



# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

An Extraordinary Meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** will be held in David Hicks 1 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **MONDAY 23 DECEMBER 2019 AT 7.00 PM**

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

Susan Parsonage  
Chief Executive  
Published on 13 December 2019

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

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



# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Our Vision**

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

## **Our Priorities**

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

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

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

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

## **The Underpinning Principles**

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE

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

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
59.		<p><b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence</p>	
60.		<p><b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest</p>	
61.		<p><b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any public questions</p> <p>A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.</p> <p>The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the items included within this agenda.</p> <p>Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can only relate to the items which are on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to <a href="http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions">www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</a></p>	
62.		<p><b>MEMBER QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any member questions</p> <p>A period of 20 minutes will be allowed for Members to ask questions relating to the items included within this agenda</p> <p>Any questions not dealt with within the allotted time will be dealt with in a written reply</p>	

## **Matters for Consideration**

<b>63.</b>	None Specific	<b>HOMELESSNESS AND ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY</b>	<b>5 - 54</b>
<b>64.</b>	Emmbrook	<b>CANTLEY PARK ENHANCEMENT</b>	<b>55 - 70</b>
<b>65.</b>	None Specific	<b>APPROVAL OF WOKINGHAM'S STRATEGY FOR RESIDENTS WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY</b>	<b>71 - 118</b>

A decision sheet will be available for inspection at the Council's offices (in Democratic Services and the General Office) and on the web site no later than two working days after the meeting.

### **CONTACT OFFICER**

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<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	The Executive on Monday, 23 December 2019
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific;
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby and Director of Corporate Services – Graham Ebers.
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser.

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

To obtain Executive 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 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.

<b>Year</b>	<b>11/12</b>	<b>12/13</b>	<b>13/14</b>	<b>14/15</b>	<b>15/16</b>	<b>16/17</b>	<b>17/18</b>	<b>18/19</b>
<b>Presented</b>	50	81	81	141	236	196	180	248
<b>Accepted</b>	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 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.
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The Homelessness Reduction Act, which came into force on 3<sup>rd</sup> 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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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.

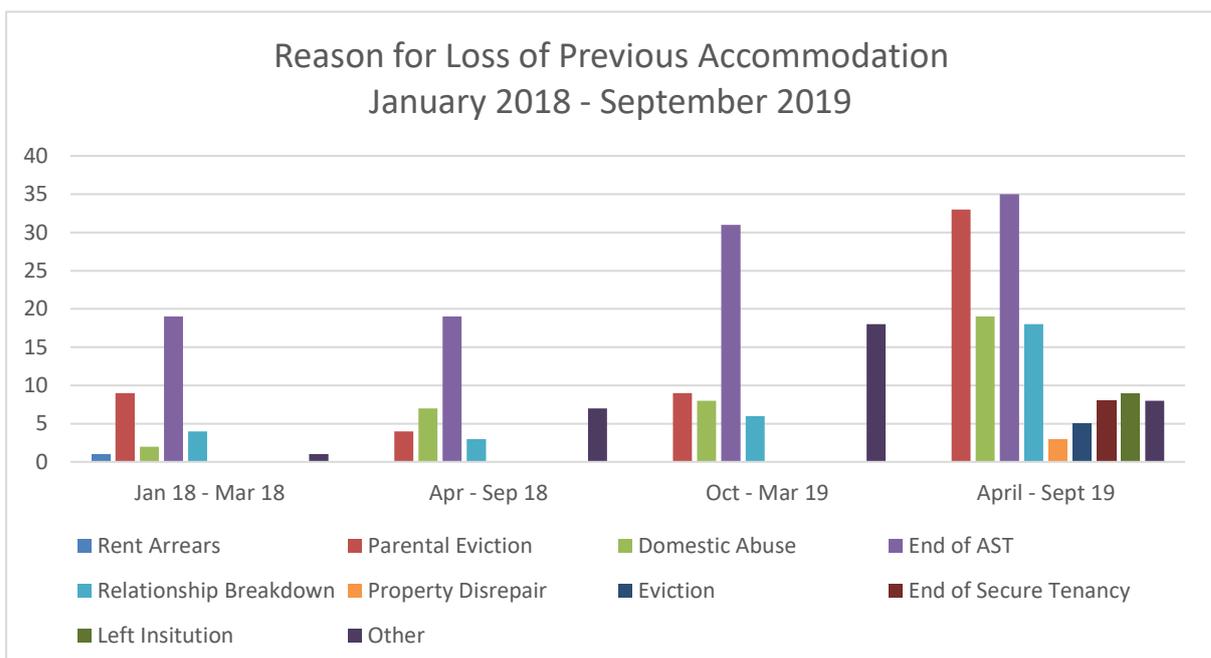
Our annual rough sleeper count (a single night snapshot taken each November) for 2019 was 10. The figure from our 2018 count was 7, and in 2015 the figure was 14. Of the 7 individuals recorded in 2018, 6 were male, and 1 was female. 5 were UK nationals and 2 were EU non-UK nationals. All 7 were aged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

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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.



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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.

### Next Steps

If the Executive approve Wokingham Borough Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2024, the strategy and action plan will be considered at Full Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020. We hope to adopt the new strategy by the end of January 2020.

## **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)	-	-	-
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### **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.

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

If agreed, the strategy and action plan will be considered at Full Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020.

### **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.

<b>Contact</b> Victoria Higgins	<b>Service</b> Place Commissioning
<b>Telephone</b> Tel: 0118 974 6562	<b>Email</b> victoria.higgins@wokingham.gov.uk

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

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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 2018<sup>1</sup>. 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 million<sup>2</sup>.

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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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
<b>Presented</b>	50	81	81	141	236	196	180	248
<b>Accepted</b>	13	20	28	70	102	111	87	91

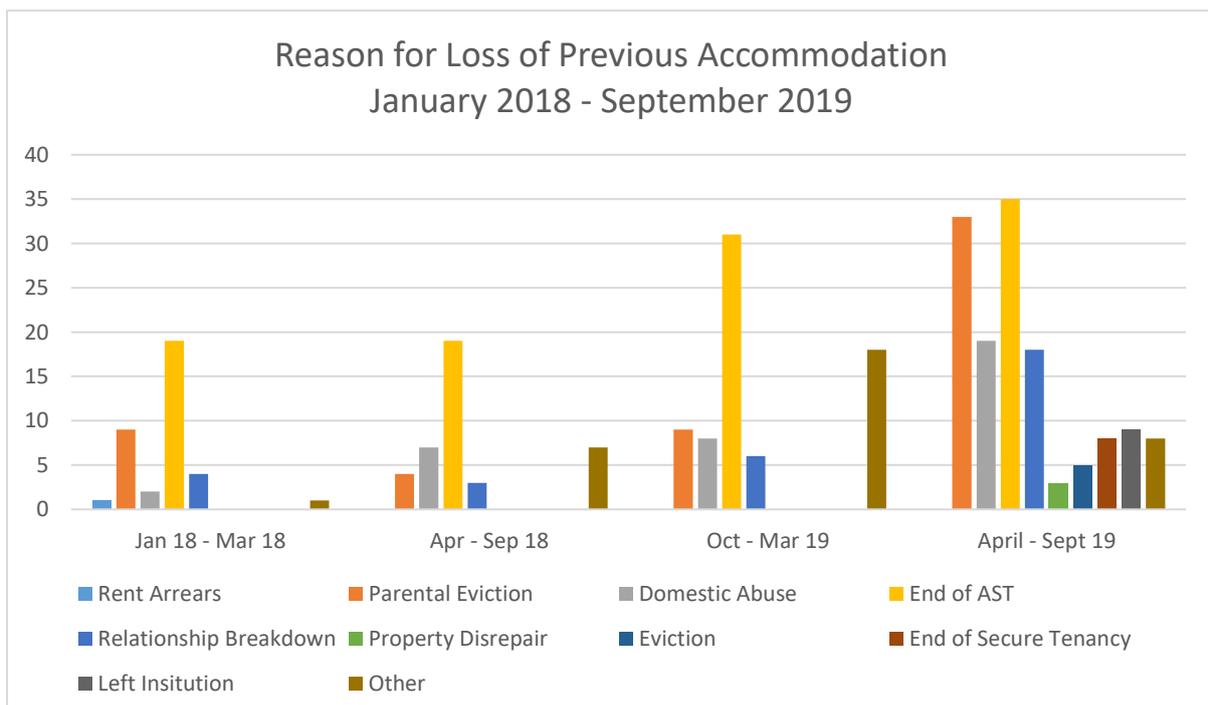
The percentage increase in presentations from 2011/12 to 2018/19 is 396%. The percentage increase in acceptances from 2011/12 to 2018/19 is 600%.

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.

<b>Early Intervention and Prevention at Wokingham Borough Council.</b>	
✓ 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 2.5<sup>3</sup>.

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

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<sup>3</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 UK<sup>4</sup>.

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.

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<sup>4</sup> <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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, 1498 households were on the Council's Housing Register.

233 homes were let by the Council between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.	
<b>2 - Strategic Priority Two: working towards ending rough sleeping and tackling hidden homelessness.</b>						
<b>No.</b>	<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions/Targets</b>	<b>Lead Officer / Service Area</b>	<b>Anticipated Achieved By</b>	<b>RAG</b>
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.				
<b>3 - Strategic Priority Three: build more affordable homes.</b>						
<b>No.</b>	<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions/Targets</b>	<b>Lead Officer / Service Area</b>	<b>Anticipated Achieved By</b>	<b>RAG</b>
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.	Strategy and Commissioning – Place.	Ongoing.	
			Analyse the Housing Register and other data sources to understand the current and future demand for affordable homes in the borough.		2020.	
3.2	Refresh the Council's Allocations Policy.	<p>A fair and transparent allocations system is in place that responds to need.</p> <p>Homeless applicants receive appropriate priority.</p> <p>Residents understand their housing options, including the likelihood of being allocated social housing.</p> <p>The Council is able to make best use of available housing stock.</p>	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.	
<b>4 - Strategic Priority Four: support our vulnerable residents.</b>						
<b>No.</b>	<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Actions/Targets</b>	<b>Lead Officer / Service Area</b>	<b>Anticipated Achieved By</b>	<b>RAG</b>
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"> <li>❖ Early intervention and prevention.</li> <li>❖ Working towards ending rough sleeping and tackling hidden homelessness.</li> <li>❖ Building more affordable homes.</li> <li>❖ Supporting our vulnerable residents.</li> </ul> <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"> <li>• Providing tenancy support.</li> <li>• Negotiating with private landlords.</li> <li>• Providing supported housing options for vulnerable clients.</li> <li>• Providing a supported housing scheme for vulnerable young people aged 16 – 25 at risk of homelessness.</li> </ul>

- 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

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Cantley Park Enhancement</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	The Executive on Monday 23 December 2019
<b>WARD</b>	Emmbrook
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Executive Member for Environment and Leisure - Parry Batth

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

To enhance the current facilities at Cantley Park available to the community. This will include

- New 3G pitch
- Upgrade sports pavilion and changing rooms
- New Café and social space
- Additional 40 car parking spaces
- New Artificial cricket wicket
- Upgrade the existing grass football pitches
- Destination play area

WBC will contribute to the climate emergency plan, as the majority of local teams are currently travelling out of the borough. The enhancement will also enable a greater variety of Arts and Cultural Events to take place on the site.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Executive:

- 1) to agree to a consultation and subject to the consultation outcomes agree to the upgrade of the facilities;
- 2) agree in principle the upgrade of the pavilion, additional parking and an additional café;
- 3) agree to the enhancing of football pitches and building the new 3G pitch, Café & social space, upgrade the sports pavilion, artificial cricket wicket, additional 40 Car parking spaces (subject to funding from the Football Foundation and planning permission), commencing summer 2020);
- 4) subject to funding from the football foundation, approve the release of S106 monies to the value of £528k. This will need to be released at the start of the project.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At present, the Cantley Pavilion is in dis-repair and not currently maintained to the level required of such a facility. The pitches are in a poor condition as recognised in the current playing pitch strategy. This often results in unsatisfactory experience for the user and a loss of potential income for the council.

The playing pitch strategy is to be finalised by January 2020 and is showing an increase in football teams within the Borough, currently 534 teams. To meet the demand an additional 9 x 3G pitches would be required, as currently teams are travelling outside the borough to use football pitches, and winter training facilities, therefore an upgrade and 3G pitch is required. Increasing provision for additional 3G pitches, this will also help towards the climate control action plan. Our teams will no longer need to travel outside the borough for external matches and training facilities. Within the plan, WBC will introduce additional cycle shelters on site.

Parking is currently an issue as there is not sufficient parking on site to meet demand; therefore, cars are parking on roadside causing a potential risk to other road users and residents, causing negative publicity for the council. By increasing the parking by an additional 40 spaces and implementing a travel plan for the site this should help reduce congestion.

## **IMPACT**

Approval is required for the upgrade of the current facilities offered at Cantley Park; this would be in the form of two phases, the first commencing in Summer 2020, maintaining the existing facilities while upgrading the pavilion, parking, new cricket wicket, café/social space and new 3G pitch and 40 additional car parking spaces. Phase 2 will be the upgrade of the grass pitches, which will commence in spring 2021.

## **BACKGROUND**

Cantley Pavilion is in dis-repair and not currently maintained with lack of investment to improve the facility. Currently there are health and safety issues for residents and football clubs presently using the facilities. The pitches are in a poor condition as stated in the current playing pitch strategy all of which leading to a review of the current facilities and a clear plan for the improvements and financial implications.

## **BUSINESS CASE**

In addition to address the current state of disrepair:

- It is estimated that refurb of the pavilion costs £250k this is required to enable ongoing football pitches.
- A café and social space will enable provision of refreshments and attract additional clientele. The cost of funding this provision is £275k and is estimated a min of £30k per annum income.
- Football pitches require additional drainage to allow pitches to be used all year round. It is estimated to cost £200k, which should grant additional income of £10,000 per annum.
- A new 3G pitch will enable additional all year play and will be available at times the grass pitches are unplayable. Cost of £800k of which £600k (estimated) will

be funded by the football foundation subject to funding, WBC cost funded by S106. Additional income is estimated average £53k per annum.

- Arts and culture events on the site generated estimated £15k income as well as encouraging arts and culture events provided in the borough.
- Reduction in carbon footprint because of teams not having to travel outside of the borough.
- Additional 40 carpark spaces to enable additional parking expected from the enhancement of the facility costing £75k.
- Sinking fund £25K for the new 3G pitch.
- Artificial cricket wicket to enable teams to play costing estimated £25k with an estimated income of £1.5k per annum.
- The total cost of above is £1.6m with estimated average income of £120k per annum

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Upgrade of the current facilities offered at Cantley Park; in the form of two phases, the first commencing in Summer 2020, maintaining the existing facilities while upgrading the pavilion, new cricket wicket, café/social space and 40 additional car parking spaces.

The 3G pitch also within phase 1 (Once executive approve, the deadline for the Football Foundation will be June 2020, if successful (and planning permission is granted) work will commence straight away from Summer 2020).

Phase 2 will be the upgrade of the grass pitches, which will commence in spring 2021.

The destination play area is due to commence September 2020. The Café will be tendered out to the market place. A sinking fund, which forms part of the football foundation bid, will be introduced to keep the project sustainable; currently any new 3G facility will require a sinking fund of around £25k pa.

## **ISSUES**

- Enhancing the pitches and building the new 3G pitch, this is subject to funding and planning permission.
- Potential issues are planning risks with 3G pitch in securing funding in turn having an impact on the football foundation funding.

### **Cost of Refurbishment**

The cost of the refurbishment are estimated costs at present, final costs will be reached once tender have come back with confirmed costings.

	<b>Year 1 2020-21</b>	<b>Year 2 onwards 2021-22</b>
<b>Capital Cost - Build and redevelopment cost</b>		
New 3G pitch	800	
New café, kitchen and social space	275	
Carpark	75	
Upgrade grass pitches	200	
Pavilion upgrade/changing rooms	250	
<b>Total</b>	1,600	0
<b>Funded by</b>		
Developer contribution	(528)	-
Football foundation grant	(600)	
<b>Shortfall to be fund capital loan</b>	472	
Annual Expenditure		
Running cost	27	27
Sinking fund		25
Financing cost	7	33
<b>Total</b>	34	85
Annual Income		
Revenue Income stream	(58)	(118)
<b>Total</b>	(58)	(118)
<b>Net Income</b>	(24)	(57)

## 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)	£0	Funding from Football Foundation and S106 and borrowing. See spreadsheet attached at Appendix A.	Capital/Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2 20/21)	£24k – saving Net income after capital financing costs (half year)	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3 21/22)	£58k – saving	Yes	Revenue

	Net income after capital financing costs (full year)		
--	--	--	--

<b>Other Financial Information</b>
None – subject to football foundation funding

<b>Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation</b>
Consultation will be carried out to local football teams using the site, tennis members, Wokingham theatre, Archery, Hockey and local residents. Consultation will last six weeks, online information, and public consultation on site. Results will be published on the website.

<b>Public Sector Equality Duty</b>
An equalities assessment will take place as part of the new project. This will be published on the website on commencement of the project.

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
None

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## Cantley Enhancements

(Note income increase are due to increased use )

		31/03/20	31/03/21	31/03/22	31/03/23	31/03/24	31/03/25	31/03/26
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
	Total	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>								
cost	1,600	1,600	-	-	-	-	-	-
Principle repayment of loans	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Capital costs</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>1,600</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Allocation of funding</b>								
S106 Contributions	(528)	(528)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans	-	(472)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Developer contribution	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Football foundation	(600)	(600)	-	-	-	-	-	-
other (including revenue contribution)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Capital funding</b>	<b>(1,128)</b>	<b>(1,600)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net debt</b>		<b>472</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>472</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>								
Total Finance cost (including repayment of loans -MRP)	355	7	33	33	33	33	33	33
Sinking Fund	1,000	-	25	25	25	25	25	25
Running costs	1,091	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
<b>Revenue costs</b>	<b>2,394</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Income</b>								
Revenue income stream	(4,792)	(58)	(118)	(119)	(121)	(122)	(119)	(118)
<b>Revenue funding</b>	<b>(4,792)</b>	<b>(58)</b>	<b>(118)</b>	<b>(119)</b>	<b>(121)</b>	<b>(122)</b>	<b>(119)</b>	<b>(118)</b>
<b>Revenue ( )Surplus /deficit</b>	<b>(2,398)</b>	<b>(24)</b>	<b>(33)</b>	<b>(34)</b>	<b>(36)</b>	<b>(37)</b>	<b>(34)</b>	<b>(33)</b>
<b>Cumulative ( )Surplus /deficit</b>	<b>(2,398)</b>	<b>(24)</b>	<b>(57)</b>	<b>(91)</b>	<b>(127)</b>	<b>(164)</b>	<b>(198)</b>	<b>(231)</b>

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<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Approval of Wokingham's Strategy for Residents with a Learning Disability</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	The Executive on Monday 23 December 2019
<b>WARD</b>	None specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Director of Adult Services - Matt Pope
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services - Charles Margetts

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

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a new Council strategy for Wokingham's residents with a learning disability and the families, partners and carers who support them.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Executive approve Wokingham Borough Council's Strategy for People with a Learning Disability, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Learning Disability is defined as individuals who have:

- A significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information and to learn new skills
- A reduced ability to cope independently with everyday living tasks
- Impaired social functioning
- A disability that started before adulthood with a lasting effect on their development

The level of difficulty experienced by people with a learning disability can vary considerably from mild to severe requiring a range of support from low to complex support. Some people with mild learning disabilities may experience few significant problems but people with severe learning disabilities may have a variety of interconnecting needs, which significantly impact on every aspects of their lives. This includes a significant number of people who have a learning disability who are also autistic.

For some people it is not the degree of learning disability that determines the level of support they need but the presence of a number of other significant factors such as mental illness. It's also important to note that many people with a learning disability experience conditions of older age when they're younger, including dementia.

The Council supports more adults with a learning disability, who are eligible under the Care Act, than other parts of the country. Wokingham has the second highest population needing support in the south east. The council supports 520 learning disabled adults with a Care Act eligible support package:

- Overall 80% require direct support with everyday living tasks
- 32% have substantial support and complex needs

As a consequence the council spends a significant proportion of its adult social care funding on people with a learning disability. The Council spends £19.8 million per year on learning disability support, which is 42% of its adult social care budget. It is expected that significantly more people will need support with a learning disability over the next 5 years.

The proposed strategy sets out how it will meet this need and address the increased pressure on its resources in Wokingham.

Wokingham Borough Councils strategy for residents with a learning disability has been developed within a national framework and sets out how the council will transform the lives of our learning disabled residents in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This includes people with complex learning disabilities, preventing them from needing long term hospital care.

The strategy will ensure that the council is able to meet its obligations under the Care Act 2014 including:

- Providing support that prevents people's conditions from getting worse
- They get the right information and advice they need to make decisions about their care
- They have a choice of good quality support and care services that can meet their needs
- The strategy has been developed using an extensive range of national and local data covering:
  - How many learning disabled people live in Wokingham
  - The level of support they need
  - A prediction of the number of learning-disabled people the council will need to support over the next 5 years
  - How much the council will need to spend to fund their support

The Council has developed and designed the strategy with learning disabled residents and their advocates. Families of people with a learning disability and carers have also determined what the strategy will do. The Council will continue developing its plans with people who use learning disabled support and will fund organisations that help them and their carers have a voice.

Many people with a learning disability have complex and multiple health conditions that significantly impact their ability to manage their basic needs and live independently. This includes mental health conditions and autism. Their health is often poor and their life expectancy is 23 years lower than the general adult population. As a consequence learning disabled people need a range of support from council funded adult social care services and the NHS.

The Council is good at helping people with a learning disability get and keep a job but it needs to do better in terms of helping more learning disabled people be independent in a home of their own.

The council also wants to improve how it supports young people with a learning disability prepare for adult life. This includes making sure that they and their parents have what they need to make good decisions regarding their future.

To deliver against these aims, over the next five years, this strategy includes proposals to:

- Review the council's offer covering support that helps learning disabled people by modernising this and creating more choice
- Plan and design housing, neighbourhoods and transport that meet the needs of learning disabled people and which are learning disability friendly
- Create a dedicated Learning Disability Service providing focused social work support and access to social care
- Set up a new service to support disabled young people prepare for adult life
- Work with the NHS to improve the support learning disabled people get from their GPs and hospitals; to ensure they get the health checks they need and that people with more complex needs get the right support
- Review our offer to residents caring for people with a learning disability

## BACKGROUND

People with a learning disability experience complex neurological conditions that can significantly impact their ability to manage some of their most basic needs. They can also find it difficult to build and maintain safe and healthy relationships and to process information affecting their ability to make decisions. These challenges are often compounded by other lifelong conditions that significantly affect their physical and mental health. As a consequence the average life expectancy of people with a learning disability is 23 years lower than the rest of the adult population.

The proportion of Wokingham's adult population who have a learning disability and who need support is one of the highest in the country. Within the south east region Wokingham has the second highest prevalence of adults needing support with a learning disability.

There is limited national research on the factors that may affect local populations in terms of the number of adults who may have a learning disability. Therefore, it is not possible to determine or reliably speculate as to why more adults living in Wokingham need support with a learning disability.

The Council spends more on services for people with a learning disability per head of the adult population, than most south east councils with responsibility for adult social care services. 42% of the council's annual budget allocated to adult care is spent on support for Wokingham's residents with a learning disability.

In 2018/19, the Council spent £19.8 million on learning disability support, for 517 adults entitled to social care funding under the Care Act 2014. However, the council's social care spending on each learning disabled person, is well below the average for councils in the South East and in line with the average for England.

Therefore, there is nothing to indicate that a learning disabled person living in Wokingham, receives more support or funding when compared to learning disabled people living elsewhere in the country. Equally, the Council's high spend on learning disability services per capita is not as a result of inefficient spending, when compared to other councils but arises from a high proportion of Wokingham's adults needing help with a learning disability.

Government data shows that the number of Wokingham people needing learning disability support, has grown at a faster rate than the rate of increase for England and the South East. Over the last five years the overall rate of growth for Wokingham has been 10% against a 6% growth rate for England and the South East. Critically an analysis of children and young people supported by the council with a disability via an Education, Health and Care Plan, indicates that this rate of growth will continue over the next four years.

The Council's strategy for people with a learning disability is designed to address the challenges this level of high and increasing demand brings. The strategy recognises the importance of the council planning effectively, to meet the goals and needs of what is the most significant community of disabled people living in Wokingham. This includes challenging and addressing the discrimination and inequality that learning disabled people face, which prevent them from being educated and trained; getting a job; receiving the right healthcare and doing the things that are fundamental to everyone's

well-being. However, the financial challenges this demand brings are significant within the context of the council's increasingly limited resources.

The increasing demand challenges set out in the strategy will have an impact on the Council's mid-term financial plans. However, the strategy sets out a clear work programme, developed with our partners, which is designed to address the financial pressures. The work programme will support achieving outcomes that increase the independence of many learning disabled people the council helps, reducing their need for social care. These initiatives will mitigate the impact on the council's spending plans arising from the anticipated increase in overall demand for learning disability support.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£21.4m	See comment below	Revenue and Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£21.4m	See comment below	Revenue and Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£21.4m	See comment below	Revenue and Capital

### Other Financial Information

The capital and revenue bids required to support changes identified in the strategy will be factored into the council's medium term financial planning process which will be reviewed annually. The costs associated with the strategy for 2019-20 will be accommodated within existing budgets.

### Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Over 150 people with a learning disability and the advocate groups that support them, have been directly involved with developing the strategy through a series of focus groups, individual meetings and discussions of the strategy at existing forums. Easy Read presentations were developed with CLASP and a joint communication approach was adopted, to ensure that people with a learning disability were able to understand and fully take part in discussions. CLASP represents and advocates for people with learning disabilities.

Parents, families and carers have also been extensively engaged with and through community groups such as SEND Voices and Wokingham MENCAP.

Individual face to face meetings were carried out with people with more complex care and communication needs, their families and the staff who support them. Telephone and online surveys aimed at people with learning disabilities, parents and carers and education and social work staff were also carried out.

With the support of CLASP the final strategy, its proposals and the comments drawn from the above, were considered and approved at the Learning Disability Partnership Board. The partnership board is open to all people with a learning disability, carers, statutory partners and user and carer groups and is led and run by people with learning disabilities.

The strategy proposals and the actions set out in the initial implementation plan arose from this engagement.

The Director of Adult Services will report quarterly at the Learning Disability Partnership Board, on the council's progress in implementing the strategy. This will give people with a learning disability, carers and stakeholders a further opportunity to review the strategy and the implementation plan.

Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group and the NHS were comprehensively consulted with and the strategy developed in line with their recommendations. This included discussion of the strategy at Wokingham's Leadership Partnership board, whose membership includes all local NHS bodies and the Primary Care Networks that represent GPs.

#### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

The strategy provides a full and detailed analysis of the equalities issues affecting people with a learning disability, across the delivery of health services and social care but also access issues regarding employment; education and training; transport; and community facilities. The proposals set out in the strategy are designed to address these issues and to ensure the human rights of people with a learning disability.

#### **List of Background Papers**

Appendix 1 – Wokingham's Strategy for People with a Learning Disability  
Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

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**Our Learning Disability Community**  
**Wokingham Borough Council's Learning  
Disability Strategy**

## Forward

People with a learning disability are our neighbours, our friends, our work colleagues, fellow students and the people we love. They train with us in the local gyms, travel with us on the buses and work with us as volunteers in the local groups that matter to us. They are an integral part of our community and we are very proud of the contribution they make to the life of Wokingham.

We are also proud of the families, partners and friends who offer their lives, skills and passion, in supporting our residents with a learning disability to live well and in the way they choose.

The council with its partners are committed to making Wokingham the very best place for people with a learning disability to live, learn, play and work.

We recognise, however, that many of our people with a learning disability need support to help them achieve the quality of life and life chances that we all expect to have. They often have to live with other disabilities and health conditions that impact their ability to live independently and which, without the right type of help can have life limiting consequences.

Discrimination and inequity in how services are delivered and a lack of understanding of adjustments that may help a person with a learning disability get a job or attend college, also impact on the quality of life of our residents with a learning disability. We all need to work together, working as partners of our residents with learning disabilities to challenge this and to design solutions that recognise and enhance their abilities.

Our learning disability community has worked hard with us and our partners across the NHS, community groups and schools, to develop this strategy. It represents our joint mission to enhance the lives of people with a learning disability living in Wokingham but critically the council's commitment to invest the resources needed to deliver it.

**Charles Margetts**  
**Executive Member for Health,  
Wellbeing and Adult Services**

**Matt Pope**  
**Director Adult Services**



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## Executive Summary

The 2001 Valuing People Strategy set out a clear Government agenda to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities. This was updated in 2008 by Valuing People Now.

Valuing People aimed to achieve life changing outcomes for learning disabled people in the following areas:

- Securing their Civil Rights
- Supporting independence
- Enabling choice
- Ensuring inclusion in the mainstream

This strategy sets out how the council will continue to deliver against these, transforming the lives of our learning disabled residents in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The strategy also supports the council's response to the Government's 2015 'Building the right support' framework. The framework aims to transform the support and care offered by the NHS and local authorities to people with complex learning disabilities, preventing them from needing long term hospital care.

The strategy will ensure that the council is able to meet its statutory obligations to learning disabled residents under the Care Act that include:

- Providing support that prevents people's conditions from getting worse
- They get the right information and advice they need to make decisions about their care
- They have a choice of good quality support and care services that can meet their needs

The strategy has been developed using an extensive range of national and local data covering:

- How many learning disabled people live in Wokingham
- The level of support they need
- A prediction of the number of learning-disabled people the council will need to support over the next 5 years
- How much the council will need to spend to fund their support

Learning disabled residents and the advocates who help them to be heard, have worked closely with the council in designing the proposals detailed in this strategy. Families who provide support to learning disabled residents have also been instrumental in deciding what this strategy will do.

The council will continue developing its plans with people who use learning disabled support and will fund organisations that help them and their carers have a voice.

People with a learning disability often have complex neurological and health conditions alongside physical disabilities, which significantly affect their ability to manage their basic needs. Many learning disabled adults also experience poor mental health or are autistic.

Their overall health is often poor, with their average life expectancy 23 years lower than the general adult population.

As a consequence many learning disabled people need a range of support from both adult social care services, funded by local authorities and the NHS.

Wokingham supports a higher number of adults with a learning disability than many of other parts of the country and has the second highest learning disabled population needing support in the south east. In line with this level of need the council spends a significant proportion of its funding for support and care on people with a learning disability. The council expects the number of learning disabled people it supports to significantly increase over the next 5 years.

This strategy sets out what the council proposes to do to meet this need and its approach to addressing increased pressure on its finite resources.

The council is good at helping people with a learning disability get and keep a job. However, we want to support more learning disabled people to be independent and to have the choice of living in a home of their own home and with the

people they choose.

The council also wants to improve how it supports young people with a learning disability prepare for adult life. This includes making sure that they and their parents/carers have what they need to make good decisions regarding their future.

To deliver against these aims this strategy includes proposals to:

- Create a dedicated Learning Disability Service providing focused social work support and access to social care. Creating capacity to ensure that we have a detailed action plan that ensures that the LD Strategy is implemented within Wokingham.
- Develop an LD Commissioning and market development plan that fosters greater choice and control within the market. Supporting learning disabled people to be more independent and active in their own homes, reducing the number of people living in residential care.
- Create an enhanced and sustainable offer of support for carers get the support they need to help them continue caring.
- Set up and implement a new service to support disabled young people to plan and prepare for adult life
- Developing our corporate responsibility to ensure that our the local Plan and design housing, neighbourhoods and transport to meet the needs of learning disabled residents
- Working with the NHS to ensure that our integrated services improve outcomes for residents with a learning disability
- Ensure that the voice of people with learning disability is heard through the development and implementation of this strategy. We will facilitate an active learning disability partnership and a voluntary sector that supports people with a learning disability.

# Chapter 1

## The Background Story

### 1.1 We need a plan

In 2001 the then Government set out an ambitious 21st century plan for our citizens with a learning disability. The Valuing People strategy described an unambiguous vision for what life in the 21st century should be like for people with a learning disability. This vision was further developed and updated through Valuing People Now.

In 2015 the Government through NHS England launched a new approach to supporting people with more complex learning disabilities. The 'Building the right support' framework covers a range of policies and tools designed to significantly improve the outcomes achieved by the NHS and local authorities for learning disabled people with complex needs. This includes people with significant mental health needs and those on the autistic spectrum.

Our strategy is designed to achieve the national vision, building on the guiding principles set out in the 2015 framework. It also describes our ambition for our residents with a learning disability and what we will prioritise and do over the next 5 years to enable them to build a healthy and purpose driven future, where they can choose how they want to live

Critically the strategy will drive our plans that will support making Wokingham one of the best places to live for people with a learning disability. We are committed to designing and producing these plans with our learning disabled residents, their families and carers and with the advocates and organisations that support them in having their voices heard.

The strategy will support the council in meeting its statutory obligations under the Care Act 2014, which include:

- Making sure that people with disabilities or who have long term debilitating conditions receive services that prevent their care needs from becoming more serious, or delay the impact of their needs

- That they can get the information and advice they need to make good decisions about care and support
- Ensuring they have a range of provision of high quality, appropriate services to choose from

It has been developed using:

- Extensive analysis of the needs of our residents with a learning disability;
- A good understanding of what we are spending to meet their needs
- Knowing how well we perform at keeping people independent

We have used this to model what might happen in the future so that Wokingham is well prepared for any changes in demand for our services.

We have worked hard to develop robust evidence and data to support the development of this strategy and its proposals. We acknowledge that the council needs to do more to provide consistent and ongoing need, performance, good practise and quality data to support:

- Effective day to day care assessments and reviews
- Accurate information being given to people with a learning disability, their carers and advocates on the most effective service options available to them
- More effective commissioning and funding decisions both at council planning level and for each individual needing council support
- The council being clear about its medium to long term pressures and financial challenges and the opportunities and options available to address them

We have compared ourselves with other English councils using data available from the Government and by talking to councils who perform well when supporting people with a learning disability. In addition to developing this strategy the council is using this to design its medium to long term commissioning proposals

and plans.

However, our understanding of existing services for people with a learning disability and the local and national market, is underdeveloped. This includes not having the following:

- A comprehensive database of local supply and services for people with a learning disability, including costs
- Data on the use of Wokingham services by other councils;
- Analysis of services the council commissions and whether they are cost efficient and delivering effective outcomes
- Information on whether the services the council commissions are designed in line with national best practice and guidance

In addition to addressing these gaps in our knowledge, we want our services to demonstrate that they can support our people with a learning disability;

- Achieve greater independence and control;
- Become active within their communities;
- Be healthier
- Do all the things that other people can choose to do

This strategy is the first step towards achieving the new things we want for our learning disability community. Our next step will be to develop a commissioning plan between now and April 2020, based on coproduction with people who depend on our services and those who advocate for them. This will enable us to work with our provider market and develop a range of local accommodation options.

People with a learning disability needing support, are a significant and growing community in Wokingham. Compared with the overall adult population we have more people with a learning disability living in Wokingham than most areas in England.

### **What is a learning disability**

Valuing People defines learning disability as individuals who have:

- A significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information and

to learn new skills

- A reduced ability to cope independently with everyday living tasks
- Impaired social functioning
- A disability that started before adulthood with a lasting effect on their development

It's important to understand that this definition does not include those with Learning Difficulties such as dyslexia.

The level of difficulty experienced by people with a learning disability can vary considerably from mild to severe requiring a range of support from low to complex support.

Some people with mild learning disabilities may experience few significant problems but people with severe learning disabilities may have a variety of interconnecting needs, which significantly impact on every aspects of their lives. This includes a significant number of people who have a learning disability who are also autistic.

For some people it is not the degree of learning disability that determines the level of support they need but the presence of a number of other significant factors such as mental illness. It's also important to note that many people with a learning disability experience conditions of older age when they're younger, including dementia.

### **Working with the people who matter**

In producing this strategy we have spoken to over 150 people with a learning disability. We also spoke to carers and parents, enlisting the help of advocate organisations such as CLASP, SEND Voices Wokingham and Wokingham MENCAP.

The council has invested in these organisations to ensure that our residents with a learning disability and the friends and families who support them have a voice. This investment has allowed these organisations to set up learning disability awareness campaigns across local businesses, schools and communities.

It has also allowed them to support people with a learning disability and their carers to fully take part, in council consultations on key decisions such as local regeneration plans. This has been achieved through training learning disabled

people to be advocates and trainers and through providing family and carer liaison workers.

It's important that people with a learning disability are not only heard but are able to directly influence the decisions the Council makes. This includes decisions regarding the key resources they depend upon to achieve good wellbeing and a life of purpose and independence.

For this reason we have commissioned CLASP to work with other local advocate organisations to run Wokingham's Learning Disability Partnership Board. This is the key body that we work through to develop and determine our plans for local learning disabled people and which will agree this strategy before it is considered and approved by the council's Executive.

Coproduction of our plans and the design of services is a fundamental principle that sits at the heart of delivering this strategy. Therefore, during its lifetime we are committed to continuing our current investment in the local groups, which support our learning disabled people and carers to influence what we do.

We've also worked with our local special school that educates children and young people with special needs, to get the views of parents, governors and their staff.

We have discussed our plans with our partners in the NHS and providers.

We have offered face to face and telephone support with online surveys aimed at our residents with a learning disability, their carers and the staff who support them. **We asked:**

- What's important to you
- What's difficult to do
- What helps
- What can be done better
- What would be good to have

The feedback has been included throughout this document and grouped into themes.

## Feedback from people with a learning disability on community

We want to live in areas we are familiar with, we don't want to live outside Wokingham

We want to choose where we live and who we live with

We want to be independent with help to become more independent



## We speak for ourselves

CLASP is a Wokingham charity that supports local people with a learning disability have their say.

A small team of staff, volunteers and trustees are involved who either have a learning disability or who have a lot of experience of what is important to people with a learning disability.

CLASP's mission is:

"To develop independence through self-advocacy for those adults living with a learning disability".

CLASP deliver this through workshops and training; providing resources and signposting; and peer support.

CLASP run several projects and groups:

- "Listen To Us" – awareness training led by people with a learning disability, used by schools, local businesses and support providers
- "Take Notice" - campaigning group working hard to make things better for people with learning disabilities
- Weekly coffee shop to share information and to help community engagement
- The Hate Crime Reporting Centre helping people to report incidents and provide information on hate crime and being safe.

CLASP is the home of the Wokingham Learning Disability Partnership Board. The partnership board works to break down barriers for people with learning disabilities and their families

The regular LDPB roadshows, around the borough, are a chance to find out more about learning disability services, give feedback and talk about important issues.

## People with a learning disability at the heart of our communities

People with a learning disability are our neighbours, our work colleagues and for many are much loved partners, family members and friends. Our learning disability community is an integral part of the neighbourhoods in which we live. They are also customers using Wokingham's shops, cafes, restaurants and leisure and training facilities.

We want to live in a place that is learning disability friendly and that helps us to play a full part in our communities

Increasingly they want their views and opinions heard and acted upon. This applies to how their neighbourhoods are developed and planned, so that they can take full advantage of all the community resources and opportunities available. This includes opportunities to work; to be educated and trained; to shop; to meet friends for a night out and to develop new relationships.

We want housing designed for and with people with a learning disability

Developing spaces, neighbourhoods and local transport that are easy and safe for people with disabilities to use and which are designed to address their needs, is crucial in supporting them in being active members of their communities. This in turn prevents isolation and loneliness and supports their fundamental human right to do what everyone else can do, removing barriers and eradicating discrimination.

We want better and safer transport that works for people with a learning disability and which helps us to get around easily and

The council will use its powers to improve the local environment through Wokingham's Local Plan, Local Transport Plan, local planning guidance and through section 106 agreements,

to achieve this ambition.

There are a range of tools the council will use to provide the robust evidence to support its housing and development proposals for people with a learning disability. This evidence will cover:

- Where learning disabled people live
- How they use services
- What design features need consideration when planning buildings, spaces and transport links that address the needs of people with a learning disability.

These tools include the council's Housing Strategy, GIS mapping, housing needs assessments and the growing and more sophisticated data available from the Office of National Statistics, Public Health and NHS Digital. Map 1, which shows where our learning disabled residents live, is an example of the tools we will use.

Proposal activities within this strategy set out how we will develop our neighbourhoods, regeneration proposals and planning policies and guidance, to meet the aspirations and needs of our residents with a learning disability.

**Map 1 - Where people with a learning disability live**

## 1.2 Our Wokingham

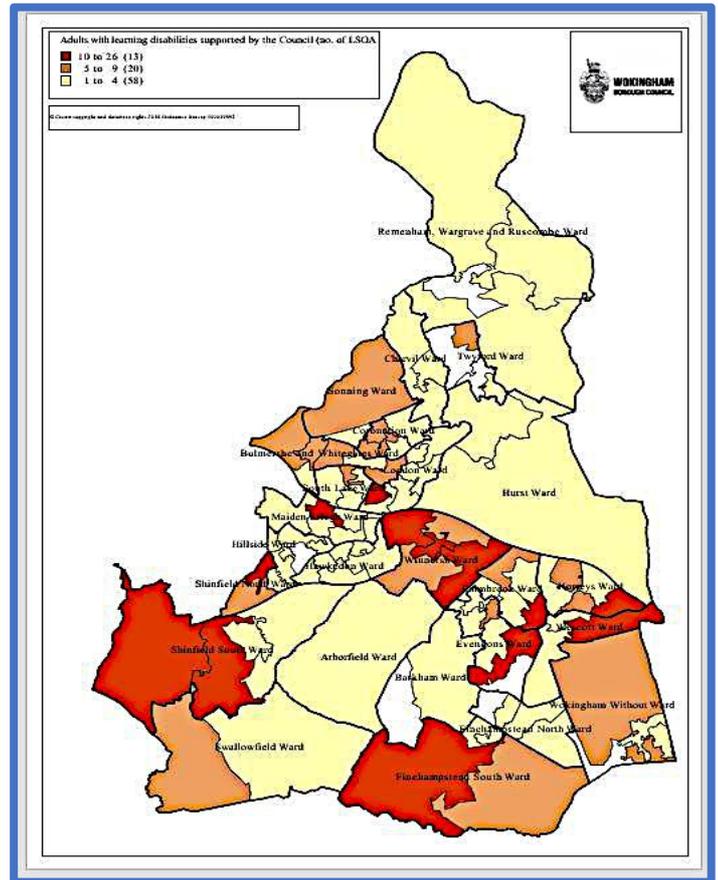
There are 168,000 residents living in Wokingham, which is expected to increase by over 10,000 new households over the next 10 years.

Wokingham has an aging profile with the over 65s rising from 14% of the population in 2007 to 18% in 2017, with an expected rise to 20% by 2025.

Wokingham has one of the highest life expectancies in the country with healthy life expectancy significantly higher than the England average.

Female healthy life expectancy is the highest in the country. However, the proportion of the population in their twenties and thirties is much lower than the

England distribution.



61% of working adults work in senior managerial and professional occupations compared to 51% for the SE and 46% nationally.

Only 12% work in areas such as care, which is below the SE at 16% and nationally at 16.5%.

## 1.3 Who we support

### The Broader View

The people the council supports with a disability or long-term illness are fewer when compared with similar councils but the number of our residents needing help is rising. Wokingham has seen an increase in the number of residents accessing long term council funded care since 2016/17, from 1775 residents to 1825 in 2018/19

There are significant demand pressures from people with a learning disability and older people with life limiting conditions. This is highlighted by table 1 that<sup>1</sup> illustrates the proportion of Wokingham adults

<sup>1</sup> Based on CIPFA benchmarks of English councils with a similar population, need and spending profile to Wokingham

accessing council funded care, with local authority areas similar to Wokingham.

Chart 1 highlights how we spent the money we use to help our residents who require support, to manage their disabilities and health conditions and which affect their ability to look after themselves.

Overall Wokingham spent:

- £42.7 million on adult social care in 2018/19
- 42% of this was spent on services for people with a learning disability

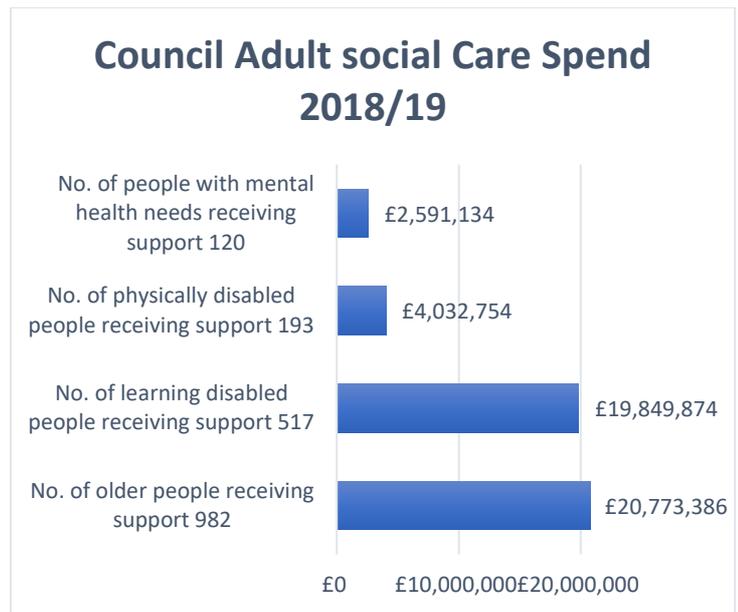
**Table 1**

**Wokingham residents accessing long term council funded care compared with similar local councils**

	18-64	65 Plus
Learning Disability	Highest in comparator	Higher than comparators
Mental health	Lower than comparators	Lower than comparators
Physical Support	Lower than comparators	Higher than comparators
Support with Memory and cognition	Lower than comparators	Lower than comparators
Sensory Support	Lower than comparators	Higher than comparators

**Chart 1**

**How we spent on our residents needing support and care**



**Learning Disability**

People with a learning disability experience a range of health and other challenges that can significantly impact their lives, choices and their independence.

A combination of often complex neurological conditions, can affect their ability to make relationships and can cause significant anxiety that impacts behaviour. They can experience additional challenges with considering information, significantly impacting their ability to make decisions and to learn and acquire skills.

Adults and children with a learning disability are more likely than the wider population to have physical disabilities where they require direct support with personal hygiene and care and with mobility.

Equally the health outcomes for people with a learning disability are poorer than the wider population, with their life expectancy at least 23 years lower than the general adult population. The level of concern regarding the poor health of people with a learning disability, resulting in early death, caused the Government to set up the Learning Disability Mortality Review (LeDeR) Programme in 2015, which is now in its 4th year.

This combination of what are highly complex support and health needs, requires well planned and coordinated support across adult social care, children services and the NHS. However, the complexity of disability and need that many people with a learning disability experience, also requires higher investment in support and care services.

These services are critical in helping people with a learning disability live safely in the places they want to live and with the people they want to live with, which for many means living with the families who provide much of the support they need.

# Chapter 2

## Our People with a Learning Disability

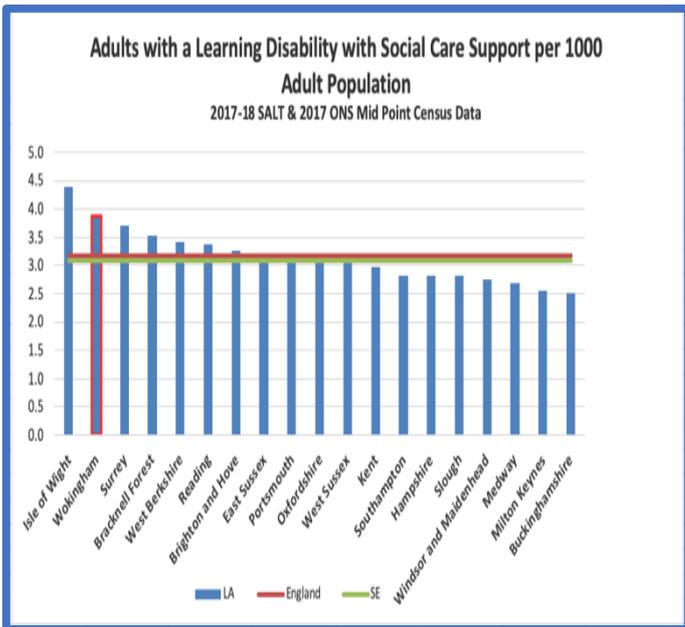
### 2.1 Who needs help?

Wokingham has one of the highest prevalence of adults with a learning disability needing support in England.

Wokingham is ranked 22nd highest out of 152 English councils with social care responsibilities and 2nd within the South East region in terms of people with a learning disability needing support. Chart 2 provides the South East comparison.

**Chart 2**

#### Comparison of learning disability support needs across the South East region

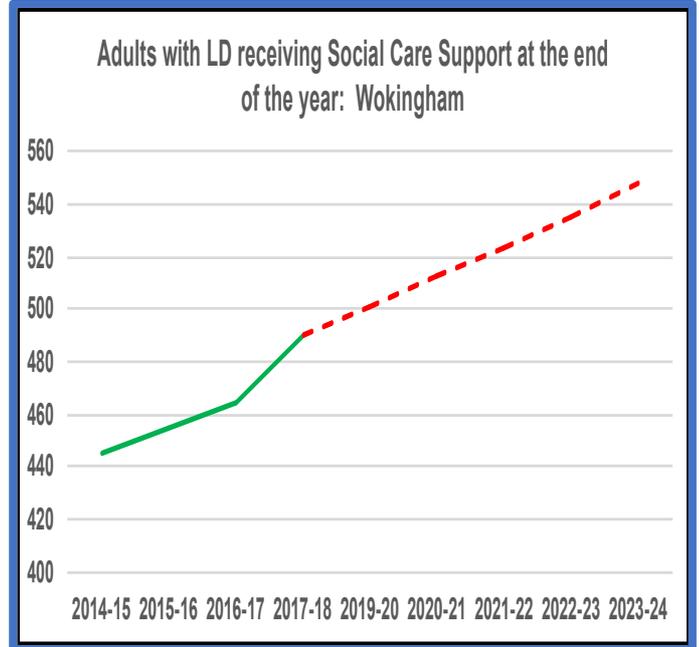


The demand for support by our residents with a learning disability is well above Public Health England (PHE) national and regional benchmarks.

Chart 3 shows that Wokingham can expect an on-going and significant upward pressure in demand for support from adults with a learning disability, with a 10% increase in demand over the last 4 years compared to an England and South East average of 6%.

**Chart 3**

#### Changes in demand for support from learning disabled residents living in Wokingham



Our analysis of projected demand confirms this additional pressure. This is based on the number of children currently supported by the council with a disability and who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This shows that in each of the next four years, at least 10 young people with a learning disability will need on going adult social care support.

This will increase the number of learning disabled adults the councils supports from 517 to 557 by 2024. The additional funding required to support this increase will be covered in the council's medium term financial planning process.

These facts highlight that the needs, expectations and aspirations of our people with a learning disability is a key priority for the council

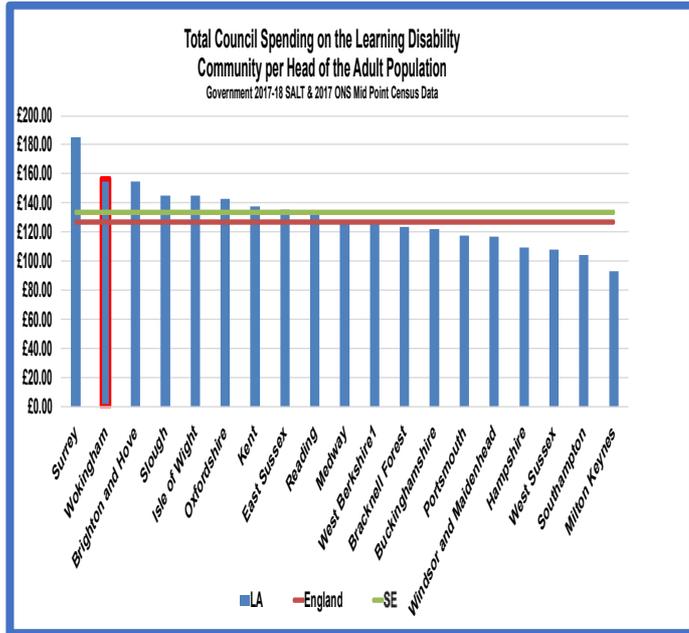
### 2.2 Our investment

Wokingham's spending on its learning disability community is high, reflecting the high number of learning disabled residents living in Wokingham who need council support.

Wokingham spends above the average for England and has the 2nd highest spend per head of the adult population in the South East. Chart 4 shows the comparisons for the South East.

**Chart 4**

**Comparison of council spending on learning disability support per head of the adult population**



Despite the high level of demand for learning disability support, the council's adult social care spend on each resident with a learning disability compares favourably with other local authorities. We spend in line with the average for England and much less than the average for South East councils.

Chart 5 highlights that in 2017/18 our average weekly spend per person with a learning disability was £772 compared with the England average of £764 and an average for the south east of £826.

**Chart 5**

**Comparison of council spending on each person with a learning disability**

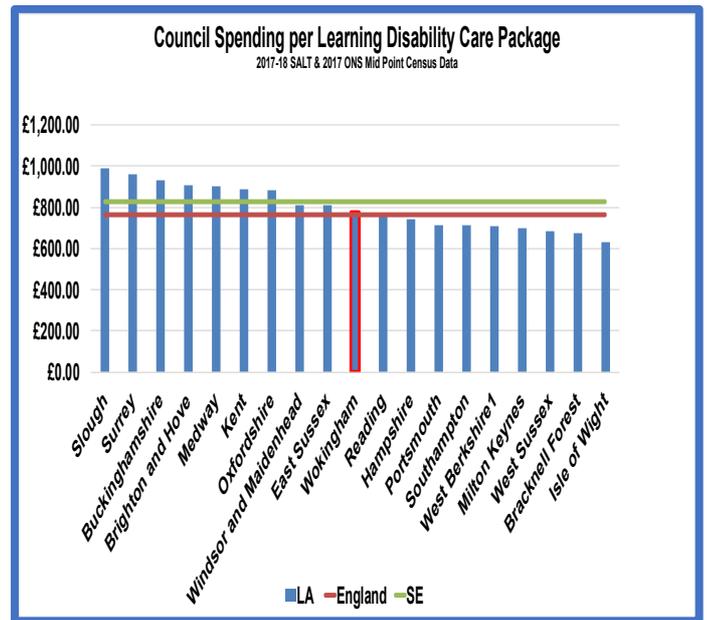
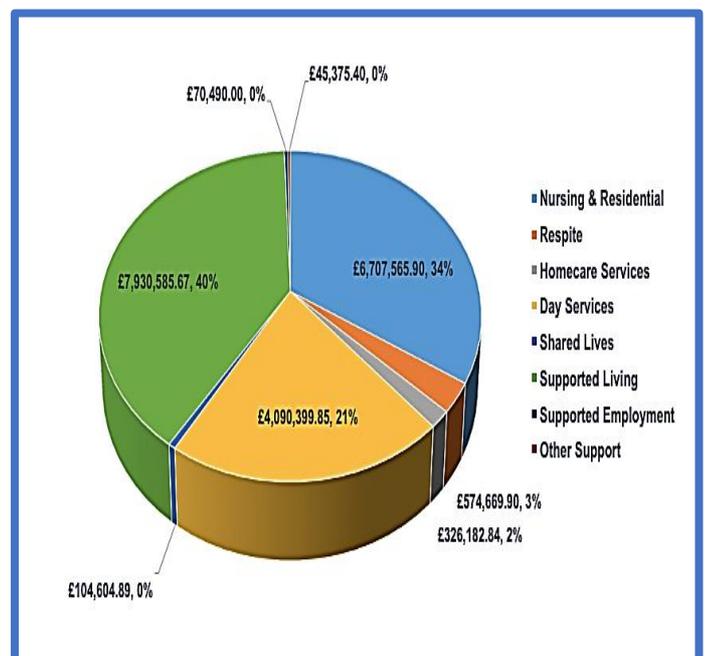


Chart 6 provides an overview of the range of services the council funds for our residents with a learning disability, highlighting on what we spend the most.

**Chart 6**

**Spend on Learning Disability Services**

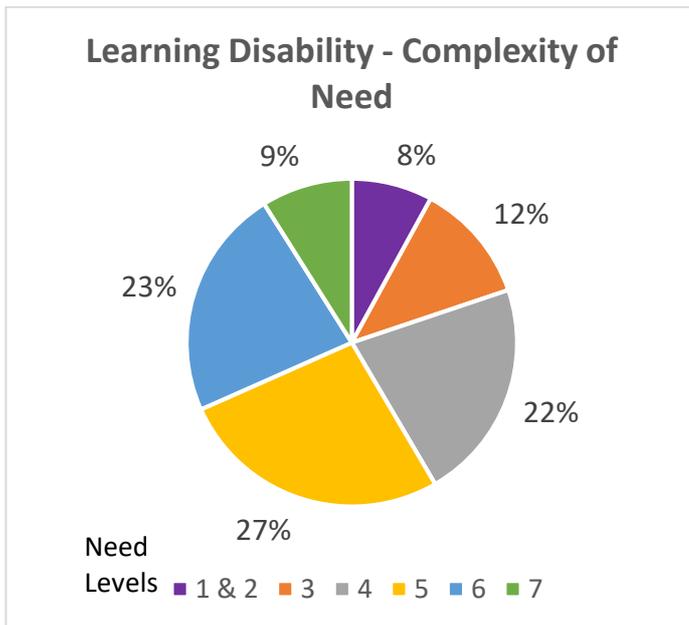


## 2.3 Who cares? We do!

517 of our residents with a learning disability are supported by the council, of which 80% require direct support with everyday living skills and tasks and 32% have substantial support and complex needs. This is detailed in Chart 7.

Chart 7

### <sup>2</sup>Type, Level and Complexity of Learning Disability Needs Care Homes



Care homes generally support people who may struggle to manage and maintain their independence safely. Most care home residents need direct hands on care and support and often need regular supervision to ensure their safety both day and night.

Care homes provide a 24/7 care service that is

#### <sup>2</sup> Need Level Descriptions

1. Full independence - Does not need support
2. Assisted independence - Requires equipment but no help
3. Set up/standby - Requires help of one person. Only needs someone to help set up/supervise or to standby and prompt
4. Minimal assistance - Requires occasional hands-on help of one person
5. Moderate assistance - Can do aspects of ADLs but requires one person to assist.
6. Maximum Assistance - Requires one or more person(s) to assist throughout ADLs
7. Full support/unable to do any of the task - Requires one or

attached to the home and they are inspected by the Care Quality Commission, which is a statutory regulator. It is a legal requirement for all care homes to be registered with the Care Quality Commission.

100 learning disabled adults live in a care home funded by Wokingham council. They mainly have highly complex and substantial needs. These residents are mostly middle aged and have lived in their current home for more than 10 years with just under half living outside Wokingham.

It's important to recognise that despite their level of disability and care needs, people living in a care home still have the same right to live an active and fulfilling life where their potential to develop new skills is supported. Equally support that helps them to be active members of the communities they live in.

Therefore, the focus of our strategy in achieving these aims will be to develop outcome driven social work reviews, which identify and build the strengths and assets each person living in a care home has.

Our quality control and monitoring of care home providers will be driven by their effectiveness in supporting each resident to exercise choice; increase their control over their lives and which supports their rights to be active citizens

### Supported Living

180 of our residents live in housing for people with a learning disability where support and care is provided with their home, of which 79% need help with everyday living tasks and 29% have complex or substantial needs. These services are often referred to as supported living or supported housing. People living in these

more people to complete ADLs

ADLs: Activities of daily living such as:

- Bathing and brushing teeth
- Preparing and eating a meal
- Wearing the right clothes and getting dressed
- Using the toilet
- Going to bed and getting up in the morning
- Moving around
- Taking medication safely

services in Wokingham are slightly younger than care home residents but most are either middle aged or approaching middle age. On average they have been living in their current home for 10 years.

Most people living in a supported living services have a tenancy and pay rent. A support and care service is often attached to where they live to help them maintain and develop their independence, as well as helping them manage their day to day living tasks.

The council spends over 70% of its budget for people with a learning disability on care home and supported living services.

### **Support with getting active, building skills and making friends (Day Support)**

Opportunities to meet and make new friends and to develop loving relationships that can see us through our good and more challenging times are fundamental to all people. We often achieve these relationships through being around people who are like us, share our interests and who understand who we are. These relationships often define our sense of wellbeing and support our good mental and physical health.

What is important to us is: meeting people, getting out and about, volunteering and helping others, having something to do and somewhere to go

Having a sense of purpose and self-worth based on doing the things that we find interesting and enjoy but which develop our skills so that we can do more of what matters to us and the people we are connected to, are also fundamental to our well-being.

The building of relationships and the pursuit of personal fulfilment, worth and achievement are often developed through a range of experiences that include:

- Work
- Taking up a course and educating and training ourselves

- Getting involved in sport or going to the gym
- Meeting friends for a night out
- Joining a choir, learning an instrument or getting involved in art or drama
- Learning how to make and create things

Keeping our minds active is important. We want a happy and healthy mind and body

These are just a few examples that help us to build purpose and the meaningful relationships that we value, all of which are key to our wellbeing.

However, as described in section 1.3 of this strategy people with a learning disability face multiple challenges. These challenges can significantly impact and impair their ability to get involved with the activities detailed above. This undermines their opportunities to develop and sustain the meaningful relationships we all need and to pursue a purpose driven life.

We fund and directly provide a range of support services to help our people with a learning disability to overcome these challenges. These services are often described as Day Support but can also cover support that helps people to socialise and go out at night.

We really value our day support but it needs an upgrade

## Feedback from people with a learning disability on getting active, building skills and making friends

We want to play sport and keep fit

We want to stay up late and do things at night that are learning disability friendly

We need people to support us to enable access to the opportunities and activities available

The support offered is diverse and includes:

- Building based help in neighbourhood centres across Wokingham with skills training and development but creating links with neighbours and local communities
- Support with new experiences such as working on a farm or in a community café
- Specialist support for people with complex needs to help them manage their disabilities and to get the social stimulation and interactions they need
- Support for people with a range of disabilities to meet friends, go out, go shopping and have a social life

310 learning disabled people living in Wokingham get this help funded by the council, which is 60% of all people the council helps with a learning disability. The overwhelming majority of people who are supported and cared for in a family home use day support.

Therefore, these services are an important part of the council's offer to people with a learning

disability and their carers.

Wokingham services are highly valued by our learning disabled residents who use them. Our review of councils that perform well on supporting the independence of people with learning disabilities, highlights that Wokingham's current arrangements are consistent with best practise.

However, we spend just over a 20% of our learning disability budget on day support services, within the context of a significant and increasing demand for learning disability support. This will need considering as part of the review detailed under section 3.1.

We also need to reflect on the fact that for many of our people with a learning disability, these services are intended to connect them to the communities in which they live. They are also intended to help them develop and build the skills they need to live as independently as possible, exercising choice and control over their lives.

These concepts are set out in the national (SCIE) review 'Having a good day?' published in 2007, which looked at community-based day activities for people with learning disabilities.

Whilst this review was completed 12 years ago it still provides useful principles to guide service design, aimed at helping develop meaningful social interactions and broader life skills.

The design principles include:

- Undertaking activities that have a purpose
- Being in ordinary places, doing things that most members of the community would be doing
- Doing things that are right for them personally
- Receiving support that meets their individual and specific requirements and overcomes inequalities
- Meeting local people, developing friendships, connections and a sense of belonging.

In chapter 3 we set out proposals to review Wokingham's day support arrangements against the framework set out in 'Having a Good Day'

The review and any redesign of services that emerge will be taken forward in partnership with advocate groups under the oversight and direction of Wokingham's Learning Disability Partnership Board.

### **People living with family and carers**

187 Wokingham adults with a learning disability live at home with their families or someone close to them who provide support and a care. 81% require support with their everyday living needs and 24% have complex or substantial needs. Therefore, families and carers are a substantial source of support for many of Wokingham's most vulnerable residents with a learning disability.

We want more help so we can carry on caring

The council recognises and celebrates the significant contribution carers are making to the lives of many of Wokingham's residents with a learning disability and the enhanced quality of life they experience through being able to live at home with their families.

The cost of supporting people living at home with carers is lower when compared with people living in supported living and a care home. This helps Wokingham manage the increasing pressures on its social care spending as our population of older people needing support and care increases. These pressures are being experienced by most English councils who fund and provide social care support.

The average age of our carers of adults with a learning disability is 59 with the majority between 52 and 66. This suggests additional future pressures on the council's adult care services as and when they are no longer able to provide support in their home.

87% of adults living with a carer receive a day support service funded by the council.

The council is very aware that these services are a key part of the support that families depend upon and that any changes in day support may

affect their ability to continue caring.

Given the value families and carers offer to our residents with a learning disability still living at home, the council is committed to their voices being heard when services that help them care are reviewed, including day support.

It is also important to recognise that most of the residents they support and care for are aged between 22 and 35 with an average age of 30. It's not unreasonable to expect that many of these young adults will want to leave home and the council is committed to helping them with that choice as and when they are ready to move on.

The council has already successfully used Wokingham's planning framework to secure housing designed for the needs of people with a learning disability, including development of a scheme that will provide 10 self-contained flats and two shared houses for people with profound needs. This scheme will open in 2020 and will offer 24/7 support and care where needed.

We will continue to work with housing developers, particularly with regard to the larger housing developments in Wokingham to secure further specifically designed housing schemes for our residents with disabilities.

More detail regarding our plans are set out in chapter 3

### **Shared Lives**

Shared Lives offers support and accommodation within the homes of carefully recruited, trained, checked and supported Shared Lives Carers. The people they support live as part of the carers' family and the council pays a weekly allowance to the carer so they can provide the person with the support they need.

Shared Lives offers a real alternative to other less independent and more expensive forms of support and care, such as care homes. The scheme enables someone with a disability needing support to develop meaningful and enduring relationships, reducing their long-term risk of isolation and loneliness. It also helps them gain confidence and greater independence and supports them to develop the skills they need for independent living within a safe family setting.

There are 9 learning disabled residents supported by Wokingham's Shared Lives scheme. They share a very similar need and age profile to people living with their families. They are mainly in their late 20s or early 30s and require support with one or more of their basic needs with a 1/3 having complex and substantial needs. The costs of delivering support and care through a shared lives arrangement are significantly lower than a supported living service or care home.

Therefore, shared lives services offer an effective option where a person supported by their family can no longer remain at home, due to changes in their needs or where their families can no longer provide care. Equally where adult Safeguarding concerns arise, involving a vulnerable person's family and where they need short term accommodation with support while the concern is investigated and resolved.

Critically Shared Lives offer choice for people who are either not ready to live in a place of their own or where they want and would benefit from the social interactions that living with a family bring.

### Feedback from carers of people with a learning disability

We need a break from caring and at times that can help us take time off work

We want better information and advice on the options available to us and the person we care for

We need help and support with legal and money matters, when someone can't make their own decisions



### Jane loves her sister

Jane loves her sister Mary very much, who lives happily with Jane and her family. Jane initially contacted Wokingham Mencap for advice and support regarding respite for Mary. Wokingham Mencap's family liaison worker arranged a home visit with Jane, who was worried about sorting out a short break for Mary.

Jane needed to book an operation for her back and she wasn't sure that her young family could manage Mary's needs. She was a bit overwhelmed with all the information about respite and needed to understand the options for Mary.

Wokingham Mencap helped Jane by gathering information on short break and respite options for Mary. Jane's family liaison worker then supported her in reviewing Mary's support plan with her social worker.

As a result a short break was arranged for Mary who wanted to go on a seaside holiday. Wokingham Mencap helped Mary and Jane, find a service that supports people with a learning disability take a holiday. The council agreed a budget to fund this support and Mary had a wonderful time. Jane had her operation and is recovering well.

Jane's stress levels regarding respite for Mary were taken care of and both of them continue to enjoy their lives living together.

## People with Complex Health and Care Needs

Some people experience significant challenges with remaining independent and without the right kind of support their safety and the safety of others may be undermined. These risks can arise due to a person having a combination of various disabilities and health conditions on top of their learning disability. These may include mental health problems and being autistic. In a small number of people these conditions, on top of the person's learning disability, may affect their behaviour potentially causing harm to themselves and other people.

Across the UK, too often learning disabled people with multiple and complex health conditions have ended up staying in hospitals and institutions for years, some of which are not equipped to manage their needs. Some have been placed in hospitals that are considerable distance from where the person and their families live, due to a lack of local specialist services able to provide the support they need. A combination of these factors has resulted in well publicised failures in the delivery of safe healthcare, such as the major failures at Winterbourne View.

The Winterbourne View scandal and subsequent inquiries carried out by the NHS and Care Quality Commission, highlighted evidence of systematic and individual abuse against the most vulnerable people with learning disabilities.

In response to these challenges the Government set up the Transforming Care Programme. The programme is designed to bring the NHS and local authorities together to develop and provide local services and resources, which ensure that no person with a learning disability is admitted or kept for long periods in institutions. Equally that they can be supported in their local communities, in a home of their own or can continue to live safely with their families, partners and carers.

Berkshire Transforming Care Partnership directs the local programme across Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group, East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group and the following local authorities:

- Wokingham
- Slough
- Bracknell Forest

- West Berkshire
- Reading
- Windsor and Maidenhead

The Berkshire Transforming Care Partnership is committed to supporting a reduction in the current local specialist beds. As a result the partnership has established a community based Intensive Support Team, which seeks to avoid all but essential admissions into hospital.

Across Berkshire there are 27 people with complex learning disabilities who are currently inpatient in mental health or specialist learning disability hospitals. Four patients are from Wokingham. However, we estimate that there are 6 young people with complex learning disabilities, supported by Wokingham's Children's Service, who may be at risk of hospital admission during adulthood.

The council is supporting Berkshire West CCG, through the partnership, in developing new community based services and resources aimed at learning disabled people with complex needs. This includes developing and designing specialist housing, with support services that are highly skilled in supporting people who present with challenging and risky behaviours.

Proposals in chapter 3 provide more detail on the NHS's work with the council to develop these new resources.

### Feedback from people with a learning disability

We need the council and health to work better together to improve the lives of people with a learning disability

We need a learning disability team that understands what people with learning disabilities need and want

## Respite Support and Short Breaks

Having time to ourselves and being able to spend quality time with our friends and families, are key to us developing and maintaining good physical and mental health. Being able to pursue our interests outside of work and to develop ourselves through exercise, taking up education and training and through socialising are also fundamental elements to good living. Taking a holiday can also promote and support a person's well-being, through giving them a time to rest and opportunities to explore new things with their friends and families.

However, for a person with a learning disability who has complex support and health needs and the families who care for them, these very basic human needs can be difficult to meet. To address this the council provides respite support and short break services.

These services offer people with complex learning disabilities, the opportunity of taking a break and holiday of their choice with the people they choose. They can also help them to explore new experiences and opportunities to develop themselves, within a safe environment designed to meet their support and care needs.

Respite support is also designed to give families who provide care the time off they deserve and need. This is critically important to Wokingham given the substantial level of support and care families provide to our learning disabled residents, within the context that many of our family carers are working.

Short term respite support can be provided in a registered care home; in a person's family home through homecare or through services designed to enable learning disabled people to access holidays, leisure opportunities etc.

As recognised already in this strategy the council's social care costs are much lower for people cared for by their families. The council offering a choice of good quality and responsive respite support will be key to ensuring that they can continue caring, helping the council manage its long-term spending pressures. Therefore, the council is committed to maintaining its current levels of investment in respite support and short break services during the lifetime of this strategy.

However, a council review of the existing respite services it funds, carried out in 2019, suggests they may not be fit for purpose. Critically they may not be delivering the quality outcomes, choice and opportunities we want for our residents with complex learning disability needs. The council is committed to engaging people using these services and their carers in their redesign following its review.

- 59 people with a learning disability receive funding for respite, including people receiving direct payments and those supported through accommodation-based respite such as Loddon Ct
- This is 11.4% of all LD people receiving a funded adult care package
- The overwhelming majority (88%) are adults living at home with family and carers with the remainder living with Shared Lives carers
- The needs of people using respite support, both through direct payments and accommodation based, are high and they are likely to have complex and profound LD needs
- They are higher than the needs of LD adults who do not receive funding for respite support
- It's important to note that there is virtually no difference in the needs of people using accommodation-based respite and those who use direct payments to purchase other community options
- However, those using accommodation-based support are on average slightly older than those using direct payments although they are not significantly older
- Overall LD adults using respite support are in their mid-20s to late 30s with an average age of 34
- There is virtually no distinction between the weekly cost of an accommodation-based respite option and other options funded via direct payments

## People living independently

There are 41 Wokingham residents with a learning disability who live independently in ordinary housing but who need support to maintain their independence.

They are mainly middle aged to aging with an average age of 50, with a typical age range between 39 and 60 years of age. Overall their need levels are markedly lower than people living at home with carers and with Shared Lives support. They are also lower than people living in supported living services.

75% of learning disabled residents living independently use day support and 31% access the council's employment support service. 22% use a combination of day support and homecare services to address personal care needs such as support with eating, bathing and dressing. The needs of people who use both day support and homecare are higher.

The council's proposal to develop a strengths based approach to social work review is designed to reduce dependency on adult social care support. This is being supported by the council adopting a new approach to commissioning support providers, so that they focus on achieving outcomes that build independence, resilience and life skills.

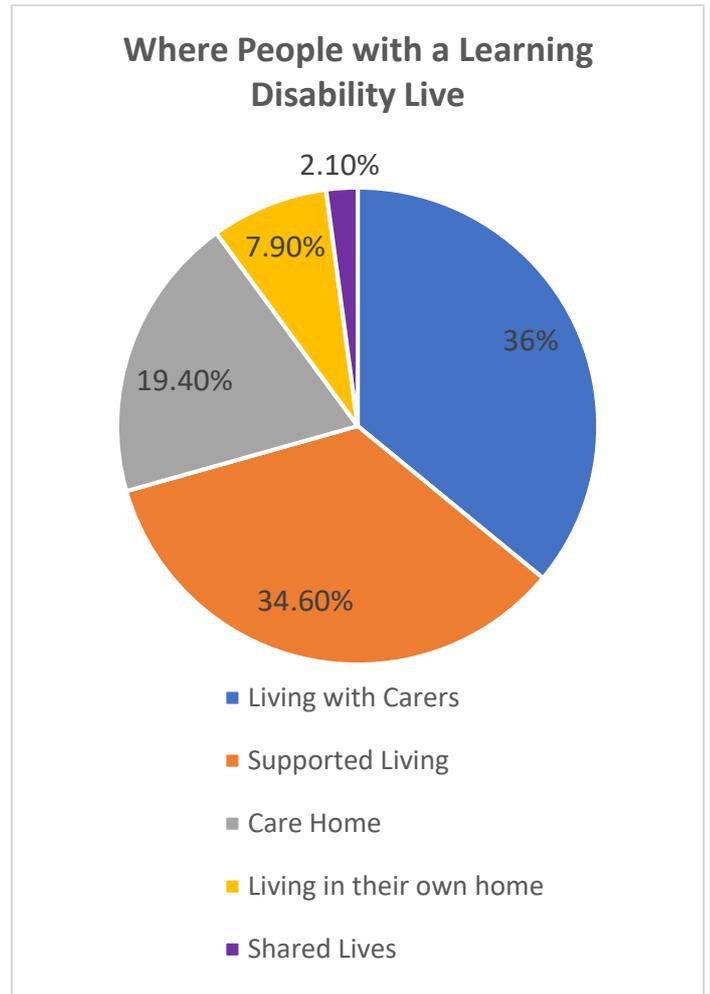
Enabling people with the potential for greater independence to be less reliant on social care support is a key aim of this strategy, particularly given the increasing financial pressures faced by the council.

This is within the context of Wokingham's higher and increasing demand for learning disability support, when compared with other council's and the increasing pressures arising from Wokingham's aging population.

Chart 8 summarises the living arrangements of Wokingham's residents with a learning disability who are supported by the council.

Chart 8

## Living Arrangements of Learning Disabled People using Support





### Giving our talents

We are Focussed Friends. A group of people with learning disabilities supported by the council to be active in our communities.

We meet every Tuesday morning. Our 'job' is to speak up for the people who use the Learning Disability Day Service. We do this by being a part of the Wokingham Learning Disability Partnership Board and working on projects that make things better for people.

We wanted to do something about people who are lonely and who need cheering up. We also wanted to connect people to each other.

We came up with the idea 'Hug in a Mug', which we started in autumn 2015.

We filled mugs with treats (things like, teabags and sweets) and gift wrapped them. We got involved with people in hospital, using the gifts to start conversations and help new friendships to develop.

Everyone was really happy. The feedback we got was that we gave everyone something really good to remember. This made us feel really good about what we were doing. We kept going helping more patients feel better about themselves.

This project benefits people with learning disabilities (us!) because it gives Focussed Friends something good to do. We are learning new things and feel a part of our local community.

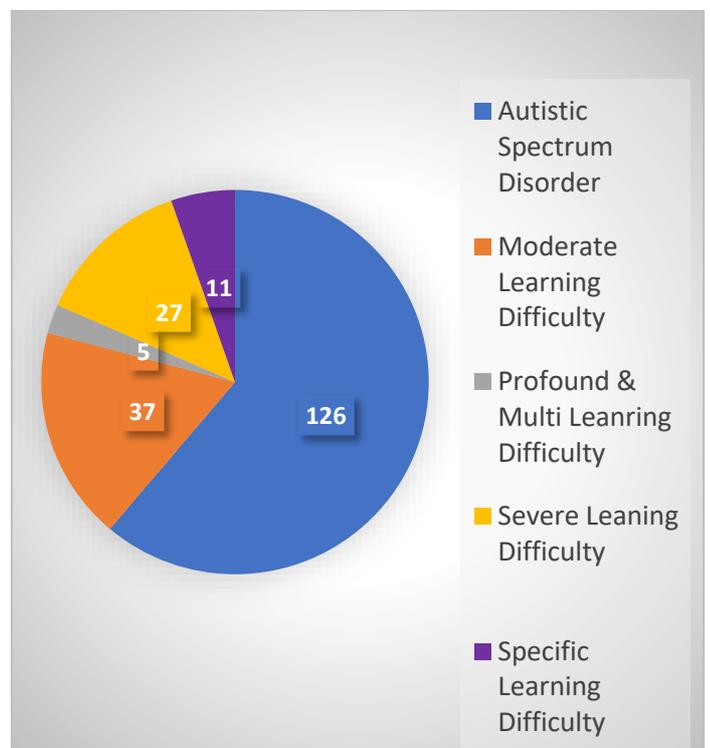
## 2.4 Building a future for our young people

Wokingham's Children's Service supports 206 young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who are either on the Autistic Spectrum or have behaviour and emotional support needs or who need help with a learning difficulty.

Their needs are summarised in chart 9.

Chart 9

### Young People with Education, Health and Care Plans by Support Need



Estimates suggest that over the next four years 40 of these young people will need long term adult social care support when they reach 18. This equates to about 10 young people needing an adult support package each year.

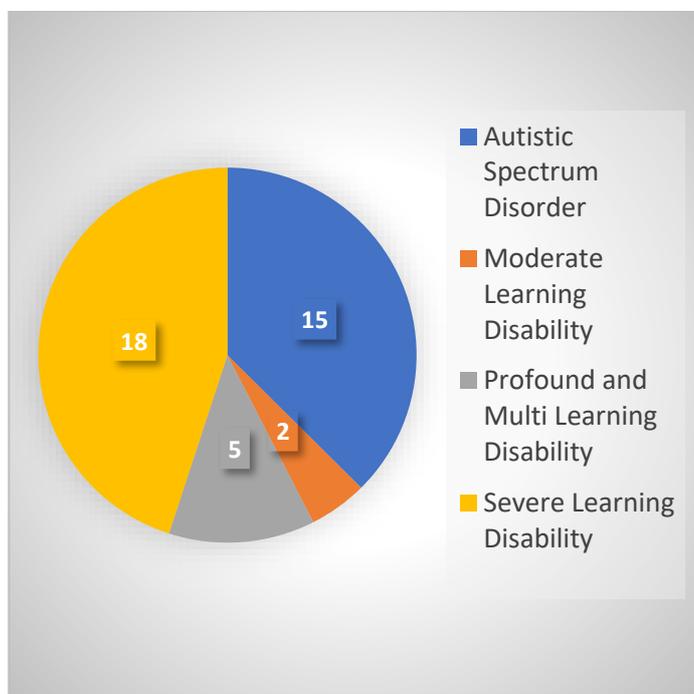
Chart 10 offers an overview of their needs

Preparing Wokingham's young people with a learning disability for adulthood through support that helps achieve their goals is key to achieving the council's long-term strategic aims. This includes helping young people:

- To set up a home,

- To be educated and trained
- To pursue a purpose driven life of their choice
- To access work, where appropriate, raising their long-term financial independence and well-being

**Chart 10**  
**Need Breakdown of Young People Transitioning to Adult Services**



This can only work where young people and their carers are well informed about what to expect as they reach 18 supported by their professionals, whether they're council or NHS, working together to help smooth their progression to adulthood.

To achieve this the council is reviewing how it supports its young people with disabilities. In particular the council wants to improve how it prepares them for becoming adults, ensuring that they and their carers are clear about how the council will support them as they reach 18 and into adulthood.

The council is committed to providing the advice and resources at all of the critical points in a young person's development, to maximise their opportunities and to enable them to become thriving adults.

The following guiding principles drive the council's review:

- A pathway plan co-produced with each young

person with a learning disability and their parents or carers by the time they reach 17, with goals focused on preparing for adulthood and budgets agreed with adult services, where the young person needs ongoing care

- Early professional collaboration and planning across children services, health and adult care and coproduction of solutions and services with each young person and their parent or carer
- Parents, carers and the young people they support well briefed on how things work for adults with disabilities including housing; employment and training; further and higher education; disability rights; mental capacity; adult mental health and the Care Act
- Ensuring that each young person with a learning disability has a right to become an independent adult with choices and opportunities to develop not just skills but their ambition

The review will be completed in 2019 with changes implemented by 2020.

Our analysis suggests that 40% of our young people, supported by the council's children service with a learning disability, choose to remain at home with their families well into adulthood. This only emphasises the importance of the council continuing to provide a service offer that help families support and care.

Of the 60% of young people that either choose or need to leave home they tend to be in their early to mid-20s when they leave, with most moving onto a supported housing or supported living service.

However, most people living in Wokingham's supported living services are middle aged and have lived in these services for 10 years or more. This combined with the fact that much of Wokingham's supported housing offers shared living, may make current services an unsuitable offer for many young people choosing to leave home

Therefore, over the lifetime of this strategy the council will pursue developing housing options, designed to help learning disabled young people

leave home as and when they are ready to do so.

This will be combined with targeted support able to meet the needs, goals and expectations of young disabled people and which help them become successful adults with as much choice and control over their lives as possible.

However, we want to develop options that parents and carers can be confident will keep their children safe but which build their skills to live independently.

## 2.5 Doing right by our people

The Government have two performance measures to judge how well councils support their residents with a learning disability including:

- The employment of people with LD and
- Adults supported to live in their own home

### I want to work

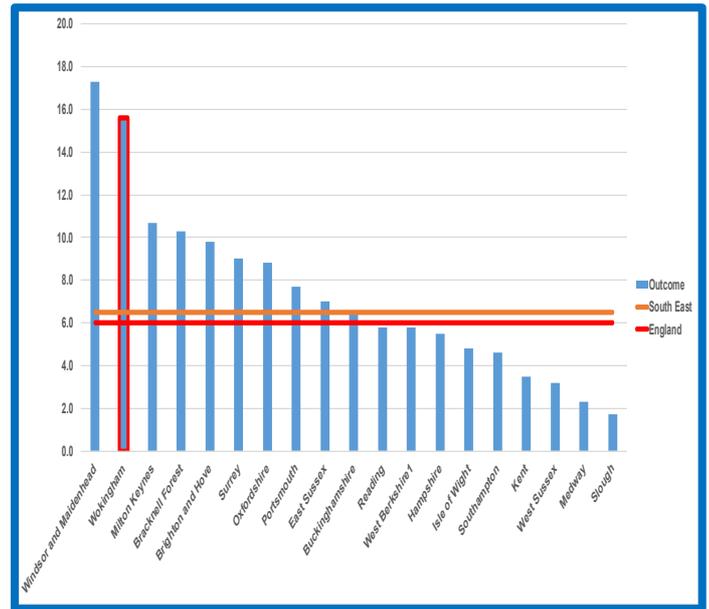
Wokingham is doing well in supporting people with a learning disability get and keep a job, performing significantly above national and regional expectations. Skills development and helping our residents with a learning disability access mainstream employment has been a key feature of the council's strategy.

In 2018/19 the council's investment in employment support helped over 250 adults who are learning disabled achieve financial independence, develop skills and build workplace social networks. This is something Wokingham should be proud of.

### Chart 11

#### Adults with a Learning Disability in Paid Employment – Regional Comparison 2018

However, despite our success the gap in employment between adults with a learning disability and adults with no disabilities is high





### **Sophie gets a job**

Sophie is 33 years old and is supported by the Optalis Supported Employment Service (SES), funded by the council.

The service has enabled her to get and keep a paid job. Prior to this support Sophie could not get a job.

Sophie was provided with tailored and individual support through one to one contact with a Job Coach, who helped her identify her goals through:

- Giving Information, Advice and Guidance
- CV writing
- Help with application forms
- Confidence building
- Interview training.

Sophie was supported to apply for a job at a local school. Sophie was successful in getting the job. Sophie's employment support worked with her new employer, helping them understand Sophie's disability and plan for her workplace needs.

Sophie has successfully kept her job. Sophie now needs less council support and has become more independent.

In 2017/18 80.7% of Wokingham's economically active adults were in employment compared to the 15.6% of adults with a learning disability, which is a gap of 66.3%. Our gap is substantially lower than the gap for England at 72.8% and for the South East at 75.8%. It is also significantly below the average for Berkshire at 72.8%.

Wokingham narrowing the employment gap for people with a learning disability is clearly a positive achievement. However, the council recognises that further work is needed to help more of its residents with a learning disability realise the financial independence, skills development and social benefits work can bring.

Therefore, the council is committed to continuing its investment in employment support during the lifetime of this strategy. The council will also review the performance of its support, with our residents with a learning disability who want to work, to ensure that the best possible outcomes for as many people as possible are being achieved against the council's investment

### **Living where I want with who I want**

The council is doing less well at helping residents with a learning disability to live independently in their own home and with the family, friends and neighbours they want to live with. Whereas the council's performance on supporting independence is at the same level as most councils, it wants to perform amongst the very best in the country.

In 2017/18 77% of local residents the council supported with a learning disability, lived in their own home. In comparison the best performing English councils enabled between 85% and 97% to live in a home of their own or with their family. The council has set itself an ambitious target of enabling 90% of Wokingham's residents with a learning disability support need, to live in their own home and with the people they choose to live with, including their families. We will achieve this target by 2024.

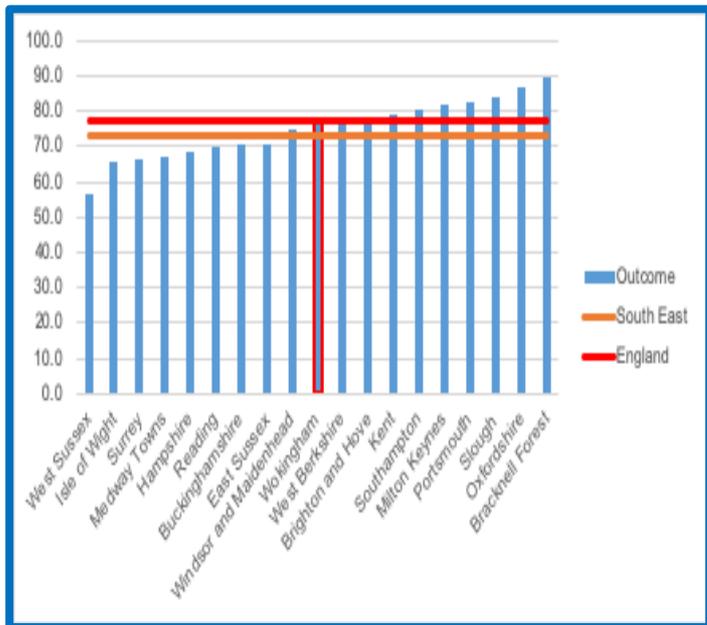
The council's plan to achieve this is described in chapter 3

These commitments reflect the fact that residents

with a learning disability are an important and significant part of Wokingham's community. They also reflect the council's high ambition for all its residents within the context of achieving the outcomes set out in the national Valuing People Strategy.

**Chart 12**

**Adults with a learning disability who live in their own home - Regional Comparison 2018**



**2.6 Keeping our people healthy**

National evidence from the Learning Disability Mortality Review programme (LeDeR) highlights that the average age at death of people with learning disabilities is 59 for men and 56 for women. This compares to an average life expectancy for UK adults of 79.

More than a quarter (28%) of deaths were of learning disabled people aged under 50. Therefore, promoting the better health of our residents with a learning disability is a key priority for the council and its NHS partners

To achieve this commitment Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust provide a learning disability community health team, with specialist community nurses who support learning disabled people and their carers access the GP support they need. The nurses also help GPs and their practise staff prepare for appointments for people with a learning disability,

ensuring that they are able to adjust what they do to meet the specific requirements of each patient.

A specialist learning disability coordinator is also based at the Royal Berkshire Hospital to support with hospital consultations and inpatient treatments.

Each adult with a learning disability is entitled to a full annual health check, irrespective of age, which are intended to tackle health issues that may further limit their life chances or cause premature death. Through the targeted community nursing support Wokingham's performance on people entitled to a learning disability health check has risen.

Set against the number of learning-disabled patients registered with Wokingham GPs, our performance rose from 52% in 2015 to 63% in 2018. This is above the performance benchmark for England at 55% and the South East at 50%.

Specialist Learning Disability nursing support has been highly effective in educating hospital professionals, GPs and their staff on how to plan for the needs of people with a learning disability so they can offer effective healthcare. It's also helped Learning Disabled service users and their carers prepare for hospital and GP appointments.



## Paul gets a check up

### How it all started

One of the community nurses, Mary, came to our Partnership Board and told us about Health Checks

I wasn't sure to start with. Perhaps I better have one

One of the nurses, Lynette, helped me fill out my form and make an appointment.

### Seeing my Practice Nurse

I made an appointment with my practice nurse. She

- Weighed me
- Did blood tests
- Checked my eyes
- Examined me all over

She sent me to my doctor

### I found out

I have type 2 diabetes

I have to take tablets

I have to watch what I eat

I have to see my doctor regularly

I have to have an eye-check at the hospital every year

### I needed help

At first I didn't really understand what I had to do because of my diabetes so Julie, who I worked with, went with me to see the doctor.

We found out about:

- Eating properly
- Taking my tablets.

Julie also came home with me to explain all this to my mum.

### How do I feel now?

I feel much less tired and have got lots more energy

I have lost weight, am feeling really well and I am happy

I had an eye test and now I have glasses and I can see better

Despite this 1/3rd of vulnerable residents with a learning disability do not get the checks they are entitled to. This will undermine their long-term health.

This may be affected by what Wokingham's learning disabled community told us about their experiences of using local health services. They said that they are not always listened to or respected and that some professionals don't understand how to treat people who may not be able to make decisions on their healthcare

We want the NHS to listen to us, understand us, respect us and give us enough time to think and understand

Some people with more complex needs are not being well supported by out of hours and crisis support services, particularly when they need help with mental health.

Our Public Health team is working with our NHS partners and the Learning Disability Partnership Board to tackle this. Our outline plan is set out under section 3.1 of our strategy

### Feedback from people with a learning disability on keeping healthy

We want the health service to understand us and know how to support people who need help to make a decision

We want better support when we go to the dentist and when we need our health check

We want better support when we are mentally unwell

## 2.7 Keeping our people safe

Supporting people with disabilities to exercise full control over the decisions that affect them and the services they use, is a key principle that's at the heart of this strategy. Choice and independence and helping learning disabled people achieve their full potential are also fundamental principles.

However, some people are vulnerable through a combination of disabilities and health conditions that may affect their ability to judge and manage risks. Their ability to make decisions on key aspects of their day to day lives may also be affected. This can often result in people with disabilities being open to the abuse and exploitation by others, including by people they know well and trust and those who support them.

It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard vulnerable people against this abuse and exploitation, including:

- The people who care for them
- The social workers, teachers and other professionals who assess and provide services and
- The council, NHS and other providers who plan and manage their support

<sup>3</sup>Government guidance issued under The Care Act defines safeguarding as:

'Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.'

The Care Act requires local authorities to set up Safeguarding Boards, which have the responsibility of ensuring that all local agencies act to protect vulnerable adults living in their

areas. These boards must include senior representation from:

- The council
- The local NHS
- The chief officer of the local police force

Wokingham, Reading and West Berkshire councils have established the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board. It's membership includes Thames Valley Police and Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (NHS). The Board's full membership can be found at:

[West of Berkshire Safeguarding Board Membership](#)

The board has agreed a 2018-21 strategy, to support the delivery by all councils, statutory agencies and providers of the six Care Act safeguarding principles:

**Empowerment:** 'I am asked what I want as outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens'

**Prevention:** 'I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help.'

**Proportionality:** 'I am sure that the professionals will work for my best interests, as I see them, and they will get involved as much as needed'

**Protection:** 'I get help and support to report abuse. I get help to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want and to which I am able'

**Partnership:** 'I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together to get the best results for me'

**Accountability:** 'I understand the role of everyone in my life'

The Board develops annual business plans that set out the objectives and actions agreed across all councils and agencies to deliver the strategy.

<sup>3</sup> [Care and Support Statutory Guidance Oct 2018 - Safeguarding](#)

Each council and member agency produce annual reports detailing their performance against achieving these objectives and which also detail the key safeguarding themes and issues they've had to address. The business plans, achievements and agency reports can be found at:

[Business Plans and Reports](#)

Wokingham's last report to the board (2017-18) highlighted the following:

- 22% of all safeguarding reports to the council were for a person with a learning disability, compared with 24% in 2014/15 and 18% in 2016/17
- 50% of all reports were linked to allegations that the abuse took place in the persons home, with 27% taking place in a care home
- 49% of the abuse cases arose from risks identified with a service provider, with 43% linked to a person known to the abuse victim and only 8% arising from someone the victim didn't know
- Of the service provider linked abuse 61% of these cases arose from care homes and 11% from supported living services

The key themes that emerge from this:

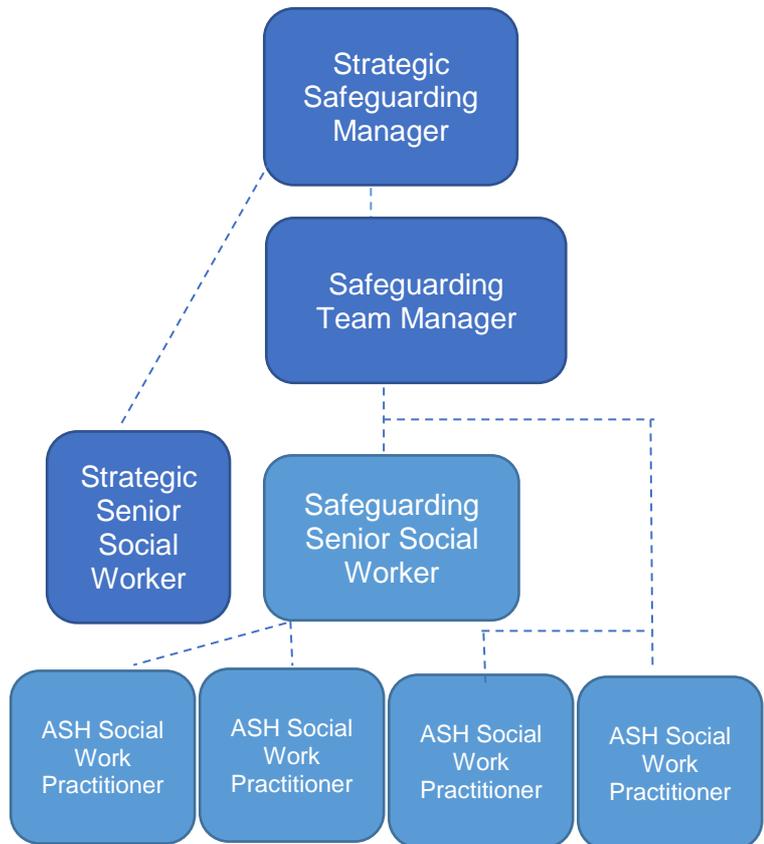
- The abuse of people with a learning disability is a significant risk issue for Wokingham, with it being the second highest area of locally reported abuse
- Local investigations and prevention of abuse and harm will be complex given the high number of allegations linked to a person who knows the abuse survivor and agencies that support and work with them
- This is particularly acute for people with a learning disability given that 92% of those supported by the council, either live at home with family carers or live in a care home or

supported living setting

- These factors highlight that the prevention of abuse and exploitation of people with a learning disability, will be one of the highest priorities for the council's safeguarding framework during the lifetime of this strategy
- Specific reporting on key safeguarding themes for learning disabled people and the council's performance in addressing key risks will be a standing item on the agenda of the council's Adult Social Care Leadership Team

The council recognises that its approach to safeguarding requires restructuring to ensure the better coordination of its response and investigation of abuse allegations. Equally to better manage its approach to preventing the abuse and harm of vulnerable people.

The council has already completed a review of its safeguarding arrangements. The review concluded that an Adult Safeguarding Hub will give the council the capacity and coordinating expertise capable of keeping Wokingham's vulnerable adults safe. From autumn 2019 the Safeguarding Hub will be in place based on the following structure



## Chapter 3

### Helping our people choose how they want to live

#### 3.1

#### What we will do next

The council is taking forward a strengths based approach to supporting Wokingham's residents with complex support and care needs and this includes people with a learning disability. This approach seeks to develop the assets and skills people already have, including what is available to them through the friends and family that support them and the communities in which they live. It also seeks to develop and build new skills and assets by working with a network of groups and through targeted support focused on achieving personal life goals.

This approach will deliver improvement in people's life chances and their opportunities to become active and engaged citizens, with a lifestyle that is their choice and which provides purpose. However, given the significant demand pressures we expect over the next five years, within the context of tightening local government spending by central Government, we also need to find ways of helping more people to become self-reliant whilst still continuing to provide support in the areas they most need it.

How we intend to take this agenda forward for our residents with a learning disability, based on the evidence and analysis set out in the strategy, is described in this chapter.

Over the next 5 years we will take forward the proposals set out below, to address the opportunities and challenges detailed in this strategy. We will meet the projected growth in the learning disability and the challenged outlined within this strategy through the continual investment, as identified within our Medium Term Financial Plan. We will redesign services for people with learning disability to maximise the resources available to us.

The council will update and further develop the plan through the Learning Disability Partnership Board, with learning disabled people; those who support and care for them and with advocate organisations. This will be an ongoing process during the lifetime of the strategy, enabling the council to design new solutions with the learning disability community and respond to emerging challenges.

## Proposals for change arising from our strategy

Activity	Timescale
To create a dedicated Learning Disability Service providing focused social work support and access to social care. Creating capacity to ensure that we have a detailed action plan that ensures that this LD Strategy is implemented within Wokingham.	April 2020
To develop an LD Commissioning and Market Development Plan that fosters greater choice and control within the market. Supporting learning disabled people to be more independent and active within their own homes, reducing the number of people living in residential care.	April 2020 - March 2025
To create an enhanced and sustainable offer of support for carers get the support they need to help them continue caring.	April 2020 - March 2025
To set up and implement a new service to support disabled young people to plan and prepare for adult life.	January 2020 - April 2020
To develop our corporate responsibility to ensure that our Local Plan and housing design, neighbourhoods and transport meet the needs of learning disabled residents.	April 2020 - March 2025
To work with the NHS to ensure that our integrated services improve outcomes for residents with a learning disability	By October 2021
To ensure that the voice of people with learning disability is heard through the development and implementation of this strategy. To facilitate an active learning disability partnership and a voluntary sector that supports people with a learning disability.	April 2020

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**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:	5.11.19
Service:	Our Learning Disability Community
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Wokingham Borough Council's Learning Disability Strategy
Completed by:	Lesley Buckland
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	The Learning Disability strategy has been considered at Wokingham's Partnership Leadership Board and shared for final comment with organisations that support people using services and their carers.
Signed off by:	Wesley Hedger
Sign off date:	11.12.19

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**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:

Wokingham supports a higher proportion of adults with a learning disability relative to other local authority areas and the council predicts the number of people it supports will increase over the next 5 years. We have developed our learning disability strategy to explain how we will meet the needs of the learning disability community in Wokingham to 2025.

The strategy will support the council in meeting its statutory obligations under the Care Act 2014. These are to ensure people with a learning disability:

- Receive services that prevent their care needs from becoming more serious, or delay the impact of their needs.
- Get the information and advice they need to make good decisions about care and support.
- Have a range of provision of high quality, appropriate services to choose from

The strategy will drive our plans that will support making Wokingham one of the best places to live for people with a learning disability.

The strategy is aligned to our corporate priorities which will form part of the borough plan:

- Deliver more efficient and effective services for vulnerable groups

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:

In producing this strategy we have spoken to over 150 people with a learning disability. We also spoke to carers and parents, enlisting the help of advocate organisations such as CLASP the *Caring, listening and supporting partnership*, SEND Voices *Special educational needs and/or disabilities parent carer forum*, and Wokingham Mencap.

We have held workshops with the Learning Disability Partnership Board and have also worked with Addington, our local school for children and young people with special needs, to get the views of parents, governors and their staff. We have discussed our plans with our partners and NHS providers.

We have offered face to face and telephone support with online surveys aimed at our residents with a learning disability, their carers and the staff who support them.

Internally we have consulted with:

- ASC Leadership Teams which includes the Director of Adult Services and AD's
- Service Manager Disabled Children and Early Help
- Assistant Team Manager Community Care Services/Learning Disability
- Transitions Team
- SEN
- Optalis
- Strategy & Commissioning
- Educational Psychologist

The Council will further develop the plan to take the strategy forward through the Learning Disability Partnership Board, with learning disabled people; those who advocate support and care for them and with advocate organisations.

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

This strategy will benefit people with a learning disability, their families and carers and the advocates and organisations that support them in having their voices heard. It also describes WBC's ambition for our residents with a learning disability and what we will prioritise over the next 5 years:

- People with a learning disability will be able to build a healthy and purpose driven future, where they can choose how to live
- Effective day to day care assessments are developed
- Accurate information is given to people with a learning disability, their carers and advocates on the most effective service options available to them
- More effective commissioning and funding decisions both at council planning level and for each individual needing council support
- The council will be clear about its medium to long term pressures and financial challenges and the opportunities and options available to address them

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

- To create a dedicated Learning Disability Servicer providing focused social work support and access to social care. Creating capacity to ensure that we have a detailed action plan that ensures that this LD Strategy is implemented within Wokingham.
- To develop an LD Commissioning and Market Development Plan that fosters greater choice and control within the market. Supporting learning disabled people to be more independent and active within their own homes, reducing the number of people living in residential care
- To create an enhanced and sustainable offer of support for carers so that they get the support they need to help them continue caring
- To set up and implement a new service to support disabled young people to plan and prepare for adult life
- To develop our corporate responsibility to ensure that our Local Plan and housing design, neighbourhoods and transport meet the needs of learning disabled residents
- To work with the NHS to ensure that our integrated services improve outcomes for residents with a learning disability
- To ensure that the voice of people with learning disability is heard through the development and implementation of this strategy. TO facilitate an active learning disability partnership and a voluntary sector that supports people with a learning disability.

## 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	
Gender:	No	
Disabilities:	Positive	<p>People with disabilities receive services that prevent their care needs from becoming more serious, or delay the impact of their needs.</p> <p>They can get the information and advice they need to make good decisions about care and support</p> <p>They have a range of provision of high quality, appropriate services to choose from</p> <p>Be healthier and have a purpose driven future, where they can choose how they want to live</p> <p>Achieve greater independence and control</p> <p>Become active within their communities</p>
Age:	No	
Sexual orientation:	No	
Religion/belief:	No	
Gender re-assignment:	No	
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No	
Marriage and civil partnership:	No	

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 Wesley Hedger

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wesley Hedger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a distinct loop at the end of the last name.

Date: 11.12.19

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