



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** will be held in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **THURSDAY 24 JUNE 2021 AT 7.00 PM**

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 16 June 2021

Note: Although non-Committee Members and members of the public are entitled to attend the meeting in person, space is very limited due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. You can however participate in this meeting virtually, in line with the Council's Constitution. If you wish to participate either in person or virtually, via Microsoft Teams, please contact Democratic Services. The meeting can also be watched live using the following link:
<https://youtu.be/t6NDkTxAURI>

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, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business

Enriching Lives

- Champion outstanding education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background.
- Support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to complement an active lifestyle.
- Engage and involve our communities through arts and culture and create a sense of identity which people feel part of.
- Support growth in our local economy and help to build business.

Safe, Strong, Communities

- Protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people.
- Offer quality care and support, at the right time, to prevent the need for long term care.
- Nurture communities and help them to thrive.
- Ensure our borough and communities remain safe for all.

A Clean and Green Borough

- Do all we can to become carbon neutral and sustainable for the future.
- Protect our borough, keep it clean and enhance our green areas.
- Reduce our waste, improve biodiversity and increase recycling.
- Connect our parks and open spaces with green cycleways.

Right Homes, Right Places

- Offer quality, affordable, sustainable homes fit for the future.
- Build our fair share of housing with the right infrastructure to support and enable our borough to grow.
- Protect our unique places and preserve our natural environment.
- Help with your housing needs and support people to live independently in their own homes.

Keeping the Borough Moving

- Maintain and improve our roads, footpaths and cycleways.
- Tackle traffic congestion, minimise delays and disruptions.
- Enable safe and sustainable travel around the borough with good transport infrastructure.
- Promote healthy alternative travel options and support our partners to offer affordable, accessible public transport with good network links.

Changing the Way We Work for You

- Be relentlessly customer focussed.
- Work with our partners to provide efficient, effective, joined up services which are focussed around you.
- Communicate better with you, owning issues, updating on progress and responding appropriately as well as promoting what is happening in our Borough.
- Drive innovative digital ways of working that will connect our communities, businesses and customers to our services in a way that suits their needs.

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
Graham Howe	Children's Services
Pauline Jorgensen	Highways and Transport
Charles Margetts	Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services
Stuart Munro	Business and Economic Development
Gregor Murray	Resident Services, Communications and Emissions
Wayne Smith	Planning and Enforcement
Bill Soane	Neighbourhoods and Communities

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
1.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence	
2.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS To confirm the Minutes of the Extraordinary Executive Meeting held on 18 March 2021 and the Executive Meeting held on 25 March 2021.	7 - 36
3.		DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest	
4.		PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice. The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of the Executive Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Council or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions	
4.1	None Specific	Daniel Hinton has asked the Executive Member for Resident Services, Communications and Emissions the following question: Question Like many interested parties across the Borough The members and followers of Greener Wokingham are	

looking forward to WBC running one, or more local deliberative processes. Can you tell residents what progress has been made in determining which LDP are right for our Climate Emergency and what the likely topics of the LDPs will be?

4.2 Wescott

Nick Dyer has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

Question:

Since 2013 the monthly membership fee (currently £30 per month/£360 p.a.) has allowed squash players to book off-peak courts at no additional cost. On 11th May 2021, without prior consultation, members were advised that with effect from 1st June that IN ADDITION to the monthly fee a charge of £5.50 would be levied for every off-peak booking.

This means ADDITIONAL COST as follows:

1 court booking per week = £286 p.a.
2 court bookings per week = £572 p.a.
3 court bookings per week = £858 p.a.
4 court bookings per week = £1144 p.a.

Not many people play 4 times a week, but I and a number of others do (we were described by PfP as “abnormal members”!) but the impact on us is huge. The group I represent are mainly senior citizens for whom this is our main source of exercise which is now being discouraged. We believe some members will cancel and the rest of us will significantly reduce usage emerging from a pandemic.

I would like to know what impact analysis on INDIVIDUALS was carried out by the Council before they sanctioned these draconian price increases by Places for People and how they can be justified?”

5.

MEMBER QUESTION TIME

To answer any member questions

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

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

5.1 None Specific

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

Question

I participated in a workshop recently which looked at building over 4500 houses, 3 schools, community centres, new roads etc at Hall Farm stretching to and including parts of Winnersh.

When asked a senior officer at the workshop suggested that the evolving local plan was to provide 700 to 750 houses a year until 2036 but in the local Wokingham Paper you are quoted as stating the number each year would be in the region of 14,000 plus a year to 2036.

Was the 700 to 750 the housing number the Council would like to put in the Hall Farm Arborfield to Winnersh and the 14,000 plus the number for the Borough as a whole, and can the Leader of the Council update me on the actual or approximate housing numbers the Council are planning for the Borough in the evolving housing plan to 2036?

5.2 None Specific

Imogen Shepherd DuBey has asked the Leader of the Council the following question:

Question:

Having looked at the Recovery Strategy document - I am having trouble seeing what WBC are doing, over and above the business as usual items that are mentioned in this document. This document seems to cover the work that WBC would be doing anyway, but it does not demonstrate what additional funding is being made available to help local Businesses recover and how it might be used. Even Wokingham Town Council has managed to find funding for advertising and banners promoting businesses in Wokingham Town Centre, but at this critical time, we have seen no wider help at all from WBC.

Please can you identify what additional funding is being allocated to business recovery and how is going to be used?

5.3 None Specific

Shahid Younis has asked the Deputy Executive Member for Equalities, Poverty, the Arts and Climate Emergency the following question:

Question:

Could you tell residents what you are doing to entrench fairness and equality of opportunity across the Council?

5.4 None Specific

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

Question:

When you gave your Budget Speech in February this year, there was no mention of a Recovery Plan, something, you may remember I commented on in my speech in response to your proposals. I have been through the current proposals, and I can still see no Budget commitments within the Document, only a broad comment about working within the financial restrictions of the Council. That seems to confirm no specific financial allowance has been made to perform any of the proposals, such as they are, mentioned within the Document.

Is this document nothing more than an afterthought?

5.5 Wescott

Sarah Kerr has asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

Question:

Who was involved in the decision-making process for the price increases at St Crispins Leisure Centre that has led to in some cases, a 4-fold increase in cost for some users?"

Matters for Consideration

6.	None Specific	WBC RECOVERY STRATEGY	37 - 74
7.	None Specific	REVENUE MONITORING 2020/21 - OUTTURN	75 - 94
8.	None Specific	CAPITAL OUTTURN 2020/2021	95 - 106
9.	Hillside	IMPLEMENTING THE LEISURE STRATEGY	107 - 118
10.	None Specific	COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY 2021-2024	119 - 148
11.	Hurst	COMMERCIAL HOSPITALITY OPPORTUNITY FOR DINTON PASTURES COUNTRY PARK	149 - 154
12.	None Specific	ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP	155 - 168

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

Anne Hunter
Tel
Email
Postal Address

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

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE EXECUTIVE
HELD ON 18 MARCH 2021 FROM 5.30 PM TO 6.05 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: John Halsall (Chairman), John Kaiser, Parry Batth, UllaKarin Clark, Pauline Jorgensen, Charles Margetts, Stuart Munro, Gregor Murray and Wayne Smith

Other Councillors Present

Lindsay Ferris

100. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Charlotte Haitham-Taylor.

101. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

102. STATEMENT BY THE LEADER

This is going to be a long evening with the penultimate Executive of the year and the last Full Council of the Municipal Year. To complete the business in the allotted time Members will need to be efficient in their interventions.

The pandemic started a year ago. The first lockdown started on 23rd March 2020. It has been a long hard road. The weekly rate to 11th March in Wokingham is 35.1 today, which is well below the peak of 606 on the 4th January but still compares very badly to below five in August. We suspect that it will be adversely affected by the schools going back and conversely favourably by the rollout of the vaccinations. Happily, both hospitalisations and deaths are declining. Our lives have changed, unrecognisably for some, and many lives have so sadly been lost. I can only restate my condolences for those that have suffered so much.

Deaths within the UK for those who have been diagnosed with Covid within 28 days have now risen to above 125,000.

Please join me in a moment's silence for those who have died of this dreadful pandemic in Wokingham, the UK, and all around the world, and those who have suffered not just the effect of the virus itself, but the problems which have accompanied it.

Please also remember in your thoughts the very sad death of Sarah Everard.

Thank you.

Our GPs continue to be magnificent. All the over-50s in England are now able to get an appointment. It means the final group in phase one of the inoculation programme can get a vaccine and just confirmed by the Prime Minister, just 5 minutes ago. So, the light at the end of the tunnel is getting ever brighter. We must, however, nervously look across the Channel at what seems to be a third wave, which is bedding in with ever increasing lockdowns. We are grateful to our Government who has had the foresight and acumen to establish the research into the vaccination programme and the unequalled roll-out.

It has never been more vital that we play our role and continue to observe the rules.

Again, a big thank again to all the carers, doctors, health staff, social care staff, health, police, fire, rescue, ambulance, teachers, school staff, charities, volunteers, our staff, and in particular our staff. In short everybody who has stepped up to the plate and made it possible for life to continue during these appalling times.

Many of our critical proactive measures 'going over and above' would not have been possible if we did not have a stable and strong financial foundation on which to fund our numerous measures intended to assist our community.

Despite, new responsibilities that needed funding, losing vital income sources such as car parking and leisure, and cost reduction programmes on hold, we had the financial resources to go well above the bare minimum. It is with this that illustrates the true strength of our financial management; CIPFA has rated WBC in the top 20 of upper tier councils for financial sustainability. Our current borrowings are very far short of the £750m irresponsibly quoted in some election literature.

Our response in many ways has been astonishing and has been being widely held up as an exemplar of good practise. It is being considered by the Council tonight. It is worth reiterating some of the essential measures employed during the pandemic, which have touched every resident and enterprise:

- the emergency planning processes;
- the protected residents in care homes;
- supported care homes by supplying PPP, critical advice, and staff;
- resisted national policy to discharge early from hospital to care homes;
- reduced homelessness to a single rough sleeper, and I haven't given up on him yet;
- widely introduced lateral flow testing;
- set up a Community Hub with our voluntary sector partners;
- created the concept of the one-front door;
- provided extended care support for vulnerable children;
- worked closely with GPs to enable vaccinations to be rolled out;
- maintained critical services for the most vulnerable residents;
- maintained universal services;
- financial support to local businesses;
- redeployed staff;
- we started our local democracy speedily;
- communicated regularly and clearly;
- considered the impacts on particular groups;
- positively impacted on Climate Emergency Action;
- managed the financial impacts of Covid-19;
- developed a risk-based approach to decision-making;
- planned ahead for the "Restart" and "Recovery"; and
- advanced the highways programme.

As I have previously said, the Council will not be found wanting to support residents; be it child hunger, poverty, or homelessness. Next week we are proposing a supplementary estimate to the winter grant fund.

It has never been of such profound importance that local government plays its role for their local community. With a steady hand, we are now navigating to recovery and business as

usual, changing the way we work, supporting all our residents, and ensuring that services run as normally as possible. The Medium Term Financial Plan enshrines recovery and enumerates our twenty-five-point published Council Plan providing a clear pathway for the future.

Britain is halfway to its goal of being carbon neutral by 2050. Greenhouse gases have fallen by 51% against the Government's baseline for measuring progress towards net zero, an analysis of official data reveals. Carbon dioxide emissions fell by 13% last year to the lowest level in nearly 150 years. I am delighted that your Council received a huge grant, with this week announcing a Woodland Trust's grant of £300,000 to plant 250,000 trees.

The roll out of the waterproof recycling bags together with green bags for food waste and blue bags for non-recyclables is now happening. Sadly, this was delayed due to the call-in, but we believe that we have been able to mitigate the adverse cost. Minimising wet waste and persuading more to actively use food waste should improve our recycling from a currently remarkable 50% and above should help further to achieve our climate change goal.

We are delighted that we have been designated the healthiest place to live in addition to one of the most desirable, which is a true complement to this Conservative led Council.

Having fiercely and successfully opposed central Government's plans for considerably more houses in our Borough and having maintained our infrastructure payments from those which are built, we will be pleased to lay before the Council our revised local plan shortly, which will include an even higher number of affordable houses. The housing policy will come to the Executive next week.

The rollout of MIND in the Borough generously funded by a local resident will provide a service for adults, youngsters and children for mental health.

Nobody understands the importance of tackling violence against women better than the Prime Minister's fiancée. At the age of 19 she was a victim of the black cab rapist John Worboys, who picked her up while she was waiting for a night bus after an evening with friends. "I will never truly know what happened after he drugged me." Carrie said. Carrie was one of the fourteen women who gave evidence at Worboys' trial and later campaigned against his early release.

The public outpouring of grief and, increasingly, anger after the death of Sarah Everard has been profound; all women recognise that fear. The lurch in your stomach as you hear footsteps that little bit too close behind you, the keys gripped in your hand as you walk down a badly lit street, the heart pounding in your chest as you cross a dark park: these experiences are, to an appalling extent, an integral part of being female. Even a future queen is not exempt from the anxiety, as the Duchess joined the tribute at Clapham Common.

We should not stray into what are national interest, but this is a Wokingham issue and underwrites much of what we are discussing tonight. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation; all of them and they are equally important.

The Council is the golden thread that runs through our Borough, the indispensable partner for our residents and businesses. Diversity, equality, anti-racism and addressing need must be at the heart of everything we do and of the example we set. No rational person would take a different point of view. Every one of our residents must be able to lead the life that he or she wishes without fear from harm and without harming others. The Equality Policy that we put in front of you today is the first step in this continuous journey in which every day we must strive to do better.

Taking responsibility for what has been delegated to others provides some of the essential means to achieve these goals and keep our residents safe, secure and happy. Combined with the work we are doing with the health sector, the voluntary sector and the police we should be able to make a material difference to our residents' lives. The increase in violent crime in Wokingham Town, reported by the Wokingham paper, underwrites this need.

It is that cultural and social change in attitudes which is required to ensure women and all our residents are heard and protected. It will not happen quickly but step by step over a long period of time ingraining work practises, culture and attitudes into life in Wokingham Borough. When I am not even a memory in this Council, I would like that architecture to continue to flourish and keep giving.

On Saturday the Prime Minister and his partner lit a candle in Downing Street in memory of Sarah. Carrie's trauma underlining an understanding of the significance of her death at the heart of our society. It is a survivor talking to her partner about a horrific experience that shaped her. On this issue at least, she is tapping into the public mood.

But it is we at Wokingham Borough Council who need to act and by agreeing the two papers tonight we take a significant step in that direction.

103. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions submitted.

104. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

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

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

Question

Can the Leader of the Council confirm that in addition to setting up a cross-party working group to look at the formation of a standalone service, will that working group also be looking at whether:

- (a) it would be possible to improve the current PPP arrangement to better meet the needs of local residents in Wokingham Borough; and
- (b) will look at whether there are parts of the current PPP service which could be retained/used by Wokingham Borough Council in the future?

The Liberal Democrat Group believe that the Council needs to have a backup position should the move to a standalone service encounter problems, which prevents, or delays the establishment of such an arrangement.

Answer

The institutions which govern this proposal will be appropriate to ensure that the project can be successfully delivered. Suitable cross party and multi-layered committees will ensure that for each legislative obligation WBC has a policy coupled with an appeals procedure if appropriate.

The PPP has delegated authority for over one hundred pieces of legislation. Notwithstanding this, our residents hold us responsible when issues are not tackled to their satisfaction. To provide the wrap around service that we aspire to for our residents, we need to repatriate the control of that legislation. Our residents are bemused that we do not have the control they would expect. The PPP works at our request, but we do not have full authority to set priorities important to our residents in our different localities. It is therefore not possible within the current Inter Authority Agreement to achieve this level of control.

Depending upon the agreement we reach with Bracknell and West Berkshire, there are opportunities to subcontract parts of the service to Bracknell/West Berks ie the PPP. This will be decided on during the period of negotiation.

I would hope that this would be an endeavour to which all the Council responds and invite the Opposition to second the motion. However, the Administration is equally happy to spearhead this alone if the Opposition feels unable to support a step change improvement in customer service.

105. TRADING STANDARDS, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND LICENSING

The Executive considered a report relating to a proposal to authorise the services delivered by the Public Protection Partnership (PPP) to be brought back in-house to Wokingham Borough Council as from 1 April 2022.

During his introduction of the report the Leader of Council advised that the Council had to continually analyse its limited resources to ensure that they were focussed to the greatest benefit of residents. The Council's ambition was to provide a wraparound service for residents to keep them safe, secure and happy.

One way of providing that wrap around service, was to repatriate the control of the more than one hundred pieces of legislation, which had previously been delegated to West Berkshire Council, and then subsequently to the PPP. Whilst residents held the Council responsible for these duties the Council did not, however, have the power to set the priorities of the PPP to ensure that residents were provided with the service they expected and that which the Council would wish to give.

Councillor Halsall advised that the aim of the proposal therefore was to tailor service delivery at a locality level which would provide a clearer cohesive response to issues that arise in the community eg anti-social behaviour, fly tipping, unauthorised encampments, noise, bonfires, neighbourhood disputes. The intention was for delivery of these services to be integrated into other Council services, such as Localities, Community Safety, Legal, Children's and Adults. This would make better use of the capacity of existing locality officers offering earlier incisive intervention and prevention. It was also anticipated that this would engender effective joined up professional responses across the Council's service specialisms i.e. safety, enforcement and environmental health, with swift responses, resulting in increased resident satisfaction and potentially efficiencies.

Councillor Halsall set out the benefits and advantages to the Council and residents of bringing the control of the service back in-house which included:

- Greater control, in one organisation with direct influence over policy, implementation, and accountability;
- More visible ownership and flexibility to focus on residents' priorities;
- An integrated single Council approach to delivery in localities, which crosses specialisms, with the efficiencies, in respect to time and outcomes, by tackling issues holistically that this approach brings. That is, "do it once" with joined up and combined responses to issues that consider the range of enforcement powers that the Council possesses. For example, consideration of anti-social behaviour alongside neighbour disputes, planning enforcement, noise and bonfires;
- An improved resident perception and experience due to a less complex customer journey, with a greater emphasis upon prevention and proactivity than reactivity;
- A service that delivers valued and visible interventions with timely support at the time when residents most need it;
- Potential efficiencies and economies of scale (within a wider locality team) can increase accessible hours and reduce response times;
- Greater influence and control over preferred suppliers and associated costs;
- It will allow, if the PPP is willing, to retain the services of the PPP when appropriate.

The meeting was advised that the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA), which governs the PPP, states that should any partner wish to exit the partnership, the following conditions apply:

- A minimum twelve-month notice period to terminate the agreement;
- The notice must therefore be given before the 31st March 2021 to exit the partnership on 31st March 2022 which was the earliest opportunity for termination;
- Within 6 months, the Councils sign off an exit plan and the Joint Management Team shall cooperate in good faith to agree this;
- If Wokingham elects to serve notice, it would still be possible to negotiate that some services remain within PPP as part of the Exit Plan.

It was noted that the IAA precluded any discussion on service delivery until notice has been given and the PPP retains control of the legislative framework until notice has been exercised.

Councillor Halsall advised that initially it was intended to replicate what currently exists but no doubt in time the service would dynamically respond to resident demands on a real time basis. It was also expected that outside agencies would be used for the delivery of some of the services; which may include the PPP but did not exclude other authorities or the private sector should they be more willing or more capable.

Councillor Jorgensen provided her support to the proposal as she felt that getting better control over public services was the right thing to do however she queried whether any consideration had been given to the provision of specialist services eg trading standards? The Leader of Council responded that the discussions that would take place after notice had been served would not exclude asking the PPP, should they be willing to do so, to continue providing any of the services that the Council wished them to provide. This would still enable the Council to have control of the service.

Councillor Kaiser felt that the proposal would provide a closer relationship with the police as very often the work carried out by the PPP led to prosecutions and having the current arm's length approach did not enhance the Council's relationship with the police. The Leader of Council reiterated that with the current arrangement the Council had all the blame without the authority to do anything about it.

RECOMMENDATION that:

- 1) the Council serves formal notice on the Public Protection Partnership before 31st March 2021, which if effected would take place on 31st March 2022;
- 2) the delegation to PPP in respect to the Executive and Council functions and duties (including environmental health, licensing and trading standards) will end and will be exercised by the Council directly from 1st April 2022;
- 3) The Director of Place and Growth and Deputy Chief Executive (and Section 151 Officer), in consultation with the Lead Member for Environment and Lead Member for Finance and Housing, are authorised to commence design of the new services structure and any resulting negotiations on an Exit Plan and to address timeframe (including earlier dates than stated in recommendation 1 and 2 if agreed by the Councils), mitigation of risks and costs, key milestones, ongoing resources and staffing implications for a successful departure from the partnership;
- 4) The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Place and Growth create and work with a task force of Officers and Members to create the new in-house service;
- 5) it be noted that a special item of £500k, spread over financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23, was included in the Medium Term Financial Plan to fund a safe and effective transition.

106. EQUALITY PLAN

The Executive considered a report relating to a proposed Equality Plan covering 2021-2025 and an associated action plan covering 2021-2022 which were being recommended to Council for approval.

The Leader of Council highlighted the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act and advised that the Equality Plan had been developed in line with the Council's vision and Corporate Delivery Plan. The Equality Plan sets out how the Council intends to enrich the lives of all residents in safe and strong communities and outlines the ambition to tackle inequality.

Councillor Halsall outlined the consultation that had been carried out on the Equality Plan, which included an online survey and a number of focus sessions with community groups, staff and Members. The qualitative feedback received from the consultation had provided a valuable insight into understanding what the Council could do better as well as what it could do to ensure that it delivered more inclusive services that would lead to improved outcomes for communities.

It was noted that the priorities proposed for the coming four years were:

- Listen to and learn from communities and use this to deliver services that worked well for everyone;

- Act on the Council's commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion in the way we plan, deliver and shape our services;
- Build a diverse and engaged workforce, where everyone was respected.

The action plan, which sets out how the Council would seek to ensure that there was progress against each of the priorities through the first year of the plan period for highlighted. It was noted that the Local Government Association Equality Framework had been adopted. This was an established, credible and objective performance framework which would be used to measure the Council's performance and results. Progress and delivery would be monitored to ensure that the Council progress to the highest levels possible for each element of the Framework. Councillor Halsall advised that at a future point, the Council would be able to invite peer challenge and support to ensure that its assessments of its performance and progress were credible and robust.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council be recommended to approve the Equality Plan (2021-2025) and associated Action Plan (2021-2022).

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE EXECUTIVE
HELD ON 25 MARCH 2021 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.50 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: John Halsall (Chairman), John Kaiser, Parry Batth, UllaKarin Clark, Charlotte Haitham Taylor, Pauline Jorgensen, Charles Margetts, Stuart Munro, Gregor Murray and Wayne Smith

Other Councillors Present

Pauline Helliard-Symons

107. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence received.

108. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 18 February 2021 and the Extraordinary Executive held on 25 February 2021 were confirmed as correct records and would be signed by the Leader of Council at a later date.

109. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor John Kaiser declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 108, Delivering the Housing 1-4-5 +100 Challenge, by virtue of the fact that he was a Non-Executive Director of Wokingham Housing Ltd and Berry Brook Homes Ltd. Councillor Kaiser took part in discussions and voted on the matter.

Councillor UllaKarin Clark declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 108, Delivering the Housing 1-4-5 +100 Challenge, by virtue of the fact that she was a Non-Executive Director of Loddon Homes Ltd. Councillor Clark took part in discussions and voted on the matter.

Councillor Gregor Murray declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 107, Arts and Culture Strategy, by virtue of the fact that he was an unpaid Trustee of Wokingham More Arts. Councillor Murray took part in discussions but stated that he would not vote on the matter.

110. STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF COUNCIL

The Leader of Council made the following statement:

Tonight, is the last formal Council meeting of this Municipal Year, which is an opportunity to reflect on the last two years.

Of course, the pandemic has taken central stage. It was the anniversary of the beginning of the first lockdown two days ago. Our lives have changed, unrecognisably for some, and many lives have been so sadly lost. I can only restate my condolences for those who have suffered so much.

I am humbled by the support that we have received from the charity, voluntary sector and our many volunteers. I particularly want to thank them all. There has been a tremendous partnership work across the board.

Our GPs continue to be magnificent and a big thank yet again to all the carers, doctors, health staff, social care staff, health, police, fire, rescue, ambulance, teachers, school staff, charities, volunteers and our staff. In short everybody who has stepped up to the plate and made it possible for life to continue during these appalling times.

The weekly rate in Wokingham today is 40.9, which is well below the peak of 606 on the 4th January but still compares very badly to the below five in August. We suspect that we will hover around this figure for some time. Happily, both hospitalisations and deaths have declined substantially. Deaths within the UK for those who have been diagnosed with Covid within 28 days have risen above 126,000.

Please encourage everyone, your family, friends and colleagues to observe the rules. It is a crucial time with the third wave beckoning across the Channel.

Please join me again in a moment's silence for those who have died during this dreadful pandemic in Wokingham, the UK, and around the world, and those who have suffered not just the effect of the virus, but the problems which have accompanied it.

Please also remember in your thoughts the very sad and recent death of Jude Whyte; a very popular member of staff. She was a person who brought a ray of sunshine to everybody she met; I never heard her say a bad word about anybody, despite her handling some of the most difficult portfolios. She had been battling cancer in her inimitable and positive way for the last two years.

Thank you.

As I said tonight is the last formal meeting of the Municipal Year. Some of the election literature I have seen foretells that it will be my last in this seat, but there are also other fanciful claims.

Whilst Covid has been centre stage for the last two years, the Council has been addressing all of its responsibilities. Tonight's papers reflect the span of issues that the Council addresses.

But before I address policy issues, I would like to commend the Officers and Members of the Council who are fundamental to our achievement and our role. My objective was to encourage Officers and Members to be bold, take initiatives and innovate. To do that they have to be motivated, proud to work for the Borough, and confident and happy in what they do. Most importantly happy! They need to feel that whoever they work for will praise what they have achieved and recognise that in doing so they will make mistakes and in turn give that joy and support to those who report to them. There will be mistakes. No worries! We need to own them, correct them, and learn from our mistakes.

I have been very proud to lead you and you have done me proud and what has been achieved during the last two years is more than I could have wished for. It is a credit to the Officers and Members alike.

It is a huge acclaim to the amazing, decisive and inspirational leadership you have had, and they have had from Susan, your Chief Executive, supported by your Directors. It is also a credit to my Executive Members, committee chairmen and other members of my administration. Thank you to you all.

It is no accident that we are the healthiest place to live and one of the most desirable. It is a tribute to your Council, its Officers, and the administration. This has been achieved over many years hard work.

Our finances are enviably strong, and our medium plan funded and ambitious. CIPFA and Ernst and Young are both complementary of our financial management. It is this fact which allows us to be imaginative and bold in our future. We are not anticipating any service reductions as other Councils have done and are doing. We have seen few defaults in our income or council tax. Our Covid levels are comparatively low and our high streets relatively vibrant.

When we return in mid-May, we should be a few steps from the release of lockdown, and it will be necessary to work out where we go from here.

This administration worked very hard to restore the democratic processes after lockdown started and by and large we did. Some of it was halting and despite caveat lector's constant criticism we expanded transparency generally, the involvement of other groups particularly the Leaders and their deputies and the remit of Overview and Scrutiny particularly with regard to the budgeting process. Sometimes technology has failed us and sometimes the protocols which we have needed to adopt have been inadequate. But with all the comparators we restored meetings sooner and more comprehensively than other councils.

It is clear therefore that we shall return quite soon to some form of face-to-face meetings but also it is clear that there is no date in the future when everybody will be back in the office; if only for the fact that with any form of social distancing we shall not have the space. So, we shall need to inch our way to hybrid meetings, continuing with virtual meetings where appropriate and starting face-to-face where appropriate.

You may have heard me say that we, the Borough Council, are the golden thread which runs through the Borough, the indispensable partner. Our only purpose is to serve our residents as best we can. In that service, there are no real limits except the ones we set ourselves. We are here to do some great things, some spectacular things.

But we must focus on our Borough. I shy from global and national movements, which may in part represent us but also lead us down blind alleys. I shy from philosophical, political, or moral arguments.

We are not here to represent central Government but our residents. We have been very much on a limb on certain issues. I successfully led the opposition to the housing numbers White Paper last year, not only in the Borough but also in England. I took the decision to not accept transfers into care homes which were not Covid free against Government policy and we were at the limit of our discretion in helping businesses with grants. I am as yet not in the Tower but then who knows?

Simply if we can continuously improve the lot of our residents then we have achieved what we are here to do. And what does this mean: safe, secure, happy, and healthy. Everybody should be able to lead the life they chose without fear if they do no harm to others. We must encourage that uniqueness and support it. We should celebrate diversity, be anti-racist and do all we can to promote equality. We need to identify where there is a need and deprivation, and resolve the root causes if we can.

Our goal is an excellent and continuously improving wrap around service for our residents. We must leave the planet in a better shape than we found it and a place where our children can thrive.

However, any organisational strategy must be holistic, understanding how one objective impacts on others and within a financial framework which is affordable, and stress tested. The Medium Term Financial Plan is the enumeration of this strategy. This administration has the depth of experience and professionalism to ensure that this is the case.

Our plan set out in the Corporate Vision and at the front of the agenda but including Covid. There has been no other plan put forward by any other Group.

So Covid. We must:

- ensure the rapid rollout of the vaccination;
- provide lateral flow testing so life can return to normal;
- aid in every way in business recovery and job creation;
- create a safe but normal environment for the future;
- establish the shape of the new normality for our staff; and
- help our high streets return to normality.

We must enrich the lives of our residents:

- by getting every school in the Borough and Children's Services to a minimum of "Good" Ofsted and provide sufficient school places;
- build three new primary schools;
- create an environment and economy that encourages new businesses and helps small and medium sized businesses thrive;
- encourage active lifestyles with easily accessible leisure facilities and open spaces as well as art and culture across our Borough;
- promote Equality, celebrate diversity and be anti-racist; and
- identify the areas of need and tackle the causes of deprivation.

We must build safe and strong communities:

- continuously improve our care services with greater focus on individual need over statutory requirement;
- strategically invest in the future of all our communities, building opportunities to live, learn, work and grow across our Borough; and
- protect our communities, invest to keep our streets secure, maintain our low crime rates and reduce our anti-social behaviour.

We must change the way we work:

- deliver value for money and become less dependent on taxes for income, allowing us to fund improved services without additional cost to you our residents;
- making our services easier for all residents, regardless of ability or capability; and
- improve our communications and transparency so you know what we are spending your council tax on, and more importantly, why.

We must make a cleaner and greener Borough:

- dramatically reduce our carbon footprint to neutrality by 2030;
- increase our recycling rate to 70% and send zero waste to landfill;
- fight the causes and prosecute the perpetrators of fly-tipping;
- build solar farms to generate our own clean energy;
- invest in greenways, cycle paths and leisure centres; and
- plant 300,000 new trees across our Borough.

We must build the right homes in the right places:

- protect our green spaces and our natural environment;
- fight unnecessary speculative house building by all means;
- build one thousand new council, starter and key worker homes over the next four years, affordable in name and cost;
- build the infrastructure our communities deserve; and
- challenge our Government-imposed housing target by all means available.

We must keep our Borough moving:

- invest in the quality of our roads, pavements, paths and greenways;
- tackle traffic around our schools and combat congestion to ease journeys across the Borough;
- invest in sustainable alternative transport options for moving us across the Borough; and
- target areas of poor air quality.

We can only achieve these objectives as we have been diligent and astute financial management which has achieved balanced budgets for each of the last nineteen years. We come out of the pandemic with strong finances, which other authorities are envious of. We are anticipating no service cuts indeed service enhancements. Our balance sheet is strong with a very low and prudent level of current and future borrowings covered many times by saleable assets.

This administration has delivered in the past, been solid in the pandemic and has a great plan for the future.

During this evening's Executive it reflects all the work that we have done in the last two years where there has been an immense amount of activity with an unprecedented number of policy papers covering every aspect of our Council, but it is the tip of the iceberg as we are ambitious to step up the pace to achieve service excellence for our residents.

I am delighted to present tonight's agenda, which illustrates the enormous span of work going on in the Council; pretty typical of the last two years.

- The Community Vision and Corporate Plan Review, much of which I have already covered. It is however necessary in any organisation to have deliverables which are articulated and known to the organisation. This is a very detailed plan which is being rolled out organisationally with performance targets for each and every member of staff. KPIs have been developed and are being honed.

- The Housing Strategy 2020-24 which is designed to address and understand our housing needs, support our vulnerable residents through a range of housing options, improve the quality, sustainability and management of the Borough's homes and to enrich other people's lives. It is a key parameter of our poverty strategy but also a driver of the Local Plan Update expected later in this year.
- The Draft Leisure Strategy. The Borough's current Leisure Strategy focused on sports provision and in particular the Council's own leisure services. This new draft strategy broadens its scope to incorporate the many opportunities provided by the extensive and growing network of high quality open spaces. Embracing country parks, new 'greenways' linking our strategic development locations, children's play and encouraging active travel. It is a key contributor of being the healthiest place to live. That accolade did not come by accident.
- Arts and Culture Strategy. I am delighted to see this coming forward and thank you to Charlotte. I made a promise to Robin Copse. In the context of a growing population and the Borough's reputation as an excellent place to live with a high quality of life, the quality of the cultural offer will play a significant role in enhancing the Borough's reputation and enriching the lives of residents. Building from a strong base of events and activities the Strategy seeks to further develop the cultural offer and extend the many associated social and economic benefits.
- Delivering the Housing 1-4-5 +100 strategy. The Housing 1-4-5 Challenge aims to deliver 1,000 additional homes, led by the Council, over a 4-year period and providing an average of 5% return to the Council. The recent '+100' addition reflects an additional challenge identified as part of the current work around developing a robust new Local Plan. The Council is looking to lead on the development of an additional approximately 100 new homes a year, predominantly on brownfield sites.
- The pandemic is predicted to have a significant and long-lasting negative impact on the economy. These impacts will include increased unemployment and a challenging job market. Wokingham Borough does not have any DWP Job Centre Plus presence with residents having to travel to Reading or Bracknell to access support. This paper approves in principle the establishment of our employment hub.
- Home to school transport policy provides Members with an overview of the key outcomes from the public consultation and seeks agreement to amend the current Home to School Transport Appeals Process to ensure it is compliant with the national regulations.
- Wokingham School Arrangements. Wokingham Borough Council has statutory responsibilities for admissions to mainstream publicly funded schools (Academies, Free Schools and Maintained Schools) in the Wokingham Borough area. The Council is the admissions authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools in its area. Academies, Free Schools and Voluntary Aided Schools are the admissions authorities in their own right. Admissions authorities set the admissions arrangements (including the oversubscription criteria) and are responsible for managing appeals and mid-year applications. We will revisit this in the new year.
- Covid Winter Grant Scheme Supplementary Estimate. This report seeks a Supplementary Estimate of up to £100,000 to continue to support vulnerable

families and individuals who are struggling to meet the costs of food and utilities over the Winter months due to the Covid pandemic, supplementing the funds provided through the DWP Winter Grant. The DWP Grant allocated to Wokingham is £281k. The supplementary estimate, if fully spent, will bring total spend on supporting families and individuals over the Winter months to £381k.

This is the Council and this administration looking to the future to protect and defend our residents, whilst enhancing the quality of life.

Lastly, I would like to thank my very hard-working Executive particularly John, my indispensable and reliable deputy. I could not wish for better. Thank you all for your support in what have been very challenging times.

In particular Charlotte, who will certainly not be here in May. I thank you Charlotte for all your work over many years in Children's Services, as the Leader and latterly in Regeneration and the Arts and Culture Strategy. It is a great compliment to you that Wokingham town centre is as vibrant and resilient as it is.

This is a great Borough, the healthiest and one of the most desirable, we wish to make it even greater. We did not get here by accident.

Remember - The administration has delivered in the past, been solid in the pandemic and has a great plan for the future.

Why would you risk it?

111. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

111.1 Wesley Budd asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

For years, many Earley residents have raised concerns about speeding along Redhatch Drive. The road and neighbourhood design contribute to drivers regularly traveling in excess of 35mph on this road with its 30mph speed limit. Despite good visibility splays, the speed with which many vehicles travel make this very dangerous for vehicles entering from side streets. The Beech Lane end in particular is used by many school children. Many of the elderly residents living in Redhatch Drive and neighbouring roads finding it difficult, as pedestrians or drivers themselves, to accurately judge the speed of fast approaching vehicles. Earley Town Council's submission on the 22nd July 202 to a WBC speed limit consultation recommended with regards to Redhatch Drive to: retain the current 30 mph speed limit, but install appropriate VAS signage. Additional speed limit signage at the Elm Lane and Beech Lane ends of Redhatch Drive. Request WBC highways engineers investigate possibilities for traffic calming measures, such as chicanes and rumble strips. Will the Executive Member for Highways support Earley Town Council's recommendations for Redhatch Drive?

Answer

The Council is aware of two requests raised by residents of Redhatch Drive about traffic speeds and the submission from Earley Town Council as part of the Borough-wide Speed

Limit Review in 2020, and I have also seen one recently from the Town Council as a result of our speed limit consultations. We acknowledge the road safety concerns of residents and school children in particular using this road.

Despite common perceptions, the road has actually got a very good safety record, with one personal injury collision recorded by the police over the past 10 years. Whilst the Council's speed limit review has still to be concluded, I am able to confirm that speed data recorded for Redhatch Drive indicates that average vehicle speeds, upon which speed limits are based, are broadly compliant with the existing 30mph speed limit, during peak/off peak hours on all days across the week.

However, in the section between Wychwood Crescent and Collins Drive, 85thile speeds are in excess of the level normally used by Thames Valley Police for speed enforcement purposes and the likelihood of speeds higher than this occurring at times is acknowledged. As a result, I am able to confirm that Officers have already added Redhatch Drive to the Council's programme for temporary VAS signs and regular monitoring via the Council's Road Safety Dashboard.

In the event that recorded speeds remain unchanged as a result of the VAS signs and/or any deterioration is identified in the current safety record, we will investigate options for speed management measures appropriate to the residential environment and will consult with the residents, Town Council and elected Members.

Supplementary Question

It would be interesting to know what the next updates will be.

Supplementary Answer

Do you mean the next updates in terms of what we might do? I think we have a couple of problems with this road as the design of it means that it is very straight and therefore it is easy to speed on it. I think we would struggle with rumble strips because as you have seen with the speed limit humps in Beech Lane they cause a lot of noise to the residents that live by them and also if you put humps in they cause vibrations. So, for every resident that thinks they are a great idea there is another one who thinks they are terrible, and it actually increases the noise in people's houses. So, rumble strips and speed humps are probably not likely.

My experience with chicanes, which we have seen on Rushey Way, is that what they are essentially is a challenge to people to zig zag around them if you get them at the wrong distance. So, what happens is people, especially when the road is quiet, drive really fast and take it as a challenge to see if they can slalom round them and also with the ones opposite Hillside School the reason we reduced the distance between them is because you can actually build up quite a lot of speed between them. So, I am not entirely convinced that either chicanes or rumble strips or humps would help and think it might make it worse. But we will certainly keep monitoring it and will look at it again and we will certainly put the VAS in.

111.2 Mike Smith asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question:

Question

This month a very large oak tree had to be felled in Earley to help prevent further substantial structural damage done to various properties, some of which were a

considerable distance from this tree. The damage to these properties has been very distressing and costly to the homeowners. However, from an environmental and aesthetic point of view, it is also very distressing to many other residents. This is not an isolated instance.

Obviously, such trees can have long reaching impacts stretching decades into the future and can affect many properties quite a distance away. Their preservation is also very important from a Climate Emergency point of view, in their role of sequestering carbon as well as ascetics.

One possible way to reduce the need to fell large, mature trees might be a change of planning policy whereby, the impact of trees on or adjacent to planning application properties must be considered in depth where appropriate – perhaps something like a Bat Survey for Trees.

Can the Executive Member for Planning consider this or look at other ways to help to mitigate the need to fell mature trees?

Answer

There has been a number of subsidence cases in relation to mature trees within the close proximity to properties over the last year. Felling of a mature tree due to subsidence is always a last resort and will always only be allowed if there is no suitable measure that can be implemented to protect both the tree and the property.

A number of procedures are in place to ensure that the current and future planning applications carefully consider the proximity of new housing to existing trees. The Trees and Landscapes Team review planning applications and consider how the development would impact on any trees. Where necessary, the Team will serve TPOs on valuable trees that are at the risk of felling.

Developers are required to submit a tree survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment as part of their planning application, in order to comply with the current policy; which is CC03. Where a tree is protected by a TPO, the applicant will also be required to submit an Arboricultural Method Statement so that the Trees and Landscapes Team can be certain that the development or extension can be constructed without harm to the tree. If it is considered that the proposal will cause harm to the TPO tree and no technical solution will be acceptable, the application will be recommended for refusal.

Furthermore, the most recent draft Local Plan, that we put out for consultation in February last year, included new text within the Policy NE4 relating to the predicted growth of trees when assessing the layout of new development sites. This will help to ensure that new developments provide sufficient space to enable trees to grow and thrive; which is one of the main reasons why we are having the problem with subsidence.

Supplementary Question

We do need to urgently ensure we protect the trees in the Borough so it is good to hear about new developments, but it is also people sticking up inappropriate extensions near trees that seems to be an issue.

An example of the failure I think is the felling of 450 trees over at the Bearwood Estate on the grounds that they were an immediate health and safety risk. I think I am right in saying that the application was submitted urgently, and it was granted on the grounds of an

immediate risk, but it took them over a month to even start work. It is difficult to believe that all 450 trees presented an immediate risk given that they cover such a significant area. It is odd that the 2005 and 2015 statutory inspections did not mention it.

One of your colleagues was quoted in the press as saying that “the Council is working to ensure only the required removals have taken place”. That presumably means that an inspection has taken place. So, what is the result of that investigation and what is going to be done to replace the tragic loss?

Supplementary Answer

It certainly was not me that you are referring to that made that statement. What I will do is I will contact the Trees Team tomorrow and Parry and come back to you with an answer to your question.

111.3 Eileen Kessel asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:

Question

I am aware that residents are currently experiencing real issues with inconsiderate parking on Mill Lane, caused by motorists picking up children at Hawkedon School. Could the Executive Member for Highways and Transport set out what steps the Council can take to tackle this problem for people living in the area?

Answer

We acknowledge the concerns of residents living close to schools where inconsiderate parking and road use by parents causes access and safety issues. To deter this, we work with as many schools as we can to ensure their travel plans set out the most appropriate ways for parents to bring their children from school and we will back this up with localised traffic measures, especially to assist those walking and cycling from short distances away, where possible.

Where parking restrictions already exist, such as School Keep Clear markings, and yellow lines, we will target non-compliance using civil parking enforcement powers, and we do move the parking enforcement around schools quite regularly, in response to requests from schools or residents living nearby. However, when residents feel that there are problems in unrestricted roads that require firmer controls, they can request these through the Council’s website and Officers will investigate the potential for using Traffic Regulation Orders that can be enforced under CPE legislation, which in real terms probably means a single yellow line.

We are mindful, however, that these types of measures can simply result in a transfer of the problems to other streets and for this reason, any proposals are subject to formal consultation allowing any objections to be considered. As a result the process is very lengthy and can take between 10 and 12 months to complete.

In the case of the parking near Hawkedon School that you have mentioned and the parking up Mill Lane I arranged for the Highways Enforcement people to go and have a look at what was going on there, once I received your question, and they actually moved on two people who were parked on the single yellow lines. I have asked them to go back again and make sure that they continue to do this to reinforce the fact that parking on those lines is not acceptable.

111.4 Norman Jorgensen asked the Executive Member for Environment and Leisure the following question:

Question

Several areas of Wilderness Road in Earley were plagued with flooding at times of heavy rain and Wokingham Borough Council repaired sections of drains around Betchworth Avenue a couple of years ago. Residents at the Pepper Lane end of Wilderness Road still experienced flooding and the Council were investigating the reasons for this with the intention of fixing it. Please will you tell me how this is progressing?

Answer

Council Officers have been working extremely hard to resolve the flooding issues on this site and have been keen to work with the team to resolve the issues to benefit our residents locally. Following on from the work completed on Wilderness Road to resolve surface water flooding between the junctions of Betchworth Avenue and Hartsbourne Road, the drainage team have also been investigating flooding issues at the junction with Pepper Lane. Investigation works identified a problem with the pipework that runs from the roundabout with Pepper Lane, westwards towards Reeds Avenue. Pipe repairs and cleansing works have largely resolved the issues at this location. The drainage team have programmed a final pipe cleanse and CCTV survey of the system to ensure that the repair works have resolved all of the issues. These works are due to take place and to be completed in early April.

I am therefore confident that the flooding issues on this site will be resolved and the flooding issue will not trouble our residents going forward.

111.5 Daniel Hinton asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question:

Question

This is related to the Housing Strategy. Can you please update me on the Council's progress on working with the Government to ensure the Borough has the right number of houses in the right places?

Answer

As you know, last summer the Government consulted on controversial changes to the way a councils' minimum housing need was calculated. In our case, the changes would have seen the need for the Borough to more than double to over 1,600 homes a year.

Wokingham Borough Council was the first in the line against the proposals, and as a Council we submitted the strongest possible objections as well as highlighting flaws in the approach. Councillor Halsall, the Leader of the Council, took a lead nationally on the issue, engaging with other Council leaders across England to share our concerns and encouraging others to do similar. When the proposals were debated in Parliament, Wokingham Borough MPs, including Theresa May, James Sunderland, and Matt Rodda joined others in strongly opposing the proposals.

I am delighted to confirm that thanks to Wokingham's lobbying, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, Robert Jenrick announced in December that the Government had decided not to follow through on the proposals, but instead continue with the approach with an additional focus on building in London and nine other areas and towns.

This is great news for Wokingham. Whilst the minimum housing need remains challenging at between 700-800 homes a year, the threat of significantly increasing the numbers has been removed.

The Housing Strategy and action plan highlights the on-going work developing a revised draft Wokingham Local Plan Update that needs to provide us with the required numbers over the lifetime of the Plan, whilst maintaining that ever important five year land supply.

I hope to bring forward a second draft Plan in the early autumn. Fundamental to the success of that will be the overall housing strategy remains that new housing delivery in the Borough is planned and built in sustainable locations through sustainable methods. It should address local housing priorities and can be accompanied by essential infrastructure to support it.

We believe that the Council itself can play a vital part in the delivery, setting the standard in terms of design, sustainability, affordability and liveability. As such, my colleague Councillor John Kaiser has set the Housing 1-4-5 Challenge for the Council to lead on the development of 1,000 homes over the next four years providing an overall return of 5%. In addition, I have requested that the teams identify a further 100 new homes per year on brownfield sites to meet the Government requirements; and that is ongoing.

I am pleased to say that we already have the potential of a forward programme of over 1,500 new Council homes with a substantial proportion of them affordable and delivered through either the Housing Revenue Account or the growing housing companies.

111.6 Anne Chadwick asked the Executive Member for Regeneration the following question:

Question

Relating to Community Vision and Corporate Plan Review – I am delighted that the Council, as part of its Corporate Plan, is investing in Woodley and other parts of the Borough. Does the Executive Member agree with me that building on the success of Wokingham's regeneration to fund investment in the rest of the Borough is good news for Woodley?

Answer

In short absolutely, yes!

It is incredibly important that we help our towns and villages to have a vibrant future. By creating and nurturing locally the right conditions for economic prosperity and growth we can make sure that residents can access the opportunities, jobs and facilities that they need in and around the Borough. This remains an important part of our shared Community Vision.

The regeneration of Wokingham town centre is proving a great success for all of our local residents. The new shops and businesses are generating an income of over £2million a year, and this will rise hopefully to over £6million a year as the costs of building are paid off.

This is income that can be used to fund projects and services for residents right across the Borough and, yes, in Woodley too.

It is the extra income, from projects like the regeneration of Wokingham Town centre, or the property investment fund, which allows us to continue to make improvements for our local libraries, or to fund services like social care, when so many other councils are paring back on services or even shutting them down. I take for instance Reading next door, with the closure of swimming pools and leisure facilities. Our approach has been very different, and I very much hope that you will have already benefitted from the investment in Woodley's new leisure facilities at Bulmershe, which have included a much bigger gym and swimming pool.

The regeneration has also bought about wider benefits for residents. The Council has built up an experienced investment and development team inhouse. Their skillset has been used to make sure that the Council's investment strategy is rolled out not just with an eye to securing income, but also with the strategic vision for the future, especially in regards to supporting our towns and villages, and longer term ambitions for wider regeneration.

A good example of this is the recent purchase of Woodley's Waitrose. In addition to this being a great business and financial investment, it also has secured an important site right in the heart of the town centre.

111.7 Philip Cunnington asked the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:

Question

I understand Sports and Leisure staff are helping with the Covid recovery plan. Can you tell me how they are helping people get over the effects of the pandemic?

Answer

This is one part of our Covid recovery plan and it is called 'Moving with Confidence' and it is very much the awareness that through Covid many residents had to shield in their own homes and this has led to a loss of confidence, fitness and mobility and in my family I know people who had that experience and I am sure that many others have too. This has had a major impact on their well-being, putting them at risk of falls, social isolation and deteriorating health.

We have therefore started the 'Moving with Confidence' project with the Council's Sport and Leisure staff. This scheme takes referrals from across the system, Adult Social Care, the voluntary sector, One Front Door, the Intermediate Care Team and general practice.

Specially trained coaches will deliver 1:1 sessions to residents in their own homes, working through mobility exercises and building confidence. Already we have had 127 referrals initially from the WBC supported Friendship Alliance.

Towards the end of the sessions, (up to six) clients will be encouraged to join group based activities for those who are frail or have long term conditions. The scheme is linked to the Community Navigation Service and clients will be invited to a session with a Navigator to see how else they can be supported, in terms of social activities and other practical issues.

As I said at the start this is part of the Covid recovery plan which includes the mental health service, MIND, which is meant to open next month which will serve up to 1,200 clients when fully open across the Borough from Wokingham town centre and with our GPs.

Our expansion of our lateral flow testing, which now includes a mobile service which is initially based at Asda in Earley and Aldi in Wokingham and there are other measures including support roles as we move, hopefully, towards the end of the pandemic.

112. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

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

112.1 Pauline Helliar-Symons asked the Executive Member for Resident Services, Communications and Emissions the following question:

Question

In respect to the Leisure Strategy, a large number of our residents choose to spend their leisure time outdoors enjoying nature in the many parks and woods that lay without our Council boundary. I know that laying our new, accessible woodland will be a priority as part of the Council's tree planting initiatives. Following the announcement of the £300,000 grant for tree planting from the Woodland Trust, can you confirm to me that any trees planted using this money will be maintained and looked after properly and not just planted and allowed to fend for themselves?

Answer

As you rightly say Wokingham Borough Council recently successfully bid for grant funding from the Woodland Trust Emergency Tree Fund. We were one of only 10 councils around the country to receive this funding and we have been awarded a grant of £300k. The Woodland Trust recently announced an ambitious plan to establish 50m more trees across Britain by 2025. We are very proud to become one of the first phase partners with them in achieving their and our ambitious climate plans. An additional benefit for Wokingham Borough is that the funding brings with it the invaluable advice and support of experts in conservation and largescale planting.

The ongoing maintenance of trees is a concern that is raised by residents to both Councillor Batth and myself on a regular basis and it is something that we specifically had to address as part of our bid with the Woodland Trust. We were able to demonstrate that our overall budget for the 250k trees included money both for planting and for their ongoing maintenance.

In addition to this, going forward we will have two additional dedicated Tree Officers specifically responsible for carrying out inspections and maintenance works for these and for the stock of other Council trees.

It is important to stress here that this grant award was not the work of a few weeks. Councillor Halsall and I met with the Woodland Trust shortly after Wokingham Borough declared a climate emergency in 2019. Since then, as a council, we have opened up a number of very productive conversations with the Woodland Trust around our vision and the types of trees we should be planting across the Borough and where we should be planting them around our Garden Forest project. All of which resulted in Wokingham being invited to bid for funding as part of the Emergency Tree Fund.

I stress this because I have seen today that Members of the Opposition have tried to take some of the credit for this relationship and bask in the reflected glow of what is a great achievement for Wokingham residents and for the Officers of this Council. With that said

this funding not only helps to kick start our tree planting programme but show that the Woodland Trust believes in both our planting programme and also in our future maintenance plan and I am very proud to say that I played a part in making it happen.

Supplementary Question

Are there any plans for community engagement on where they will be planted? Will residents be able to make suggestions and will we engage with schools, user groups and parish and town councils and how will they feed their ideas in?

Supplementary Answer

Yes, there are plans for engagement around it and I have spoken about the Garden Forest project already. That is our plan to put 10,000 trees into the homes and gardens of our residents and to hopefully give them an option of which type of trees that they will be able to choose from. We are doing that because we know it is a great way to make sure that those trees are maintained. Supplementary to that the Council's Climate Emergency Team have begun what we call 'drop in' sessions with all the town councils around Wokingham Borough where we educate them on the different projects that are going on and there has already been a drop in session on trees where the town councils were invited to come along, listen to our plans for planting the 250,000 trees and input their thoughts and feed back in terms of the areas where those trees could be planted.

Some of the bigger planting projects we have already identified space for where they are going to be but for the smaller scale plantings, 1,000-5,000 tree size projects, we do not know quite yet where they are going to be and we are inviting all sorts of feedback in terms of where they could be from anybody who wants to tell us.

The town and parish councils are all invited to the drop-in sessions. Whether they choose to attend or not that is their choice, but they are all invited to come along to listen to what the Officers are working on, feed in their thoughts and ideas and understand what it means specifically for them.

113. COMMUNITY VISION AND CORPORATE PLAN REVIEW

The Executive considered a report setting out the results of a review of the Community Vision and the state of delivery against the targets identified within the Corporate Delivery Plan.

The Leader of Council drew attention to the remarks he had made on the item during his earlier statement and confirmed that a review had been undertaken on the Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan and no major changes were being proposed.

RECOMMENDATION: That the challenges and opportunities which have arisen over the course of the year be noted and the recommendation that the Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan remain appropriate and relevant be endorsed.

114. HOUSING STRATEGY 2020 - 24

The Executive considered a report relating to a proposed Housing Strategy to cover the period 2020-2024.

The Executive Member for Finance and Housing introduced the report and explained why housing was so important to him. He also informed the meeting that the number of homeless people in the Borough had been reduced, there were currently no rough sleepers except those who chose to be, the housing waiting list was low with the number

of people with real need being met by the number of affordable homes which the Council had built over the last few years and all social housing now met the decent home standard.

Councillor Kaiser reported on the work of the Council's housing companies to deliver affordable homes across the Borough and highlighted the Gorse Ride scheme. He also drew Members' attention to the impact of Covid, as set out in the report, and the fact that it was difficult to determine the longer-term problems that the Council might be faced with.

In response to a query Councillor Kaiser provided an update on phase 2 of Gorse Ride which involved decanting 160 families from their homes to other homes. It was expected that some of the families would want to return to Gorse Ride and some would want to move to new areas. It was confirmed that work on the scheme was on target.

Councillor Munro highlighted that when the furlough scheme and the grants come to an end there might be additional pressure on housing need and asked if there was a plan in place to address this possibility? Councillor Kaiser advised that there was a team within the Council who had been considering this issue and the Council was increasing the number of temporary homes, including the building of such homes in Grovelands. The intention was, whenever possible, to ensure people were kept in the Borough.

With regard to strategies to assist first time buyers to buy properties in Wokingham Councillor Kaiser confirmed that the Council was building affordable homes which were being offered as part buy, part rental and in future the Council would be looking to see if it could facilitate loans to assist people buying their own houses.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council be recommended to approve the adoption of the proposed Housing Strategy 2020-2024.

115. DRAFT LEISURE STRATEGY

The Executive considered a report setting out a draft Leisure Strategy which if approved would be consulted upon with residents and stakeholders.

The Executive Member for Environment and Leisure advised the meeting that the Council was committed to supporting and improving the health and wellbeing of its residents and the draft Leisure Strategy demonstrated the dedication to provide the best leisure provision and outdoor spaces to make Wokingham Borough the healthiest place to live in the country.

Councillor Batth advised that the Strategy set out plans for residents' physical and emotional wellbeing through the Council's leisure offering and partnership with a wide range of other organisations, including proposals to establish a new Active Wokingham Partnership to support connective efforts to ensure that high quality facilities and opportunities remain affordable, accessible, and sustainable. Councillor Batth highlighted the various investment leisure projects across the Borough, as set out in the report, that had either been invested in or committed to, amounting to over £50m e.g., Bulmershe Leisure Centre, Ryiesh Green and Arborfield leisure facilities etc.

In response to a query Councillor Batth confirmed that in order to ensure that the action plan met residents' needs it would be developed once responses were received to the public consultation and would be brought back to a future Executive.

RECOMMENDATION that:

- 1) the principles and content of the draft Leisure Strategy be endorsed;
- 2) the draft Strategy be approved for consultation with residents and stakeholders;
- 3) the results of the consultation and any resulting changes to the draft Strategy to be considered at a future meeting of the Executive;
- 4) it be noted that an initial Action Plan for implementing the Strategy will be presented alongside the consultation feedback to the Executive.

116. ARTS & CULTURE STRATEGY

(Councillor Gregor Murray declared a personal interest in this item)

The Executive considered a report setting out a proposed Arts & Culture Strategy following consultation on the document.

During the introduction the Executive Member for Regeneration highlighted that Covid had demonstrated just how much people missed, in addition to other things, having arts and culture facilities in their lives and how important these were to people's health and wellbeing.

Councillor Haitham Taylor explained that one of the reasons why the Arts & Culture Strategy had been developed was because when speaking to businesses, a few years ago, many of them were saying at that time that a number of employees were leaving to move to other areas e.g. London and Bath because they had a better, more joined up and accessible leisure offer. Following these discussions, the Arts & Leisure Strategy was developed and taken out to consultation which led to some really interesting responses. Councillor Haitham Taylor advised that she had been disappointed that more young people had not responded to the consultation and in future it would be good to reach out to try and gain their views, particularly those under 18. It was noted that Overview and Scrutiny had praised the Strategy when considering it at its meeting held last month.

In addition, an Arts & Culture Alliance was set up, which was a partnership of key stakeholders i.e. cross party Members, Officers from departments across the Council, and partners from across the Borough and the different art and culture sectors to drive forward the Strategy and action plan. Councillor Haitham Taylor thanked Officers and Robin Cope for the amount of effort they had put into developing the Strategy.

Councillor Haitham Taylor also highlighted the six key priorities set out in the Strategy and advised that she hoped that these could be achieved within the 10 year life span of the document. It was noted that the Action Plan would constantly evolve as new things were included and others completed.

Councillor Haitham Taylor informed the meeting about the opportunities that were being developed for children and young people including discussions being held with Artsmark on the formation of a local cultural educational partnership.

Councillor Batth stated that the BME community within the Borough had an enriched arts and culture programme, including Black History Month, Diwali festival of lights, Eid celebrations etc and asked that these be taken on board when the arts and culture

programmes were being developed. Councillor Haitham Taylor stated that she would love to embrace all these activities and would like to see more representation from the BME Forum on the Alliance.

RECOMMENDATION that:

- 1) the Arts & Culture Strategy, as set out in the report, be approved:
- 2) the appended Action Plan for implementing the Strategy over the coming year be noted;
- 3) the establishment and role of the Arts & Culture Alliance as the key strategic partnership for implementing the Strategy be endorsed.

117. DELIVERING THE HOUSING 1-4-5 + 100 CHALLENGE

(Councillor Clark and Councillor Kaiser declared personal interests in this item)

The Executive considered a report setting out an approval process for new housing projects that would contribute towards the Council's Housing 1-4-5 +100 challenge.

The Executive Member for Finance and Housing informed the meeting about the background to the 1-4-5 +100 challenge and explained that the proposal within the report was to enable land that the Council owned to be identified and turned into decent homes. Councillor Kaiser highlighted the importance of the proposals as the sooner homes could be built the quicker people could be housed. When considering possible sites the Council wanted to ensure that homes were built in places where the infrastructure eg shops, schools, facilities etc was there to support the residents living in them.

RECOMMENDATION that:

- 1) authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Housing, to approve the transfer of land or property to the Council's housing companies for the purposes of providing new homes to address agreed local housing need and where appropriate at less than market value in line with The General Housing Consents 2013 or subsequent amendments;
- 2) authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Housing, to approve the funding (grant and/or loans) of any new homes provided by the Council through its Housing Revenue Account or its housing companies provided the funding required has been approved as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and within existing borrowing approvals and the new homes contribute to the Housing 1-4-5 Challenge and address agreed local housing need;
- 3) authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with WBC (Holdings) Ltd, to approve the interest rate at which any long term loan is charged to the Council's housing companies for any new housing developments.

118. EMPLOYMENT HUB

The Executive considered a report setting out a proposal to establish an Employment Hub which would offer access to a range of services to assist people to overcome barriers and support them to access sustained employment or further education.

The Executive Member for Business and Economic Development introduced the report and highlighted the substantial increase, 227%, of people claiming unemployment benefits even before the full employment impact of the pandemic emerged. Included within these figures were a 312% increase in young people, aged between 18-24 in Wokingham, an increase of 265% of over 50s and also a 68% increase in young people, aged between 16-18, not in employment or education. It was therefore proposed to set up an Employment Hub which was intended to focus on those people with low or limited skills to enable them to compete in the very competitive labour market, young people to meet DWP funding requirements whilst offering an all-age service, retraining older people to get them back into work, recruiting people into caring professions and opportunities in growth sectors or where there was employer demand. In addition, short training opportunities for high demand employment sectors would also be provided.

Councillor Munro advised the meeting that he wished to put forward an amendment to recommendation 2 as it should state that final approval of detailed proposals should be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director, Place and Growth, in consultation with the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development. This amendment was agreed.

RECOMMENDATION that:

- 1) the establishment of an Employment Hub, as outlined in the report, be approved in principle;
- 2) the final approval of detailed proposals be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director, Place and Growth, in consultation with the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development;
- 3) a supplementary estimate of £90k, to cover the implementation and first year running costs of the Employment Hub be approved and a £10k pa pressure regarding running costs in future years be noted.

119. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY (5-16 YEARS) AND TRAVEL ASSISTANCE POLICY (16 YEARS + WITH SEND) CONSULTATION AND HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEALS PROCESS UPDATE

The Executive considered a report setting out the key outcomes from the public consultation on the proposed new Home to School Transport (5-16 years) and Travel Assistance (16 years +) policies and amendments to the current Home to School Transport Appeals Process to ensure that it was compliant with national regulations.

The Executive Member for Children's Services introduced the report and advised that a review of the current Home to School Transport and Travel Assistance policies had been carried out in May 2020 following which a consultation was carried out with Members, key stakeholders, including representatives from the Parent Carer Forum (SEND Voices Wokingham) and the public. The meeting was advised that the report was the result of the public consultation and at this stage was only a draft and only required noting. Changes to the policies would be presented at a future Executive.

Councillor Clark highlighted the amended Home to School Transport appeals process, which was proposing that Stage 1 would be carried out by a single Officer and Stage 2 would be carried out by a Member panel. This would replace the current process which

was for an Officer panel to meet to consider Stage 1 of an appeal. The reason for the change was to make the Council compliant with national requirements.

Councillor Smith voiced his concern about the means by which children were travelling to school when they were not able to secure a place at their chosen school and the effect this was having on the Council's carbon footprint. In addition, he had concerns about the way that the distance between home to school was calculated as quite often that process did not take account of the inaccessibility of some routes, particularly at different times of the year. Councillor Smith also raised issues with the academy system and the difficulties some parents faced accessing their local schools.

RECOMMENDATION that:

- 1) the content of the report following the public consultation on the proposed drafts of the Home to School Transport and Travel Assistance policies be noted and that a further report will be presented at a later Executive with recommendations for changes to the existing policies;
- 2) the amended arrangements for Home to School Transport Appeals, to ensure that WBC is compliant with national requirements (following the Ombudsman direction), be agreed.

120. WOKINGHAM SCHOOL ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS 2022/23

The Executive considered a report relating to Wokingham Borough's School Admissions arrangements for the 2022/2023 School Year.

The Executive Member for Children's Services informed the meeting that the secondary admissions process for entry into Wokingham secondary schools for the 2021/22 school year has been completed and reported that due to a large cohort, and increased numbers of Hong Kong nationals relocating to the area under the British Nationals Overseas Visa arrangements, the number of families receiving one of their four preferences was 93.51% which compared favourably to national and regional performance but was slightly down on the Council's performance last year, which was 94.64%. Members noted that by national offer day the Council had offered 2,320 places which was a higher number than the 2,157 places allocated at the same time last year. Councillor Clark advised that work would continue on late applications and any in-year applications to ensure that all children had a secondary school place.

Councillor Clark reported that the admissions process for primary phase education was due to conclude shortly. In addition, the Council was working to ensure that arrangements for supporting school admissions were reviewed and therefore a School Admissions Task and Finish Group, made up of elected Members, Officers and school leaders had been set up as part of the Schools' Forum arrangement. This body would explore how effective the local admission arrangements were, consider how to deal with difficult admission issues and advise admission authorities on ways their admission arrangements could be improved.

Following a query by the Leader of Council Councillor Clark confirmed that the Council had no authority or influence over Academies' admissions criteria and its role was limited to implementing the agreed criteria.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Wokingham Borough School Admissions arrangements for the 2022/23 School Year should be unchanged from those in force for the 2021/22 School Year.

121. COVID WINTER GRANT SCHEME SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE

The Executive considered a report relating to a proposed supplementary estimate of up to £100,000 to continue to support vulnerable families and individuals who had struggled to meet the costs of food and utilities over the winter months due to the Covid pandemic.

Whilst introducing the report the Executive Member for Finance and Housing explained that the Executive had previously made a commitment that in the event that the Winter Grant provided by the Government did not meet all of people's requirements the Council would look to increase the amount available. It was therefore proposed to request a supplementary estimate of up to £100,000 to continue to support vulnerable families and individuals. Councillor Kaiser reminded the meeting that part of the Winter Grant had been used to fund school children's meals during the holiday period and also to assist with utility costs.

In light of the fact that the Council was having to increase the amount of money available Councillor Haitham Taylor queried whether the Council would be writing to the Secretary of State ahead of next year requesting that a larger grant be provided to cover these costs? Councillor Kaiser responded that the Council would be applying for a larger grant next year however as the grant was part of the package of assistance provided to mitigate the effects of Covid it was therefore unknown whether it would continue.

RECOMMENDATION that:

- 1) a Supplementary Estimate of up to £100,000 be approved to allow vulnerable families and individuals who are struggling with the cost of food and utilities to continue to be supported once the Covid Winter Grant funds of £281k are exhausted;
- 2) it be noted that this will bring total spend on supporting families and individuals most in need in the Borough to £381k and will allow families and individuals to receive support up to the closing date of the scheme on 16th April 2021.

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 6.

TITLE	WBC Recovery Strategy
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 24 June 2021
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
LEAD MEMBER	Leader of the Council - John Halsall

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To provide a strategy for the Council that addresses the key issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and attends to 'recovery' in the context of delivering the Corporate Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive approve the Wokingham Borough Council Recovery Strategy and note the challenges of recovery in a changing landscape and the need to be agile in our approach.

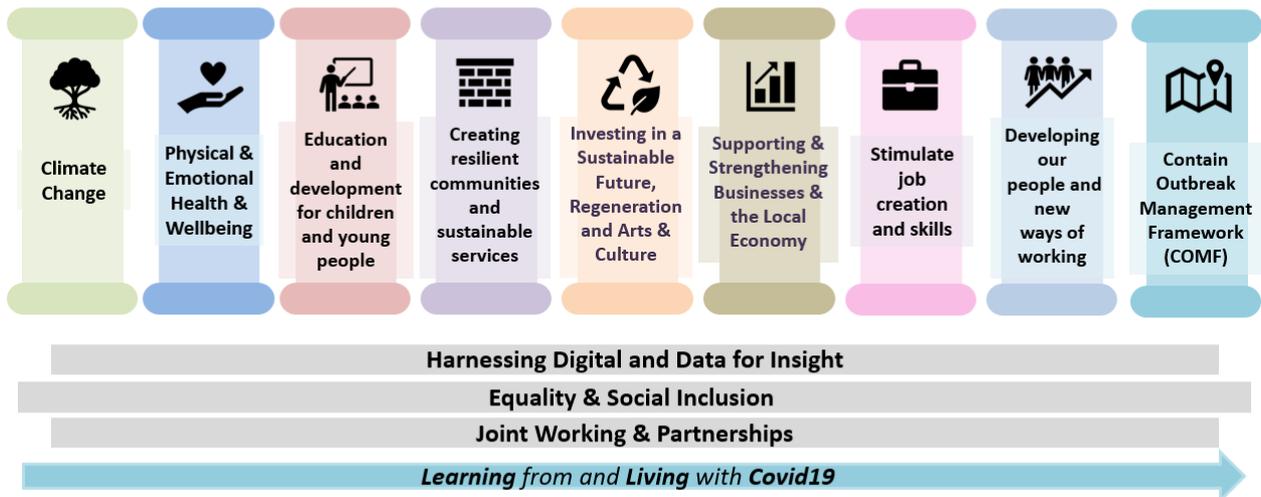
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The COVID-19 pandemic has been much more than a health crisis. It has come at a high cost to our economy and communities and put an unprecedented strain on our services. Over the last year many of our services have been focused on the response to the pandemic in order to contain the virus and address the immediate impacts this had on society and the economy. As we approach a relaxation of lockdown restriction and increased vaccine rollouts there can be no return to "normal"; we must adapt and learn from the experiences of the last year and seize opportunities for recovery and re-orientation for our borough.

We will view each of our nine pillars of recovery through the lens of three key principles; data, equality and partnerships. We will use data and insight to inform our direction and harness technology to maximise opportunities for recovery. We will actively champion our commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion through our recovery work. Finally, we will deliver on our recovery ambitions jointly with our partners, build on existing networks and continue to strengthen those arrangements that have been set up during the response phase.

We have placed an additional emphasis on learning from and living with COVID-19. Although a significant proportion of adults have been vaccinated there are gaps in our vaccinated population and the threat of emerging variants pose the risk that we will be living with COVID-19 for many years to come; our approach to containing the virus is therefore an integral part of our planning. An additional consideration across each pillar is that we have learnt a great deal over the last year and wherever possible we will strive to use our learnings in our recovery approach.

Pillars for Recovery



This strategy is intended to:

- Provide assurances that activity has been reviewed through the lens of COVID-19
- Ensure each key theme impacted by COVID-19 is properly addressed through the pillars
- Capture a snapshot of one version of recovery activity across the organisation and signpost to recovery activity within existing strategies and groups
- Enable development of a central reporting mechanism for recovery activity

The timescale of this report is currently 5 years. This strategy is a working document and will continuously be reviewed and adapted as the recovery landscape we work in is constantly shifting.

BACKGROUND

COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact globally, nationally and locally here in Wokingham. We have all faced challenges presented by the pandemic, whether they be social and physical impacts of lockdown restrictions, financial challenges or the emotional impacts of losing loved ones and living through incredibly turbulent and uncertain times. Like the rest of the world, we have paid a heavy price; as of 16th April 2021, 8,186 COVID cases have been detected in Wokingham and sadly we estimate that around 300 residents have tragically lost their lives since the start of the pandemic in 2020.

The demands and pressures from the pandemic have been felt within the organisation as well as by our partners, local businesses and residents. These challenges will continue to evolve as case rates fall and the wider impacts of COVID-19 come into focus for example inequalities, deteriorating emotional health and impacts of an economic recession.

However, despite the challenges, people and communities have rallied together to offer support to each other during a time of crisis. In addition, there have been inadvertent positives to emerge from the pandemic. For example, we have seen the environmental benefits of increased remote working, unique and innovative models of service delivery and increased partnership working which has strengthened local and regional networks.

In many ways COVID-19 has reshaped life as we know it and the world will emerge from this pandemic being very different economically and socially. Organisations are harnessing data & insights from the pandemic to shape and embrace a 'new normal'. This has provided us with a unique chance to rethink, reshape and re-orientate the way we work and the services we deliver to seize the opportunities which have arisen during the pandemic.

We have approached the pandemic in three phases; response, recovery and re-orientation.

Response - Taking action that has an immediate impact and addresses issues as they arise to create innovative services at the point of use

Recovery - Making services robust and well-adapted as we move out of lockdown. Aims to create stability while bolstering support to residents and the local economy so they can return to normal

Re-Orientation - Ambitious, transformational and broad-reaching in scope. Anticipating what the future will look like, implementing preventative measures and shock-proofing our services

The scope of the Recovery Strategy brings together the recovery and re-orientation phases.

BUSINESS CASE

The Recovery Strategy builds on the vision and priorities expressed in the Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan and will support us to achieve our ambitions to make Wokingham '*A great place to live, learn, work & grow and a great place to do business*'.

The strategy sets out nine pillars of recovery which will address short, medium and long-term actions we are taking towards recovery and re-orientation of the borough. We will work with our partners to tackle these pillars of activity.

The strategy describes immediate actions we are taking towards recovery as an organisation through the next year. It goes on to set up actions for a sustainable recovery over 2-4 years. Finally, it touches on work we are doing towards our longer term ambitions, 5 years and beyond, to re-orientate the borough and longer term transformation.

The nine pillars of recovery are:

- 1) **Climate change**
Tackling climate change and laying the foundations for a sustainable, clean and green future for our borough.
- 2) **Physical & Emotional Health & Wellbeing**
Promoting the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of our residents and targeting action to support our most vulnerable communities.
Containing the spread of COVID-19.
- 3) **Education and development for children & young people**
Tackling the impacts of lockdown restrictions on childhood development and education to ensure all children and young people have opportunities to be successful.
- 4) **Creating resilient communities & sustainable services**
Creating strong and resilient communities. Thinking creatively about managing increasing demand for frontline service delivery.
- 5) **Investing in a Sustainable Future, Regeneration and Arts & Culture**
Invest in the regeneration of local areas, support housing growth, digital infrastructure, sustainable transport and reviving arts and culture in the borough
- 6) **Supporting & Strengthening Businesses & the Local Economy**
Cultivating a business-friendly environment in order to sustain a strong economic recovery.
- 7) **Stimulate job creation & skills**
Work with our partners to support people through skills and learning to get back into employment.
- 8) **Developing our people & new ways of working**
Promote staff health & wellbeing.
Aligning our ways of working to the vision set out as part of the Workforce Re-imagination programme.
- 9) **Contain Outbreak Management Framework**
The Contain Outbreak Management Framework sets out how local and regional partners should continue to work with each other, in their communities, to prevent, manage and contain outbreaks of COVID-19. This is a temporary pillar and its activity will be absorbed into other pillars over the life of the recovery strategy.

We will view each of our nine pillars through the lens of three key principles:

- 1) Harnessing the power of digital, data & insight
 - Realising our ambitions to be an insight led council by utilising data & insight to inform decision making and strategic thinking to enhance performance. We will harness digital opportunities, technology and innovation wherever possible to deliver better outcomes for our residents.

- 2) Equality, fairness and social inclusion
 - Actively champion our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion through our recovery work to tackle inequality together. Our vision is to be a great place to live, learn, work, and grow and a great place to do business and this includes everyone. There is no place for discrimination in any society.

- 3) Joint working and partnerships
 - We will build on existing networks and create new connections with partners across sectors to jointly work on recovery and maximise opportunities for positive and long-lasting change.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Funding will be in line with the MTFP	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Funding will be in line with the MTFP	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Funding will be in line with the MTFP	N/A	N/A

Other Financial Information
Financial impacts of recovery are considered as part of the Council’s budget setting process through the MTFP. Where requirement for additional resource is identified through specific projects this will be addressed through the budget setting process

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
Internal

Public Sector Equality Duty
Due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty has been taken. Equality is an overarching principle of recovery and will be addressed as part of the work carried out against each of the eight pillars of recovery. An initial equality impact assessment has been carried out and is included in the appendices

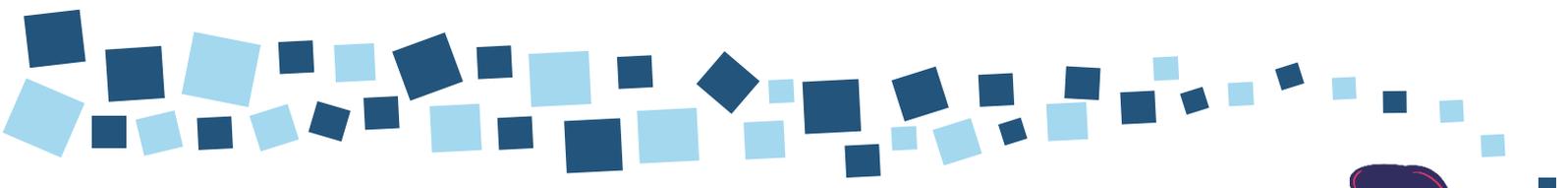
Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*

The approval of this strategy would have a positive impact on the Council's carbon neutral objective by directly addressing climate change as a key action within the strategy.

List of Background Papers

Wokingham Borough Council Recovery Strategy
Equality Impact Assessment

Contact Javeria Ali	Service Communities, Insight, Change
Telephone 07562169065	Email javeria.ali@wokingham.gov.uk



Wokingham Recovery Strategy

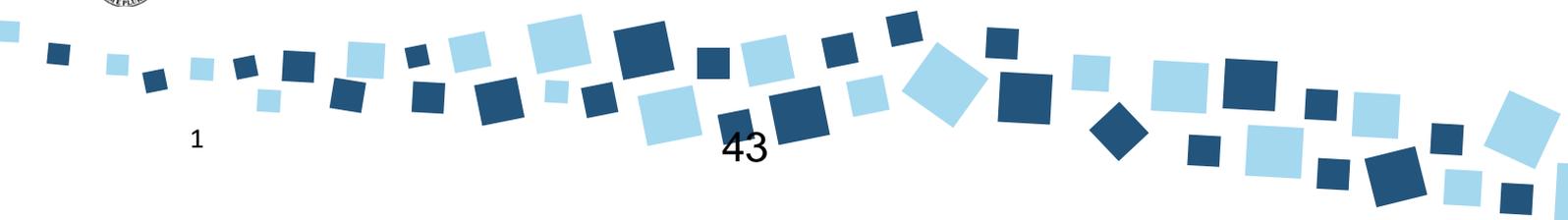
2021-2026

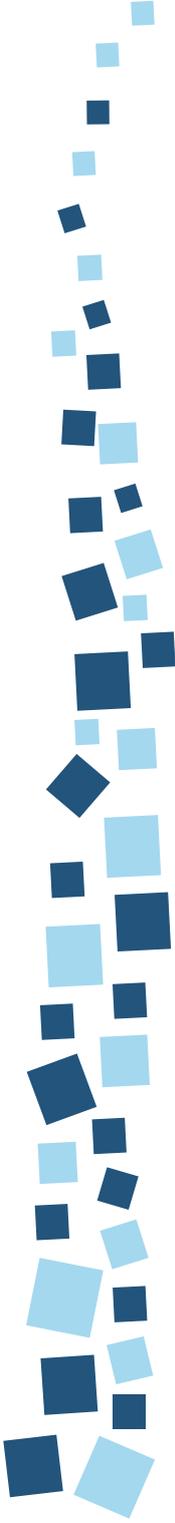


A great place to live, learn, work & grow, and a great place to do business



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL





Contents

1. Executive Summary
2. Background & Context
3. Purpose of the Recovery Strategy
4. Our Vision
5. Key Strategies & Groups
6. Nine Pillars of Recovery
 - a. Climate Change
 - b. Physical & Emotional Health & Wellbeing
 - c. Education and Development for Children & Young People
 - d. Creating Resilient Communities and Sustainable Services
 - e. Invest in a Sustainable Future, Regeneration and Arts & Culture
 - f. Supporting & Strengthening Businesses and the Local Economy
 - g. Stimulate Job Creation & Skills
 - h. Developing our People and New Ways of Working
 - i. Contain Outbreak Management Framework
7. Appendices

Executive Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on our borough, causing a loss of life and livelihood as well as wider social, emotional, financial and health impacts for our residents. This has led to a need for the Council to drive a strong and ambitious recovery for our borough, building on existing work carried out leading up to and during the pandemic in order to fulfil our vision for Wokingham to be '*A great place to live, learn, work & grow and a great place to do business.* We will do this through our recovery strategy which sets out our approach through nine pillars of recovery. This strategy will remain agile in its nature and will be reviewed annually to ensure we are responsive to emerging challenges and changes to the landscape we work in.

Background & Context

Wokingham is a largely healthy and prosperous borough; The Office of National Statistics (ONS) Health Index recently named Wokingham as the healthiest place to live in England and we are also the most prosperous Local Authority area in the country. However, there are small but significant pockets of deprivation which have been exacerbated during the pandemic.

Across the course of the pandemic, our borough and residents have been challenged in unimaginable ways. Like the rest of the world, we have paid a heavy price; as of 16th April 2021, 8,186 COVID-19 cases have been detected in Wokingham and sadly we estimate that around 300 residents have tragically lost their lives since the start of the pandemic in 2020.

COVID-19 has been much more than just a health crisis. It has come at a high cost to our residents, economy and communities resulting in an unprecedented strain on our services. Many of our residents are experiencing wider health, social and financial challenges as a result of lockdown restrictions and ongoing uncertainties to our way of life.

As we approach a national relaxation in restriction measures, outlined by the Government's Roadmap, it is imperative that we recognise the impacts on all areas of society, learnings from the last year and build on our successes during the response to form the foundations of a strong recovery.

At Wokingham Borough Council we have adopted a three-phase approach to recovery. This involves the immediate response, ongoing recovery and longer-term re-orientation.

This strategy highlights the impact of the virus on our borough, the work we carried out during the response and sets out how we will address recovery and re-orientation. This strategy is designed to remain agile and flexible during its course to ensure that we remain responsive to changes and continue to use the most recent data to inform our direction and decisions relating to recovery.



Reorientation

Ambitious, proactive and **broad-reaching** in scope. Anticipating what the future will look like, implementing preventative measures and **shock-proofing** our services

Recovery

Making services **robust** and **well-adapted** as we move out of lockdown. Aims to create **stability** while bolstering support to residents and the local economy so they can return to normal

Response

Taking action that has an **immediate impact** and addresses issues as they arise to create **innovative** services at the point of use

The Impact of COVID-19 & Our Response

Wokingham residents have shown incredible strength over the last year and we feel proud to see communities demonstrating high levels of social capital through volunteering and supporting one another.

At the start of the pandemic the Council quickly mobilised resources and utilised the Council's existing emergency planning processes to enact a coordinated, managed, and timely response to the crisis. In the early stages of the pandemic the Council redeployed 107 staff to support those services and activities of greatest need to the community. The response was carried out in conjunction with key partners including health, police, communities, the voluntary sector and the Town and Parish Councils.

The impacts of the pandemic have been felt widely across sectors and services, from health, local businesses, children & young people, care homes, communities and others. The pandemic has also exposed and exacerbated longstanding inequalities and brought into sharp focus the disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in society; in particular minority ethnic groups and those on lower incomes have been evidenced nationally.

This section will discuss some of the significant impacts of the pandemic and our response to support the borough which has laid the foundations for recovery and re-orientation. The information from this section has been drawn from the January 2021 report to Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) outlining the Council's Response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to note that some of the local and national data provided in the section below may have changed since the publication of the O&S report. The themes discussed below are just some of the areas impacted by COVID-19 and the Council's response to this; it is important to note that every sector, service and area of life has been impacted by the virus in some way.

Mental Health

Good mental health is an asset which support positive outcomes for individuals and society. Nationally, self-reported mental health and wellbeing worsened during the pandemic and while Wokingham is the healthiest place to live in England, residents in our borough also experienced a rise in poor mental health. Locally, 15% of the Borough's residents had a formal diagnosis of depression with more than 40% of GP consultations relating in some way to mental health issues. In response, the Council launched a pilot mental health programme in partnership with Earley Plus PCN and Citizens Advice, encouraging residents to contact the One Front Door if they were concerned about deteriorating mental health or wellbeing. The Council also set up a mental health recovery college which helped residents to understand mental health issues and manage mental health in a positive way and also worked in partnership with the Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to deliver community mental health services. Mental health challenges will continue into the recovery phase as residents deal with the lasting effects of bereavement, social isolation and poor mental health resulting from financial and economic pressures.

Adult Social Care (ASC)

A key aim of the Borough's community response had been to reach out to isolated and vulnerable residents. The Council's Adult Social Care team, along with redeployed staff, carried out 7,000 initial welfare checks to clinically extremely vulnerable residents during the

first wave, in addition there were 2400 calls to adults known to social care and over 500 calls to carers. ASC also worked in partnership with the One Front Door which generated hundreds of referrals to the Link Visiting Scheme and Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) who supported people throughout the pandemic.

To facilitate hospital discharge and avoid hospital admissions, we awarded block contracts to providers who provided a 7-day service to guarantee patients were safely and timely discharged.

We also implemented the 'Moving with Confidence' programme which is run by the Sports & Leisure Team in conjunction with Adult Social Care Team at Wokingham Borough Council and focuses on those residents that have been identified as being at risk of falls, loss of muscle strength and declining confidence. After a successful pilot, funding has been agreed to continue the Movement in Confidence offer to decrease falls & prevent hospital admissions.

To further support residents with physical activity, we jointly delivered The Mobility Project which supported more than 130 residents in their homes with exercise sessions as Day Centres were closed due to lockdown restrictions.

The pandemic has had a profound impact on those receiving and providing Adult Social Care and we will need to continue to support Adult Social Care and apply lessons learnt from the response to shape our services, the care market and address emerging challenges from the impacts of the pandemic.

Public Health

Public Health in Wokingham have been playing a leading role in supporting the local authority response to the pandemic by working alongside the leadership team to shape the extensive work undertaken across the Council.

The impacts of COVID-19, both as a disease and lockdown measures to counter it, on health and wellbeing are likely to be great and varied. Missed opportunities for early diagnosis of diseases, waiting times for operations and other treatments have increased and it is likely we will see similar patterns for health service provisions, impacting a diverse number of areas such as vaccination coverage, sexual health service, contraception and pregnancy services, mental health services and cancer services.

Public Health will continue to use their expertise to carry out further data collection and analysis to understand the impacts of COVID-19 and the implications of this for Recovery.

Care Homes

From the start of the pandemic, care homes and their residents faced a number of critical issues including the vulnerability of residents, access to PPE and risk of transmission due to the living environment as well as discharges from hospital. In addition, residents experienced the ongoing challenges of limited in person access to loved ones and family members due to restrictions.

To assist our Care Homes, we set up a Taskforce to work with homes to offer wraparound support to minimise infections and provide PPE. The Taskforce is a joint health and social care function and works in partnership with care homes. The work of the Taskforce is an example of best practice and has undoubtedly protected residents, saved many lives and strengthened our relationships with our care homes which we will continue to build on.

Children & Young People

The impact on the pandemic has been felt by children & young people who have missed out on crucial time in school and the ability to interact with their friends and loved ones as a result of lockdown restrictions. We know that the true extent of how this pandemic has impacted on childhood development and mental health will not be understood for years to come. In the short term however, it was reported that there had been a period of suppressed demand for services during the first lockdown (March-June 2020). Demand began to increase again once lockdown restrictions ended. In September 2020, for example, the Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service's (CAMHS) rapid response team received 70% more referrals compared to September 2019. In response to the impact on children and young people's mental health we jointly commissioned Kooth; an on-line youth counselling service which, nationally, supported over 130,000 children and young people in 2019/20. As we look to recovery and the future it is imperative that we support the borough's children to fulfil their ambitions by supporting education, development and employment opportunities.

Businesses

The COVID-19 impact on jobs and the local economy has been immense. Nationally, lockdown meant significant impacts on business turnover and on the workforce. In the 2-week period ending 31st May 2020 employers were reporting that just over a fifth of the UK workforce was on furlough and just under a quarter of enterprises across all industries had experienced a decrease in turnover of more than 50%. Locally, we saw a 223% increase in claims for out of work benefits between February and August 2020 and a disproportionate impact is being felt on workers from the ethnic minority community, women, young workers, disabled workers and the low paid. In addition, there are 120 young people at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET), which was a significant increase on previous years. We have worked with key partners, including the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) on our response to support jobs and the local economy. Some of our work includes providing financial support in the form of business and discretionary grants, additional advice and guidance through a Business Growth Hub and Business Taskforce and regular communications to businesses in the borough. As part of our continued work to invest in our borough we have, and will continue to, regenerate our town centres and look forward to growing our arts & culture offering through the arts & culture strategy as part of the borough's recovery.

Communities

COVID-19 had a significant impact on our communities; we saw a significant increase in demand for support from the Citizens Advice Bureau and a 220% increase in people accessing the Wokingham Foodbank during March - August 2020, compared to 2019.

In recognition of financial hardship being experienced by our residents we implemented flexible repayment plans for Council Tax, supported residents through the Community Engagement Team and supported Council tenants via the Tenancy Sustainment Team. We have recently approved a Housing Strategy which will work to ensure housing options for our most vulnerable residents. The Council is also developing an Anti-Poverty Strategy to ensure no one in the borough is left behind.

The pandemic has brought about a major shift in Wokingham's approach to rough sleeping. Whilst the Council was already working hard to reduce the numbers of rough sleepers, in

March 2020 the government instructed all local authorities to accommodate all persons from the street immediately; this became known as the 'Everyone In' policy. Wokingham's homelessness team sprang into action, sourcing new temporary accommodation facilities, ensuring a total of 84 homeless people were accommodated to protect them and others from the virus. At the time of writing, Wokingham has managed to ensure that no persons are sleeping rough in the borough.

During our response, the Council also worked with a wide range of partners including Citizens Advice, the Link Visiting Scheme, Age UK, Involve, First Days, Wokingham Volunteer Centre, Wokingham Foodbank, Churches Together, Just Around the Corner, Norreys Church food hub, Home Start, local community groups and the Borough's Town and Parish Councils. Our relationship with the voluntary sector has strengthened at great pace during the pandemic and we will continue to nurture and build on this as we move in recovery and beyond.

Recovery & Re-Orientation

Our successes and learnings during the response to COVID-19 have set the blueprint for an ambitious and transformational recovery and re-orientation. We will continue to build on what went well during the response and drive accelerated action to maximise the positive impacts to arise from the pandemic, for example, positive environmental impacts and sentiments towards climate change, positive health behaviours, increased community resilience and people's willing to help one another. We will also recognise areas of importance for our residents and work in partnership to address these through our recovery activity and corporate priorities.

Our recovery planning will also take into account that there are many unknowns regarding the future and the worst of the impact may be yet to come. We recognise that some of the impacts on our borough have been significantly mitigated through central government funding and policies for example through furlough, business grants and eviction legislation. We will need to continue to horizon scan into the future to identify potential threats to our recovery and plan mitigating actions to address these.

We will also use national guidance and policies to inform our direction into recovery and beyond, for example the Government's Four Step Roadmap to ease restrictions and provide a route back to a more normal way of life.



Purpose of the Recovery Strategy

Recovery is not simply returning to our baseline before COVID-19 or 'business as usual', it is about navigating the uncertainties, sustaining positive changes from the response and working alongside partners and communities to tackle the challenges laid bare by the pandemic.

In developing this strategy, we have used best practice and research from across the U.K to inform our approach. In addition, we have considered data, insights and evidence including the voice of our residents, partners and staff. This strategy is aligned to our Corporate Plan and Community Vision and provides an opportunity to strengthen our corporate vision to make Wokingham *'A great place to live, learn, work & grow and a great place to do business'*. This recovery strategy does not seek to replace the Corporate Plan; instead it will ensure we are fully cognitive of the impacts of COVID-19 and what needs to be attended to in order to enhance, and where possible, accelerate its delivery.

Within the strategy we have set out our vision and nine pillars of recovery which will be addressed in order to maximise opportunities and build on lessons from the crisis to support our recovery and re-orientation.

Realism is central to this strategy. As a Council we operate within resources constraints which have been stretched due to the COVID-19 response. We need to deliver on a recovery plan within our budgets which is good value for money and within our means. We will be realistic and transparent about what we can achieve.

In order to effectively implement this strategy an accompanying action plan is being developed. The action plan seeks to capture areas of recovery activity across the organisation and will support to track and monitor progress against each of the nine high-level pillars, as well as identify and address any gaps.

Due to the unprecedented uncertainty of the current climate both the strategy and action plan will remain live and iterative to ensure that as an organisation we flex to emerging challenges and opportunities. We will regularly review and refresh this strategy in light of emerging data and intelligence.

Our Vision for Recovery

We aim to ensure the best and most holistic deal for recovery for our residents and in developing this vision have been ambitious in the range of areas we wish to positively impact for our borough.

We have developed this vision in line with key principles from our Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan. We have also incorporated insights gathered from residents, partners and staff regarding the key impacts and opportunities from COVID-19.



Key Strategies & Groups

The model for recovery is based on the Hub and Spoke model, with the corporate recovery group acting as a central hub with multiple spokes relating to each pillar of recovery. These spokes are in the form of key groups and partnerships as well as key strategies and policies which are being reviewed and reshaped through the lens of COVID-19.



We will build on existing networks and partnerships as well as strengthening those arrangements that have been set up during the response phase in order to jointly drive recovery and re-orientation of our borough. At a county level, we will continue work with the Berkshire Strategic Group to escalate recovery activity where appropriate and find opportunities for collaboration across the county.

The Corporate Recovery Group reports into the Council's Gold Group and is formed of 4 subgroups: Health & Wellbeing, Communities, Business & Economy and Our People and Accommodation. The nine pillars of recovery will feed into the central hub of the Corporate Recovery Group. In addition, we will work in partnership across all spokes identified to deliver on these pillars.

See Appendix A for a full view of key strategies, policies, documentation and key groups associated with the delivery of recovery against each pillar.



Pillars of Recovery

Our recovery is underpinned by nine recovery pillars which we will work towards in order to drive our recovery and re-orientation ambitions.

These pillars of activity have been identified using data & insights gathered from our residents, partners and staff as well as research into best practice at a national level to understand priorities which will support us to achieve a successful and holistic recovery for our borough. Each pillar has actions to support its delivery however, it is important to note that these pillars do not operate in isolation, there are areas of overlap and interdependencies which have been considered when developing the actions and will remain a focus in further development of this strategy and any associated action plans.

We will view each of our nine pillars through the lens of three key principles: data, equality and partnerships, as well as and an overarching consideration for COVID-19. Although a significant proportion of adults have been vaccinated there are gaps in our vaccinated population and the threat of emerging variants pose the risk that we will be living with COVID-19 for many years to come; our approach to containing the virus is therefore an integral part of our planning. An additional consideration across each pillar is that we have learnt a great deal over the last year and wherever possible we will strive to use our learnings in our recovery approach.

The Contain Outbreak Management Framework (COMF) sets out how local and regional partners should continue to work with each other, in their communities, to prevent, manage and contain outbreaks of COVID-19. Successful prevention and management of local outbreaks will lead to a return to a more normal way of life; therefore, the successful application of the Contain Outbreak Management Framework in Wokingham will ensure a successful recovery. This is a temporary pillar, and subject to review, the activity in this pillar will be absorbed into other pillars over the life course of the Recovery Strategy.

The three principles spanning our recovery pillars are:

1) Harnessing the power of digital, data & insight

- We will work towards realising our ambitions to be an insight led Council by utilising data & insight to inform decision making and strategic thinking to enhance performance. We will harness digital opportunities, technology and innovation wherever possible to deliver better outcomes for our residents.

2) Equality, fairness and social inclusion

- We will actively champion our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion through our recovery work to tackle inequality together. Our vision is to be a great place to live, learn, work, and grow and a great place to do business and this includes everyone. There is no place for discrimination in any society. It is our legal duty and moral responsibility to tackle inequalities. Wherever possible in the actions for our pillars of recovery we will ensure targeted action to support our underserved communities.

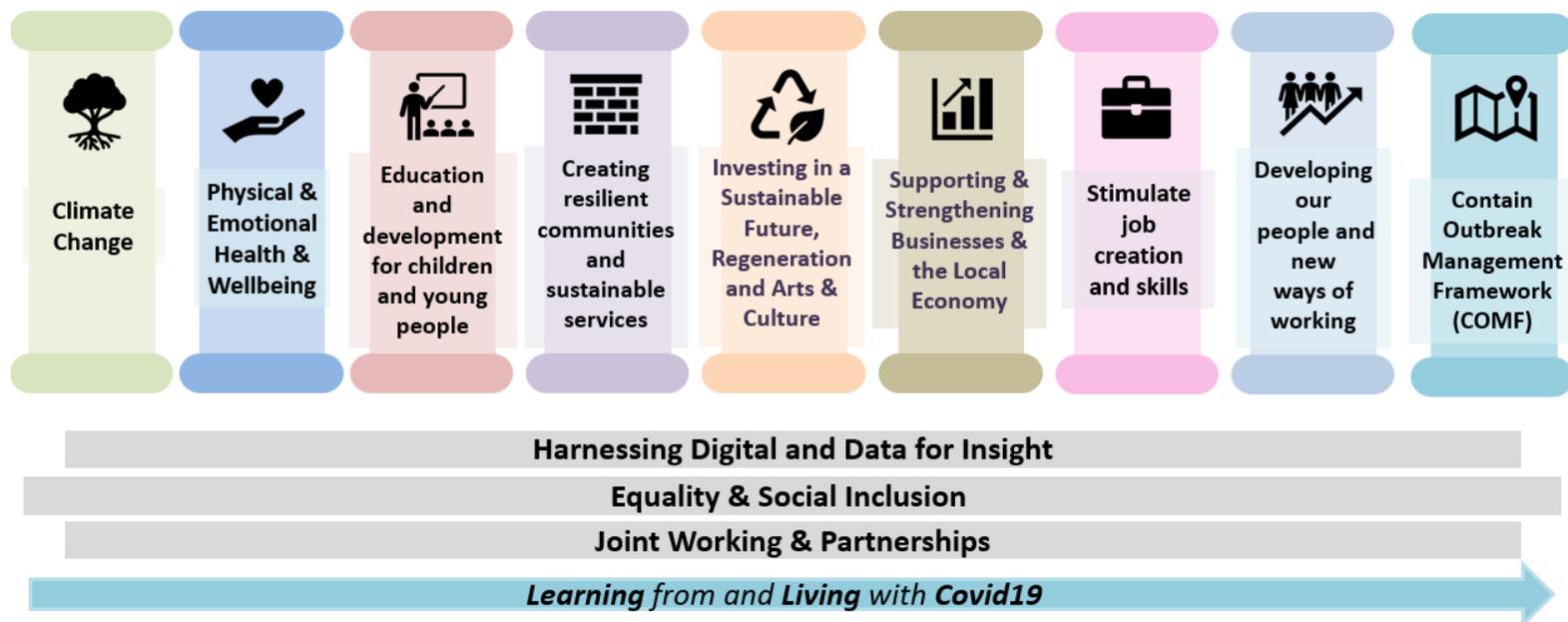
3) Joint working and partnerships

- We will build on existing networks and create new connections with partners across sectors to jointly work on recovery and maximise opportunities for positive and long-lasting change.

In this strategy, against each pillar, we have summarised the **impact** of COVID-19 in order to define issues arising from the pandemic, we have gone on to state the **opportunity** to recover and re-orientate within each pillar of recovery. We have referenced the high-level **actions** we will work towards in the short, medium and long term. These actions are statements of intent and are intended to provide a high-level view of what we will achieve within indicative periods of time. The actions and timescales may flex in response to emerging evidence, data and evaluation of each pillar. Finally, we have outlined **success descriptors** for each pillar, these success descriptors are based on our current position but are formative and will be reviewed along with this strategy to ensure they remain relevant. In addition, as part of the ongoing development of this strategy, we will identify further success measures and continue to develop these for each of the pillars of recovery.

A more detailed and comprehensive view of all recovery activity is being developed as part of the evolving Recovery Action Plan which complements this strategy.

Pillars for Recovery





Climate Change

Successes to date

- Over £2million in grants awarded to support climate emergency projects, including tree planting, air quality, active travel and decarbonisation of buildings.
- Air quality monitoring through the pandemic has given insight into transport impacts on the environment and potential longer term solutions.
- Dinton Activity Centre is the first carbon positive building in the Borough
- First solar farm has received planning permission
- Schemes for retrofitting and energy generation up and running

Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has brought about a shift in individual behaviours and social attitudes. There is a need for proactive action to maximise these changes in order to drive environmental benefits through encouraging new ways of working, living and moving around.

Opportunity

Tackling climate change and laying the foundations for a sustainable, clean and green future for our borough.

Immediate Action (1yr)

- Continue to deliver the actions in our climate emergency action plan
- Continue to encourage the growth of green industries
- Continue to maximise the short term environmental benefits of lockdown restrictions based on data and insights
- Reflect the green agenda in all council policies
- Continue to protect our green spaces and natural environment
- Prepare our waste strategy to reduce waste, increase recycling and commence implementation of action plans

Action for Sustainable Recovery (2-4yr)

- Deliver environmental benefits to the organisation through the Workplace Re-Imagined programme and the WBC environmental audit
- Continue to build on the increased public awareness of climate change to change people's behaviours and reduce emissions
- Continue to support development of green infrastructure and protect our outdoor spaces
- Continue to implement campaigns to promote active travel including schools, residents and workplaces and develop plans to deliver better walking and cycling infrastructure.

Re-orientation (5yr+)

- Continue to invest in long term ambitious green projects such as solar farms, tree planting and a network of electric charging points
- Increase biodiversity and ecology through green corridors and tree planting, maximising use of available grants
- Ensuring the majority of people in the borough have access to affordable sustainable energy
- Meet our goal for both the council and the borough to be net zero carbon by 2030

We will know we are on the road to success when...

- Carbon dioxide emissions have been reduced further towards the Council's ambition to play as full a role as possible in becoming carbon neutral by 2030
- There is increased biodiversity and the council's plan to plant 250,000 trees is underway
- We have greater investment in sustainable transport e.g. electric vehicles, cycle routes and public transport
- All corporate buildings have achieved maximum energy efficiency

Successes to date

- Recovery College prospectus launched; the number of students has risen from 52 to 75 in the last month as a result of advertising
- Contract awarded to MIND to deliver services for mild to moderate MH needs for an 18 month pilot
- After a successful pilot by sports and leisure funding has been agreed to continue the Movement with confidence offer to decrease falls & prevent hospital admission
- Development of the Mental Health strategy and mental health needs assessment is in progress
- Kooth- an online counselling service was commissioned jointly across West Berkshire for children & young people
- Little Blue Book of Sunshine revised to address COVID-19 impacts and circulated to schools in the borough
- Setting up partnership action groups for delivery and reporting on the Wellbeing Board priorities. The action groups are; Promoting Physically Active Communities, Social Isolation & Loneliness and Health Inequalities
- Public Health Services maintaining delivery and supporting health & wellbeing of our residents throughout the pandemic e.g. physical activity offers transferred to online when required
- Commissioned Tier2 weight management service in response to the government's Tackling Obesity report July 2020
- Introduction of trauma informed practice in Children's Services
- Adult Education Service delivered 26 courses (attended by 164 parents) aimed at supporting parents to build confidence in their children and manage their children's anxiety .

Impact of COVID-19

The primary health impacts of the virus have been felt by many of our residents, some of whom have tragically lost loved ones or their own lives. The secondary impacts of lockdown restrictions on poor physical and mental health & wellbeing have also had a detrimental impact on the quality of life of some residents. We have also seen health inequalities come into sharp focus and be exacerbated leaving some communities more vulnerable than others.

The full impacts of COVID-19 on the life course of a person can be seen on the diagram below.

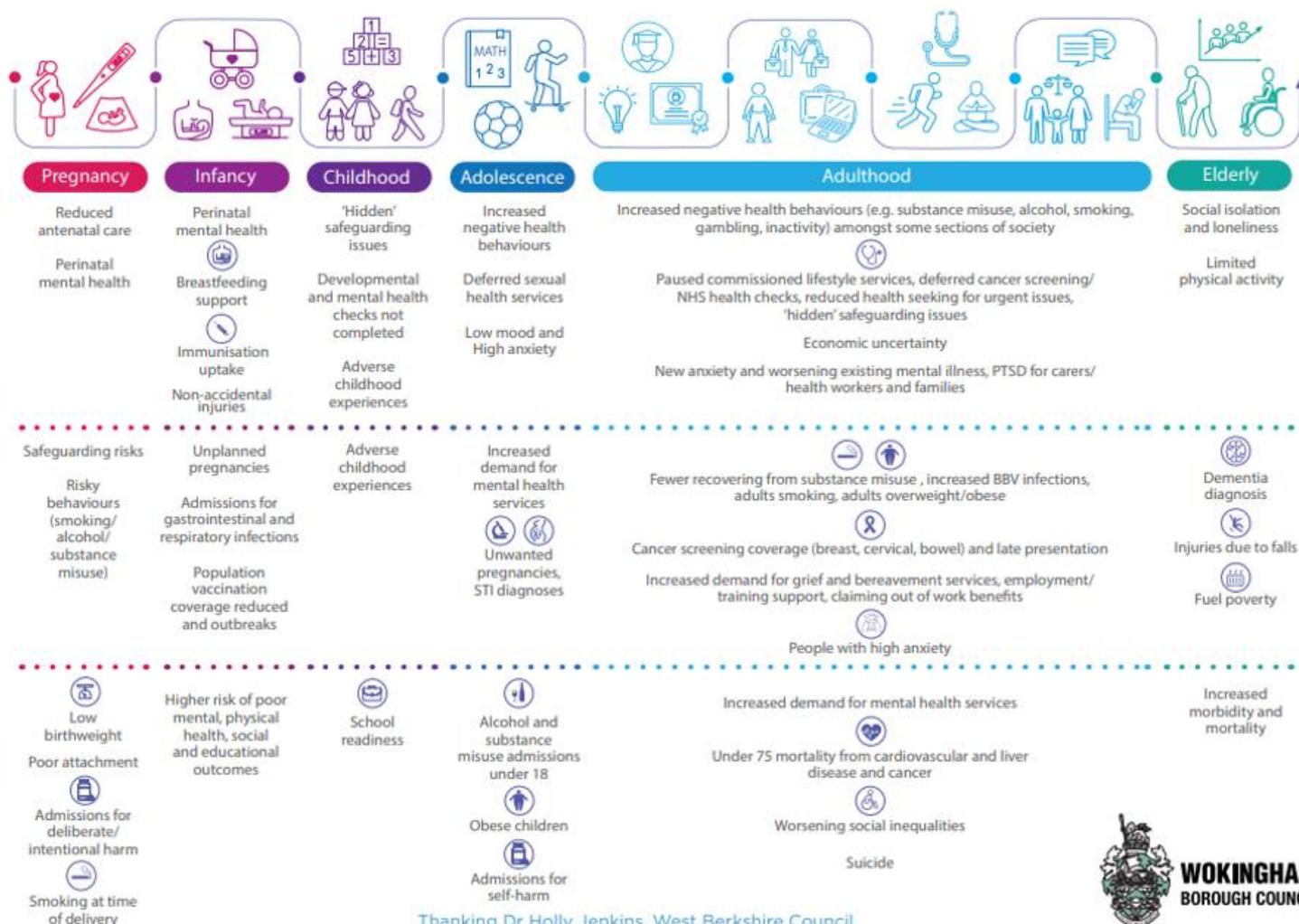
Opportunity

Promoting the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of our residents and targeting action to support our most vulnerable communities.

Ongoing management of COVID-19 in conjunction with the Contain Outbreak Management Framework.

Impacts of Covid-19 pandemic across the lifecourse

○ Symbol indicates PHOF indicator



Thanking Dr Holly Jenkins, West Berkshire Council



**Immediate
Action
(1yr)**

- Continue to address the low to moderate Mental Health service provision needs for adult's in conjunction with partners
- Continue to support the management of COVID-19, through the ASC, Children's and Communities Taskforce working closely with Public Health
- Continued monitoring and evaluation of vaccine rollout
- Development of Wokingham Strategy in Action as part of the Berkshire West Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- Continue to use data to further understand and address the health & wellbeing impacts on residents with particular reference to underserved communities and emerging inequalities
- Continuing to support health & wellbeing services to return to full service delivery
- Implement redesigned Emotional Wellbeing model and offer for children and young people with mild to moderate mental health needs
- Review Emotional Wellbeing Strategy for Children and Young People in Wokingham
- Development of specialist CAMHS offer for children and young people in care
- Continue to deliver on our health integration programme
- Continuing the safe and vibrant re-opening of leisure centres, parks and open spaces
- Continue to develop a wider scope of online activities for residents

**Action for
Sustainable
Recovery
(2-4yr)**

- Continue to work with our partners to strengthen and adapt the mental health offer in light of emerging evidence across the life course
- Continue to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on longer term health & wellbeing of residents through the ongoing collection and analysis of data and adjust action plans accordingly
- Continue service transformation projects to manage demand in ASC and improve efficiency and quality of services for residents
- Continue to embed a strength based practice approach in ASC
- Continuing to work to reduce, and prevent further, exacerbation of health inequalities during recovery long term
- Review impacts and outcomes of Emotional Wellbeing Model and Service to inform next steps
- Continue our work on building developments including Carnival Hub and Cantley Park

**Re-
orientation
(5yr+)**

- Development of longer term actions to address the physical and emotional health impacts on residents, particularly on vulnerable communities, based on data, evidence and evaluation
- Continue monitoring our actions against health inequalities to ensure effectiveness
- Continue to address the physical & mental H&W of Wokingham residents through the Wokingham Wellbeing Board's Strategy into Action Plan
- Continue with the development of leisure facilities throughout the borough

We will know we are on the road to success when...

- We have a strong mental health offer, underpinned by partnership working, for all our residents and greater numbers of residents are accessing support
- We have demonstrated a reduction in health inequalities and Wokingham continues to be the healthiest place to live in England
- We have identified and taken action on the COVID-19 related impacts on emotional & physical health & wellbeing through our service response
- We regularly review data and are agile and responsive as new evidence emerges in relation to COVID-19 and its wider impacts



Education and Development for Children & Young People

Successes to date

- School Attendance for eligible children has been high during periods of lockdown.
- Return to school has seen high level of returners.
- Asymptomatic testing arrangements have been in place with high take up.
- Remote learning has been successful with the vast majority of eligible children receiving equipment.
- Early Years settings have maintained delivery with no losses due to COVID-19
- Early Years Inclusion Service, Learning Support and EPS adapted their assessments and support to remote access
- Transition and Recovery guidance (based on research and evidence-based strategies for recovery using national excellence materials provided by Education Endowment Fund) sent to all schools to prepare for children returning after the first lockdown
- "Drop -ins" supported by the School Improvement Service during lockdowns, supported key school leaders to review curriculum provision to ensure effective educational recovery, focused on positive mental attitudes, the language of success and moving forward rather than a deficit model

Impact of COVID-19

While children have not been as impacted by direct mortality from the virus the pandemic has had an unquestionable detrimental impact on many children with regards to emotional health, development and education. Due to lockdown restrictions many children have missed key opportunities for social, emotional, behavioural and educational development.

The gap may widen for our most vulnerable pupils with respect to progress and attainment, with new groups of pupils potentially emerging with vulnerabilities and concerns.

The full extent of how children have been affected and the implications this will have on their future will not be known for many years.

Opportunity

Tackling the impacts of lockdown restrictions on childhood development and education to ensure all children and young people have opportunities to be successful.

Immediate Action (1yr)

- Continued engagement and support for schools to tackle the challenges of COVID-19
- Continued support for remote education and use of technology to support remote education outside school environment when needed
- Recommissioning of the Wokingham Healthy Child Programme
- Continue our work to develop a schools estate that meets the needs of the population

Action for Sustainable Recovery (2-4yr)

- Continue reviewing the educational impact of lockdown and impacts on children's development in light of emerging evidence
- Continue to review and monitor educational inequality to ensure appropriate action planning and interventions to support children & young people
- Action planning to address the impacts on childhood development and education in the medium term

Re-orientation (5yr+)

- Continue to use data & insights to assess the longer term impacts of lockdown restriction on childhood development and education

We will know we are on the road to success when...

- Families and carers feel confident that children can get back to school and access the education they need
- Children are back at school but have access to a robust remote learning environment if needed
- Most children can complete a full academic year, without a significant impact on their results
- Most children's results (appropriate to their key stage) return to expected levels as performance reporting resumes.
- Children and young people will be experiencing less anxiety and will be able to say their emotional wellbeing is better following the pandemic.

Successes to date

- The creation of the Wokingham COVID-19 Taskforce to support providers throughout the borough
- Distribution of the sustainability fund and PPE for providers
- Regular provider communications including the set up of a provider hub
- Ensuring the care and support market is able to continue to provide care for the most vulnerable
- One Front Door supported an average of 320 residents each week
- Wokingham VCS Hub on track for opening in September 2021
- Over 9000 children visited face to face last year (financial)
- Bridges residential provision for disabled children remained open throughout the pandemic
- Delivery of a Digital Donations project to get donations of technology out to residents who need it
- Production of the Borough / Parish Charter



Impact of COVID-19

Opportunity

**Creating strong and resilient communities.
Thinking creatively about managing
increasing demand for frontline service
delivery.**

COVID-19 has placed an immense pressure on services; for example, increases in early help referrals and increased demand on the Adult Social Care market.

Our communities have also been heavily impacted; we have seen an increased demand in CAB referrals, Home Refuge and unauthorised encampments.

COVID-19 has also highlighted and exacerbated inequalities within our underserved communities in our borough, with some groups of the community being adversely affected more than others. Despite the challenges, the pandemic has placed a spotlight on the great work of our communities in bringing people together. Volunteering has been a really positive outcome, for example we have seen a 164% increase in new members for Adopt a Street, a litter picking scheme.

Immediate Action (1yr)

- Continue to work closely with providers to understand the impact of Covid 19 including capturing data via contract management tools to make decisions
- Continue to work with community based and universal services to provide early intervention and reduce the demands on statutory services and interventions
- Creating a more sustainable market and managing increased demand within limited resources
- Continue to build on any alternative service delivery models that have had a positive impact and embed these as 'the norm'
- Continue to provide clear and simple ways for our residents to access services and support – offering the right support at the right time
- Continue prioritising direct face to face engagement, and relationship based practice with children and their families
- Continue strengthening our work with partners and networks to ensure that commissioned services manage demand and meet the needs of our residents
- Continue to keep residents at the heart of all decisions during the response and recovery, whilst keeping our staff safe and well supported
- Ensure that we have the appropriate infrastructure to host, accommodate and support our work and delivery
- Continue to work with the VCS and partners to continue to identify and build on social capital
- Continue our work to ensure a flexible and adaptive workforce and robust systems that can respond to any future external 'shocks'
- Continue to deliver on the ASC Transformation Programme
- Continue our work to reduce crime rates and anti-social behaviour

Action for Sustainable Recovery (2-4yr)

- Continue to develop and respond to any trends or patterns resulting from the long term impact of the COVID-19 period and restrictions
- Continue to ensure care and support services (including accommodation) are appropriate to the different needs of our communities (including those with dementia and learning disabilities)
- Better integration between health and social care and colleagues across Berkshire West to develop joint commissioning strategies
- Development towards a permanent workforce with manageable case loads
- Continue to build on learning, design and development of digital offers that meet future needs and enhance the customer experience
- Develop an in house fostering offer to reflect the demands and needs of our children in care
- Design and develop high quality and ambitious service provisions to safeguard and support children and prevent them requiring local authority statutory intervention.
- Continue to develop a robust and sustainable care market
- To review our day service provision and further develop our offer of high quality day opportunities for vulnerable residents in the borough

Re-orientation (5yr+)

- Continue work to build strong partnerships and services informed by needs, with a focus on early intervention and prevention
- Continuing to ensure residents are at the centre of all decisions across the council
- Infrastructure investment to grow digital capabilities across the borough
- Working in partnership to support an integrated and sustainable system that provides high quality, cost effective care to meet the demands of the community

We will know we are on the road to success when...

- Greater numbers of our communities are supported through social action, mutual aid groups and volunteers to deliver solutions to local priorities
- Our most vulnerable communities impacted most by COVID-19 receive the support they need to sustain resilience against any future impact
- There is sufficient market capacity and our residents are able to access high quality services
- We have adopted and embedded a range of alternative delivery models, building on best practice from the pandemic response
- Our partnership working has been strengthened and enables us to better work across systems to meet the needs of our residents



Investing in a Sustainable Future, Regeneration and Arts & Culture

Successes to date

- Completed the first stage of the Thinking Places Programme as part of developing a local brand identity
- Set up the Cultural Alliance and developed an arts events programme
- WBC has delivered one of the most successful affordable homes programmes in England – building 1499 since April 2017
- Sourcing new temporary accommodation facilities, ensuring a total of 84 homeless people were accommodated
- The Emergency Active Travel fund was used to encourage social distancing in Wokingham Town Centre and we have since received further funding to develop active travel schemes in the borough
- Wokingham Town centre regeneration programme continues to be a success with new retail units opening and new homes selling across the scheme
- Despite COVID-19 new businesses opened in the town centre since March 2020

Impact of COVID-19

With the rise of remote working and people spending more time in their local area due to lockdown restrictions, residents have had the opportunity to reflect on the places they live. The importance of open green spaces, space for home working, a local arts & culture offering, a diverse high street and sustainable transport have all been highlighted as areas of importance for recovery.

Opportunity

Invest in the regeneration of local areas, support housing growth, digital infrastructure, sustainable transport and revive arts and culture in the borough

Immediate Action (1yr)

- Develop a shared vision of place and celebrate the uniqueness of the borough.
- Re-imagining sustainable transport across the borough
- Continue to communicate the strengths of the borough to attract investment
- Continued development of the arts & culture offering to attract visitors to town centres and key sites throughout the borough
- Continue building the right homes in the right places
- Continue our work to keep the borough moving
- Continue our work with partners on developing a 5G and superfast broadband offer

Action for Sustainable Recovery (2-4yr)

- Review our actions from year 1 to identify areas of success, further development and use our learning to inform next steps
- Continue to build the right homes in the right places and ensure we can meet the housing needs of the Borough's key and essential workers
- Enhance our temporary accommodation provision
- Continue to ensure that we have comprehensive digital infrastructure across the borough
- Continue joint working between the council and towns & parishes
- Delivery of reimaged sustainable transport solutions
- Implement the arts & culture strategy to attract visitors, support economic growth, and promote well-being of residents

Re-orientation (5yr+)

- Continue to invest in the regeneration of our town centres, commercial and residential areas
- Continue to create well planned places that make Wokingham a great place to live and work
- Continue to plan and prepare for the impact of emerging technologies in particular relating to transport

We will know we are on the road to success when...

- We have established Wokingham's reputation as a 'cultural hub' with accessible opportunities for all to participate
- Our town centres are thriving with low vacancy rates and a vibrant offer that is valued and well used
- New affordable housing design addresses changes in requirements following COVID-19 such as the need for more outdoor space and space for home working
- We have delivered more housing for key workers and essential workers on low incomes who support the local economy
- More people are using sustainable transport modes and enjoy our open spaces and country parks



Supporting & Strengthening Businesses & the Local Economy

Successes to date

- Digital newsletter now being distributed to over 5100 businesses on a regular basis.
- Direct engagement with over 121 new businesses since January 2021.
- Total business grants worth approximately £50m distributed to businesses, including the full allocation of discretionary grant funding.
- Established a COVID-19 Marshals service working closely with PPP to support businesses to operate safely and to instil public confidence.
- Hosted two successful online virtual markets to support local craft traders and provide a different offer for residents at Christmas and Easter.

Impact of COVID-19

The spread of COVID-19 and the measures to contain it have had severe economic impacts across the world and local businesses have not been exempt from this. Ongoing economic uncertainty and the prospect of a recession will exacerbate the challenges and impacts felt by our local businesses.

Opportunity

Cultivating a business friendly environment in order to sustain a strong economic recovery.

Immediate Action (1yr)

- Continue to analyse the impact of the pandemic on our local businesses and identify trends in the economy through gathering data and insights
- Increase our level of engagement with the business community to understand their needs and provide support where we can, particularly in managing COVID-19 related issues
- Continue to distribute grants and signpost businesses to specialist business advice

Action for Sustainable Recovery (2-4yr)

- Create initiatives that support businesses that are re-evaluating and adapting to the new trading environment post COVID-19
- Work in partnership with anchor institutions, such as the University of Reading, and business parks to stimulate business growth.
- Support new business start-ups and flexible working trends e.g. through the development of innovative co-working spaces in the borough

Re-orientation (5yr+)

- Develop longer term strategies based on the growth opportunities presented by green industrial and media sectors
- Encourage businesses to invest in the borough, through relocation (FDI) and joint development projects with the private sector

We will know we are on the road to success when...

- The number of businesses and the proportion of high growth businesses is growing.
- We have strong business networks and the Council has established positive relationships with a high proportion of the business community.
- The green economy and media sectors are a growing presence in the Borough supporting a range of supply chain businesses and providing employment opportunities for local people.
- There are significant Levels of Foreign Direct Investment and major relocations into the Borough



Stimulate Job Creation & Skills

Successes to date

- Employment & Skills Hub proposal approved by the Executive and DWP actively engaged as a delivery partner
- The number of young people who completed statutory education in summer of 2020 and returned to full time education increased from 92% to 94%
- 650 IAG sessions delivered remotely since the start of the pandemic and 44 young people 16-18 have moved from NEET to EET
- More young people have engaged in Traineeships with strong relationship built with new providers
- WBC approved to deliver the Kick-start programme with an initial target of 30 placements for unemployed young people.
- The council has co-funding with other Berkshire Authorities the Berkshire Opportunities Portal – a digital service to support local job seekers find work and training

Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has reshaped the job market and job losses resulting financial hardship have impacted many residents. The job market is changing and we need to ensure our residents have the right skills for life long prosperity

Opportunity

Work with our partners to support people through skills and learning to get back into employment.

Immediate Action (1yr)

- Create an employment hub to help residents seeking work into employment
- Continue to provide high quality careers information, advice and guidance is available to residents
- Continue to provide advice to businesses seeking to support their employees with their emotional health & wellbeing
- Continue to use data to understand and address the impacts on residents in poverty
- Identify those jobs that find it hard to recruit and help businesses match skilled candidates to jobs
- Continue to support our armed forced covenant agreement and peruse our ambition to be a bronze award employer
- continue our work with partners to identify skills in high demand and the right skills needed for growth.
- Continue to work with partners to ensure opportunities are available for skills development across the borough to meet these needs

Action for Sustainable Recovery (2-4yr)

- Continue to work with schools, local colleges and businesses to identify the skills and knowledge that local businesses need to grow
- Continue strengthening the social value conditions on suppliers to help create local jobs and keep council spend within the borough
- Continue to ensure that businesses and residents get the most out of schemes such as the Government's apprenticeship programme and Kick Start
- Continue to work with partners to understand our armed forces community and their needs regarding jobs & skills

Re-orientation (5yr+)

- Continue to ensure all sectors of society benefit from economic growth and the opportunities to access employment and training that support lifelong prosperity and independence
- Continue to identify the emerging skills needs of the future and ensure there is sufficient training available for residents in these sectors

We will know we are on the road to success when...

- Unemployment levels fall to pre-COVID levels (historically the lowest in the sub-region)
- We are sustaining very low levels of young people who are NEET and actively working with those who are to secure positive education or employment outcomes
- Levels of employment for those with additional barriers such as disabilities are high compared to our neighbours, regional and national averages



**Developing
our
People &
New
Ways of
Working**

Successes to date

- Over 1000 of 1300 members of staff engaged with return to work training.
- Launch of a new Mental Health First Aider scheme – seeing nearly 50 colleagues from across all directorates, plus 8 Members take part.
- Creation of a dedicated intranet wellbeing page for staff
- Launch of the new virtual Wellbeing Café for staff to raise profile of MHFAs and informally discuss topics relating to positive mental health – great feedback to date.
- The Big Chats have enabled senior leaders to stay connected to how people are feeling and how the new ways of working have impacted staff
- Launch of “Thriving in virtual world” series of learning to support and enable colleagues to adjust to new ways

Impact of COVID-19

Changes to working patterns arising from lockdown restrictions have fundamentally changed the way we work. There has been a shift from employee experience to employee life experience (financial, health & wellbeing) as well shifting from location & time to focus on outputs.

Opportunity

**To recognise & develop the strengths and skills arising from new ways of working and align these with our corporate vision.
To encompass the whole person at work including health & wellbeing as we develop our Workplace reimagination programme.**

**Immediate
Action
(1yr)**

- Update the Council's risk plan to ensure our workforce have a safe work environment during recovery
- Promote, support & monitor colleague wellbeing & performance through recovery
- Continue to optimise opportunities to embed new ways of working digitally & flexibly that ensure we meet the needs of our residents & communities
- To ensure our strategy reflects the Government's Roadmap and colleagues are supported during the recovery phase

**Action for
Sustainable
Recovery
(2-4yr)**

- Continue to maximise the opportunities that COVID-19 has show us in relation to our workforce & accommodation
- Refresh our People Strategy to make sure we have the right skills for the future, including digital skills
- Changes to our operational model, including working hours, to ensure we are a responsive council and meet the needs of our residents and communities
- Agree equality, diversity & inclusion strategy to support a high performing, representative workforce

**Re-orientation
(5yr+)**

- Continue to use data & insight to inform our approach to staff health & wellbeing and ways of working
- To develop a fit for future accommodation & workforce strategy

We will know we are on the road to success when...

- Metrics show improved colleague wellbeing, inclusion & engagement levels
- Insights gained through COVID-19 inform our reimagination strategy
- We have a substantiable and resilient workforce that meets the needs of our residents and communities
- The cost and carbon footprint of the Council's property has been reduced
- We have a future accommodation and workforce strategy for the longer term 5 years +
- We are becoming an employer of choice for those wishing to develop their career in local government

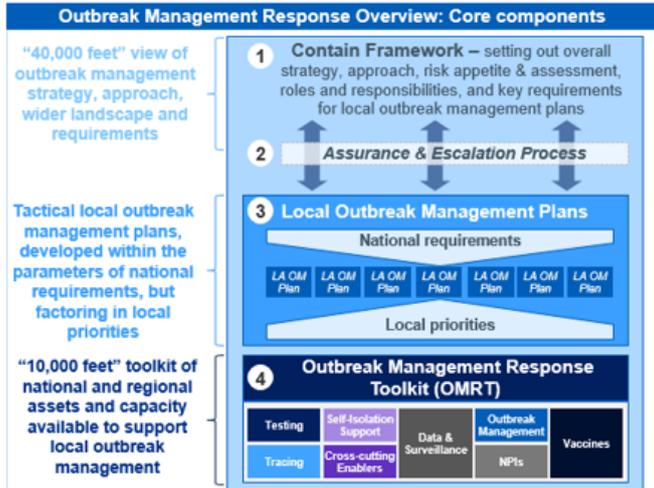


What is the Contain Outbreak Management Framework?

The government's Contain Framework sets out how local authorities and partners will work to continue to manage COVID-19, beyond the immediate response and into recovery.

The Contain Framework contains guidance on the development of a local action plan known as the Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP); this plan sets out guidance on Wokingham's approach to preventing and managing COVID-19. The action of this pillar will be delivered through this action plan which is a statutory document to ensure safeguarding and protecting the health of our residents. This is an active document which is reviewed and updated monthly in light of government guidance in order to ensure it remains fit for purpose. To ensure that we work towards achieving the government's Roadmap and a successful recovery, all of COVID-19 activity must intersect with the Contain Outbreak Management Framework.

Contain Outbreak Management Framework (COMF)



Summary of core components	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Contain Framework: The overarching framework off which all outbreak management components 'hang'. The framework will set out contractual agreement & risk appetite, along with the overall outbreak management response strategy, approach, responsibilities and requirements.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assurance and Escalation Process: Core product that clarifies the assurance and escalation processes across the three outbreak 'lenses' (ET, BAU, VOC).
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Outbreak Management Plans that will be developed in line with the parameters of the framework, but to meet local priorities and plans.
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outbreak Management Response Toolkit (OMRT): Sets out national and regional tools, capabilities, levers and deployment mechanisms available for managing response to a Covid outbreak, including detail on actions, processes, the pathway for these to be implemented and key contacts. The OMRT is comprised of assets and capabilities across Testing, Tracing, Self-Isolation Support, Data & Surveillance, Outbreak Management (E2E), NPIs and Vaccines

The action plan centres on the following themes:

- Higher-risk settings, communities and locations e.g. care home, prisons, hospitality, hospitals and education
- Vulnerable and underserved communities
- Compliance and enforcement
- Governance
- Resourcing
- Communications and engagement, including community resilience
- Data integration and information sharing

The action plan reflects the approach to the core aspects of the end-to-end COVID-19 response including:

- Community testing
- Contact tracing
- Support for self-isolation
- Outbreak management (Responding to an outbreak of two or more linked cases)
- Surveillance

Furthermore, the action plan addresses the following developments:

- Responding to Variants of Concern (VOC)
- Action on enduring transmission
- Enhanced Contact Tracing, in partnership with HPT
- Ongoing role of Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs)
- Interface with vaccines roll out
- Activities to enable 'living with COVID' (COVID secure)

Successes to date

- The first Berkshire authority to adopt local test & trace
- Care Home Task Force, founded during April 2020, proactively contacts care homes across the Borough at least weekly, coordinates response and follow up within care settings, records all cases (even single cases) and advises on contact tracing and management in setting
- Using a data led approach to target mobile testing to try and capture underserved communities
- WBC were an early adopter as a pilot site for LFT testing.
- A 'One Front Door' single point of access for support from the Borough's voluntary services to support those who are having to self-isolate
- Early adopter of self-isolation calls, calling all residents who have tested positive for COVID-19 from January 2021, in most cases being the first agency to make contact and referring on average 20-25% of residents contacted to our 'One Front Door' services
- A WBC Data Cell was established towards the end of 2020 which leads on ensuring that there is a data led response to COVID-19 across the Local Authority

We will know we are on the road to success when...

- People can return to and maintain a normal way of life with COVID-19
- COVID-19 has been embedded in practice across the organisation
- We are completely responsive to policy changes and local events
- We have minimised the impact the COVID-19 including on underserved communities

Appendices

Appendix A

Pillar	Key Strategy/ Policies/ Documentation	Key groups
Climate Change	Climate Emergency Action Plan Spatial Strategy and Design Framework (as part of the LPU) Tree Strategy (in development) Waste Strategy (in development) Electric Vehicle Strategy (in development) Low Carbon Transport Strategy (in development) Intelligent Traffic System Strategy (in development) Local Transport Plan 3 Home to School Transport Policy LCWIP (in development) Air Quality Action Plan ROWIP	Climate Emergency Officers Group Climate Emergency Officer subgroups Climate Emergency Advisory board Climate Emergency Investment Board
Stimulate job creation & skills	Thames Valley Berkshire Recovery and Renewal Plan WBC Economic Development Strategy WBC Economic Recovery Action Plan (Skills and Employment) Berkshire Local Skills Report 2021 WBC Apprenticeship Policy Adult Education Strategy NEET Reduction Plan ASC Workforce Strategy	Employment Skills Group Wokingham Business Task Force Berkshire Economic Development Officer Group (BEDOG) Berkshire NEET Managers Group DWP Stakeholder meeting
Contain Outbreak Management Framework	Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP)	LOEB (Health & Wellbeing Board) COVID Taskforce Leads Meeting
Creating resilient communities & sustainable services	Customer Strategy VCS strategy Integration Programme Plan Market Position Statement Anti-Poverty Strategy (in development) OFSTED framework Directorate CIP Programmes COVID Contain Work programme Equalities Strategy	Learning Disabilities Steering Group Rapid Community Discharge Group Urgent & Emergency Care Programme Board VCS Group Berkshire West Vaccinate Cell ASC Covid-19 Winter Plan Berkshire DASS Meeting Wokingham Integrated Partnership PHM Steering Group Corporate Recovery Group Community Response Group Joint Commissioning Board Provider Forum ASC Taskforce
Supporting & Strengthening Businesses & the Local Economy	Thames Valley Berkshire Recovery and Renewal Plan Economic Development Strategy Economic Recovery Plan	Business Task Force Business Engagement Monitoring Group Berkshire Economic Development Officers Group (BEDOG) LEP Berkshire Placemaking Board
Developing our people & new ways of working	People's Strategy HR Action Plan	Workplace Reimagined Group People's Strategy Working Group
Physical & Emotional Health & Wellbeing	Mental health strategy Autism Strategy Social Care Strategy Public Health Service plan Wellbeing strategy Joint Wellbeing Strategy	Recovery College Steering Group Health & Wellbeing board Berkshire West Mental Health Managers Meeting Berkshire Healthcare Trust management Meeting Berkshire West ICP Children's Programme Board CYP Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Review Group
Education and development for children & young people	Children & Young People Strategy	Berkshire West Partnerships Children & Young People's Partnership SEND Improvement Board Schools Forum LAP Senior Leadership Team Children's Services Leadership Team Children's Services Task Force Group
Investing in a Sustainable Future, Regeneration and Arts & Culture	Arts & Culture Strategy Housing Strategy Leisure Strategy Spatial Strategy and Design Framework (As part of the LPU) Local Transport Plan 3 Rights of Way Improvement Plan Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (in development) Economic Recovery Plan Berkshire Digital Infrastructure Plan Economic Development Plan	Thames Valley Berkshire Smart City Cluster Berkshire Digital Infrastructure group Berkshire Place Making Board Wokingham Arts Alliance Wokingham Borough Business Task Force Local Plan Officer Meeting Highways and Transport Management Team

This page is intentionally left blank

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:	12 th April 2021
Service:	CIC, R&A, P&G, ASC, CS
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Wokingham Borough Council Recovery Strategy. This strategy sets out the council's ambitions for recovery against nine key pillars of activity.
Completed by:	Javeria Ali
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Not yet.
Signed off by:	Rhian Hayes
Sign off date:	12 th April

67

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 service's corporate plan:
Purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To capture a snapshot of one version of the recovery activity taking place across the organisation• To review activity through the lens of Covid-19• To ensure each pillar of recovery is addressed within the organisation

- To provide the public with a document outlining our roadmap and vision for a recovered Wokingham

Expected outcomes:

Climate Change

- Deliver the actions in our climate emergency action plan
- Encourage the growth of green industries
- Maximise the short term environmental benefits of lockdown restrictions based on data and insights
- Reflect the green agenda in all council policies
- Deliver environmental benefits to the organisation through the Workplace Re-Imagined programme and WBC environmental audit
- Build on the increased public awareness of climate change to change people`s behaviours and reduce emissions
- Support development of green infrastructure and protect our outdoor spaces
- Invest in long term ambitious green projects such as solar farms, tree planting and a network of electric charging points
- Ensuring everyone in the borough has access to affordable sustainable energy
- Meet our goal for both the council and the borough to be net zero carbon by 2030

Physical and Emotional Health & Wellbeing

- Address the low to moderate Mental Health service provision needs within the borough
- Mobilising our relationship with partners such as the VCS to address virus outbreaks
- Continue to support, through the taskforce, adult social care markets in managing Covid19
- Monitoring and evaluation of vaccine rollout
- Working with our partners to strengthen and adapt the mental health offer in light of emerging evidence
- Service transformation projects to improve efficiency and quality of services for residents and managing demand for ASC
- Embedding a strength based practice approach
- Longer term actions to address the health impacts of Covid19, particularly on vulnerable communities, based on data, evidence and evaluation

Education and Development for Children and Young People

- Ongoing engagement and support for schools to tackle the challenges of Covid19
- Continued support for remote education and use of technology to support remote education outside school environment

- Reviewing the educational impact of lockdown and impacts on children's development in light of emerging evidence
- Action planning to address the impacts on childhood development and education
- Using data & insights to assess the longer term impacts of lockdown restriction on childhood development and education

Creating Resilient Communities and Sustainable Services

- Providing simple & direct ways for residents to access services & support
- Continue to build on alternative service delivery models and embed these as 'the norm'
- Further strengthening of partnerships, networks and support for providers
- Working with our local providers to ensure that commissioned services manage demand and meet the needs of our community.
- Learning from Covid19 to strengthen and shape our services and adopt a commercial approach
- Building on learning, design and development of digital offers that meet future needs, and enhance customer experiences, ensuring services are fully accessible
- Work closely with other partners and use WBC assets to find more collaborative and local ways of delivering frontline services i.e. Town and Parish Councils, VCS, libraries
- Developing market capacity to meet the needs of our residents
- Making all decisions with customers at the heart of what we do
- Infrastructure investment to grow digital capabilities across the borough
- Maximise digital opportunities for services
- Working in partnership to support an integrated system that provides high quality, cost effective care to meet the demands of the community
- Design and develop high quality and ambitious service provisions for our residents
- Working with health partners to ensure joined up delivery of services to vulnerable groups

Investing in a Sustainable Future, Regeneration and Arts & Culture

- Develop a shared vision of place and celebrate the uniqueness of the borough.
- Re-imagining sustainable transport across the borough
- Communicate the strengths of the borough to attract investment
- Implementation of the arts & culture offering to attract visitors to town centres and key sites throughout the borough
- Implement the arts & culture strategy to attract visitors, support economic growth, and promote well-being of residents

- Build the right homes in the right places
- Ensure that we have a comprehensive digital infrastructure for superfast broadband and 5G across the borough
- Improve the joint working between the council and towns & parishes
- Delivery of reimaged sustainable transport solutions
- Continue to invest in the regeneration of our town centres, commercial and residential areas
- Create well planned places that make Wokingham a great place to live and work
- Prepared for the impact of emerging technologies in particular relating to transport

Supporting & Strengthening Businesses and the Local Economy

- Analyse the impact of the pandemic on our local businesses and identify trends in the economy through gathering data and insights
- Increase our level of engagement with the businesses community to understand their needs and provide support where we can. Particularly in managing Covid19 related issues
- Continue to distribute grants and signpost businesses to specialist business advice
- Create initiatives that support businesses that are re-evaluating and adapting to the new trading environment post Covid19
- Work in partnership with anchor institutions, such as the University of Reading, and business parks to stimulate business growth.
- Support new business start-ups and flexible working trends e.g. through the development of innovation and co-working spaces in the borough
- Develop longer term strategies based the growth opportunities presented by green industrial and media sectors
- Encourage businesses to invest in the borough, through relocation (FDI) and joint development projects with the private sector

Stimulating Skills Development and Job Creation

- Create an employment hub to help residents seeking work into employment
- High quality careers information, advice and guidance is available to residents
- Provide advice to businesses seeking to support their employees with their emotional health & wellbeing
- Work with schools ,local colleges and businesses to identify the skills and knowledge that local businesses need to grow
- Strengthening the social value conditions on suppliers to help create local jobs and keep council spend within the borough
- Ensure that businesses and residents get the most out of schemes such as the Governments apprenticeship programme and Kick Start
- All sectors of society benefit from economic growth and the opportunities to employment and training that support lifelong prosperity and independence

Developing Our People and New Ways of Working

- Ensure our workforce have a safe work environment during Recovery
- Monitor staff wellbeing through recovery and offer support
- To maximise the opportunities that Covid-19 has shown us in relation to our workforce & accommodation
- To ensure our staff are enabled to fully utilise the technology provided whilst developing their digital skills
- Use data & insight to inform our approach to staff health & wellbeing and ways of working
- To develop a fit for future accommodation & workforce

Contain Outbreak Management Fund

- Maximising the use of government funding to contain the virus

Council's **Corporate** Plan:

- Enriching Lives: Addressed through our 'physical and emotional health & wellbeing' pillar of recovery as well as our ambitions to invest in a sustainable future, regeneration and arts and culture. Additionally we seek to focus on education and development for children and young people to enrich their lives.
- Safe, strong communities: From our residents we know that one of the positive impacts to come from Covid-19 was the sense of community. We will build on this to create resilient neighbourhoods.
- A clean and green borough: Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019 we have outlined our aspirational aims in our Climate Emergency Action Plan to ensure zero waste goes to landfill by 2050 and our carbon footprint is net carbon zero by 2030. We will address this through our climate change pillar of recovery.
- Right homes, Right Places: Regeneration and investment in housing are a pillar of this strategy
- Keeping the borough moving: We have commitment to investment in sustainable services and infrastructure which includes travel.
- Changing the way we work for you: Our people and ways of working is a key recovery pillar. This will help us address new ways of working in light of the pandemic and how we can best serve our residents.

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:

How the project will be delivered:

- Creation of a Recovery Strategy
- Collaboration with all directorates to develop a recovery action plan

Governance:

- Existing governance in the form of the Corporate Recovery Programme.
- Adoption of a Hub and Spoke model. This strategy has captured existing governance across the organisation which will be mobilised to support with delivery of this strategy.

Stakeholders:

- CLT, ECLT, WBC Businesses, residents, staff and partners

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

- WBC Residents
- WBC Staff

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

2. Protected characteristics:

There are 9 protected characteristics as defined by the legislation:

- Race
- Gender

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

To find out more about the protected groups, please consult the EQIA guidance.

3. Initial Impact review:

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

For information on how to define No, low or high impact, please consult the EQIA guidance document.

If your project is to have a positive impact on one of the protected groups, please outline this in the table below.

For details on what constitutes a positive impact, please consult the EQIA guidance.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Race:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Gender:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Disabilities:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Age:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.

Sexual orientation:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Religion/belief:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Gender re-assignment:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.
Marriage and civil partnership:	Positive	Our commitment to equality as an overarching principle in recovery will ensure that recovery activity is viewed through the lens of equality and social inclusion. Therefore each protected characteristic will be attended to in delivery of this strategy.

74

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: Rhian Hayes

Date: 12th April

TITLE	Revenue Monitoring 2020/21 - Outturn
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 24 June 2021
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

Report the revenue outturn position of the Council for 2020/21 financial year highlighting the effective management of the Council's finances to ensure value for money for council tax payers, housing tenants and schools.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive is asked to:

- 1) note the outturn position of the revenue budget and the level of balances in respect of the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Schools Block.
- 2) agree the General Fund carry forward requests of £7,464,939 as set out in Appendix B to the report.
- 3) approve a supplementary estimate of £16,000 for Digital Infrastructure Group.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to allow the Executive to note and consider the financial outturn for 2020/21 for the Council's net revenue expenditure, its General Fund Balance (GFB), the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and the Schools' Block funding. The Executive has agreed to consider Revenue Monitoring Reports on a quarterly basis.

At the end of the financial year 2020/21, the General Fund (Revenue) is reporting a total spend of £147.2m; the Housing Revenue Account has a favourable variance of £0.5m against a net planned spend of £1.2m and Schools Block an in year variance of £3.2m against a net planned spend of £150.7m.

The following table shows the breakdown by directorate for the General Fund (Revenue). **The overall variance (actual spend less budget) was £0.8m favourable.** This has been split in the table below to show the business as usual (BAU) variance of £1.2m favourable and an adverse variance from COVID pressures of £0.4m.

Directorate	2020/21 - End of Year Position				
	Approved Budget	Actual Spend	(Favourable) / Adverse Variance (Actual Less Budget)	(Favourable) / Adverse Variance split into:	
				Business as Usual (BAU)	Covid Impact
£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Adult Social Care	£53,346	£53,338	(£8)	(£1,484)	£1,476
Chief Executive	£9,215	£9,226	£11	£11	£0
Children's Services	£36,004	£37,266	£1,262	(£124)	£1,386
Community, Insight & Change	£8,774	£9,270	£496	(£52)	£548
Place & Growth	£38,553	£40,836	£2,283	£531	£1,752
Resources & Assets	£2,118	£4,928	£2,810	(£102)	£2,912
COVID - Other	£0	£1,714	£1,714	£0	£1,714
COVID - Grant funding from Government	£0	(£9,356)	(£9,356)	£0	(£9,356)
Net Expenditure Total	£148,010	£147,222	(£788)	(£1,220)	£432

2020/21 has been a challenging year with regards to the impact of Covid-19. From a financial monitoring perspective there was a lot of uncertainty at the start of the year. Throughout the year, the financial impact from Covid-19 has been monitored closely and reported to government on a monthly basis and reported in the quarterly Executive reports. Throughout the year, the Council have received new tranches of government grant to help with the impact from Covid-19. As highlighted in the table above, the net impact from Covid-19 for 2020/21 was £0.4m. In 2021/22, the Council will continue to track and report the impact of Covid-19 and will utilise government grants and other available funding streams where appropriate. As government funding support reduces, it is likely that some covid costs will naturally start to become business as usual. Any impact from this will help inform future budget setting and financial monitoring reports.

Details of the outturn position and variances are in the main body of the report and also shown in Appendix A.

Following the year-end closing process, the Council's General Fund Balance (GFB) is estimated to be £10.4 million. This balance remains in line with the reasonable level of balances set out in the general fund reserves policy statement as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

In relation to school budgets, these are funded through a direct grant from central Government known as the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This is used to fund individual schools through an agreed formula, costs associated with Early Years Services, support for children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND), and to fund relevant support services. This year the Schools Block reports an in year adverse variance of £3.2m against a net income of £152.4m – this represents 2% of the total income.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) had budgeted to use £1.2m of reserves to fund expenditure for 2020/21. Through service efficiencies on day to day running costs, a reduction in debt costs and combined with rent collection above target and less voids, the HRA will require £0.7m of reserves to cover expenditure for 2020/21 rather than the budgeted £1.2m.

BACKGROUND

General Fund

Comparing the actual spend vs the approved budget, the table below shows the outturn position for 2020/21 by Directorate. Further details are shown in Appendix A.

Directorate	2020/21 - End of Year Position				
	Approved Budget £,000	Actual Spend £,000	(Favourable) / Adverse Variance (Actual Less Budget) £,000	(Favourable) / Adverse Variance split into:	
				Business as Usual (BAU) £,000	Covid Impact £,000
Adult Social Care	£53,346	£53,338	(£8)	(£1,484)	£1,476
Chief Executive	£9,215	£9,226	£11	£11	£0
Children's Services	£36,004	£37,266	£1,262	(£124)	£1,386
Community, Insight & Change	£8,774	£9,270	£496	(£52)	£548
Place & Growth	£38,553	£40,836	£2,283	£531	£1,752
Resources & Assets	£2,118	£4,928	£2,810	(£102)	£2,912
COVID - Other	£0	£1,714	£1,714	£0	£1,714
COVID - Grant funding from Government	£0	(£9,356)	(£9,356)	£0	(£9,356)
Net Expenditure Total	£148,010	£147,222	(£788)	(£1,220)	£432

Material areas of favourable / adverse variances include;

Adult Social Care

Underspend of £1.5m. As a result of the expert determination there is a reduction in the central management costs to the Council from Optalis of c£0.3m in 20/21. This efficiency has been achieved earlier than anticipated as this is built into the savings assumptions for 21/22 and beyond. Negotiations surrounding any further changes to central management costs in Optalis is ongoing. The £1.2m in relation the BAU budgets relates to good work from the staff in Adult Social Care in achieving higher than previously forecast delivery against the services savings targets and a reduction in the number of people receiving care in older people's services.

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on Adult Social Care services specifically relating to hospital discharges and supporting the vulnerable in our community. The £1.5m

reflects the financial impact of supporting our customers and care market during the pandemic.

Children's Services

Underspend of £0.1m for the year on BAU. Continued focus on social care placements has allowed earlier risks identified in the forecast to be well managed which, taken alongside reduced Home to School Transport costs during the spring term, has provided for a small underspend in year.

The £1.4m covid pressure reflects the impact on the service in supporting and safeguarding vulnerable children and families during the pandemic.

Community, Insight & Change

Underspend of £0.1m, relates to savings in Library stock purchases, project costs and general operational spend.

Covid pressures resulting in a net full year actual of c£0.6m. This includes lost income of c£0.3m across some facilities and land charges. Other cost pressures include support service costs such as IT, HR and benefit assessments and additional resources for Covid Communications.

Place & Growth

Additional essential drainage work has resulted in £100k overspend with a further additional £620k in essential reactive highway maintenance, compounded by uplifts in the maintenance contract rates, this has in part been offset by lower than expected winter maintenance cost to the tune of £170k. These rate increases have been reflected in next year's budget (21/22) and agreed as growth through the MTFP.

£1.8m Covid pressures consists mainly of lost income across car parking, licensing, planning and street works income.

Resources & Assets

BAU – Over-achievement of income from Solar investments has been greater than anticipated. Across the directorate various smaller pressures have been contained by efficiencies.

£2.9m Covid pressures include costs pressures of c£2.0m relating to our Leisure Services offset by £0.3m leisure grant. c£0.8m relating to our property portfolio including commercial, operational and regeneration. Other costs include c£0.4m on additional temporary accommodation provided during covid, a £0.07m contribution to a Berkshire wide temporary place of rest and smaller costs relating to additional cleaning, staff support, lost income, etc.

Covid - Other

These costs include direct covid costs such as PPE, resources and other support over the past 12 months. Also included is provision for the impact on collection fund of Council Tax and Business Rates.

Emergency Grant Funding

This includes the four tranches of emergency government grant received to support all covid costs incurred within each directorate.

Carry Forwards

The Executive are asked to approve the general fund carry forwards set out in Appendix B. The request for carry forward approval is an annual process and nothing new. For 2020/21 and due to the impact from Covid-19, the carry forward balance is higher than in previous years. Resources in services were targeted to support Covid-19 through 2020/21 meaning many improvement projects such as the Continuous Improvement Plan and the Local Plan have been deferred and will now be planned for 2021/22. Many of these projects will deliver service improvements and efficiencies and are still seen as key priorities for the Council as we recover from the impact of Covid-19. As part of the Medium Term Financial Plan budget process for 2021/22, many one off budget items were reduced on the assumption that money would be carried forward from 2020/21, thus allowing services to catch up on agreed programmes before committing to additional workloads. Additionally there is a carry forward request for budget allocated for Covid-19 Response to be carried forward and made available in 2021/22.

The budget for these carry forwards is already approved in the 2020/21 budget that was agreed and set at Council in February 2020, and as such the carry forwards are fully budgeted for. This will not create any additional pressure on the 2021/22 budgets. Further information on the carry forwards can be found in Appendix B.

General Fund Balance

General Fund balances at 31 March 2021 are £10.4m.

The General Fund balance is held to provide a general contingency for unavoidable or unforeseen expenditure as well as providing some stability for longer term planning particularly in uncertain economic times. Professional guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy recommends a minimum general fund reserve of 5% of net expenditure. This equates to a recommended level of £6.6m set out in the general fund reserves policy statement in the Medium Term Financial Plan. This is within our current general fund balance.

The Statement of General Fund balance is shown in Appendix C.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) had budgeted to use £1.2m of reserves to fund expenditure for 2020/21. Through service efficiencies on day to day running costs, a reduction in debt costs and combined with rent collection above target and less voids, the HRA required £0.7m of reserves to cover expenditure for 2020/21 rather than the anticipated £1.2m, which is favourable variance of £0.5m. The HRA reserve balance as at the 31st March 2021 is £1.4m, shown in Appendix D.

Schools Block (Dedicated Schools Grant 'DSG')

Schools are funded through a direct grant from Central Government known as the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This is used to fund individual schools through an agreed formula, costs associated with Early Years Services, support for children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND), and to fund relevant support services. This year the Schools Block reports an in year adverse variance of £3.2m against a net income of £152.4m – this represents 2% of the total income (shown in Appendix E).

As is the case with the vast majority of authorities across the country, the overspend on the DSG relates to ongoing pressure on the High Needs Block, driven largely by continuing increases in the number of children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and their related needs resulting in demand for specialist placements. The number of children & young people within Wokingham assessed as requiring an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) has risen significantly since 2015, doubling since 2017, with a large proportion of those having a Social, Emotional and/or Mental Health need and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Wokingham's numbers in these two categories of need are increasing beyond that seen both nationally and across South East local authorities. Demand for suitable placements and support has outstripped the current available local supply, resulting in the need for costly independent and out of borough provision in order to ensure legal and statutory duties and responsibilities are met.

A large-scale programme is underway through the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme to align future High Needs Block spend to available in-year resources, working in conjunction with key strategic partners and the Department for Education (DfE), who are visiting us in the next few months to receive an update on progress and discuss what support they can offer. Several strands of work within the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme will collectively deliver better outcomes whilst addressing the HNB deficit by increasing local provision and inclusion within all local settings. To achieve this, deliverables within the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme include a programme of Sufficiency work to ensure that the HNB is commissioned intelligently; ensuring that local Resource Bases are effectively utilised and Wokingham maximises the opportunities from the new Special School operational from academic year starting September 2022; working with stakeholders to ensure a greater level of SEND support in the mainstream is Ordinarily Available; and ensuring that the Council works effectively with strategic partners across Health, Education and the Voluntary and Community Sector to ensure that resources are used effectively and costs are met by the most appropriate agency/organisation.

2020/21 was a particularly challenging year financially for the High Needs Block due to the necessary additional investment needed to deliver on enhanced local provision, such as the expansion of Addington School, in advance of the wider programme benefits being realised. Early projections for the 2021/22 financial year indicate that the gap between available resources and cost base is now reducing, and discussions with the DfE over the summer will continue to inform multi-year financial planning while the outcome of the national SEND Review is awaited.

Recommendation 3 – Supplementary Estimate

The Executive are asked to approve a supplementary estimate for £16k for the Digital Infrastructure Group (DIG).

The Digital Infrastructure Group (DIG) is a Berkshire-wide group comprising senior officer representatives from all the Berkshire Unitary Authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Chaired by the Chief Executive of West Berkshire Borough Council. The DIG has evolved from the Superfast Berkshire project steering group with a broadened remit and has developed the Thames Valley Berkshire Digital Infrastructure Strategy and Vision with the following primary objectives:

- Full-fibre Coverage: Increase Percentage of Berkshire premises connected to full fibre from 11% now to 95% by 2025;
- 4G Mobile Coverage: Eliminate all 4G ‘not spots’ across Berkshire by 2022;
- 5G Mobile Development: Establish a 5G testbed and small cell technology roll-out by 2023.

World-class digital infrastructure in Berkshire is key to ensuring that it maintains its current strong social and economic position and to assist post-covid recovery but there is insufficient resource in the current Superfast Berkshire project office to move initiatives forward at the pace that is required to realise Berkshire’s Digital Strategy and Vision. With the prospect of significant resources becoming available nationally to expedite digital infrastructure and the need for Berkshire to be able to compete effectively for a share of these resources, all the Berkshire local authorities and the LEP agreed in principle to contribute £16k each (£112k in total) to bolster capacity in the Superfast Berkshire project office. Use of these additional resources will be overseen by the DIG.

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)	£147.2m	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	As per MTFP	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	As per MTFP	Yes	Revenue

Other Financial Information

Effective monitoring of budgets is an essential element of providing cost effective services and enables any corrective action to be undertaken, if required. Many of the budgets are activity driven and can be volatile in nature.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

None

Public Sector Equality Duty
Public Sector Equality is considered during the business cases before spend is committed.

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
N/A - This is a report of past performance

List of Background Papers
Appendix A – Revenue summary Appendix B – List of carry forwards Appendix C – General fund balance Appendix D – HRA summary Appendix E – Schools block summary

Contact Mark Thompson	Service Business Services
Telephone Tel: 0118 974 6555	Email mark.thompson@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

Directorate	End of Year Position			(Favourable) / Adverse Variance split into:		Comment on major areas of BAU over / (underspend)	Comment on major areas of COVID 19 over / (underspend)
	Budget	Actuals	(Favourable) / Adverse Variance (Actual Less Budget)	BAU Variance	Covid Impact		
	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000		
Resources and Assets	2,118	4,928	2,810	(102)	2,912	BAU - income generated from Solar investments has been greater than budgeted. In addition, across the directorate, various smaller pressures have been contained with offsetting savings.	£2.9m Covid pressures include costs pressures of c£2.0m relating to our Leisure Services offset by £0.3m leisure grant. c£0.8m relating to our property portfolio including commercial, operational and regeneration. Other costs include c£0.4m on additional temporary accommodation provided during covid, a £0.07m contribution to a Berkshire wide temporary place of rest and smaller costs relating to additional cleaning, staff support, lost income etc.
Chief Executive	9,215	9,226	11	11	0	No BAU material variances identified.	No Covid material variances identified.
Children's Services	36,004	37,266	1,262	(124)	1,386	Underspend of £124k for the year on BAU. Continued focus on social care placements has allowed earlier risks identified in the forecast to be well managed which, taken alongside reduced Home to School Transport costs during the spring term, has provided for a small underspend in year.	The £1.39m covid pressure reflects the impact on the service in supporting and safeguarding vulnerable children and families during the pandemic.
85 Adult Social Care & Health	53,346	53,338	(8)	(1,484)	1,476	Underspend of £1.484m. As a result of the expert determination there is a reduction in the central management costs to the Council from Optalis of c£300k in 20/21. This efficiency has been achieved earlier than anticipated as this is built into the savings assumptions for 21/22 and beyond. Negotiations surrounding any further changes to central management costs in Optalis is ongoing. The £1.184m in relation the BAU budgets relates to good work from the staff in Adult Social Care in achieving higher than previously forecast delivery against the services savings targets and a reduction in the number of people receiving care in older people's services.	Covid-19 has had a significant impact on Adult Social Care services specifically relating to hospital discharges and supporting the vulnerable in our community. The £1.47m reflects the financial impact of supporting our customers and care market during the pandemic.
Place and Growth	38,553	40,836	2,283	531	1,752	Pressures on the Revenue Drainage Budget £100k & £620k on the Highways Reactive Maintenance budget due to increase in schedule of rates prices in the new highways contract. Offset by savings (£170k) from Winter maintenance reserve.	£1.75m Covid pressures consists mainly of lost income across car parking, licensing, planning and street works income.
Communities, Insight & Change	8,774	9,270	496	(52)	548	Underspend of £52k, relates to savings in Library stock purchases, project costs and general operational spend.	Covid pressures resulting in a net full year actual of £548k. This includes lost income of £266k across some facilities and land charges. Other cost pressures include support service costs such as IT, HR and benefit assessments and additional resources for Covid Communications.
Other	0	1,714	1,714	0	1,714		Includes direct covid costs and impact on collection fund.
Emergency grant funding from Government	0	(9,356)	(9,356)	0	(9,356)		Four tranches of unringfenced grant funding.
Revenue Expenditure Total	148,010	147,222	(788)	(1,220)	432		

This page is intentionally left blank

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY - 2020/21 CARRY FORWARDS

Directorate	Budget Description	Reason for Carry Forward	Amount £
Adult Social Care	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLs)	To clear backlog of cases delayed due to COVID.	£100,000
	COVID-19 Testing	Balance of funding agreed at Executive September 2020 for COVID testing kits.	£30,000
Adult Social Care Total			£130,000
Resources and Assets	COVID-19 Response	COVID response budget agreed at Executive in December and January 2021 to be used for the response in the 2021/22 financial year.	£1,674,000
Resources and Assets Total			£1,674,000
Children's Services	Service Improvements - investing in new ways of working	Delay in implementation of specific projects due to covid. Special item funding for 2021/22 reprofiled through the MTFP to take account of expected carry forward.	£603,000
	SEND Written Statement of Action (WSOA)	While the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme in response to the WSoA has continued throughout the pandemic, areas of investment will now fall into 2021/22 following full reopening of schools.	£112,000
Children's Services Total			£715,000
Place and Growth	Local Plan	Following the publication of the Draft Local Plan in February 2020, several substantial issues have arisen which require investigation and additional work to be completed. This is now planned to be spent in 2021/22. This includes major inquiry for site allocations £596k, Minerals and Waste £152k and additional resources £700k.	£1,448,228
	Highways & Transport	For completion of boroughwide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan £69k. Corporate Transport Unit new service model delayed into 2021/22 £160k	£229,000
	Countryside	Part of transfer of responsibilities for play area maintenance and open spaces.	£50,000
	Garden Waste	Streets and Grounds officer post which has been approved for a one year fixed term contract.	£45,000
	Public Protection Partnership	Air quality monitoring equipment.	£20,200
Place and Growth Total			£1,792,428
Communities, Insight and Change	Business Change	Covid project and resource delays to systems including Business World On, Power BI, Hybrid working.	£1,228,440
	CIP Adult Services	Delay in use of Special Item for delivery of the Transformation Programme.	£1,000,000
	CIP Children's Services	Delay in use of Special Item for delivery of the Transformation Programme.	£925,071
Communities, Insight and Change Total			£3,153,511
2020/21 Carry Forward Requests Total			£7,464,939

This page is intentionally left blank

Estimated General Fund Balance - 31st March '21

	£,000	£,000
General Fund Balance (as at 31/3/2020)		(£12,240)
Budgeted contributions to reserves (as per MTFP)	(£1,979)	
		(£1,979)
<u>Supplementary Estimates</u>		
Sep'20 - Covid test services (£120k approved in total)	£55	
Nov'20 - Customer satisfaction software	£20	
Nov'20 - Free Parking Christmas Period	£20	
Dec'20 - Adults Social Care COVID-19 Response	£500	
Jan'21 - Priority Covid related issues	£1,200	
Jan'21 - Corporate Plan Refresh	£16	
Jun'21 - Digital Infrastructure Group	£16	
		£1,827
<u>Carry Forwards from 2019/20</u>		
Adult Social Care & Health	£380	
Chief Executive	£0	
Children's Services	£0	
Communities, Insight & Change	£0	
Resources and Assets	£1,714	
Place and Growth	£640	
		£2,734
<u>Service Variance (excluding COVID-19 Impact)</u>		
Adult Social Care & Health	(£1,484)	
Chief Executive	£11	
Children's Services	(£124)	
Communities, Insight & Change	(£52)	
Resources and Assets	(£102)	
Place and Growth	£531	
		(£1,220)
Estimated net impact from Covid - 19		£432
Estimated General Fund Balance 31/3/2021		(£10,446)

This page is intentionally left blank

REVENUE MONITORING REPORT Outturn 2021

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Director: Keeley Clements

Lead Member, Housing Services: John Kaiser

Service	Year to Date Position			Details of Year End Variance	
	Budget £,000	Actuals £,000	Variance £,000		
Rents	Expenditure	332	280	(52)	Rent collection inline with target including previous years arrears, less voids and less right to buy sales than budgeted.
	Income	(14,981)	(15,162)	(181)	
	Net	(14,649)	(14,882)	(233)	
Fees & Charges / Capital Finance Charges	Expenditure	97	80	(17)	
	Income	(125)	(91)	34	
	Net	(28)	(12)	16	
Housing Repairs	Expenditure	3,184	3,445	260	Additional costs for cleaning, security and signage incurred as a result of covid.
	Income	(30)	(176)	(146)	
	Net	3,154	3,269	115	
General Management	Expenditure	576	557	(19)	
	Income	(21)	(75)	(54)	
	Net	555	482	(73)	
Sheltered Accommodation	Expenditure	293	227	(66)	Better than anticipated income collection rates and savings in project costs, travel and maintenance attributed to the impact of covid
	Income	(476)	(510)	(34)	
	Net	(183)	(283)	(100)	
Capital Finance	Expenditure	7,036	6,736	(300)	One off savings made through reduced debt costs
	Income	(59)	1	60	
	Net	6,977	6,737	(240)	
Subtotal Excluding Internal and Capital Charges		(4,174)	(4,689)	(515)	
Internal and Capital Charges		4,174	4,174	0	
Total		0	(515)	(515)	

91

Housing Revenue Account Reserve	£,000	£,000
HRA Reserves as at 31st March 2020		(£2,091)
- Planned Spend	£1,202	
- Net Variance (Total)	(£515)	
2020/21 - Net Spend against reserves		£687
HRA reserves as at 31st March 2021		(1,404)

This page is intentionally left blank

REVENUE MONITORING REPORT OUTTURN 2020-21
DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT MONITORING REPORT

	End of Year Position			Comment on major areas of estimated over / (underspend)
	Budget	Actuals	Variance	
	£000	£000	£000	
Schools Block including academies (excluding De-delegation)	108,390	108,441	51	Academy conversions impact.
Early years	10,783	11,169	386	Offset by increased income from DfE below.
High Needs Block	20,528	23,631	3,103	Spend above budget driven largely by continuing increases in the number of children and young people with EHCPs and demand for specialist placements. An extraordinary meeting of Schools Forum was held on the 11th December to focus on SEND and the High Needs Block Strategic Plan.
Central Schools Services Block (includes Growth Fund)	1,737	1,737	0	No material variance identified.
De-delegation	1,306	1,318	12	Academy conversions impact, and overspend of staff costs for maternity cover.
Other schools grant	8,001	9,286	1,285	Offset by increased grants income below.
Total Expenditure	150,744	155,581	4,837	
Dedicated School Grant (DSG)	(142,743)	(143,123)	(380)	Increased income from DfE based on actual EY headcount, plus small reduction due to high needs import/export adjustment.
Other school Grants	(8,001)	(9,286)	(1,285)	Increased grants passported to schools.
Total Income	(150,744)	(152,409)	(1,665)	
Total in-year (surplus) / deficit	0	3,172	3,172	In Year expenditure less income
Brought Forward (surplus) / deficit balance	0	3,363	3,363	Deficit brought forward from previous years
Total Year End (Surplus) / Deficit	0	6,535	6,535	

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE	Capital Outturn 2020/2021
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 24 June 2021
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To inform members of the capital programme outturn for 2020/2021, seek approval for the relevant budget carry forwards and demonstrate effective and safe use of our resources to deliver service improvements and service continuity through capital investments.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive is asked to:

- 1) note the outturn position of the capital programme for 2020/21 as summarised in the report below and set out in detail in appendix A;
- 2) approve and note the proposed fourth quarter carry forwards into the 2021/22 Capital Programme, as set out in appendix B.
- 3) note and approve the Quarter 4 budget adjustments to the 2020/21 capital programme which include;
 - a. £4.22m of ringfenced funded capital budget provisionally programmed for 2021/22 is brought forward into the current year (2020/21), for the acceleration of the delivery of the SCAPE – Road Infrastructure project;
 - b. Reduction in capital programme budget of £114k across schools devolved programme, due to the reduction in the funding from the devolved schools grant.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report informs the Executive of the final position of the Council in delivering its capital programme for the financial year 2020/21. The Executive have previously agreed to consider Capital Monitoring Reports on a quarterly basis and this report highlights the capital outturn as at the year end (31 March 2021).

In 2020/21 the Council, against a working budget of £175.0 million, made a total capital investment in services of £123.5 million representing a spend of 71%. In addition, the total underspend across the capital programme was £3.3 million. The table below shows the financial summary for 2020/21.

		£'million
Capital programme approved at Council (Feb 2020)	a	157.3
Budget rephased from prior years (existing projects)	b	160.7
New budget added to Capital Programme (in 2020/21)	c	18.0
Approved Budget	d = a + b + c	336.0
Budget rephased to later years (agreed in previous quarterly Executive reports)	e	161.0
Working capital programme	f = d - e	175.0
Budget identified to be rephased in 2021/22		48.2
Actual capital expenditure in 2020/21		123.5
	g	171.7
Total savings against working capital programme	h = g - f	(3.3)

A breakdown of the £3.3m savings include;

	£m
<u>Adult Social Care and Health –</u>	
Connected Care (IT equipment) - saving due to utilisation of budget brought forward from 2019/20	£0.3
Day service provision for the physically disabled - condition of property has remained better than expected thus reducing cost of keeping property operational	£0.3
<u>Children Services:-</u>	
Basic Needs Primary, Additional Places - projected one year expansion for Reception capacity in Woodley has been contained within existing school capacities	£0.9
<u>Resources and Assets:-</u>	
Corporate Contingency - saving as budget not required in 20/21	£1.2
Bulmershe Leisure centre - build costs savings achieved through securing space and functional efficiency by working with the build contractor	£0.2
Tape Lane, Hurst - saving on redevelopment against agreed budget	£0.1
Other project variances less than £50k individually	£0.3
Total	£3.3

Further information can be found in Appendix A.

Carry Forwards

The Executive are asked to approve the fourth quarter carry forwards into the 2021/22 Capital Programme, as set out in appendix B.

Appendix B lists all budget carry forwards requiring approval of Executive. As highlighted in the table above, £48.2m has been identified to be rephased in 2021/22. As per the finance regulations, any project that is funded by ringfenced funding or has started will be automatically carried forward at the financial year end. This equates to £24.3m which leaves £23.9m of carry forwards listed in Appendix B which require approval to carry forward into 2021/22.

Quarter Four Budget Adjustments

The Executive are asked to note and approve the following budget adjustments;

- 1) agree that £4.22m of ringfenced funded capital budget provisionally programmed for 2021/22 is brought forward into the current year (2020/21), for the acceleration of the delivery of the SCAPE – Road Infrastructure project;
- 2) Note the reduction in capital programme of £114k, due to reduction in Devolved Schools grant against forecast budget.

BACKGROUND

Capital expenditure breakdown –

In February 2020, the Council approved the Capital Programme of £157.3m for 2020/21. During 2020/21 a further £178.7m was added to the programme through a mixture of carry forwards from 2019/20 and in year additions.

During the year, officers' profile a working (deliverable) budget. As of 31 March 2021, the working budget was set at £175.0m; this is the budget that the Council monitors to and records against. The surplus above the working budget is reprofiled to later years and agreed by Executive on a quarterly basis.

During 2020/21 the Council has invested in the following key areas.

MTFP category	Expenditure 2020/21 £m
Roads & Transport	£58.3
Investment and Regeneration	£38.1
Children Services and Schools	£14.7
Climate Emergency	£5.3
Environment	£5.0
Internal Services	£1.1
Adult Social Care	£1.0
Total	£123.5m

The Council has continued to deliver its ambitious capital programme, which has enabled it to meet its key priorities, these are:-

- Affordable Housing
- Clean, green and enjoyable spaces
- Economic prosperity
- Encouraging physical and mental wellbeing
- Ensuring opportunity for all children
- Promoting quality of life for vulnerable adults
- Provide affordable homes;
- Sustainable towns and parishes
- Traffic congestion

(as reported in the MTFP, Capital Programme 2020/21 and Prudential Indicators)

The main areas of capital project expenditure by asset type in 2020/21 were:-

Asset type	Working Budget 2020/21 £m	Expenditure 2020/21 £m
Strategic Roads and Highways	£57.8	£56.4
Housing	£15.0	£14.8
Schools	£14.8	£13.7
Economic Development and Regeneration	£12.4	£12.4
Town Centre Regeneration	£10.6	£10.6
Plant and Equipment	£4.5	£3.3
Bridges	£3.6	£3.6
Corporate Properties	£2.7	£3.8
Outdoor Sport and Play Areas	£2.1	£2.1
Information Technology	£1.8	£1.5
Leisure Centre Facilities	£1.4	£1.2
Street Furniture and Lighting	£0.1	£0.1
Total	£126.8	£123.5

Capital Programme Funding -

The Council funds its capital expenditure from government grants, developer contributions, capital receipts and borrowing.

It is a key requirement that all capital expenditure needs to be funded. Availability of resources to fund this expenditure continues to be in short supply and (as with expenditure) it is essential that these resources are recorded, monitored and allocated to achieve best value for the council and its local tax payers. This includes maximising the use of developer contributions and capital grant funding to reduce the need to borrow, and thus the cost of such borrowing, which will fall upon the local taxation requirement. All borrowing is sustainable, prudent and affordable.

This table shows the budget for 2020/21, the actual spend for 2020/21 and the breakdown of how the capital programme was funded for 2020/21. Wherever possible, the Council will aim to utilise funding such as grants and developers' contributions before using borrowing as shown in the table below where the £3.3m underspend has been saved on borrowing.

Funding	Working Capital Budget 2020/21 £m	Actual Spend 2020/21 £m	Funding Variance 2020/21 £m
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>b - a</i>
Borrowing	52.1	48.8	-3.3
Developer Contributions	34.3	34.3	0
Capital Grants	30.8	30.8	0
Capital Receipts	5.3	5.3	0
Contribution from reserves	4.3	4.3	0
Total available resources	126.8	123.5	-3.3

Note - Working capital budget is calculated as:- approved budget less carry forwards into 2021/22.

Net indebtedness

When the Council has to borrow, this is at the most opportune time and based on the need to borrow and not in advance based on the proposed expenditure plans. Thus the Council will use its internal balances at times to defer the borrowing requirement until the market offers the best rates and lowest costs.

When considering the external debt, this should be offset by the level of cash investments the Council, which give the level of net indebtedness as £131 million and as shown in the table below:

Net indebtedness as at 31 March 2021	£ million
Total external debt	458
Less total cash investments	(327)
Net indebtedness	131

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£123.5m	Yes	Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	As per MTFP	Yes	Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	As per MTFP	Yes	Capital

Other Financial Information
Robust monitoring is carried out on a monthly basis and reported to CLT. Quarterly monitoring reports are also reported to the Executive

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
None

Public Sector Equality Duty
An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this item

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
Climate Emergency spend is reported in the table in this report.

List of Background Papers
Appendix A - Capital outturn report 2020/21 Appendix B - Approval of carry forward budgets

Contact James Sandford	Service Business Services
Telephone Tel: 0118 974 6577	Email james.sandford@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

CAPITAL OUTTURN REPORT 2020 - 2021

Directorate	Current Approved Budget	Current Approved Budget is split into:		Analysis of Current Year (Yr 1)			Comments
		Current Year (Yr 1)	Next Year (Yr 2)	Outturn	Carry Forward	(Under) / Overspend	
		£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	
<i>Notes</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>			<i>7</i>
Adult Social Care & Health	10,951	4,586	6,365	737	3,212	(637)	<p>Material Variance (Under/Overspend): £(302)k saving in Connected Care (IT equipment) due to utilisation of budget brought forward from 2019/20. £(335)k saving in Day service provision for the physically disabled - condition of property has remained better than expected thus reducing cost of keeping property operational.</p> <p>Material carry forwards: £911k Older People's Dementia Home - Project timetable revised due to the diversion of resources to manage Covid-19 & the need for activity to align with the development programme for the Toutley Fields site £851k ASC and Optalis Transformation Programme - delay in transformation due to the diversion of resources to support Covid-19</p>
Children's Services	34,263	20,939	13,323	13,641	6,206	(1,093)	<p>(Underspend) / Overspend: (£0.9m) saving in Basic Needs Primary - Additional Places, projected one year expansion for reception capacity in Woodley has been contained within existing school capacities. (£0.1m) saving in Basic Needs Primary - No further FFE needs at Beechwood Primary</p> <p>Material Carry Forwards: £1.7m New Arborfield Primary - Further delay due to impact of Covid-19 on labour & manufacture, expenditure profile being reviewed £1.2m Investment in Special Education Needs - Carry forward to support review of Resource Base Needs</p>
Communities, Insight & Change	19,790	11,239	8,551	8,515	2,676	(48)	<p>(Underspend) / Overspend: (£0.07m) saving on Tape Lane, Hurst redevelopment against agreed budget.</p> <p>Material Carry Forwards: £0.8m Purchase of Council Houses HRA - budget to be used in 21/22 as housing needs from Gorse Ride changes have been met using existing housing stock. £0.7m IMT project resource delayed due to covid including equipment refresh; network hardware replacement, security and resilience improvements. £0.6m Tenant services, delays due to covid, unable to enter homes to complete repairs and maintenance and resource delays on London Road project</p>
Place & Growth	143,964	83,777	60,187	68,359	15,314	(103)	<p>(Underspend) / Overspend: (£0.1m) Gorse Ride Regeneration Project Management - project management savings</p> <p>Material Carry Forwards: £4.7m Shinfield Eastern Relief Road - Final payments to University Of Reading to be settled, once final contract costs all agreed. £3.1m Winnersh Triangle Parkway - original delivery plan not feasible, start on site in May21 £1.1m Integrated Transport schemes including Wokingham Borough Cycle Network - high level feasibility being developed and various other smaller schemes. £1.0m Dinton Activity Centre Project - Manufacture & labour resource delays due to Covid. £1.0m Managing Congestion across eight schemes - Delays due to Covid-19 effecting surveys of traffic speed, flow and parking patterns. £0.9m Highways Carriageways Structural Maintenance including resurfacing programme - Rescheduling of rolling programme projects being undertaken following completion of planned works at a reduced cost.</p>
Resources & Assets	126,996	54,460	72,536	32,212	20,846	(1,402)	<p>(Underspend) / Overspend: (£1.2m) saving on Corporate Contingency as budget not required in 20/21. (£0.2m) saving on Bulmershe Leisure centre build costs.</p> <p>Material Carry Forwards: £15.3m Strategic Property and Commercial Assets - spend determined by individual strategic business cases £3.9m Town Centre Regeneration - refurbishment of acquired properties to bring into operational use. Construction of leisure centre and library now in 21/22, mainly due to impact of Covid-19. £1.7m Economic Development and Regeneration projects - refurbishment of acquired properties to bring into operational use £1.1m Strategic Residential Portfolio - development constraints during Covid-19 & lack of opportunities delivering required level of return</p>
Total	335,964	175,001	160,962	123,464	48,254	(3,284)	

Notes

- 1) Current approved budget is made up of approved budget through the MTFP plus additional budget approved in year.
- 2) Current approved budget is split at the start of the year into budgeted spend in current year and spend in next year.
- 3) Outturn is actual spend for the year.

Please note when a negative number is shown in the "Carry Forward" column this shows that the schemes expenditure has accelerated from the original profile of spend

This page is intentionally left blank

Capital Carry Forwards 2020/21 - For Approval at Executive (June 2021)

Project	Amount £
Adult Social Care	
Older People's Dementia Home	850,000
Manual Handling Equipment to Reduce Domiciliary Care Costs	251,764
Connected Care- Integration of health and social care ICT systems	75,000
Adult Social Care - Total	1,176,764
Children's Services	
Investment in Special Education Needs Provision	620,714
Capita One System	336,186
Basic Needs Primary Programme	235,949
Wescott Resource Base Expansion	225,000
Southfield School Expansion	200,000
Emmbrook Comprehensive School - heating mains pipework replacement	110,000
Sixth Form Expansion to meet provision across borough	100,000
Highwood Primary School - Furniture, fixtures & equipment	87,162
Alder Grove School - Dilapidation costs	75,000
Improve Access to school buildings	71,410
Schools Urgent Maintenance - Planned maintenance of schools across the borough	69,075
Highwood - Service teams relocation	37,500
School Kitchens - Upgrades	30,276
Special Educational Needs website development	30,000
Children in Care website upgrade	30,000
Polehampton Caretakers House (London Road) – Dilapidation Work	28,028
Emmbrook Junior School - Electrical supply upgrade	19,800
General Schools asbestos emergency works (health & safety works)	18,330
New Special School in Winnersh - Legal work associated with project	15,000
Westende Primary School - Kitchen upgrade and new flooring	15,000
Radstock Primary School - New kitchen flooring	14,000
Highwood Primary School - Kitchen upgrade	10,500
Westende Junior - Replacement boiler and radiators	10,000
Polehampton Junior School - Kitchen ventilation (air supply) improvements	6,000
Aldryngton Primary School - Kitchen upgrade	5,000
Westende Junior School - Kitchen upgrade	5,000
Care Leaver Supported Accommodation - Renovation costs of Seaford Court	5,000
Multifaceted Placement Hub - Feasibility to develop unit to support vulnerable children, providing immediate, safe, and local provision	5,000
Care Leaver accommodation	5,000
Equipment for Children with Disabilities	4,172
Children's Services - Total	2,424,101
Communities, Insight & Change	
Laptop Refresh	219,714
IMT Security & Infrastructure/Networking/Licences	120,000
Network Hardware Replacement	97,326
Berkshire Record Office - extension to building to create additional space	20,000
Southlake Dam Crest Reparation	18,000
BWO finance system upgrade and improvement	5,315
Communities, Insight & Change - Total	480,355
Place & Growth	
Managing Congestion (Borough-wide) - Signage, traffic signal controllers and survey work	624,115

Highways Carriageways Structural Maintenance	397,764
Integrated Transport Schemes	251,702
Safety / Crash Barriers	194,455
Integrated Transport - Eversley Road / Church Lane	171,505
Highways Infrastructure Flood Alleviation Schemes	150,000
Traffic Signal Upgrade Programme	131,332
New Crematorium - Feasibility	130,000
Highway Structures - Early Station Footbridge (Preliminary Design)	105,767
Strengthening approach embankments to bridges	46,549
Byways - Surveys to determine priorities	30,000
Place & Growth - Total	2,233,189
Resources & Assets	
Strategic Property and Commercial Assets - Review of investment strategy with focus towards community investment	15,271,416
Strategic residential portfolio - To deliver an ongoing pipeline of housing schemes within the borough	1,101,000
3G Pitch at Laurel Park	300,000
Renewable Energy Infrastructure projects	250,000
Former Marks & Spencers Site - Feasibility	249,585
Capital Loans to Housing Companies	190,000
Strategic Development Locations	81,303
Commercial Portfolio - Toutley Depot	65,934
Emmbrook All Weather (3G) Pitch	37,307
Wellington Road demolition	30,000
Communications and Engagement	6,087
Hillside Primary School - Design & construction of solar shelter	5,000
Resources & Assets - Total	17,587,631
TOTAL CARRY FORWARDS REQUIRING EXECUTIVE APPROVAL	23,902,039

Note:-

As per the Council's constitution, capital carry forwards are considered approved if funded by ringfenced budgets, or the project has started. Also during the course of the year the quarterly capital monitoring reports have requested approval for budgets to be reprofiled into year 2. All these budgets are treated as approved and have been removed from this list above.

Agenda Item 9.

TITLE	Implementing the Leisure Strategy
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 24 June 2021
WARD	None specific
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Environment and Leisure - Parry Batth

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

Approve two new leisure developments to take forward the draft leisure strategy by further enhancing the Council's facilities to increase physical activity and improve wellbeing.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive approves the following:

- 1) a new boxing fitness hub based in a first floor unit in Peach Place, Wokingham. This is to be managed by WBC Sport and Leisure team and approval for all associated fees and charges to be agreed for the hub as set in Schedule 1;
- 2) the borrowing of £630k for the hub which will be funded by income from the activities, resulting in a surplus after all costs on average of £80k p.a.;
- 3) a new 3G pitch and additional car parking located at Laurel Park, subject to funding and planning, and borrowing of £300k to be self-financed by project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Boxing fitness hub

Local research of the current fitness trends identified that combat sports and fitness session attendances are on the rise and is something that is growing. This is demonstrated through national studies that have found boxing participation has increased by 15% between 2016 and 2020 to 774,000 people, and in particular female participation increased by 18% from 2015 to 2019. In a government and Sport England study boxing and martial art were the most frequently attended activities with 16% attending more than 4 times per week. Greater weekly attendance than gym, swimming, racket sports, team sports and more. As Wokingham do not have a dedicated boxing fitness hub this was seen as an opportunity, supporting the increased demand for the sport.

In line with the town centre regeneration an opportunity for a high-end fitness studio with classes as its main attraction to fit in on-brand with local developments around the town became available.

Focus will be on combat exercises classes and free-box sessions for training and exercise purposes. The fitness hub will be equipped with bespoke equipment different from all other local “gym” types. The space also allows further development to work alongside self-defence partners in the area as well as support young individuals in the borough.

Laurel Park

Following the outcome of data from the current Playing Pitch Strategy showing that Wokingham has over 540 football teams and in need of an additional 3G pitches. Laurel Park’s pitches were rated as ‘poor’ within the strategy, maintenance works have commenced on the pitches to bring the level back to good quality. In line with the large use of youth and adult teams, it is proposed to install a new 3G pitch and additional parking so that players do not have to travel outside of the borough.

BACKGROUND

Boxing fitness hub

Executive March 21 agreed the draft Leisure strategy for consultation and the response to this will inform and shape the strategy and its delivery going forward. However, in the meantime the Council has an opportunity to further enhance its leisure provision for the community through the provision of a new 3G pitch and a boxing club. Approval for these two new developments will support key outcomes in the draft Leisure Strategy, increasing the amount of exercise in line with public health guidelines (completing 150 mins exercise of moderate intensity or 75 mins of vigorous intensity/week) and supporting healthy weight management for residents within the borough.

The developments will help support targeted groups outlined in the strategy, reducing the health and wellbeing gap within the borough. It will also support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to compliment an active lifestyle in line with the Corporate Delivery Plan.

There are also key links with the strategic themes:

- Safe and strong communities
- Enriching lives
- A clean and green borough
- Keeping the Borough Moving

Research taken place locally shows that combat sports and fitness sessions are becoming more popular nationwide with many facilities opening around the country, mainly around the London area. An opportunity to embrace this trend in popularity has arisen in Wokingham, with a Boxing fitness studio located in Peach Place. The new boutique boxing and combat style fitness hub for the residents will bring a new style of space to the borough to exercise and help promote positive physical and mental health.

With the regeneration of the town centre in full flow an opportunity was identified for a high-end boxing studio with classes as its main attraction to fit in on-brand with local developments around the town and occupy one of the prime units. It is envisaged to create a rustic but quality destination to offer something new to people wanting to get active and to those who are currently active with a different experience to what they have already been a member of.

The boxing space also allows further development to work alongside self-defence partners in the area as well as support young individuals in the borough, something that is very relevant and on-topic with events in recent time and something important to address within the borough.

The boxing club will also provide a commercial proposition for the Council and the business case with associated implementation timeframe is set out below.

A boxing fitness hub will help tackle healthy weight management in the borough for all ages including children 8+ and adults, promoting positive social, mental and physical wellbeing/health by creating a new opportunity to become or stay active. It will also help

address anti-social behaviour by working with the crime prevention team in the borough providing off-peak sessions to help create discipline through the art of boxing, combat sports and martial arts. This will include sessions for youth offenders at a subsidised cost. This will help address provisions for the youth within the borough helping find a safe place to socialise and exercise as a release away from normal life. It will also enable the Council to work in partnership with the local boxing clubs within the borough and also target areas of deprivation to help improve the health and wellbeing of these residents.

We will use the off-peak times for sessions working alongside the Crime-prevention team and with youth offender groups (outside of the usual pre/post working day & lunchtimes as well as Sunday evenings) and local boxing club hire. This will enable us to maintain the high -level experience for our members. The cost for the hire during these off-peak times will be to the group using the space rather than the individual.

We also believe the Boxing hub will help engage with the BAME community. In the last 2 Olympics 87% of medal winners in boxing for GB have been from a BAME background and we see the sport inspiring young individuals from all backgrounds to take part. Boxing is also unique where 25% of its board members are from a BAME background and although more can be done this is among the highest percentage in the UK.

Laurel Park

The Council has made representations to the Berks and Bucks FA association and the Football Foundation for support in creating a new 3G pitch in the borough and Laurel Park has been put forward as an ideal location (to supplement existing facilities across the borough). The new 3G pitch is much needed for regular users and football clubs in the local area who will no longer have to travel to use other 3G pitches, thereby promoting local use and supporting a key outcome of physical activity sessions offered in outdoor spaces. It will also reduce congestion as many teams are having to go outside the borough to train.

Furthermore, the location would enable two primary schools within walking distance to utilise the pitch and a partnership with Reading Football club Kicks programme to help address anti-social behaviour and enhance integration.

BUSINESS CASE

Boxing fitness hub

By opening a boxing fitness hub it will create job opportunities within the Borough both full-time and casual. The Kickstart scheme could also be used to create roles for 16-25 year olds to work as fitness hub attendants and gain some associated qualifications, these will be targeted at the unemployed 16 – 25 year olds.

The fitness hub will be managed, in-house, by WBC Sport & Leisure with a Fitness Hub Manager, fitness attendants and external coaches (self-employed) running the classes. There is the option to host virtual classes run through monitors.

Local Membership Authority Benchmarking

COUNCIL/ GYM	YOUTH MEMBERSHIP	OTHER MEMBERSHIPS	MAIN MEMBERSHIPS
Haringey Council	14-18 years Olds - £20 set-up fee. Members £2/class, non-members £3.50/class.		Affiliated with Total Box Centre Memberships - £59-129/MONTH
			UNLIMITED GYM + 5 CLASSES = £59/MONTH UNLIMITED GYM + 10 CLASSES = £89/MONTH UNLIMITED GYM + 20 CLASSES = £129/MONTH
Thame Council	4-15 YEAR OLDS £30/MONTH	Corporate & Duke of Edinburgh Memberships £25/MONTH	Affiliated with Invictus Boxing Gym
			UNLIMITED MONTHLY £45/MONTH ANNUAL £450/YEAR
London Community Boxing Club – Run in partnership with a London Borough of Southwark.	Under 16s = £1/class Over 16s = £5/class		

Proposed Opening times, Structure and Timetable - Hours per week – 114 hours

Monday to Friday 6AM to 10PM
 Saturday 8AM to 8PM
 Sunday 8AM to 8PM

There will be “Free-box” (FB) time, which will be free use of the fitness hub facilities from the combat equipment to the functional training equipment. There will be 28-35 class sessions available ranging from boxing style classes, combat classes to functional circuit classes and a mixture.

Proposed Pricing Structure

Further to recent benchmarking within the London Borough and onsite visits it was felt the fees and charges could be increased by an additional 10%, maximising income generation and contributing to the increased tender costs (due to COVID-19 there is a national increase in materials and plant costs) recently received.

Fee's and Charges to be agreed in Schedule 1.

There is a further opportunity for secondary income through sales and merchandise. (detailed in Schedule 1).

- Clothing and merchandise – Caps, Bobble Hats, Hoodies, Training tops
- Fitness accessories and equipment - Bottles, Shakers, Gloves, Hand/Wrist Wraps, Skipping ropes
- Protein shakes and Snacks

We will look to build up a comprehensive and diverse membership base, supporting to achieve one of our targets within the leisure strategy to reach those targeted groups of inactivity.

- Interest in boxing & combat training
- Amateur combat participants for training
- General public looking to improve physical & mental wellbeing
- Self-defence – through self-defence classes e.g. Female self-defence
- Local boxing clubs e.g. Pinewood Stars
- Youth offender groups
- BAME community
- Target health weight management for all ages

A differentiated charging structure will be introduced to encourage this.

Equipment

A new gym floor has been designed with a variety of equipment bespoke to a Boxing fitness hub, the main aims of the gym is to provide combat/boxing stations through a variety of “bags” and “stations”. We have chosen equipment we think best to reduce noise pollution to the unit below. Prior to the fitting out an acoustic assessment will be made in order to minimise the sound transfer within the fitness hub.

We have selected a floor based 16ft training ring for pad work and will have the BXGFIT branding. Local boxing clubs such as Pinewood Stars, who will be able to hire out the boxing space for training purposes, can use the training ring. There is an opportunity for sponsorship on the ring and ring ends, which can increase income opportunities.

There will be a DDA compliant unisex disabled toilet and changing facility with access for disabled use. There is a lift from the ground floor to the first floor for disabled access. A staff breakout room will be included as a kitchenette design for teas, coffees and lunches with a sink, microwave and blender.

Timescales

Task	Duration
Design consultant appointment	1 week
Prepare detailed design	4 weeks
Tender Period	4 weeks
Tender Assessment	1 week
Lead-in period	2 weeks
Work on site	8 weeks
Total	20 weeks

To be launched late summer 2021.

Finances

BOXING GYM	INCOME	EXPERNDITURE	PROFIT
YEAR 1	£334,200	£246,970	£87,230
YEAR 2	£350,910	£271,470	£79,440
YEAR 3	£368,455	£271,470	£96,985

Income Estimates:

REVENUE	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
MEMBERSHIP BOX CLASSES	£ 39,600	£ 41,580	£ 43,659
MEMBERSHIP FREE BOX	£ 39,600	£ 41,580	£ 43,659
MEMBERSHIP PREMIUM	£ 79,200	£ 83,160	£ 87,318
PAYG Box CLASSES	£ 39,600	£ 41,580	£ 43,659
PAYG FREE BOX	£ 66,000	£ 69,300	£ 72,765
MERCHANDISE	£ 20,000	£ 21,000	£ 22,050
FOOD & DRINK	£ 12,000	£ 12,600	£ 13,230
EQUIPMENT	£ 7,000	£ 7,350	£ 7,718
BOX HIRE	£ 31,200	£ 32,760	£ 34,398
TOTAL REVENUE	£ 334,200.00	£ 350,910.00	£ 368,455

Expenditure Estimates:

EXPENDITURE	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
RENT	£ -	£ 30,000	£ 30,000
BUSINESS RATES	£ 15,000	£ 15,000	£ 15,000
STAFF - MANAGER	£ 30,000	£ 30,000	£ 30,000
STAFF - BOX STAFF	£ 50,000	£ 50,000	£ 50,000
STAFF - CLASSES INSTRUCTOR	£ 30,000	£ 30,000	£ 30,000
LOAN	£ 63,970	£ 63,970	£ 63,970
UNIFORM	£ 1,000	£ 1,000	£ 1,000
INSURANCE	£ 4,000	£ 4,000	£ 4,000
PHONES	£ 1,500	£ 1,500	£ 1,500
STAFF TRAINING	£ 2,000	£ 1,000	£ 1,000
IT & CARD SUBSCRIPTION	£ 1,000	£ 1,000	£ 1,000
LICENCES	£ 3,000	£ 1,500	£ 1,500

UTILITIES			
GAS	£ 3,000	£ 3,000	£ 3,000
ELEC	£ 8,000	£ 8,000	£ 8,000
WATER & SEWAGE	£ 5,000	£ 5,000	£ 5,000
BUILDING REPAIRS	£ 3,000	£ 3,000	£ 3,000
EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	£ 1,000	£ 1,000	£ 1,000
CLEANING	£ 7,500	£ 7,500	£ 7,500
FOOD & BEVERAGES	£ 6,000	£ 6,000	£ 6,000
MERCHANDISE PURCHASE	£ 5,000	£ 5,000	£ 5,000
REFUSE	£ 2,000	£ 2,000	£ 2,000
MARKETING	£ 5,000	£ 2,000	£ 2,000

EXPENDITURE - TOTAL	£ 246,970	£ 271,470	£ 271,470
----------------------------	------------------	------------------	------------------

Profit Estimates:

NET PROFIT	£ 87,230	£ 79,440	£ 96,985
-------------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------------

Laurel Park Business Case

The sport and leisure team have been very successful in the past four years to secure funding for 3 other projects, totalling around £1.5m from the Football Foundation for additional 3G pitches and pavilions. Therefore will be working with the Football Foundation for Laurel Park, again already working very closely with them, they have asked us to proceed with the new project.

Following the outcome of data from the current Playing Pitch Strategy showing that Wokingham has over 540 football teams and in line with the leisure strategy regarding investment the need of an additional 3G pitches. Laurel Park's pitches were rated as 'poor' within the strategy, maintenance works have commenced on the pitches to bring the level back to good quality. In line with the large use of youth and adult teams, it is proposed to install a new 3G pitch and additional parking so that players do not have to travel outside of the borough.

The planning application is to be submitted Summer 2021; the football foundation bid will be submitted February 2022 with a final decision to be made in June 2022. If planning permission granted work will commence within 4 weeks of the decision. As part of the football foundation bid, we have two partner clubs who will play on the new 3G pitch, Laurel Park FC and Whiteknights FC allowing local teams to be based within the borough. The fees and charges are already incorporated within current fees and charges for all 3G pitches.

The cost of the 3G pitch with associated works is around £800k with a contribution of £300k from WBC and the remainder from the Football Foundation of around £500k.

Details of the Income and Expenditure for 3-year period below.

LAUREL PARK 3G	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
INCOME	£60,000	£61,800	£63,654
Maintenance	£5,500	£5,500	£5,500
Utility Cost	£4,000	£4,000	£4,000
Loan Repayment	£26,000	£26,000	£26,000
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	£35,500	£35,500	£35,500
PROFIT	£24,500	£25,300	£28,154

Any additional profit will be paid into the sinking fund contribution.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1) 2021/22	<p>Boxing £630,000k</p> <p>Income: Year 1 £334,200</p> <p>Expen: Year 1 £246,970</p> <p>Estimated net profit for: Year 1 £87,230</p>	Yes	Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2) 2022/23	<p>Laurel Park £300k £500k Football Foundation grant</p> <p>Income £60,000</p> <p>Expenditure £35,500</p> <p>Profit: £24,500</p> <p>Boxing: Income Year 2 £350,910</p> <p>Expen Year 2 £271,470</p> <p>Profit</p>	no	Capital Football foundation grant

	Year 2 £79,440		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Boxing: Income Year 3 £368,455 Expen Year 3 £271,470 Profit Year 3 £96,985 Laurel Park Income £61,800 Expenditure: £35,500 Profit: £25,300	n/a	n/a

Other Financial Information
This is a project that attracts funding from the Football Foundation, subject to a contribution from Wokingham Borough Council. Given the enhancement generated and the level of grant it attracts, it is a sound business case to proceed at this time on works that would be likely to have been proposed at a later stage in the programme. There is a provisional allocation already agreed from the 'Capital Contingency' budget within the agreed programme so there will be no impact on the overall capital programme.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
Leisure consultations to take place for the strategy and the boutique boxing and combat fitness hub between May to July, Laurel park consultation is within the planning process.

Public Sector Equality Duty
Equalities assessment will be carried out for both developments.

Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030
The town centre boxing location will allow residents to walk or cycle and Laurel Park will allow teams to no longer travel outside the borough to access a 3G pitch.

List of Background Papers
Leisure Strategy

Contact Beverley Thompson	Service Business Services
Telephone Tel: 0118 974 6254	Email beverley.thompson@wokingham.gov.uk

BXGFIT Boxing Fitness Hub - Pricing List	DESCRIPTION	LEVEL/TYPE	CHARGE - TYPE	UNIT	VAT TYPE	CHARGE	NOTES	
ADULT MEMBERSHIPS	FREEBOX - free use of the studio space (similar to a gym session)	HEAVYWEIGHT - top level	MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£44 PER MONTH	Unlimited FREEBOX attendance - PAID MONTHLY	
			MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£440	Unlimited FREEBOX attendance - PAID UPFRONT	
		MIDDLEWEIGHT - middle level	MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£33 PER MONTH	10 FREE BOX SESSIONS PER MONTH	
			MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£330	10 FREE BOX SESSIONS PER MONTH	
		LIGHTWEIGHT - lower level	MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£22 PER MONTH	5 FREE BOX SESSIONS PER MONTH	
			MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£220	5 FREE BOX SESSIONS PER MONTH	
	CLASSES - organised exercise class sessions	HEAVYWEIGHT	MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£44 PER MONTH	Unlimited CLASSES attendance - PAID MONTHLY	
			MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£440	Unlimited CLASSES attendance - PAID UPFRONT	
		MIDDLEWEIGHT	MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£35.20 PER MONTH	10 CLASSES PER MONTH	
			MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£360	10 CLASSES PER MONTH	
		LIGHTWEIGHT	MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£24.20 PER MONTH	5 CLASSES PER MONTH	
			MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£250	5 CLASSES PER MONTH	
PREMIUM - access to class and FREEBOX bookings	HEAVYWEIGHT	MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£66 PER MONTH	Unlimited CLASSES & FREEBOX attendance - PAID MONTHLY		
		MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£720	Unlimited CLASSES & FREEBOX attendance - PAID UPFRONT		
	MIDDLEWEIGHT	MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£55 PER MONTH	UNLIMITED FREEBOX AND 10 CLASSES PER MONTH		
		MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£600	UNLIMITED FREEBOX AND 10 CLASSES PER MONTH		
	LIGHTWEIGHT	MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£50 PER MONTH	UNLIMITED FREEBOX AND 5 CLASSES PER MONTH		
		MEMBERSHIP	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£550	UNLIMITED FREEBOX AND 5 CLASSES PER MONTH		
OTHER MEMBERSHIPS	JUNIOR	JUNIOR FREEBOX MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£27.50 PER MONTH			
		JUNIOR CLASSES MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£27.50 PER MONTH			
		JUNIOR PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP	MONTHLY	STANDARD	£38.50 PER MONTH			
		JUNIOR FREEBOX MEMBERSHIP - ANNUAL	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£300			
		JUNIOR CLASSES MEMBERSHIP - ANNUAL	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£300			
		JUNIOR PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP - ANNUAL	ANNUAL	STANDARD	£385			
	CORPORATE	CORPORATE PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP			STANDARD	20% off full price		
		CORPORATE CLASSES MEMBERSHIP			STANDARD	20% off full price		
		CORPORATE FREEBOX MEMBERSHIP			STANDARD	20% off full price		
					STANDARD			
MEMBERSHIP SAVINGS	MEMBERSHIP & AD-HOC SAVINGS	FAMILY DISCOUNT				15% off full price	3+ memberships - discount applied to all members (same household)	
		COUPLES/HOUSEHOLD DISCOUNT				10% off full price	2 memberships - discount applied to all members	
		SPORT AND LEISURE PROGRAMME DISCOUNT				5%-20% off full price	members of another programme or family member	
		STUDENT DISCOUNT				10%-20%	University or College students - student ID required	
		EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT				10% off full price	on memberships upfront and monthly	
AD-HOC/PAYG (PAY AS YOU GO) SESSIONS	FREEBOX	ADULT		1		£11		
		JUNIOR		1		£7.00		
	CLASSES	ADULT		1			£13	
		JUNIOR		1			£9.50	
		MISCELLANEOUS BLOCKS OF MULTIPLE 5,10,20,50,100	MISC			5-20% OFF FULL PRICE		
		BLOCK OF 10 ADULT		10			£110.00	
	BLOCK OF 10 JUNIOR		10			£82.50		
OFF-PEAK CLASS	E.G. YOUTH OFFENDERS GROUP		1			£1.50		
TECHNIQUE TRAINING - boxing equivalent to personal training	1 SESSION			1		£55		
	MEMBERS SESSION - 20% OFF					£44		
	MISCELLANEOUS BLOCKS OF MULTIPLE 5,10,20,50,100	MISC			5-20% OFF FULL PRICE			
	MEMBERS BLOCK OF 10		10			£400		
	BLOCK OF 10		10			£500		
PROMOTIONS			BUY 1 GET 1 HALF PRICE			1 FULL ONE 50% OFF		
			5% TO 30% OFF MEMBERSHIPS			5% -30%		
OTHERS			OVER 60S MEMBERSHIP SHINE			PART OF SHINE MEMBERSHIP - DESIGNATED SHINE CLASS		
			OVER 60S PAYG CLASS/FREE BOX SHINE			£8.50 CLASS, £6.50 FREEBOX		
			BXGFIT STAFF			10%-50% off full price		
			CHILDREN IN CARE			FREE		
			CARER LEAVERS			FREE	<25 YEARS OLD	
			FOSTER CHILDREN + SIBLINGS			FREE	AGED 12+	
			FOSTER PARENTS			FREE		
			NHS DISCOUNTS			20% OFF		
			PREVENTION PROGRAMMES			20% OFF FULL PRICE	UPON COMPLETION OF A WBC PREVENTION PROGRAMME	
			DISABLED			20% OFF FULL PRICE	PROOF OF REGISTERED DIABILITY	
			UNEMPLOYED			10% OFF FULL PRICE	OFF PEAK ACCESS	
			CAFÉ DISCOUNT			10% off food and drink		
		CORPORATE RATES	PER COMPANY		£500-£2000			
		STUDIO HIRE RATE	PER HOUR		£100-£500 PER HOUR			

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE	Community Safety Strategy 2021-2024
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 24 th June 2021
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Communities, Insight and Change - Keeley Clements
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Communities and Neighbourhoods - Bill Soane

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

This report seeks endorsement from the Executive to agree the Community Safety Partnership Strategy and Priorities 2021-2024, for implementation on the 1st July 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive endorses the Community Safety Partnership Strategy and new priorities for 2021-2024, for implementation on the 1st July 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has a duty to formulate and implement a local crime reduction strategy as set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The current strategy and priorities came to an end in March 2021.

Legislation sets out that the Community Safety Partnership must have in place;

- a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area;
- a strategy for the reduction of re-offending in Wokingham Borough
- a system for monitoring the strategy for effectiveness and make any changes where necessary and expedient.

Furthermore, the partnership has a duty to undertake a local strategic assessment of crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse to inform the strategy. A detailed strategic assessment of the borough has been undertaken in December 2020, assessing data spanning a five year period. A summary of the findings can be found in appendix 1.

Following on from the strategic assessment data analysis a development workshop was held on the 10th of December with key internal and external stakeholders including, the Police, Health, Fire, Childrens and Adults Social Care. Details of attendees can be found in appendix 2.

The draft priorities as set out below (and in appendix 3) were formulated upon the information contained within the local strategic assessment and other wider local and national policy context.

Priorities will cover a three year period 2021-2024 and will be refreshed annually. A detailed delivery plan will be developed to assist the monitoring and delivery of the partnership priorities. This will feed into the respective Community Safety Partnership subgroups that have key work streams and priority areas to deliver on. Subgroups report progress and performance quarterly to the Community Safety Partnership Board.

Draft Strategic Aims for 2021-24

The Community Safety Priorities are set out as three strategic priorities with five specific delivery areas within these.

Three strategic priorities:

- 1. Listening to the needs and concerns of local residents and taking action**
- 2. Intervening early and preventing issues escalating**
- 3. Working together to protect vulnerable residents**

Five delivery areas:

1. Work with communities to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots
2. Reduce harm caused by domestic abuse
3. Reduce incidents of serious violence and knife crime
4. Tackle exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults
5. Reduce crimes of residential burglary and theft from vehicles

Consultation

A full stakeholder and public consultation was undertaken from 22nd February 2021 – 31st March 2021. This ensured that the draft priorities were widely circulated and available for interested residents, community, businesses and voluntary groups to have an opportunity to comment on and shape our thinking. All feedback has been considered and incorporated appropriately. A summary of the consultation results can be found in Appendix 3.

Key timescales:

- Circulate final draft strategy to CSP members – 20 May 2021
- CSP board sign off – 27 May 2021
- Wellbeing Board for consideration – 10 June 2021
- Executive Meeting – 24 June 2021
- Publish Strategy 2021 – 2024 – 1st July 2021
- Review strategy – 31 April 2022

BACKGROUND

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has a duty to formulate and implement a local crime reduction strategy as set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The current strategy and priorities came to an end in March 2021.

Legislation sets out that the Community Safety Partnership must have in place;

- a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area;
- a strategy for the reduction of re-offending in the area
- a system for monitoring the strategy for effectiveness and make any changes where necessary and expedient.

Alongside this the partnership has a duty to undertake a local strategic assessment of crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse to inform the strategy. A detailed assessment of the borough has been undertaken looking in- depth at a range of available data for a five year period, a full summary of information can be found in Appendix 1.

Following on from the strategic assessment analysis a multi-agency development workshop was held on the 10th of December with key internal and external stakeholders including the police, fire, health, children's services, the police and crime commissioner's office and voluntary sector representatives findings and data were disseminated. Details of workshop, stakeholders and feedback can be found in Appendix 2

The draft priorities outlined in Appendix 3 are based on information contained within the local strategic assessment and other wider local and national policy context. Priorities will cover a three year period 2021-2024 and will be refreshed annually. A detailed delivery plan will be developed to assist the monitoring and delivery of the partnership priorities, this will feed into the respective CSP's subgroups that have key work streams and priorities to deliver on and report progress against. Performance is reported quarterly to the CSP board.

Stakeholder and Public Consultation

A full stakeholder and public consultation has been undertaken to ensure that the draft priorities were widely circulated and interested residents, community, businesses and voluntary groups have an opportunity to comment and any feedback is considered and incorporated appropriately. Due to covid19, consultation was predominately through an internet survey opening on 22nd February 2021 to 31st March 2021.

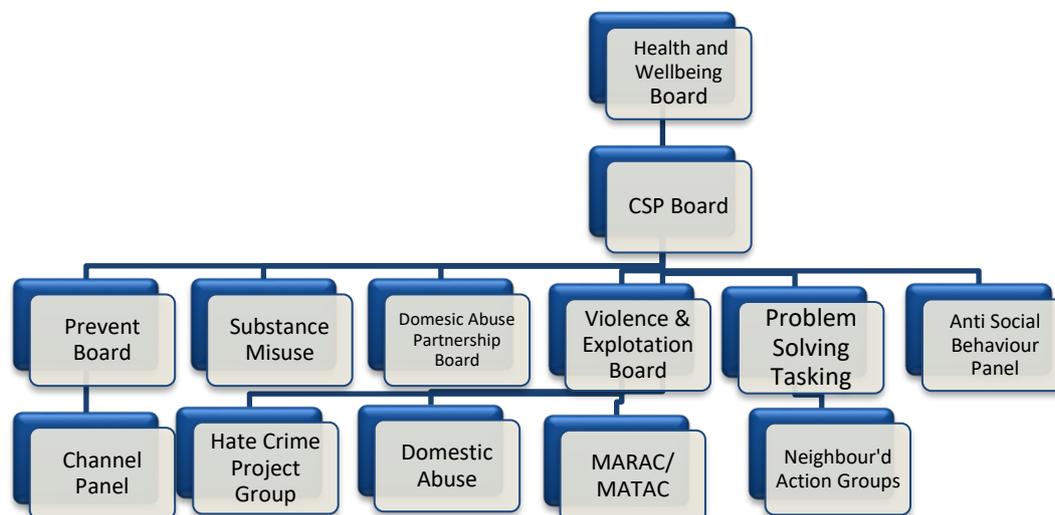
Wokingham Community Safety Partnership – Membership

- Wokingham Borough Council
- Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Thames Valley Constabulary
- Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner
- Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group
- Berkshire Healthcare Trust
- Wokingham Youth Offending Services
- National Probation Service

- Involve Community Services

Wokingham Community Safety Partnership Governance

The current governance structure and delivery groups for the Wokingham Community Safety Partnership are set out below.



Community Safety Partnership Subgroups

Problem Solving Tasking Group (PSTG)

Chair: Police Inspector

Deputy Chair: Wokingham Community Safety Manager

Frequency: Every 6 weeks for 1.5hrs

Membership: SMART drug and alcohol services, public protection partnership, police, children's social care, fire service, Wokingham town council, WBC community development and Involve Community Services. Reading football club.

Overview: Key priorities are location based problem solving across the borough. Group has dealt with several location based issues including: Bigshotte Park, Carnival Pool Car Park, Elms Field, graffiti, across Wokingham Town Centre over Christmas, car meets, and anti-social vehicle use in Carnival Pool Car Park. The group has shared intelligence, information and data to decide on the best problem-solving approach to deal with issues. The group has delivered practical crime reduction measures such as ring doorbells, no cold calling zones and communication and awareness campaigns on a range of subjects including burglary and vehicle crime.

Anti- Social Behaviour Panel

Chair: Wokingham Borough Council Anti-Social Behaviour Officer

Deputy Chair: Wokingham Community Safety Manager

Frequency: Every 6 weeks for 1.5- 2hours

Membership: Registered social landlords, WBC community development, WBC housing, police, adult social care, children's social care and Reading football club.

Overview: Multi agency panel meets to discuss medium and high level anti-social behaviour issues across the borough. During the past 12 months the group has

discussed 20 medium to high level anti-social behaviour cases in relation to private or housing association properties. This does not include cases that involve serious ASB in council tenancies. Outcomes have included the securing of a criminal behaviour order (CBO), investigative interviews, warning letters, issuing of acceptable behaviour contacts, multi-agency interventions including referrals on to mental health services and assisting with tenancy checks, warnings and notices. Multi-agency training on tools and powers has also been delivered to approximately 25 professionals.

Domestic Abuse Partnership Board

Chair: Assistant Director Neighbourhoods and Communities

Deputy Chair: TBC

Frequency: bimonthly moving to quarterly for 1.5- 2 hours.

Membership: Wokingham borough council, representative from victims of domestic abuse service, representative from children of domestic abuse victims, charities and other voluntary organisations that work with victims of domestic abuse, health care, policing or criminal justice and housing services.

Overview: Key priorities for the group are to support Wokingham Borough Council in meeting its duty under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act. The board is working together to support, advise and work in partnership with Wokingham Borough Council to ensure victims of domestic abuse have access to adequate and appropriate support within safe accommodation services. The group is working to improve outcomes for victims of domestic abuse, including children, through a strategic approach to identify and address gaps in support within safe accommodation services.

Domestic Abuse

Chair: Assistant Director Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

Deputy Chair: Wokingham Community Safety Manager

Frequency: Four times a year for 1.5-2hrs

Membership; Berkshire Women's Aid, housing, adult social care, children's social care, Kaleidoscopic and citizens advice service.

Overview: Key priorities include the review and implementation of Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) recommendations, reviewing domestic abuse training and communications. The group oversees the operational delivery of; support services for the victims of domestic abuse (DA) including; specialist one to one support and advice, support for children living with domestic abuse delivered in schools, Choices group work which is a six week programme to provide women with a better understanding of domestic abuse. Communications campaigns throughout the year including co-ordinating local delivery of the national 16 days of action. Increasing awareness and education of local help and support options especially throughout the pandemic. Reviewing the recommendations of the local DHR's. Reviewing and coordinating local training offer for professionals. Considering and planning for the implications of the DA bill.

MARAC and MATAC

Chair: Thames Valley Police

Deputy Chair N/A

Frequency: Every month

Membership: Children and adult social care, Berkshire Womens Aid, housing, schools, probation and Thames valley police.

Overview: Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) are a meeting where serious and cases that are graded high risk are reviewed. Multiagency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) is a meeting focussing on repeat domestic abuse victims and perpetrators. High risk cases are referred to Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA's) for guidance and support and support outcomes and reviewed.

Substance Misuse

Chair: Strategy and Commissioning lead for Substance Misuse

Deputy Chair: Wokingham Community Safety Manager

Frequency: Every quarter for 1.5-2hrs

Membership: Cranston drug and alcohol services, community safety manager, anti-social behaviour officer, Wokingham borough council housing, adult social care, children's social care, and citizens advice service.

Overview: Key priorities include to review local drug and alcohol trends, develop and implement and training and communications campaigns. For key local stakeholders to network, share good practice.

The substance misuse group considered key substance misuse data and information from the local service provider including information on cannabis alcohol and tobacco as well as key treatment information on Class A and B drug use locally. The group also considered information from a local needs assessment of substance misuse which informed the new substance misuse contract. The group also has oversight of the delivery of the Community Alcohol Project (CAP) in Woodley which is being led by Trading Standards.

Prevent Board

Chair: Assistant Director for Adult Social Care,

Deputy Chair: N/A

Frequency: Every Quarter for 1.5hrs

Membership; counter terrorism police south east, Thames valley police, CCG and health safeguarding leads, adult social care, children's social care, and education safeguarding leads.

Overview: Key priorities include the delivery and review of the Wokingham Prevent Action plan and ensuring that the local authority is undertaking its statutory duties as set out by the Counter Terrorism and Securities Act 2014. The Prevent Board has strategic oversight of the Borough's delivery of the duties set out in the Counter Terrorism and Securities Act 2014. This includes compliance and delivery of Prevent training delivery across a range of partner public sector organisations, IT and venue hire policies. Community engagement and development activities and raising awareness of the Prevent programme across communities and professionals including information on how to raise concerns and where to go for further information.

Channel Panel

Chair: Assistant Director Childrens Services

Deputy Chair: Safeguarding lead Adults

Frequency: Every month for 1.5hrs

Membership: CCG and health safeguarding leads, education safeguarding leads, and counter terrorism prevent officers, adult social care, children's social care, and community engagement officers.

Overview –Only meets if there are case to discuss or once every quarter to discuss good practice and shared learning. Currently the panel is meeting once a month. Key priorities are to discuss any referrals made to the multi-agency panel, to safeguard individuals at risk of racialisation.

Hate Crime Task and Finish Group

Chair: Community Safety Manager

Frequency: Quarterly

Membership: WBC localities and engagement lead, community safety manager, Thames valley police and WBC equalities officer.

Overview – This is a task and finish group meeting bimonthly to develop, implement and deliver a Hate Crime Action plan for Wokingham Borough. This is a newly formed task and finish group further meetings are planned to meet four to six times a year to develop and deliver the Borough response to Hate Crime.

Serious Violence & Exploitation Board

Chair: Local Police Area Commander and Assistant Director Early Help

Deputy Chair: N/A

Frequency: Every 6 weeks for 1.5hrs initially then every quarter.

Membership: Thames, valley police, VRU unit representatives, WBC, children and adults social care, probation, health, mental health services, education, youth offending services, public protection, voluntary and charity sector.

Overview: To work collaboratively to provide a whole systems response to the issue of serious violence in communities including that which occurs within the context of the criminal and sexual exploitation of children and young people. Working to increase active participation across agencies and communities to fully understand and prevent individuals of all ages from becoming involved in and impacted by serious violence.

LINK TO CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

The Community Safety Strategy links to the Community Vision and the Corporate Delivery Plan in several ways, supporting strategic values, principles, and plans:

- Safe, Strong Communities
- Changing the way we work for you

In addition, it links to Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

LINK TO CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

The Community Safety Strategy links to the Community Vision and the Corporate Delivery Plan in several ways, supporting strategic values, principles, and plans:

- Safe, Strong Communities
- Changing the way we work for you

In addition, it links to Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

Link to Strategies and legislation;

It also sits within a wider national strategy and legislative context.

- Serious Violence Reduction Strategy (public health approach to serious violence) and Serious Violence Bill (currently awaiting second reading) expected duties April 2022.
- Domestic Abuse Bill expected 2021 (awaiting royal assent)
- Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Counter Terrorism and Securities Act 2015
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Police and Social Responsibilities Act 2011

TIMETABLE

Timetable for strategy and delivery plan development and implementation.

Circulate draft priorities to CSP	20 May 2021
CSP Board Sign off	27 th May 2021
Wellbeing Board for consideration	10 th June 2021
Executive	24 th June 2021
Publish 2021-24 Strategy	1 st July 2021

KEY RISKS AND MITIGATIONS

The most significant risk is the failure to agree the priorities before the 1st July 2021 could result in not complying with our statutory duty.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

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

Other Financial Information

None

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Full public consultation including internal and external stakeholders has been undertaken.

Public Sector Equality Duty

An initial equalities impact assessment has been completed and attached as Appendix 4. A further Equality Impact Assessment will be considered once the strategy is agreed. No detrimental impacts are anticipated.

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
N/A

List of Background Papers
Appendix 1: Strategic Assessment 19/20 Executive Summary Appendix 2: Key Stakeholders Workshop Summary Appendix 3: Draft Community Safety Strategy 2021-24 Appendix 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Contact Narinder Brar	Service Customer and Localities
Telephone 07979255308	Email narinder.brar@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Wokingham Community Safety Strategic Assessment 19/20: Executive Summary

Overview of Crime and Disorder

Wokingham Borough is a safe place to live, work and visit. However, as with crime in other areas of the country and Thames Valley, crime in Wokingham Borough is also increasing. Although it does remain below average when compared to the Thames Valley region and other similar community safety partnerships (CSPs). Acquisitive Crime remains the largest volume crime in the borough but is decreasing. Violence and Public Order offences have seen the largest increases over recent years. However we must be mindful that our starting point low compared with the rest of the Thames Valley and other most similar areas. The top non-crime recorded incidents creating demand on police resources in Wokingham Borough are Anti-Social Behaviour, Domestic Abuse, Adult and Child Protection and Missing Persons. The data period used for this assessment covers 2015/16- 2019/20.

From April 2020 to December 2020 since national restrictions were put in place in response to Covid-19 in April 2020, there has been a significant impact on recorded crime figures. Burglary, both Dwelling and Non-Dwelling, have fallen and stayed low, whereas Theft, Vehicle Theft and Criminal Damage fell initially but have now returned to previous levels. Robbery, Shoplifting and Sexual Offences appear largely unaffected, but Violence, Public Order and Drugs Offences have all increased.

Vehicle Theft is increasing and occurs across the three main locations peaking around 6pm.



The most common vehicle type targeted in Theft of and Theft from Vehicles is Ford Transit and the most common items stolen are Vehicle Accessories (e.g. number plates, satnavs), Personal Accessories (e.g. mobile phones, handbags), and Machinery/Tools.



Burglary Dwelling, although decreasing, disproportionately affects certain parts of the borough, targeting certain 'hot-streets'. Offences peak around 5pm during winter months.



Shoplifting, is decreasing, peaks between 4-5pm; however, there has been a subtle shift in the types of items commonly stolen. Traditionally, high-value Personal Accessories (e.g. mobile phones, handbags) were most common but recent trends indicate an increase in more basic Items. Household Articles (e.g. bed linen, toys).

Recommendations:

- Work with car parks across the borough that are identified as hotspots using other significant car parks that are not targeted for examples of effective prevention techniques
- Burglary Dwelling awareness raising campaigns should be focused in target areas, and specific target hardening interventions could be implemented in hotspot locations.



Violence, Robbery, and Public Order are increasing and generally concentrated in Wokingham Town centre, peaking at 3pm, especially during the summer. Robbery also has a hotspot. The data suggests that there may be a link between school finishing time and the peak times for Robbery offences occurring. Key locations include outdoor spaces. Recorded knife crime has also increased, predominantly used in Robbery and Violence with Injury, especially involving young people.



Robbery has seen a subsequent shift in the types of items stolen, with Bikes and Personal Accessories (e.g. mobile phones, handbags) preferred over the traditional Cash and Jewellery. Bike theft in Wokingham is above average and predominantly targets mountain bikes, which can vary in value.



Anti-Social Behaviour is also concentrated in Wokingham Town centre, but peaks late Friday and Saturday nights, especially in the summer. The most common behaviour reported is Noise and the most common Noise complaints include Barking Dogs, Loud Music and Machinery or Tools.

Recommendations:

- Where Violent crime centers around a particular location, a coordinated partnership approach could support the tackling offending in or around the premises.
- Where Robbery or ASB occurs in outdoor locations, there may be scope to 'design out crime' by reviewing how these locations are accessed, particularly at peak times of the day or year.



Rural crime in Wokingham predominantly affects Farms and Fields, however, these crimes are comparatively low in volume. Similarly, Unauthorised Encampments are low in volume but above average for the Thames Valley the average length of an unauthorized encampment is 2-7 days. Rural interventions can often be resource intensive therefore prevention should be the key focus.

Recommendations

- Supporting rural communities to protect and look after each other using Farm Watch or similar, could help those most affected to share experiences and learning
- Provide rural communities with information and advice around local crime types and support on target hardening

Offenders



A large proportion of crime had no one recorded as a suspect or offender. Where an individual was identified, the majority were male (90%) and aged 30-39. Most (two-thirds) of identified suspects received No Further Action. The largest increases in crime are in offences involving young people; however, Youth Offending caseloads are decreasing, at least in part due to decreasing numbers of youth suspects receiving a formal outcome.

Recommendations:

- Appropriate diversionary activities for young people suspected of criminal activity could help to prevent subsequent offending without imposing criminal justice sanctions
- Risk factors for offending , include four key categories



Substance misuse is prevalent in all offending cohorts, particularly Drug misuse. In addition, referrals to Drug and Alcohol Services in Wokingham are increasing, as are police-recorded Drugs Offences, particularly among young people. Alcohol misuse, although less prevalent in individual offenders, does feature as a contributing factor in more police-recorded offences than drugs.

Recommendations

- Diversionary activities for young people caught in possession of illegal substances could help to prevent subsequent offending and opportunities for child criminal exploitation
- A youth specific drug and alcohol treatment services could help to identify, attract, and support young people misusing drugs and prevent subsequent offending



Mental health issues are prevalent in most datasets, ranging from 23-63%; however, Mental Health Services data indicates that people with mental health issues are more at risk of being harmed than causing harm. Police-recorded data indicates that 1 in 4 identified suspects were also



Family and Peer relationships were only captured in the youth offending datasets. Domestic Abuse, Gang Association, Social Care Involvement and/or Family Relationship concerns are likely to increase a child's risk of offending.



Accommodation and Employment were only captured in adult offender datasets but were highly prevalent, ranging from 30-49% of probation service cases.

Recommendations:

- Make Every Adult Matter (MEAM) is a pilot scheme in Berkshire that could provide opportunities to learn what works for this cohort of people



Between 50-66% of all offender cohorts were recorded to have more than one risk factor present, highlighting the complexities involved in working with offenders to reduce their risk of offending.

Recommendations:

- Holistic approaches to offender management will help to prevent subsequent offending, the Integrated offender management model particularly demonstrates effectiveness at improving issues in relationships
- The prevalence of multi-agency involvement among offenders suggests that strong information sharing between agencies is important and may benefit from a lead agency

Victims



Violence, Robbery and Public Order are all increasing and the most significant increases are in offences involving young people and young adults. Non-Domestic Violence in particular has a younger peak age group for both victims and suspects compared to five years ago (10-19 compared to 15-24) as does Robbery (15-24 compared to over 25), while Public Order offences target young victims.

Drugs Offences are also increasing and, again, the peak age for suspects is younger (15-19 compared to 20-2

4). Sexual Offences, although decreasing, disproportionately affect young people and the peak age group for both victims and suspects is younger (10-14 compared to 15-19). Hate Crime suspects also tend to be young people (10-19).

Recommendations:

- Awareness raising campaigns within schools will help to protect young people against violence and robbery and potentially gather intelligence around youth offending
- Analysis of data gathered directly from young people could help understand root causes and potential interventions; the Violence Reduction Unit may offer additional recommendations



A significant and growing minority of crime and disorder target victims that are particularly vulnerable. The highest volume of these are Domestic Abuse incidents and these are increasing. The profile of victims of domestic abuse are older than five years ago (30-40 compared to 25-35), which could be an indication that new victims are not reporting.

The Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment found that victims of domestic abuse were far more likely to self-refer for support.

Recommendations:

- The recommendations set out in the Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment will ensure that domestic violence victims are able to access the support they need
- The recommendation to establish a Domestic Abuse Champions Network in partner agencies will improve the identification of and support offered to domestic abuse victims



After Domestic Abuse, the most common incident types are Child and Adult Protection. Adult Protection is most likely not to be recorded as a crime and includes incidents of fraud and scams, which are known to specifically target vulnerable adults. Child Abuse is more likely to be recorded as a crime and includes Child Sexual Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

Recommendations:

- Routine collection and sharing among victim support agencies of vulnerabilities and risk factors will provide opportunities for comparison and collaboration between agencies
- Analysis of data collected on vulnerability could help to identify key cross-cutting themes and opportunities for coordinated partnership responses



Almost half of Cybercrime incidents are recorded as Violence, particularly Harassment, and a significant proportion of these are recorded as Domestic Abuse. Just under a third of Cybercrime incidents are recorded as Sexual Offences and a significant proportion of these are recorded as Child Sexual Exploitation. 15% of Cybercrime incidents are recorded as Action Fraud Referrals.



Other incident types include Missing Persons and Hate Crime; however, significant data gaps prevent much analysis of these incidents. Missing Persons is anecdotally linked to incidents of Child Sexual Exploitation, but missing age data makes it impossible to analyse this further. Asian ethnicities appear over-represented within recorded crime data, particularly racially motivated Hate Crime; however, missing ethnicity data in over half Hate Crime incidents, makes it difficult to draw conclusions.

Recommendations:

- Engaging with minority communities to understand their experience of hate crime and reporting and ensuring that adequate support is available for victims
- Improved recording of ethnicity of victims of hate crime will help the partnership to understand issues and target resources where they are most needed
- Incidents of Modern Slavery, FGM, Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage appear comparatively low in Wokingham, although it is not known to what extent this is related to under-reporting.

Data Sources

Data Sources are listed by the dataset that was used and the agency from which it was sourced

Provider of Data	Description of Data Used
Wokingham Borough Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unauthorised Encampments - ASB in Council accommodation - Reported fly-tipping incidents
Police Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recorded Crime Data with offender, victim and property attributes - Police calls for service re ASB
Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliberate Fires
Youth Offending Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Caseload Data plus Assessments
Integrated Offender Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance Data
National Probation Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wokingham Cases plus Assessments
Wokingham Children's Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CSC Exploitation Panel Cases of CSE and CCE
Drug and Alcohol Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treatment Referral Data
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk Assessments for Mental Health Treatment Service Users
SafeLives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment for Wokingham
Public Protection Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trading Standards Service Requests - Noise Complaints - Complaints re Scams
Office of National Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Census Data - Claimant Counts
Public Health England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fingertips Tool for Violence
HCLIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Homeless Applications Data
Crime Survey of England and Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perceptions of Police and CJS by Ethnic Group
NHS Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FGM Annual Statistics
National Crime Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modern Slavery NRM Statistics
Other Publicly Available Data Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sentencing Council Sentencing Guidelines - UK Police Force Ethnic Breakdown

Appendix 2

10th December Community Safety Partnership Workshop 10.00am – 12.30pm

Wokingham Community Safety Partnership Strategic Priority Setting Workshop 10th December 2020



Purpose of Workshop

To agree the priorities for the Community Safety Partnership 2021/22 onwards

Aims:

1. To review the partnership strengths and opportunities
2. To consider the findings of the strategic assessment
3. To agree and set the priorities for 21/22 and beyond
4. To agree next steps residents and stakeholder consultation plan



Attendees

- Felicity Parker – TVP LPA Commander 1
- Susan Parsonage – WBC CEO
- John Halsall – WBC Leader 2
- John Kaiser – Deputy Leader WBC 1
- Lindsey Ferris – Lib Dem Leader 1
- Barry Patman – Member for Shinfield South 2
- Parry Batth – Exec Member Enviro & Leisure 2
- Keeley Clements – Director Communities Insight & Change 1
- Nick Austin – AD Customer & Localities 2
- Narinder Brar – Community Safety Manager 1
- Natasha Jones – Commissioning Lead DA & Substance Misuse 2
- Alistair Lloyd – Safer Neighbours Inspector
- Rachel Oakley – AD Childrens 1
- Simon Broad – AD Adult Social Care 2
- Simon Price – AD Housing
- Sal Thirway – AD Childrens 1
- Cath Marriot – OPCC's Office 1
- Philip Bell – Involve 2
- Debbie Preedy – ASB Officer 2
- Aletta P – Youth Services Manager 2
- Kathy Kelly – CCG 1
- Melanie Smith – Probation Services 1
- Karen Evans – DA Co-ordinator 2
- Peter Slade – CS Business Support Officer 1
- Ian Banks – Berkshire Fire and Rescue



Wokingham Community Safety Partnership current priorities

1. Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
2. Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Harmful Misuse and Organised Crime
3. Reduce & prevent exploitation and address the needs of vulnerable victims & offenders
4. Empower and enable the resilience of local communities

Wokingham Community Safety Partnership - local picture and progress



- ✓ Have stabilised the community safety team; CSP manager in post for 18 months
- ✓ Anti-Social Behaviour Officer post recruited.
- ✓ Project and Business Support secured
- ✓ Needs assessment of local domestic abuse service undertaken
- ✓ Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator post recruited to
- ✓ Domestic abuse contract provision increased and procurement process underway
- ✓ Health check for all the subgroups and related action plans completed
- ✓ Appointed a new Prevent Chair and review Channel Chair
- ✓ Resources have been identified for Prevent, Channel and Hate Crime
- ✓ Reviewed Problem Solving Task Group & ASB panel membership and delivery practices



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Local progress continued



- ✓ Review of partnership reporting structures completed
- ✓ Reviewed website pages
- ✓ Internal enforcement (incl PPP)co-ordination group established to look at problem sites and themes
- ✓ Multi agency crime and anti-social behaviour legislation tools and powers training completed
- ✓ Multi agency crime prevention and designing out crime training underway
- ✓ Strategic assessment of crime and disorder across the borough completed

Appendix 3



Draft Wokingham Community Safety Strategy 2021-2024

This draft strategy outlines the Wokingham Community Safety Partnership's priorities for 2021- 2024. It is based on an independent local Strategic Assessment of crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse and other data. It is informed by national and local policies including the Wokingham Community Vision, the Corporate Delivery Plan 2020-2024 and the Police and Criminal Justice Plan 2012-2024 (*Thames Valley Crime and Police Commissioner*)

The Wokingham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is made up of the following partner agencies:

- Wokingham Borough Council
- Thames Valley Police
- Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner
- Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group
- Berkshire Healthcare Trust
- Wokingham Youth Offending Services
- National Probation Service

In addition to these members, the partnership works with other agencies that support the delivery of reducing crime and disorder locally such as Trading Standards, Housing Associations, third sector agencies including, Involve Community Services, Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB), Berkshire Women's Aid and Cranston Drug and Alcohol Service.

The Partnership operates in a complex network of boards and strategies to deliver a range of priorities that span several different but interconnected workstreams. This includes the Wokingham Wellbeing Board the Adult Safeguarding Board, West of Berkshire Safeguarding Children's Board, Wokingham Children and Young People's Partnership and the Thames Valley Criminal Justice Board.

It will continue to work closely with these boards, ensuring that the intricate relationships continue to compliment individual respective delivery plans and outcomes including reducing reoffending. The Partnership will also ensure that it uses every available opportunity to reduce crime and disorder in the design and delivery of public spaces, town planning and housing infrastructure.

The Community Safety Partnership recognises that Wokingham is a safe Borough to live and visit. When comparing recorded crime to other areas of the Thames Valley and its most similar family areas, it has some of the lowest levels of recorded crime. The partnerships vision is to **Build Safe and Strong Communities in Wokingham**, this underpins the focus and the priorities of our work.

As part of the process of setting out the draft priorities in this strategy the partnership has undertaken wide consultation, with both residents and key stakeholders. The results of the feedback have been analysed and informed the priorities set out in this 3 year plan. A summary of results can be found at the end of this strategy.

The Partnerships three strategic themes represent our overarching work, whilst the specific priorities are areas we will endeavour to concentrate on in more detail.

Proposed Draft Priorities 2021-2024

Strategic Themes

Listening to the needs and concerns of local residents and taking action – We will ensure that the partnership has a robust and clear approach to listening, monitoring and responding to issues and concerns at a local neighbourhood level. The partnership wants to ensure that we place communities and neighbourhoods at the heart of our approach. We understand that many issues of local concern require a multi-strand approach involving several partner agencies. We will therefore take a problem-solving approach to help communities and businesses to address behaviours and incidents and crimes. This includes burglary, vehicle crime and anti-social behaviour as well as other key issues that affect local communities including unauthorised encampments, and rural crime concerns. We will support Neighbourhood and Resident Action Groups (NAGS) to improve communication and engagement with residents.

Intervening early and preventing issues escalating – we will ensure all residents especially children and young adults have access to a range of support services and information. This will help to ensure that issues are dealt with at the earliest opportunity using a range of measures and interventions to stop them escalating. We know that intervening early can help us catch young people before they go down the wrong path, encouraging them to make positive choices. Therefore, we fully recognise the importance of early intervention to tackle the root causes and provide young people with the skills and resilience to lead productive lives free from being drawn into anti-social behaviour, substance misuse, crime and exploitation including serious violent and knife crime. We will provide targeted activity through the Supporting Families Initiative (formerly Troubled Families) working with partner agencies to support young people on the periphery of offending. This will include a diversionary activities and mentoring offer that will underpin the partnerships work and delivery of the governments Violence Reduction Strategy. Where there is a need, we will take adequate and proportionate action including enforcement steps to address issues and protect communities.

Working together to protect vulnerable residents – We will ensure that all victims and the vulnerable have the access to help, information, and advice they need. This includes victims experiencing domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, hate crime, vulnerable residents at risk of being drawn into exploitation and racialisation, and residents targeted by specific crime types including fraud. Through the Integrated Early Help Service we will provide support to families, children, young people and their carers to protect them from and give them the skills to prevent them becoming victims.

As a partnership we will ensure that services and information reach all sections of the community, especially those that may have additional barriers to accessing help such as ethnic minority groups and residents with protected characteristics. We recognise the wider social and economic factors influencing criminality, including those linked to housing, education and health. Vulnerable people and how we provide a range of assistance for a cross section of communities is a priority for several boards. Including, featuring as a priority for the refreshed Wokingham Wellbeing Board Strategy. The partnership will work in close alliance to compliment this workstream.

Furthermore, as a partnership we understand and recognise the benefits of physical and emotional wellbeing, especially those gained through health and leisure opportunities. Not only because they have a role to play in helping to keep residents healthy, but also in helping individuals make overall positive lifestyle choices. To assist some of the most vulnerable of our residents the Council's leisure services team has enabled access to leisure facilities including swimming and gym membership free of charge to a wide range of vulnerable groups. In addition, the leisure services team will continue to deliver targeted programmes that address social isolation and health inequalities for those facing additional barriers to access and participation. This includes ensuring the new 3G pitch at Cantley and state of the art Boxing Hub facility coming online during summer 2021, will be available to targeted young people in order bolster our diversionary activities offer.

Specific Aims

1) Work with communities to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots

Our aim is to:

- listen to communities at a neighbourhood level to identify crime and disorder hotspots to improve safety in areas using a multi-agency problem solving approach.

We will achieve this by:

- exploring and investigating hotspots identified in the Strategic Assessment
- monitoring the number of cases referred and resolved by the partnership problem-solving groups.
- We will review enhanced policing, security presence and situational measures in hotspots.
- We will review the toolkit of available enforcement interventions including Protection Orders (PSPOs)

2) Reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse

Our aim is to:

- prevent and intervene at the earliest stage possible.
- reduce the risk of people becoming repeat victims of domestic abuse
- reduce the harm caused to children and young people affected by domestic abuse

We will achieve this by:

- monitoring the number of victims referred to specialist services and responding to emerging issues.
- Working in partnership to promote opportunities for perpetrators to change their behaviour.
- continuing to deliver appropriate interventions and specialist support for children and young people affected by domestic abuse including development of a Healthy Relationships programme.
- increasing the number of practitioners trained to recognise domestic abuse and how to refer to support services.
- increase community awareness and messages through communications campaigns

3) Reduce incidents of serious violence and knife crime

Our aims are to:

- understand the risks around knife crime, reduce the harm it causes and reduce knife crime incidents, particularly those linked to public spaces, gangs and county lines drug dealing.
-

We will achieve this by:

- educating young people and promoting awareness of violence prevention

- reducing crimes of serious violence and knife crimes in the borough.
- working with our partners to adopt a long term, preventative public health approach to serious violence and harm.

4) Tackle exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults

Our aims are to:

- utilise the use of criminal and civil powers to protect victims
- ensure that victims have the right level of information, help and support
- ensure that communities are equipped to recognise and report issues of concern including exploitation

We will achieve this by:

- monitoring the use of civil powers, for example, community protection notices, premises closure orders, and injunctions.
- increasing the number of practitioners trained to recognise the signs of exploitation and how to refer for support

5) Reduce incidents of residential burglary and theft from vehicles

Our aim is to:

- make Wokingham Borough a hostile place for burglars and vehicle thieves to operate by encouraging community resilience and pursuing offenders

We will achieve this by:

- tackling organised criminals by working in partnership
- multi agency problem solve to reduce crimes
- reducing crimes of thefts from vehicles
- reducing crimes of residential burglary
- increasing the number of crime prevention messages to the community
- supporting residents through a range of schemes including; Neighbourhood Watch, Adopt a Street and Living Streets Audits

How will we delivery our priorities?

1. Work with communities to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots

The partnership will intervene at the earliest possible stage to reduce issues escalating. It will engage with community and neighbourhood groups, and encourage a growth in community resilience. We will listen to concerns of local residents and respond appropriately utilising the multi-agency problem solving and anti-social behaviour panel. We will use restorative justice and community/group activity where appropriate.

To tackle some of the root causes of criminal behaviours the partnership will continue to work with different agencies including mental health, drug & alcohol and floating support services to implement a multi-agency and problem solving approach to tackle anti-social behaviour hotspots and help people maintain their accommodation where it may be at risk.

2. Reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse

The partnership will support those impacted by domestic abuse, tackling perpetrators, raising awareness and educating people around healthy relationships and personal safety. The partnership will continue to focus on Domestic Abuse (DA) as the request for assistance from victims has seen an increase in demand locally. The community safety team will develop a violence against women and girls (VAWG) strategy, which will ensure that the partnership has a co-ordinated response in implementing the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. We will support and contribute to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) - meetings to review serious cases and Multiagency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) -

focussing on repeat domestic abuse victims and perpetrators. High risk cases will continue to be referred to Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA's) for guidance and support. The council's team will work with the police and the Home Security Scheme to protect those at risk by target hardening.

The council will tackle perpetrators by taking possession action against council tenancies where appropriate and will liaise with the police to prosecute offenders to keep families safe. We will also ensure that access to help to address offending behaviour is available for perpetrators.

The council has appointed a Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator, to champion good practice locally. Training will be given to front line staff and to council contractors who deal council tenancies. Through the Early Help Hub we will offer 'Reducing parental Conflict Training'.

The partnership will support DA awareness week in November 2021 and will continue to raise awareness locally as well as throughout the course of the year of the issue. Furthermore, we will ensure that we are ready for the implementation of the new Domestic Abuse Bill expected to become law in 2021. Work on a local housing-based support assessment is already underway to underpin a accommodation based support strategy. Further work will include the completion of the domestic abuse housing accreditation programme (DAHA). Which ensures that support linked to housing is consistent and in line with national good practice models and practice. The Partnership will implement a 'Healthy Relationships' course to Year 8 & 9 pupils for those schools who have requested it. It educates young people on the key elements of a healthy relationship and how to recognise a relationship which is toxic.

The partnership will continue to implement recommendations from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR).

3. Reduce incidents of serious violence and knife crime

The partnership will continue to support the work of the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit and implement a local response to the Serious Violence Strategy whose aims include the reduction in the number of people carrying and using knives, early intervention to stop people becoming involved in gangs, support for those already involved in serious violence and robust enforcement where necessary. Through the Youth Offending Service (YOS) we will run restorative justice workshops The Public Protection Partnership will be undertaking more test purchasing on knives and warning businesses that it is illegal to sell knives to anyone under the age of 18. We will deliver new knife crime workshops working with local young people who may be at risk of committing violent crime including identified specific young people who need support to stop them becoming involved in serious crime.

4. Tackle exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults

The partnership will continue to work together closely to safeguard vulnerable members of our community. We will ensure that education and awareness about exploitation and the signs are provided to communities, young people and professionals. We will ensure that individuals who are vulnerable to exploitation are provided with information, support and help. We will utilise the child missing and at risk of exploitation (EMRAC) process to protect and safeguard young people from exploitation. The partnership is keen to ensure that we are live to issues and concerns in relation to tackling exploitation, especially county drugs lines (CDL's). Cases can be complex and multi-faceted requiring a sensitive and joined up approach ranging from support to enforcement. However, where deemed necessary we will

advocate the use of criminal and civil powers including community protection notices, premises closure orders, and injunctions to intervene. We will also work to ensure that practitioners and communities are equipped and trained to recognise and report issues of concern and who to refer individuals on to for support.

5. Reduce crimes of residential burglary and theft from vehicles

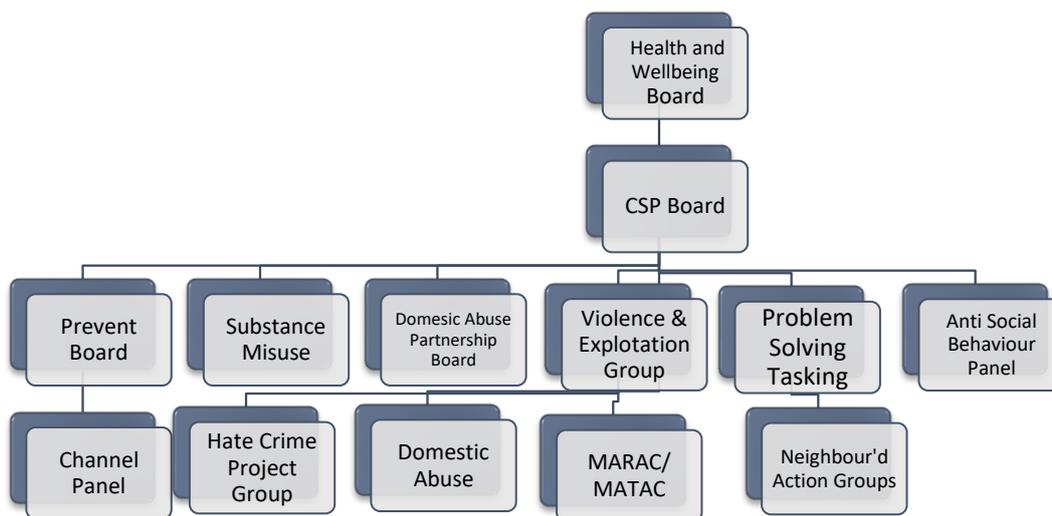
Thames Valley Police is the lead agency that has the duty to hold offenders to account and reduce burglaries and theft from motor vehicles. Other partners will complement their activities by working in partnership to provide effective community messaging to educate residents of how to better protect their property and prevent crime, and target harden hot spots. The partnership will work to target organised criminals when they are operating in the Wokingham Borough to commit burglaries and theft from vehicles by making the borough a hostile place or criminals to operate.

Covid19

The partnership recognises that Covid19 has produced an exceptional set of circumstances and challenges. It has also resulted in dramatically changing and unusual trends. Notable trends have included a fall in burglary and vehicle crime offences and a rise in domestic violence and anti-social behaviour in residential estates and parks and green spaces. Therefore, we will keep a watchful eye on emerging issues and remain flexible in our approach and respond accordingly.

Community Safety Partnership Governance & Delivery Groups

The work of the partnership is driven by a number of multi-agency groups the governance structure and delivery groups for the Wokingham Community Safety Partnership (CSP) are set out below.



Summary of Consultation Results

This strategy was widely consulted upon with residents and key stakeholders. The consultation process was undertaken through a web-based survey for a period of one month. Draft priorities were presented as part of the information with additional free text boxes provided for responders to articulate their suggestions and opinions at each stage. There

were 134 respondents to the survey. The consultation results provide a strong endorsement of the draft priorities and as a result no significant changes are proposed.

In response to whether the Strategic and Specific aims addressed the most important issues 88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. The highest support for any aim was Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) at 96% and the lowest was Exploitation at 85%. Other priorities suggested were speeding vehicles and noise nuisance. There was recognition and concern that resources to deliver were limited, reducing and likely to reduce further.

Respondents shared concerns about increasing crime levels, increasing anti-social behaviour (ASB), a reduction in visible policing and reporting mechanisms for communicating with residents. Anti-social behaviour was the highest concern relating mainly to gathering groups of young people in parks.

Bigshotte Park is mentioned most often as an area experiencing anti -social behaviour and specific suggestions to resolve this problem from respondents include a Public Space Protection Order and re-deployable CCTV. Other locations featured were Wokingham Town, Sindlesham, Baker Crescent and Sol Joel Skate Park.

Some respondents asked for a better dialogue on local concerns with a suggestion that Neighbourhood Action Groups should be re-introduced. There were also calls for better incident/crime reporting mechanisms and there was frustration that there was no feedback following a report.

Wokingham Community Safety Team

For more information contact the Wokingham Community Safety Team on <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/community-and-safety/community-safety/community-safety-partnership/>

Last updated 28 05.2021v6
Review Date April 2022.

Appendix 4: 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:	3 rd February 2021
Service:	Neighbourhoods and Communities
Project, policy, or service EQIA relates to:	Draft Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2021-2024
Completed by:	Narinder Brar – Community Safety Manager
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Yes 22 nd February 2021
Signed off by:	Simon Price
Sign off date:	22 nd February 2021

145

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:
<p>The purpose of the project; To agree a new Community Safety Partnership Strategy for 2021-24. The intended outcomes are that it will focus the work of the partnership to ensure the correct crime and disorder reduction outcomes are achieved. It will also ensure that the partnership has taken into account changing crime patterns to ensure resources are targeted in the required areas.</p> <p>This service aligns with our Community Vision and the Corporate Delivery Plan in several ways, supporting strategic values, principles, and plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safe, Strong Communities• Changing the way we work for you

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 Community Safety Partnership has a duty to undertake a local strategic assessment of crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse to inform the strategy. A detailed assessment of the borough has been undertaken looking, in- depth, at a range of available data for a five year period.

Following on from the strategic assessment analysis a multi-agency development workshop was held on the 10th of December with key internal and external stakeholders including the police, fire, health, children's services, the police and crime commissioner's office and voluntary sector representatives findings and the data were disseminated.

The draft priorities are based on information contained within the local strategic assessment and other wider local and national policy context. Priorities will cover a three-year period 2021-2024 and will be reviewed annually. A detailed delivery plan will be developed to assist the monitoring and delivery of the partnership priorities, this will feed into the respective CSP's subgroups that have key work streams and priorities to deliver on and report progress against. Performance is reported quarterly to the CSP board.

Stakeholder and Public Consultation

A full stakeholder and public consultation is planned to be undertaken to ensure that the priorities are widely circulated and interested residents, community, businesses and voluntary groups have an opportunity to comment and any feedback is considered and incorporated appropriately. Due to covid19, consultation will be predominately through an internet survey opening on 22nd February 2021 to 16th March 2021.

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

- All residents, communities, business and those traveling into to work or visit Wokingham Borough.

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

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has a duty to formulate and implement a local crime reduction strategy as set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The current strategy and priorities are due to end in March 2021.

Legislation sets out that the Community Safety Partnership must have in place;

- a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); combatting the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area;

- a strategy for the reduction of re-offending in the area
- a system for monitoring the strategy for effectiveness and make any changes where necessary and expedient.

This new strategy will ensure that the partnerships statutory duty is complied with and that the detailed in-depth analysis of data allows an evidence based approach to tackling issues across Wokingham Borough.

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.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Race:	Positive	The partnership will have a focused approach to hate crime issues underpinned by clearer monitoring and response.
Gender:	Positive	The partnership strategy highlights domestic abuse as one of its priorities. A crime that disproportionately affects women, in turn this provides a better response to victims who are predominately women.

Disabilities:	Positive	The partnership strategy will have a focused on hate crime issues underpinned by clearer monitoring and response led approach.
Age:	Positive	Exploitation of children and young people, together with tackling serious violence and knife crime are all priority areas that will impact younger aged residents. Tackling fraud offences targets assistant towards older residents who will be impacted positively.
Sexual orientation:	Positive	The partnership strategy will have a focused on hate crime issues underpinned by clearer monitoring and response led approach.
Religion/belief:	Positive	The partnership strategy will have a focused on hate crime issues underpinned by clearer monitoring and response led approach.
Gender re-assignment:	Positive	The partnership strategy will have a focused on hate crime issues underpinned by clearer monitoring and response led approach.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No Change	N/A
Marriage and civil partnership:	No Change	N/A

148

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: Simon Price Assistant Director Communities and Neighbourhoods.

TITLE	Commercial Hospitality Opportunity for Dinton Pastures Country Park
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Monday 24 June 2021
WARD	Hurst;
DIRECTOR	Steve Moore, Director Place and Growth
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Environment and Leisure, Parry Batth

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INCLUDING STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To commence a contract opportunity to commercially drive Dinton Pastures hospitality premises which will result in outstanding customer experience, innovative food/drink offers and increased income.

This concession contract will commence in 2022 and will be based on a five-year term with the possibility of five-year extension. The tender will be publicly available and bids will be reviewed against a set measurable scoring matrix. Candidates shortlisted will be invited to pitch their business case to a panel (competitive dialogue) and the winning tender awarded the hospitality contract for Dinton Pastures.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive is asked to approve commencing the procurement process to select a contractor who will provide outstanding hospitality services at Dinton Pastures Country Park (i.e. the Dragonfly Café and new Dinton Activity Centre Café) from April 2022.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is an exciting opportunity to develop and realise Wokingham Borough Council's commercial ambitions whilst delivering excellent customer experiences. This approach will enable innovative and aspiring bids to enable the provision of an outstanding hospitality venue in the Borough.

Dinton Pastures has some of the best fishing and water sports in the region and it attracts thousands of visitors annually. This year the new Activity Centre will open and there will be increased customer demand from now and in the future for new and imaginative hospitality offers. Currently there is one café at Dinton Pastures Country Park (Dragonfly Café) and one upcoming café which forms part of the new Activity Centre. Both facilities have great internal and external footprints and these will be maximised to ensure exceptional customer satisfaction and deliverability of service.

The current contract for the Dragonfly Café operates as a concession contract with the incumbent on an income share basis and will come to an end on 31 March 2022. Therefore, there is a requirement for this service to be retendered with the opportunity of including the new Dinton Activity Centre café at the same time.

On average, £50,000 per annum is obtained by Wokingham Borough through the existing Dragonfly Café income share arrangement. It is expected that a greater income share will be realised through the retender, however this cannot be guaranteed until the tenders are submitted. Any income is reinvested into the service to further improve customer experiences and expand consumable offers.

As part of the tender process, bidders will be encouraged to be creative with offers (across all age ranges and dietary types) which will attract further custom to the Activity Centre and wider Country Park. The tender is a flexible working arrangement which seeks to realise innovation and exceptional service delivery. It also aims to expand the service including more 'on the go' options which could cater at any of the other 30 Council owned countryside sites.

This report outlines background information, the preferred business model option and anticipated income levels in order to realise these ambitions.

BACKGROUND

The existing contractor for the Dragonfly Café has had the opportunity to operate the café for the past ten years. This comes to an end in March 2022 so the contract needs to be retendered. The new Dinton Activity Centre also includes a second café and will be incorporated in the new contract. It is expected both cafes to be operated by one contractor with outstanding complementary and imaginative offers to widen the trade and increase visitor satisfaction.

The existing contract term was five-year base with five-year extension and expires on 31 March 2022. The aim is to complete the procurement process prior to this date to enable a seamless transition.

BUSINESS CASE (Options Appraisal)

- **Option 1:** Do nothing – Existing tender expires - close the café
- **Option 2:** Re-tender the concession contract and select a new business partner.
- **Option 3:** Lease the café for a set income
- **Option 4:** Run the café ourselves

The existing contract is coming to an end and it is therefore required to tender this excellent business opportunity in the hospitality market. The premises running options are considered as follows:

Option 1 (Do nothing)- This is not plausible as not having a café would reduce visitor experience which has been strongly built on over many years and it would also reduce visitor numbers to Dinton. This would also result in the loss of income to the Council and would mean the service would be 'going back' rather than forwards.

Option 2- This is a unique concession contract and is considered the best financial option for the council in terms of mitigating risk and proving success as current. Overall, this approach shares risk as well as profit and has a robust growth model. There is a requirement to drive food/drink offers and grow our income as opposed to receiving similar income on an annual basis. It is expected any additional income is reinvested into the service to improve customer experiences and product offers.

Option 3 – This has been assessed but there are limitations with this approach including inflexibility unlike Option 2 which allows for income share. This has also been trialled in the past and it was found that the quality of service is reduced as well as overall income. This also limits the offer to customers as the control will be with the lessee rather than a joint approach between the tenant and the Countryside Service.

Option 4 - Research has been conducted to operate the service in-house for running both the cafés. It was concluded, through this analysis, that the existing staffing model does not have the required level of expertise within the team to run the café. Indeed specialist staff could be brought in, but there is an overall risk that if the business model is not properly set out or supported this could lead to failure.

In 2015, FMG Consultants reviewed the Countryside Service Café prior to extending the existing contract for the additional five-year period as a form of due diligence. The consultants agreed the Countryside Service were using the best option for delivery by outsourcing the management of the café. They did highlight that the existing contractor

has higher than usual staffing costs, as such a KPI was put in place to monitor this. A clause in the new contract about staffing provisions and costs will be included.

There is a very close working business relationship with the existing contractor over the last ten years to establish the market and to improve our financial standing. Regular visitor surveys are conducted to gain customer feedback. Consequently, there is a good level of understanding of what our customers want to see going forward, such as building on family and dog friendly opportunities, new and wide-ranging food products which cater for all ages, high quality hot drink options etc. As these comprehensive surveys have taken place and continue to do so we have met our obligations for public consultation.

It is also envisaged that the deliverables within the new contract specification are enhanced by specifying requirements that tenderers will need to provide, such as recyclable packaging, food waste reduction/recycling, bio-degradable or recyclable take away packaging and introduction of reusable cups scheme to meet waste and recycling/climate change objectives.

The level of funds from the income share will be continuously improved by introducing new initiatives to enhance business performance, providing a more attractive offer to customers.

It is important note that any additional funds are reinvested into the service to improve the customer experience and offer more products.

It is therefore recommended to continue outsourcing this contract as the best practicable option (Option 2).

Contract Management:

The resources to manage the administration and financial tasks are currently available within the Countryside Services team. These tasks will include auditing the contractor's budget books, conducting monthly review meetings, ensuring all legal and Council policies and procedures are followed (including health & safety) and assessing customer feedback.

All records of café income, expenditure and KPIs are currently analysed and this is reported on a monthly basis and reviewed annually. Management of this new contract will not require any additional time other than the retendering process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save) (The below income levels are estimated)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Starting Financial Year (Year 1) (2022/23)	£63,750 income generated to the Countryside Service is expected, which is anticipated to bring in additional income of £13,750 per annum	There is sufficient funding based on these estimates, however this may require adjustment following the final tender award.	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£70,125 income generated to Countryside Service, is expected, which is anticipated to bring in additional income of £20,125 per annum		Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£77,137 income generated to Countryside Service, is expected, which is anticipated to bring in additional income of £27,137 per annum		Revenue

Note: The above is based on a like-for-like model and actual levels of income will not be known until the tender has been awarded and the business case will then be developed. However, it is anticipated that the income above will be exceeded due to the increased customer visits as a result this innovative approach.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Stakeholder consultation is regularly undertaken through customer surveys and feedback.

Public Sector Equality Duty

An equalities assessment is not required as this project does not affect or impact on people's circumstances. Access to buildings is compliant with all laws and regulations.

Climate Emergency

Measures will be put in place to reduce the amount of waste generated from the respective cafes and to include more sustainable take away options which will include reusable, biodegradable and recyclable packaging. The new Activity Centre building is Wokingham Borough Councils first net carbon facility which contributes to meeting our targets.

List of Background Papers
None

Contact Richard Bisset	Service: Place and Growth
Telephone 07952 147782	Email Richard.Bisset@wokingham.gov.uk

TITLE	Enhanced Partnership
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 24 June 2021
WARD	None specific
LEAD OFFICER	Steve Moore, Director, Place and Growth
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Highways and Transport - Pauline Jorgensen

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

The Executive are being asked to agree to Wokingham Borough Council giving notice to establishing an Enhanced Partnership (EP) under the Bus Services Act 2017 by 30th June 2021.

The Department for Transport (DfT) released the National Bus Strategy (NBS) – Build Back Better on 15th March 2021. The NBS identifies Enhanced Partnerships as an expectation of all LTAs in achieving better bus services which are more locally accountable.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive agrees to Wokingham Borough Council giving notice to establishing an Enhanced Partnership (EP) under the Bus Services Act 2017.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Bus Strategy for England – Bus Back Better (NBS) was published on 15th March 2021 and sets the expectation that all Local Transport Authorities will take the opportunity to review their local bus networks, produce a local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and agree an Enhanced Partnership (EP) with local bus operators.

The BSIP and EP is an opportunity for local transport authorities to work in partnership with all local transport operators to redesign bus services and community transport provision to better meet local needs. There are three key dates and associated requirements which the NBS sets out, these are:

1. 30th June 2021 – give notice of intent to form an Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators. This is not a legally binding commitment.
2. 31st October 2021 – publish a local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). This is not a legally binding document.
3. 1st April 2022 – to have in place an Enhanced Partnership agreement with local transport operators. This is a legally binding agreement.

Local authorities who take the opportunity to give notice to form an EPs will be supported with capacity and capability funding for staff/consultancy support and will continue to receive COVID recovery funding from June 2021 onwards.

The NBS was also accompanied by a £3 billion transitional funding pot. The quality and ambitiousness of the BSIP and the Enhanced Partnership agreement will be directly linked to future levels of local authority funding allocations and bid funding from this transitional funding pot.

The Council has to make a commitment to the Enhanced Partnership by 30th June 2021 and if it does not do so by this date it could have serious financial implications for the Council. The Chief Finance Officer has deemed this decision as “urgent” in accordance with the Constitution and if agreed it is therefore not subject to call-in.

BACKGROUND

The key dates and commitments which local authorities are requested to meet are set out below.

Key Date	What LTAs are required to do	Commitment
30 th June 2021	Give notice of an intent to form an Enhanced Partnership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An agreeing in principle to forming an enhanced partnership. • This is <u>not</u> legally binding.
31 st October 2021	Publish a Local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is <u>not</u> a legally binding document nor a statutory document. • This document contains the high-level vision of how a Council and bus operators want to improve bus services in the borough. • The quality and ambitiousness of the BSIP will be directly linked to future funding allocations and bid funding. • The BSIP will continue measurable targets which must be reviewed and published every 6 months. It is for Council to identify what the most appropriate targets and outcomes for the BSIP are.
1 st April 2022	To have in place an Enhanced Partnership agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will be a <u>legally binding</u> partnership agreement between the Council and local bus operators. <u>The agreement must be agreed by operators representing 80% of the operated mileage.</u> • The EP agreement must be negotiated and consulted with <u>all</u> local transport operators. Not all operators are obliged to join the agreement, however <u>only services which form part of an EP agreement will continue to receive government funding.</u> • The EP will need to include any measures or facilities which all parties agree to provide to improve bus services. The Council and the operators will then be <u>legally obligated</u> to deliver on these commitments. • DfT guidance suggests commitments should focus on vehicles, marketing, ticketing & fares and the routes in terms of timings and frequencies.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operators must give an undertaking they will comply with the EP scheme when registering services, or the registration maybe refused and therefore the service cannot be operated. • The EP will include the mechanisms for variation and termination.
--	--	--

Next Steps for the next 6 months

1. To give notice to form an Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators.
2. To set-up an internal working group within the Council to agree our key requirements for the bus service improvement plan and EP agreement.
3. To hold discussions with all local transport operators, including the community transport operators and the volunteer driver sector on the operation of transport in Wokingham Borough.
4. To negotiate with local transport providers on detailed measures and facilities which will form part of the schemes in the Enhanced Partnership.
5. Agree a passenger charter with local transport operators as to the level and quality of services our residents can expect.
6. To bring back information to Executive prior to the BSIP being adopted and the EP being made.

Implications

The timescale as defined by the DfT is extremely challenging and will preclude any significant consultation with residents and key stakeholders as it currently stands.

BUSINESS CASE

If we do not issue a notice of intent, then we will lose between £600,000 and £1.5m (full year affect) in 2021/22.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	£100,000 is allocated from DfT, this is yet to be determined if this sufficient.	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	TBC	TBC	Revenue

Following Financial Year (Year 3)	TBC	TBC	Revenue
-----------------------------------	-----	-----	---------

Other Financial Information
The recommendation will cost £0 if it is agreed and will avoid a revenue loss of approximately £500,000

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
Not applicable at this stage – but will be addressed before any binding agreement is reached.

Public Sector Equality Duty
Not applicable at this stage – but will be addressed before any binding agreement is reached.

Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i>
Not applicable at this stage.

List of Background Papers
National Bus Strategy

Contact Rebecca Brooks	Service Customer and Localities
Telephone Tel: 0118 908 8302	Email rebecca.brooks@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

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:	9 th April 2021
Service:	Highways and Transport
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Commitment to an Enhanced Partnership and Local bus Service Improvement Plan
Completed by:	Rebecca Brooks
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Not yet.
Signed off by:	
Sign off date:	

161

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:
Purpose: <ul style="list-style-type: none">To make a decision on a commitment to forming an Enhanced Partnership Agreement with local bus operators and producing a Bus Service Improvement Plan. The decision is one which is required by the National Bus Strategy which was released by Department for Transport 15th March 2021.
Expected outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">To commit to an Enhanced Partnership agreement and a bus service improvement plan

- To allow the council to continue to receive Covid recovery funding to support bus services beyond 30th June 2021.
- To allow Highways and Transport to work with stakeholders to develop a plan for improved bus services.

Services corporate plan:

- This aligns with the Corporate Plan to Keep the Borough moving by tackling congestion and enabling safe and sustainable travel around the Borough with good transport infrastructure. This also supports our partners in offering affordable, accessible public transport with good links between services and different modes of transport.

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

How is the project delivered:

- By drafting a Bus Service Improvement Plan
- By forming an Enhanced Partnership

Governance:

- Monthly stakeholder meetings and Executive member updates
- Final plan and partnership agreement to be agreed by Executive

Stakeholders:

- CTU – Rebecca Brooks
- Council Service Areas – Adult Services, Childrens Services, Strategy and Commissioning, Highways Development Management
- Local Bus Operator

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

- Local Bus Operators – through an agreement to work in partnership and provide better highway conditions for bus travel
- Residents, Employees and Visitors to the Borough – if the decision is taken to go ahead with an EP and BSIP, better, more convenient and easier to understand bus services, which are safer and more accessible.

<p>Outline any associated aims attached to the project, policy change or service change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the potential to set the foundations for policies and ultimately service delivery which reduces congestion, carbon emissions and air pollutants • Has the potential to set the foundations for policies and ultimately service delivery which improves accessibility and the usability of public transport across the borough.

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 impact	
Gender:	No impact	
Disabilities:	Positive High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential Accessibility Improvement to bus stops and bus services should have a positive impact.
Age:	Positive High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better bus services would disproportionately benefit young people who are too young to drive • Better bus services would disproportionately benefit those of pensionable age who have concessionary bus passes
Sexual orientation:	No impact	
Religion/belief:	No impact	
Gender re-assignment:	No impact	
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No impact	
Marriage and civil partnership:	No impact	

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....

Date:....

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix - Enhanced Partnership Report

Bus Services currently operated by Reading Buses in Wokingham Borough:

Service	Frequency	Area Served	Funding Source
Leopard 3/8/9	Every 20 mins to Arborfield & hourly to Wokingham & every 30 mins to SoM4	Reading – Shinfield – Arborfield– Finchampstead & Wokingham	developer S106 funded
Lion 4/X4	Every 15 minutes	Reading – Wokingham– Bracknell	Commercial
Tiger 7		Reading – Three Mile X– Swallowfield – Riseley	Commercial weekday WBC funded evenings and weekend
Orange 13/14 (circulars)	Every 30 mins, giving a combined frequency of every 15	Reading – Woodley	Commercial
Little Oranges 19a/c (circulars)	Every 60 mins, giving a combined frequency of 30 mins	Reading – Woodley – Silverdale Road	funded by WBC
Little Oranges 19b	Hourly	Reading – Lower Earley (Beech Lane / Chatteris Way)	Commercial
Claret 21	Every 15 mins	Reading – Lower Earley (Rushey Way)	Commercial
Services 92 & 93	School Services	Lower Earley to Bohunt School Wokingham to Bohunt School	commercial, but includes payment for eligible students
Winnersh Triangle P&R	Every 15 mins	Reading to Winnersh Triangle	Commercial

Bus Services operated by Thames Valley Buses in Wokingham Borough:

Service	Area Served	Funding Source
121	Norreys Estate – Wokingham - Tesco	WBC funded with some support from Tesco & S106
122/123	Woosehill – Emmbrook - Wokingham	WBC funded
124	Wokingham – Waterloo Road	WBC funded
125/A/B	Reading – Lower Earley (Rushey Way)	Commercial

128/9	Lower Earley to Bohunt School Wokingham to Bohunt School	commercial, but includes payment for eligible students
151/151A	Reading to Winnersh Triangle	Commercial