a meeting in accordance with [Rule 4.2.13.12;](#)
- m) to continue the meeting beyond ~~10.30pm~~ **10.00pm** in accordance with Procedure [Rule 4.2.8;](#)
- n) to suspend a particular Rule of Procedure, subject to the provisions of Procedure [Rule 4.2.25;](#)

- o) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Rules in Chapter 3.2;
- p) that a Member named under [Rule 4.2.20.3](#) be excluded from the meeting under [Rule 4.2.20.4](#);
- q) to extend the time limit for speeches;
- r) to carry out a statutory duty which in the opinion of the Mayor/Chairman is urgent;
- s) that a Motion, amendment or business of an objectionable nature be not entertained or permitted. The proposer of a Motion on these grounds must state the reasons he/she considers the Motion, amendment or business to be objectionable. The Mayor/Chairman will make a ruling on whether to allow the Motion to be put, having regard to any advice given by the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer;
- t) to request a ballot in accordance with Procedure [Rule 4.2.15.4](#);
- u) to nominate a new Leader (following a vote by the majority of the Members of the Council to remove the Leader).

4.2.13 Rules Of Debate

4.2.13.1 No Speeches Until Motion Seconded

No speeches, including the proposer's actual speech may be made until the Motion has been proposed and seconded.

No amendments to Motions can be put until the proposer of the Motion and seconder (if not reserving their right to speak) have made their speech(es).

After a Motion has been proposed, seconded and the proposer has made his/her speech the Mayor will ask if any Member wishes to speak against the Motion. If no one wishes to speak against the Motion then the Mayor will put the matter to the vote.

4.2.13.2 Right to Require Motion in Writing

Unless notice of the Motion has already been given, the Mayor/Chairman may require it to be written down and circulated before it is proposed.

4.2.13.3 Seconder's Speech

When seconding a Motion or amendment, a Member may reserve their speech until later in the debate.

4.2.13.4 Content and Length of Speeches

Speeches must be directed to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or point of order. No speech, except with the consent of the Council under [Rule 4.2.12g](#), may exceed 3 minutes except in the case of

- ~~a) a Member proposing a Motion who shall speak for no more than 5 minutes;~~
- ~~b) a) the Leader of the Council or an Executive Member making a statement at Council who shall speak for no more than 5 minutes.~~

- e) **b)** at the Budget Council meeting the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition shall speak for no more than 12 minutes each on the budget agenda item. The Leader of the Council will also have the opportunity to exercise his / her right of reply as set out in [Rule 4.2.13.5](#)

4.2.13.5 When a Member May Speak

A Member who has spoken on a Motion may not speak again whilst it is the subject of debate, except:

- a) to speak once on an amendment moved by another Member;
- b) to move a further amendment if the Motion has been amended since he/she last spoke;
- c) if his/her first speech was on an amendment moved by another Member, to speak on the main issue (whether or not the amendment on which he/she spoke was carried);
- d) in exercise of a right of reply;
- e) on a point of order;
- f) by way of personal explanation;
- g) to move a Motion under [Rule 4.2.13.11](#) (Motions which can be moved during debate.)

4.2.13.6 Right of Reply

- a) The mover of a Motion has a right to reply at the end of the debate on the Motion, immediately before it is put to the vote.
- b) If an amendment is moved, the mover of the original Motion has the right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment, but may not otherwise speak on it.
- c) The mover of the amendment has no right of reply to the debate on his/her amendment.

4.2.13.7 Amendments to Motions

Any amendments to Motions should, wherever possible, be provided to Democratic Services in advance of the meeting.

- a) An amendment to a Motion must:
 - i) be relevant to the Motion;
 - ii) not negate the meaning of the Motion;
- b) An amendment to a Motion can:
 - i) omit words;
 - ii) add words; or

- iii) refer the matter to an appropriate body or individual for consideration or reconsideration.
- c) Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of.
- d) *if the proposer of the original Motion accepts the proposed amendment it becomes his/her Motion (i.e the substantive Motion) to which further amendments can be moved. No vote is required.***
- e) If an amendment is not carried, other amendments to the original motion may be moved.
- f) If an amendment is carried, the Motion as amended takes the place of the original Motion. This becomes the substantive Motion to which any further amendments are moved.
- g) After an amendment has been carried, the Mayor/Chairman will read out the amended Motion before accepting any further amendments, or if there are none or following the expiry of the 30-minute time limit, put it to the vote as the substantive Motion.

4.2.13.8 Alteration of Motion

- a) A Member may alter a Motion of which he/she has given notice with the consent of the meeting. The Mayor/Chairman may require the alteration to be written down and circulated before the consent of the meeting is sought. The consent will be signified by simple majority.
- b) A Member may alter a Motion which he/she has moved without notice with the consent of both the meeting and the seconder. The meeting's consent will be signified by simple majority.
- c) Only alterations which could be made as an amendment may be made.

4.2.13.9 Withdrawal of Motion

A Member may withdraw a Motion which he/she has moved with the consent of both the meeting and the seconder. The meeting's consent will be signified by simple majority. No Member may speak on the Motion after the mover has asked permission to withdraw it unless permission is refused by the Mayor/Chairman.

4.2.13.10 Proposal by Another Member

Where a Member is unable through absence to propose a Motion of which he/she has given notice, that Motion may be proposed by another Member, provided that the Member who gave notice of the Motion has confirmed in writing to the Mayor/Chairman the name of the Member to whom the Motion has been delegated.

4.2.13.11 Motions Which May be Moved During Debate

When a Motion is under debate, no other Motion may be moved except the following procedural motions:

- a) to withdraw a Motion;

- b) to amend a Motion ***in accordance with Rule 4.2.13.1***;
- c) Closure Motions in accordance with [Rule 4.2.13.12](#)
- d) that the meeting continue beyond 10.30pm;
- e) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Rules;
- f) to not hear further a Member named under Rule [4.2.20.3](#) or to exclude them from the meeting under Rule [4.2.20.4](#);
- g) to extend the time limit for speeches;
- h) To suspend a particular Rule of Procedure in accordance with Rule [4.2.25.1](#)

4.2.13.12 Closure Motions

- a) A Member may move, without comment, the following motions at the end of a speech of another Member:
 - i) to proceed to the next business;
 - ii) that the question be now put;
 - iii) to adjourn a debate; or
 - iv) to adjourn a meeting.
- b) If a motion to proceed to next business is seconded and the Mayor/Chairman thinks the item has been sufficiently discussed, he/she will put the closure Motion to the vote. If it is passed he/she will give the mover of the original Motion a right of reply before putting his/her Motion to the vote.
- c) If a Motion that the question be now put is seconded and the Mayor/Chairman thinks the item has been sufficiently discussed, he/she will put the closure Motion to the vote. If it is passed he/she will give the mover of the original Motion a right of reply before putting his/her Motion to the vote.
- d) If a motion to adjourn the debate or to adjourn the meeting is seconded and the Mayor/Chairman thinks the item has not been sufficiently discussed and cannot reasonably be so discussed on that occasion, he/she will put the closure motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion the right of reply. Subject to [Rule 4.2.8.1](#), unless the Mayor/Chairman specifies a date on which the Council will reconvene, any outstanding business will automatically stand referred to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

4.2.13.13 Point of Order

A Member may raise a point of order at any time. The Mayor/Chairman will hear them immediately. A point of order may only relate to an alleged breach of these Council Rules of Procedure or the law. The Member must indicate the Rule or law and the way in which he/she considers it has been broken. The ruling of the Mayor/Chairman on the matter will be final.

4.2.13.14 Personal Explanation

A Member may make a personal explanation at any time or may stand to declare an interest. A personal explanation may only relate to some material part of an earlier speech by the Member which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate. The ruling of the Mayor/Chairman on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

4.2.13.15 Responses by Officers

During the course of a debate, an Officer may be asked, through the Mayor/Chairman, to give a simple factual point of explanation, upon which there shall be no debate

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Appendix 2

13.3.2.2 Schedule 3

The following table gives an overview of the Procurement and Contract requirements for expenditure on Schedule 3 services at various contract values. These are for specific services such as health, social care, education, cultural and certain other service contracts as defined by Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV) codes:

Schedule 3 Services Contract Value	Below OJEU Threshold			Above OJEU
	< £5k	£5k - £50k	> £50k - OJEU	> OJEU
Light Touch Regime (“LTR”)				✓
Any appropriate process may be used			✓	✓
Quick Quotes Process ¹ with credit check and references for selected supplier Formal specification & evaluation criteria		Min 3 Quotes	✓	✓
Formal specification & evaluation criteria			✓	✓
Simplified specification and evaluation	(if necessary)	✓		
Simple quotation and Purchase Order	✓			
Support teams to be notified before start of procurement undertaking			Relationship Managers & if >£100k SLS	SLS & Procurement
All documents available on the date of publication of notice or advertisement		if advertised	✓	✓
Advertise in OJEU – contract notice or PIN ²				✓
Advertise in Contracts Finder ⁴ (within 24 hrs of 1st advert anywhere else)		> £25k, if advertised anywhere	✓	✓
Pre-qualification questionnaire (SQ) (Restricted Procedure)	prohibited	prohibited	Optional (but prohibited below OJEU goods and services)	✓
Invitation to Tender (ITT)			✓	
Formal tender evaluation process			✓	✓
Publish contract award notices ⁴ (can publish notices grouped quarterly)		If > £25k	✓	✓
Standstill period			recommended	✓
Complete Reg84 Report				✓

¹ If you wish to advertise your Quick Quote, use the ‘Create Project’ ‘Advertised Quotation (<50K)’ process

² Handled automatically by the e-Procurement system

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WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL - TIMETABLE 2020/21

2020/21	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
MON		1 LAB								1 LAB	1 LAB		
TUES		2 EB			1 EB			1		2	2 EB		
WED		3 AC	1 SC		2 CoSC			2		3 AC	3		
THURS		4	2 JWB		3 LD	1 LD		3 LD		4 CON/LD	4 LD	1	
FRI	1	5	3		4	2		4	1	5	5	2	
SAT	2	6	4	1	5	3		5	2	6	6	3	1
SUN	3	7	5	2	6	4	1	6	3	7	7	4	2
MON	4 LAB	8 HOSC	6 LAB	3	7 LAB	5 LAB	2 LAB/LD	7 LAB	4 LAB	8	8 SC	5	3
TUES	5 EB	9	7 EB	4	8 ChSC	6 EB	3 EB	8	5 EB	9	9 L&A	6 LAB	4 EB
WED	6	10 PC	8 PC	5	9 PC	7	4 AC	9 SF/PC	6 CoSC	10 PC	10 PC	7	5
THURS	7 Elec	11 WWB/CON/LD	9 WWBB/	6	10 WWBB/CON	8 JWB/WWB	5 ChSC	10 WWB/CON	7 LD	11 WWB/CON	11 WWBB/CON	8 WWB/CON	6
FRI	8	12	10	7	11	9	6	11	8	12	12	9	7
SAT	9	13	11	8	12	10	7	12	9	13	13	10	8
SUN	10	14	12	9	13	11	8	13	10	14	14	12	9
MON	11 CON/LD	15 SACRE	13 HOSC	10	14 LD	12 SC	9 SACRE	14	11 SC	15 LAB/LD	15 LD	12	10 CON/LD/LAB
TUES	12 Mtrg	16	14	11	15	13	10 L&A	15	12 HOSC	16	16	13	11 Mtrg
WED	13 PC	17 ChSC	15 SF/S	12 PC	16 S	14 SF/PC	11 PC/SAF	16	13 PC/SF	17	17 SF/HOSC	14 PC	12 PC
THURS	14 WWBB/CON	18 L&A	16 CON/LD	13 WWB	17 C	15 CON	12 WWBB/CON	17	14 WWBB/CON	18 E/C	18 C	15	13 WWBB/CON
FRI	15	19	17	14	18	16	13	18	15	19	19	16	14
SAT	16	20	18	15	19	17	14	19	16	20	20	17	15
SUN	17	21	19	16	20	18	15	20	17	21	21	18	16
MON	18 CON/LD/LAB	22 CoSC	20	17	21 HOSC	19	16 LD	21	18 LD	22	22 ChSC	19	17 LD
TUES	19 CPB	23	21 CPB	18	22	20 CPB	17	22	19	23 CPB	23	20	18 Mtrg
WED	20	24 S	22	19	23 AC	21 S	18 HOSC	23	20 S	24 S	24 Mtrg	21	19
THURS	21 C	25 E	23 C	20	24 E	22	19 C	24	21 C	25 Mtrg	25 E	22	20 C
FRI	22	26	24	21	25	23	20	25	22	26	26	23	21
SAT	23	27	25	22	26	24	21	26	23	27	27	24	22
SUN	24	28	26	23	27	25	22	27	24	28	28	25	23
MON	25	29 Mtrg	27 Mtrg	24	28 Mtrg	26	23 CoSC	28	25 ChSC		29 CoSC	26	24
TUES	26 Mtrg	30	28	25	29	27	24	29	26 EB		30	27	25 CPB
WED	27		29 AC	26	30 L&A	28 Mtrg	25 S	30	27 SAF		31 S	28	26
THURS	28 E		30 E	27		29 E	26 E	31	28 E			29	27 E
FRI	29		31	28		30	27		29			30	28
SAT	30			29		31	28		30				29
SUN	31			30			29		31				30
				31			30 Mtrg						31

C = Council Executive
 AC = Audit Committee
 CPB = Corporate Parenting Board
 EB = Executive Briefing
 HOSC = Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee
 SC = Standards Committee
 AC = Audit Committee
 CPB = Corporate Parenting Board
 L&A = Licensing and Appeals
 S = Overview & Scrutiny Management
 WWB = Wokingham Wellbeing Board
 WWBB = Wokingham Wellbeing Board Briefing
 JWB = Joint Waste Disposal Board
 CoSC = Community & Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee
 LD = Liberal Democrat Group
 CON = Conservative Group
 SAF = School Admissions Forum
 PC = Planning Committee
 SF = Schools Forum
 SACRE = Schools Advisory Council for Religious Education
 MTrg = Member Training Session
 Bank Holidays
 JPPC = Joint Public Protection Committee
 School Holidays
 School Public Protection Committee

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