



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** will be held in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **THURSDAY 28 OCTOBER 2021 AT 7.00 PM**

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

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 20 October 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/qJAemijQB_o

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.
47.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence	
48.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on 30 October 2021.	5 - 16
49.		DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest	
50.		STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF COUNCIL To receive a statement from the Leader of Council.	
51.		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	
52.		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

52.1 None Specific

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

Question

At the 17th September 2020 meeting of Council I asked a member question item 65.3 refers, related to the Winter Maintenance Plan.

The Highways Winter Maintenance Plan indicates that it will be reviewed annually. On that basis, what additional walking and cycling routes will be included in the 2021/22 Plan to ensure that these routes are safe and usable throughout the winter period for pedestrians and cyclists?

Matters for Consideration

53.	None Specific	REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FY2021/22 - QUARTER TWO	17 - 32
54.	None Specific	CAPITAL MONITORING 2021-22 - QUARTER 2	33 - 40
55.	None Specific	BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (BSIP)	41 - 46
56.	None Specific	COMMUNITY DELIBERATIVE PROCESS FOR THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY PROPOSAL	47 - 68

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Executive may exclude the press and public in order to discuss the Part 2 sheets of Agenda Item 56 above and to do so it must pass a resolution in the following terms:

That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) as appropriate.

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.

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE EXECUTIVE
HELD ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 FROM 7.00 PM TO 7.55 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: John Halsall (Chairman), John Kaiser, Parry Batth, Graham Howe, Pauline Jorgensen, Stuart Munro, Gregor Murray, Wayne Smith, Bill Soane and Phil Cunnington (substituting Charles Margetts)

Other Councillors Present

Rachel Bishop-Firth
Stephen Conway
David Hare

38. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Charles Margetts.

39. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 29 July 2021 and the Extraordinary Executive meeting held on 29 July 2021 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Leader of Council.

It was noted that there was a typo in the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting and that the meeting had taken place in the evening and not the morning.

40. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor John Halsall declared a Personal Interest in Item 43 Procurement of Adult Social Care Voluntary Sector Service on the grounds that he was a Non-Executive Director of Optalis.

Councillor John Kaiser declared a Personal Interest in Item 43 Procurement of Adult Social Care Voluntary Sector Service on the grounds that he was a Non-Executive Director of Optalis.

Councillor John Kaiser declared a Personal Interest in Item 46 Housing Allocations Policy 2021 on the grounds that he was a Non-Executive Director of WBC Holdings Ltd.

Councillor Stuart Munro declared a Personal Interest in Item 46 Housing Allocations Policy 2021 on the grounds that he was a Non-Executive Director of WBC Holdings Ltd.

Councillor Wayne Smith declared a Personal Interest in Item 46 Housing Allocations Policy 2021 on the grounds that he was a Non-Executive Director of WBC Holdings Ltd.

41. STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF COUNCIL

The Leader of Council made the following statement:

It is now nineteen months since our first Covid case. The rate of new Covid cases within the Borough remains high and is rising as we begin to see the impact of returning to school and returning to workplaces. The current rate is 296 per 100,000 (compared to 211 this time last week) and this is expected to continue to rise further over the coming weeks. The rate within the Borough remains slightly above, but in line with, the rates across the South-East (280 per 100,000). Most cases continue to occur within the school age

population, in line with the rest of the country. We must remain cautious and continue to work hard to reduce transmission of the virus within our Borough.

We are working closely with our Head Teachers and school communities through the Children's Services Taskforce in the management of Covid within their settings. This work has increased over the past week, and we will continue to do all that we can to support Head Teachers who are facing an incredibly challenging term. The vaccination programme of 12–15-year-olds within schools is underway and whilst the responsibility for the programme is with Central Government, we are working to support schools, particularly with the anti-vaccination messages that they are receiving. I am reliably told that our teenagers are doing a remarkable job in masking and being vaccinated. So, thank you all if anybody is on this call.

Covid marshals are providing support to schools on the day of vaccination, as well as offering reactive support should it be needed. In addition, marshals are proactively walking routes to our secondary schools to look for any anti-vaccination communication or activity. The Children's Services taskforce are collating questions and concerns from the parent community and school which will shape any further communication and support.

Finally, we are working closely with our colleagues in the CCG and in primary care as the Covid booster programme begins to be rolled out to the 60,000 residents that are eligible.

Therefore Covid 19 is far from over and we continue to step up and play our part in responding to the pandemic, working closely with our Health partners and the voluntary sector as we do this. My message to you remains consistent; please follow Public Health advice, be considerate of others and please do take up your vaccinations and encourage others to do so.

This Council has taken its financial management responsibilities very seriously over many years which is why, unlike others, we have been able to fund vital additional support to our community throughout this awful period in our history. We want to also be able to provide valuable support to our community in the future, both in the context of our response to the pandemic and enabling our community to recover as best it can.

However, it is important we recognise that we face yet another financial precipice to navigate: We have the long-term impact of Covid-19 meaning there is a greater need for local authority support. We must ensure we find funds to enable the delivery of our Recovery Strategy. We are facing significant inflationary pressures impacting on our services and Capital programme ambitions, these include gas prices and the cost of building materials, and probably most significantly, we have a potential multi-million-pound burden following the recent NHS and Social Care announcements. Many of these pressures are already upon us and others will be taking their toll over the coming years. We cannot afford to take our hands off the financial tiller and must continue to collectively steer our way through turbulent and challenging times. I have no doubt we have the right calibre of personnel and officers on board to do this with great effect.

Up ahead is one of the most significant Local Government Finance Settlements this Council has faced in a very long time. It will determine the grant funding we have to deal with our challenges over, I suspect, the next three years. It is essential we get a fair deal for this Council and our residents. I and my Executive will do everything in our power to press home the case for Wokingham. I am just grateful that my contact with Government and MPs is so very good. Regrettably I cannot determine the outcome of such a national

funding settlement. So, whilst doing all I can to bring pressure to bear to get the funding settlement our residents and our Borough deserve, it remains incumbent on us to relentlessly pursue value for money in all we do and continue to practice the highest standards of financial management in delivering vital services for our community. Therefore, we are reviewing our revenue income and expenditure, and our capital budget, particularly if unsupported.

Whilst I am a strong adherent of maximising the recycling rate, I could not support Shirley Boyt's motion on public waste receptacles as it would place adverse pressure on both our capital and revenue budgets at this critical time. Had we had time we would have proposed an amendment.

We were due to discuss the lease for a proposed new library for Twyford this evening but are now not able to do so. The recent and rapid increase in building costs across the country necessitates pause to consider how we ensure value for money for all our residents. A recent tender exercise for the work required for this project revealed a significant increase of above previously planned and budgeted costs. It is well known that I have personally husbanded this project with my Executive and invested much time and political capital to its realisation, with very little local Member or parish council tangible support. So, it is a real disappointment that we must pause our efforts.

This is simply not the moment to be cavalier with our capital spending. We are beginning to see the consequences of other authorities over-stretching themselves and getting into financial problems and these consequences are not pleasant. We have always been prudent and will continue to be so to safeguard services and quality of life for all residents.

I understand this will be disappointing and want to assure everybody that we remain supportive of the principle of the new library and that this is a pause to allow us time to make the right decision.

I have been very lenient with questions to the Executive and have done my best for them all to be answered. However, I would point out that the total permitted time is twenty minutes.

A questioner who has put a question in person may also put one supplementary question without notice. A supplementary question must arise directly out of the original question or the reply and must not introduce any new subject matter. I will reject a supplementary question on any of the grounds in Rule 5.4.37. A supplementary question must not be longer than one minute. If I consider that the questioner is making a statement, I will rule that the questioner be not further heard.

42. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

43. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

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

43.1 Prue Bray had asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question. Due to her inability to attend the following written answer was provided:

Question

At the Executive in July, you gave out the figures for the numbers of houses given planning permission in Hurst, Shinfield, Arborfield and Winnersh between 2010/11 and 2019/20. What are the figures for the number of additional dwellings actually built in each of those Parishes between those dates?

Answer

As explained in my answer of 29 July, the strategy established by the Core Strategy local plan was to meet the majority of our development needs in four major development areas: North Wokingham, South Wokingham, Arborfield Garrison and South of the M4. A remainder of development needs would be met on the edge of our towns and villages.

This approach has enabled significant infrastructure to be provided alongside new homes, helping to mitigate the impacts by providing an opportunity to access local services, facilities, and the need to reduce travel. This approach has enabled us to have the opportunity to retain the character of our towns and villages through actions such as the retention of gardens.

The Core Strategy was prepared in consultation with residents and stakeholders. Views expressed through residents to more recent planning consultations continue to suggest that the preference of residents is to meet the majority of development needs through major development areas.

Turning to the specific request, the number of dwellings built over the ten year period specified across the Borough are as follows:

Parish	Completions (net) 2010/11 to 2019/20
Arborfield	276
Barkham	255
Charvil	22
Earley	138
Finchampstead	95
Hurst	24
Remenham	1
Ruscombe	53
Shinfield	1,897
Sonning	21
Swallowfield	82
Twyford	45
Wargrave	65
Winnersh	521
Wokingham	2,900
Wokingham Without	136
Woodley	1,195

Strategic Development Locations and related parishes:

1. South of the M4 SDL = Shinfield Parish
2. Arborfield Garrison SDL = Arborfield, Barkham and Finchampstead Parishes
3. North Wokingham SDL = Wokingham Town
4. South Wokingham SDL = Wokingham Town and Wokingham Without Parish

43.2 Gary Cowan had asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question. Due to his inability to connect the following written answer was provided:

Question

Wayne, I did bring a series of questions concerning ongoing works currently taking place on Gravelpit Hill Lane to the attention of Officers, the Leader and yourself among others going back to early August asking has the Borough Council seen and approved these plans and if so, why has there been no planning Application submitted.

My question is why have I not had a reply to my questions from anyone including yourself within Wokingham Borough Council?

Answer

Between early August and the receipt of the question, the following emails about the engineering works to the dam have been received from Gary Cowan (GC) and responses provided:

GC	3/8/21	12.25
FH	3/8/21	17.11
GC	4/8/21	7.45
GC	4/8/21	11.02
GC	4/8/21	11.03
GC	6/8/21	11.19
MC	6/8/21	12.19
GC	6/8/21	12.34
GC	7/8/21	12.18
GC	8/8/21	10.56
GC	9/8/21	10.46
MC	9/8/21	12.02
GC	9/8/21	12.33
MC	9/8/21	12.40
GC	9/8/21	14.52
MC	10/8/21	14.49
GC	10/8/21	16.40
MC	10/8/21	16.55
GC	10/8/21	17.42
GC	10/8/21	19.44
MC	11/8/21	9.02
Question for Executive Member received	12/8/2021	
GC	13/8/21	12.19
GC	23/8/21	14.12
Susan P	24/8/21	17.13

In addition to the above, there has been responses to Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints and the offer of a meeting with Assistant Director Mark Cupit.

There has been a further ongoing email exchange throughout September and a meeting has been arranged on 7 October with Assistant Director Stephen Brown.

43.3 Stephen Conway asked the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Communities the following question:

Question

I am delighted to see the lease for the new Twyford Library recommended for approval by the Council's Executive. Assuming that the Executive does indeed approve, can the Executive Member give some indication of the timetable for the conversion work and likely date of the opening of the new library?

Answer

I will not go into detail of your proposed first choice of question, obviously that has been pretty well answered.

The Council has an excellent track record of sound financial management and maintaining high quality services for our residents.

The Council will need to consider the financial consequences of this project alongside the other pressures we are facing, so that we can continue to maintain our core objective of protecting the services that our residents rely on.

A key part of the considerations for this project will include discussions with the Polehampton Trust to understand their view on the challenges we face and how this project continues to support their objectives for supporting the people of Twyford, Ruscombe and Charvil.

Supplementary Question

I understand that you cannot answer the original question in terms of the timetable given. This pause, and I hope indeed that it is a pause. John indicated that is just a pause which is good news, I think. Could I ask you that when we do move to the stage of moving to the conversion work, and you are able to consider a likely opening date, could we consider naming part of this new building after the late Dave Turner who was one of the Polehampton Trustees? John would know him very well, and I readily acknowledge the work that John has put into this, but I think we should also recognise Dave Turner's contribution. I am hoping that we might be able to perhaps name one of the rooms in the new library after him in recognition of his considerable efforts on this project.

Supplementary Answer

I also knew Dave Turner very well, and I know the amount of work that he put into this and the work that he did within the Twyford community. It is a consideration that we will take very seriously, and I would like to think that we are able to do that, but obviously that will need to be a consideration taken by Council Members rather than just me. Personally, I would like to see it happen.

43.4 David Hare asked the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question which was answered by the Deputy Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services in his absence:

Question

May I congratulate the officers in this enterprising paper, support for the preventative service is something I have long advocated. You are increasing the money available to the voluntary services excellently in 2022/3 but the increase in 2023/4 is only £100km that

is 5% or not much more than inflation. As the voluntary sector grows due to more certainty that this funding provides along with increased demand and need will further monies be available to fund new preventative and first step services that are valuable assets to the Council?

Answer

Thank you for supporting this paper on the procurement of voluntary sector adult services. I am pleased to note that we have cross party support as far as I can find, for our approach to the much-valued voluntary sector. The first point to make here is that inflationary increases are dealt with from a separate additional funding stream in the MTFP. The details of this are agreed through an annual inflationary uplift process. This means that the £600K increase over 2 years is in the region of a 30% gross increase against our early intervention and prevention agenda. I think you will agree this is impressive given the pressures on local government and the uncertainty we have in central government funding going forward.

We will of course keep this under review each year through our budget setting process and will be having regular conversations with the Voluntary Sector providers as part of our contract monitoring and management process. Our ambition is that if the new spend successfully helps us manage demand and we can afford it we will of course consider more investment having evaluated any requirements raised by our providers and taking into account our own view of the services in place alongside any changing needs in this sector.

We recognise that funding is a difficult issue for the voluntary sector and that they are dependent on a number of funding streams to support their viability. We cannot and will not ignore the invaluable contribution made by the voluntary sector and we will continue to support them to maximise those external streams which are available to them.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for that answer and certainly, as I have said, it is something that I have advocated for many years, last time I was on the Council as well, not always with success. With regards to new services required by the Council from the voluntary sector, has an investigation been done in areas other than dementia into the gaps in voluntary service that are already offered, and the way new services can be provided by the voluntary sector to enhance the lives of residents?

Supplementary Answer,

Yes, thank you for that David. I think that you will hear in my speech later that there has been quite a big consultation process across the voluntary sector services to understand where they can identify gaps, as well as the ones that we can identify, and to put in place the best options that we have so that we can procure appropriately. That is really at the core of this paper, and supports those procurements on an ongoing basis.

43.5 Rachel Bishop-Firth asked the Executive Member for Resident Services, Communications and Emissions the following question:

Question

I am very pleased to see on the report from the Climate Emergency Task and Finish Group that you see behaviour change science as a golden thread throughout the CEAP and that the Council will be encouraging public transport and active travel wherever possible. This will be vital in tackling the climate emergency.

What steps will you be taking to limit the number and length of journeys which are taken within the Borough?

Answer

Firstly, I have to say that we do not have the power to limit journeys and I would oppose any move to impose journey limits, quotas or restrictions on any resident. Actually, I am also pleased that we do not have the power to limit civil liberties because that sounds more like some form of totalitarian dictatorship rather a democracy, which for the sake of my children I would defend to my last breath. I am surprised that you used the word limit but for the record your Conservative council wants to help people be more sustainable, not force them to be. Unlike the Lib Dems we will not force people out of their cars. What we will do is support residents in reducing their need to travel. We will also support residents reduce their reliance on travelling by private car, by providing viable alternatives to those that want and are able to use them.

Delivering sustainable living through behaviour change is the single most important thing we can do in the fight against climate change. By engaging with experts in behaviour change and incentivising sustainable living we aim to remove the barriers that currently prevent residents from living the desired behaviours in their everyday lives. That means working with schools, via schemes such as Beat the Street, to get kids walking and cycling to school. It means working with businesses to reduce the expectation of their staff to commute into their workplaces. It means using the Planning Strategy to design communities where people of all ages have the opportunity to access a wide range of services without having to drive. We can remove the need for residents to use their cars without having to limit, restrict or quota their use. So, will I vote to limit car use? No. Will I prevent people from visiting relatives, to go to work or to take their kids to school because of an arbitrary quota or limit? No, I will not, and frankly I am disappointed that you would.

Supplementary Question

I am not quite sure how you have interpreted the question in such a way. Certainly, nobody could or would want to, try to force people, or to impose quotas on them. The Borough as a large employer in Wokingham has it in its gift to support in managing the number of unnecessary journeys which its staff need to take on WBC business. What steps is WBC going to take as an employer to explore the possibilities of hybrid working, to allow those staff who can do so to continue to work from home?

Supplementary Answer

Firstly, the reason why I have interpreted your question the way that I have is that in your question you say what steps will you be taking to limit the number and length of journeys which are taken within the Borough. You have used the word limit and so I have interpreted it as you want to limit the journeys that people are taking.

In terms of the Council as an employer, we already have a hybrid working policy. We had it before Covid, we maintained it during Covid, and we are looking to maintain it post Covid. Actually, as a result of work that has been done on hybrid working by the Council, we have reduced our carbon footprint of vehicles coming in and out of the Council by over 65%. That has been maintained during Covid and since, which is absolutely fantastic. The Shute End offices are not full of officers, again you will have seen that yourself when you come in, you will have seen that for Council meetings, and you could see it tonight if you had been here. We have to lead by example. We have a duty as an employer, but also as a community leader to lead by example. We cannot go to businesses and ask

them to reduce the number of days that they are expecting their staff to go into offices, if we are not offering the same ourselves to our staff, which is what we are doing already.

John Halsall, Leader of the Council:

If I could just be helpful. We have a huge piece of work going on at the moment which is called 'The Workplace Reimagined', which is looking to what we should be like in terms of a Council in the future, and it is a long-range piece of work, which will come to the Executive in the course of time when we know what it looks like.

44. OFFICERS RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Executive considered a report setting out the Officer response to the recommendations from the Climate Emergency Task and Finish following their review of the Wokingham Borough Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Councillor Gregor Murray, Executive Member for Resident Services, Communications and Emissions, introduced the report and highlighted that the Task and Finish Group had made 25 recommendations, many of which had been agreed by Officers. He provided an update on the implementation of some of the recommendations; work was being undertaken to ease commute related emissions; the Bus Service Improvement Plan was under development; roads not yet built would be reviewed where possible. In addition, a house refit trial was already in place. Revenue from the Barkham Solar farm would be reinvested into further climate initiatives, and a number of behaviour change experts had been invited to pitch ideas which could be implemented across the Borough.

RESOLVED: That the Officers' responses to the recommendations from the Climate Emergency Task and Finish Group, as set out in the report, be approved.

45. PROCUREMENT OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE VOLUNTARY SECTOR SERVICES

The Executive considered a report setting out a procurement business case for Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) Adult Prevention Services.

During his introduction the Deputy Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services advised that the proposed process would enable the Voluntary Sector to have more stable, long-term funding, whilst allowing the Council to direct providers into areas where there was a need for services.

Councillor Halsall praised the way in which the Voluntary Sector had worked with the Council during the pandemic.

Councillor Kaiser commented that the Voluntary Sector had had a positive input in reducing rough sleepers. He went on to state that the work of the Voluntary Sector should be seen a compliment to the work of the Council and not as a substitute.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the procurement business case for Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) Adult Prevention Services, as attached to the report, be approved;
- 2) the Director of Adult Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services be delegated permission to approve the contract and grant the award.

46. FUTURE PART PROVISION OF REGULATORY SERVICES BY WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL

The Executive considered a report seeking approval to enter into an agreement with West Berkshire Council to provide a limited range of regulatory services to the Council, in parallel with the bulk of regulatory services that were due to be delivered in-house.

Whilst introducing the report the Executive Member for Neighbourhood and Communities clarified the services that would be provided by West Berkshire Council which included regional and national capability for trading standards, food standards, air quality and animal welfare. In addition, West Berkshire's regulatory proceeds of crime and enforcement case preparation to support these functions would be retained.

Councillor Soane went on to highlight the benefits of having the anti-social behaviour service, back in house.

Councillor Halsall clarified that all services would be brought back in house but that some services would then be sub-contracted back to West Berkshire Council, whilst the Council retained authority. He went on to clarify that the measurement of air quality would be undertaken by West Berkshire Council but not the mitigation measures.

A cross party Task and Finish Group would look at policy issues for the different elements of legislation.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) an agreement be entered into with West Berkshire District Council for the provision of certain regulatory functions under s113 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as set out in the report), from 1 April 2022 until 8 January 2027; and
- 2) the Director of Place and Growth and the Deputy Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer), in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Housing, be delegated the agreement of the final terms with West Berkshire and completion of the agreement.

47. TWYFORD LIBRARY LEASE

This item was withdrawn.

48. HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY 2021

The Executive considered a report setting out a draft Housing Allocations Policy for consultation.

During his introduction the Executive Member for Finance and Housing sought approval to consult on the draft Housing Allocations Policy 2021. The consultation would ask responders to give their views on how social housing was allocated across the Borough, and would last 6 weeks. The Council's Housing Allocation Policy was last updated over 6 years ago.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the draft policy be agreed to go out to consultation. The proposed external consultation period is six weeks;

- 2) the Director of Place and Growth, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Housing, be delegated authority to adopt and implement the Housing Allocations Policy following consultation.

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TITLE	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report FY2021/22 - Quarter Two
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 28 October 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 deliver the Council Priorities for the Community, ensuring the efficient effective and safe use of resources.

The Council agrees and sets its budget in the February preceding the current financial year and this report seeks to update Executive on the budget position throughout the year and provide an estimate of the outturn position and impact on balances at year-end (31 March 2022).

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive is asked to:

- 1) note the financial impact of the COVID-19 crisis as illustrated in the Executive Summary;
- 2) note the overall forecast of the current position of the General Fund revenue budget, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) illustrated in the Executive Summary and appendices attached to the report;
- 3) approve a supplementary estimate of £151,270 for Equalities and Diversity programme;
- 4) approve a supplementary estimate of £250,000 for the re-integration of Trading Standards and Environmental Health to WBC. This money was identified in last years Medium Term Financial Plan to be spent in 2022/23 however the project costs are forecast to now be spent in 2021/22 rather than 2022/23.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is to allow the Executive to note the current expenditure to date (as at 30 September 2021) for the second quarter of the current financial year and to inform the Executive of the forecast outturn positions for 2021/22 for the Council's net revenue expenditure, its General Fund Balance (GFB), the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), and the Schools' Block funding.

Recommendation 1 – Financial Impact of Covid-19

The financial impact from Covid-19 continues to be present as highlighted in the table below. 2020/21 was a challenging year financially, with a full year impact of £0.4m reported in the Outturn Report to June 2021 Executive. For 2021/22, we are estimating a full year impact of £0.2m. This relates largely to areas which had significant pressures in 2020/21 and includes loss of income across many services and the impact on costs of the leisure services the Council provide. In addition, the emergency grant support from central government has reduced for this year, adding to the pressure.

Although we are forecasting a net impact from Covid-19 of £0.2m, this has improved from the £0.6m forecast in quarter one. This is due to favourable movements which include an improved position on the impact on leisure services, a reduction in the impact from lost car parking income and an improved position on delivery of saving plans. These have been offset in part by some additional cost pressures around Children Services legal costs and further emergency temporary accommodation costs.

Throughout the year, the financial impact from Covid-19 will continue to be monitored closely and reported to government monthly and reported quarterly to Executive. 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.

Back in December and January, the Executive agreed £1.7m of additional budget to support the Covid recovery. The majority of this budget was approved to be carried forward in the Outturn report at June Executive. This money will continue to support the recovery from Covid 19 throughout 2021/22. This budget is ringfenced to Covid-19 recovery and has been excluded from the table below.

	£,000
Additional Expenditure	£7,236
Lost Income	£2,245
Delayed Saving Plans	£250
3rd Party Income (CCG, Income compensation)	(£6,328)
Impact from Covid-19	£3,403
Less: Emergency Government Funding	(£3,187)
Net Impact from Covid-19	£216

Recommendation 2 – Current Position

The Executive has agreed to consider Revenue Monitoring Reports on a quarterly basis. In February 2021, the Council agreed and set its net General Fund (Revenue) budget at £147.763 million; following year end, this is to be further adjusted to account for agreed carry forward of budget and movements between directorates. This gives a working budget for each of the Councils Directorates. The working budgets and forecast outturn are shown in the table below.

Directorate	2021/22 – End of September Position				
	Approved Budget	Forecast Spend	(Favourable) / Adverse Variance (Forecast Less Budget) £,000	(Favourable) / Adverse Variance split into:	
				Business as Usual (BAU) £,000	Covid Impact £,000
Adult Social Care	£55,677	£55,827	£150	£0	£150
Chief Executive	£8,696	£8,696	£0	£0	£0
Children's Services	£36,560	£37,021	£461	£0	£461
Community, Insight & Change	£5,592	£6,437	£845	£0	£845
Place & Growth	£40,175	£41,111	£936	£0	£936
Resources & Assets	£1,109	£2,625	£1,516	£205	£1,311
COVID - Other	£0	(£300)	(£300)	£0	(£300)
COVID – Government Grant Funding	£0	(£3,187)	(£3,187)	£0	(£3,187)
Net Expenditure Total	£147,809	£148,230	£421	£205	£216

Further details of the outturn forecast position and variances are also shown in Appendix A. The main items of the variances identified to date are:

Adult Social Care & Health - BAU - No material variances identified.

Covid - The covid costs of £150k show the impact of early indications of increasing demand from the hospital discharge programme. The delay in the expected delivery of savings has been removed as the service is making significant progress towards achieving targets.

Children's Services - BAU - no material variances identified yet however unbudgeted placement costs of individuals on remand, stepping down from inpatient mental health services and unaccompanied asylum seekers are being offset by cost savings in other areas as the Directorate drives forward the transformation programme. Expenditure on statutory Home to School Transport has outstripped previous projections, largely as a result of a significant rise in the number of children and young people with an Education Health & Care Plan. Under the governance of the Corporate Transport Review, a robust programme of actions has been established to bring costs back in line with financial planning assumptions.

Covid - The £461k covid pressure reflects the ongoing financial impact on the service of supporting and safeguarding vulnerable children and families during the pandemic.

Changes to that previously reported are increased legal costs on particular complex cases and further loss of income from community facilities.

Communities, Insight & Change - BAU - No material variances identified.

Covid - c£0.8m Covid pressures relates mainly to additional costs for emergency accommodation and homelessness B&B costs. Additional resources to support communication on Covid 19. Some pressures relate to lost income (Libraries) and additional support service costs such as IT to support the WBC Infrastructure.

Place and Growth - BAU - No material variances identified.

Covid - c£0.9m Covid pressures consists mainly of lost income across car parking which will be compensated for in part from income claims to government. The compensating income is shown within the line called "other" on the table above.

Resources and Assets - BAU - £160k pressure from the dissolution of the Shared Legal Services and Internal Audit Shared Services with RBWM, £45k from budget risk due to lower number of schools signing up to managed services.

Covid - c£0.5m Leisure Contract Impact. Working closely on a regular basis with Leisure partner to review the full year impact. c£0.6m relating to our property portfolio, primarily operational property. c£0.1m lost income from activity and prevention programmes.

Emerging Pressures

The following items have been identified as emerging pressures which are being closely monitored. These include dual fuel prices rises, the Council is currently protected against energy price changes until April 2022 through our energy contracts. The current estimates for 2022/23 suggest an increase of c30% which would equate to c£300k impact.

The NJC pay award for 2021/22 has still not been resolved, a supplementary estimate will be brought forward once agreed. The current estimate is an impact is c£960k.

The Adult Social Care reform impact is expected from October 2023 with a full year effect expected from 2024/25 financial year. The impact is unknown at this stage.

Further information on these emerging pressures will be presented at later Executive meetings when required.

General Fund

Taking account of the net overspends above and the effect of Covid-19 pressures (if assuming no further government funding), the balance on the General Fund reserve as at 31 March 2022 is estimated to be c£10.2m. This remains a prudent level of reserves and above the minimum recommended reserve balance of £6.6m set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan. See Appendix B for further details.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The Housing Revenue Account is currently expecting to be on budget with no material variances. Some additional costs are expected around specialist cleaning due to Covid-19 however these are planned to be met within existing budgets. HRA reserves are estimated to be c£1.4m on 31 March 2022. This remains a prudent level of reserves and above the minimum recommended reserve balance of £0.9m set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan. See Appendix C for further details.

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, education and support for children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND), and to fund relevant support services.

The DSG is forecasting an in-year adverse variance of £3.1m against a total budget of £158m – this represents 1.9% of total income.

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 (HNB), 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.

Movement on the previous reported forecast of £600k (0.4% of total DSG income) reflects the movements and changes for the 2021/22 academic year. Previous forecast assumptions were based on 1,066 funded EHCPs by September 2021, an anticipated rise of 7% on that experienced in the previous academic year. The actual September position is 1,132 funded EHCPs, a rise of 14% on that experienced in June.

SEND Innovation & Improvement Programme / HNB Deficit Management Plan

The purpose of the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme (SEND IIP) is to deliver the SEND Strategy (0-25). It has 5 priority aims:

1. To strengthen local provision and quality of local practice
2. To improve the efficiency of processes (including timeliness and quality of EHCPs and the Annual Review process)
3. To ensure effective Transitions at all ages and stages
4. To strengthen sufficiency of local provision, more effective strategic commissioning and Value for Money, and greater impact on outcomes
5. All of the above enabled through effective and meaningful coproduction

The SEND IIP is a large, ambitious programme of improvement and innovation, which currently runs until December 2022.

In addition to improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND, the IIP is also designed to ensure that Wokingham gets the best value for money from its allocation of resources to support delivery of services for children and young people with SEND, and their families.

In order to achieve this, deliverables within the programme are being reviewed for their impact on Value for Money, particularly in terms of their contribution to containment of pressures on the High Needs Block (HNB), and ensuring that the full range of resources across the local area are used in an intelligence-led, smart and strategic way.

Some examples of projects and activities within the SEND IIP which will help to achieve this include:

- Strengthening SEND Team operations to monitor and manage every child and young person with SEND currently in the system and coming through, with details of needs, costs and likely future costs
- Develop new models of delivery to meet needs more cost effectively (including the Ordinarily Available project, Outreach support, training and development for professionals)
- Restructuring services to ensure efficient permanent teams are in place
- Redesign of Local Offer and IAG platforms for parents, carers and professionals to help make support, information advice and guidance easier to access
- Transform model of working with VCS providers to support fundraising & target their support around priority issues
- Strengthen arrangements around contracts, Service Level Agreements
- Work strategically with partners across the landscape of SEND provision, and national agencies, to develop the most robust and sustainable approach to the High Needs Block
- Sharpen the focus of multiagency work on strategic commissioning, addressing Wokingham budget and resource challenges
- Ensure through the Sufficiency Planning (see section below) that Wokingham builds and makes best use of local provision, and dependency on Out-of-Borough provision is addressed in a sustainable way

Addressing the challenges on the High Needs Block in the short term is complex, particularly in light of the continuing significant rise in the number of children and young people with an EHCP.

The significant work being taken forward under the governance of the SEND IIP provides a platform for a longer term reduction of out of borough placements, the key to unlocking financial sustainability. Work continues across a range of actions in support of that overall objective.

The Council are working closely with the Department for Education on the deficit management plan, with a meeting held in recent weeks to review with them the challenges faced locally and the ongoing significant programme of work being undertaken by WBC.

Future funding levels across local government finance are uncertain. The government has been clear they would keep plans under review given the unprecedented uncertainty of Covid-19, and as such a one-year Spending Review was announced by the Chancellor last November. While schools were identified as one of the 'cornerstone(s) of society', funding levels beyond next financial year are unclear. A major national review into support for children and young people with SEND was announced in 2019 by central government and it is therefore likely that future activity locally will be influenced by outcomes from that.

Appendix D provides a financial summary for the DSG.

Recommendation 3 – Supplementary Estimate

The Executive are asked to approve a supplementary estimate for £151,270 for the Equalities and Diversity programme. This investment will be targeted into the following key areas;

- Residents' Equality Forum
- BME Forum support
- Officer support for community capacity building
- Improve the experience of residents who need to communicate in other languages
- Easy Read Training Course
- Materials for EQIA Training

Recommendation 4 – Supplementary Estimate

The Executive are asked to approve a supplementary estimate of £250,000 for the re-integration of Trading Standards and Environmental Health to WBC. Budget was identified in last year’s Medium Term Financial Plan as a special item and profiled as £250,000 in 2021/22 and £250,000 in 2022/23. Costs are now expected to fall in this financial year and therefore we require £250,000 to be moved from 2022/23 into 2021/22.

As stated in the 18 March 2021 Executive report, liability costs relating to the dissolution of the Public Protection Partnership will be presented for consideration at a future Executive. These are still unknown at this stage.

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)	£0.4m	No, shortfall of £0.4m	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)			
Following Financial Year (Year 3)			

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 Duty assessment are undertaken during individual business cases.

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>
None – this is only a report on the financial position for quarter two.

List of Background Papers
Appendix A – Revenue Monitoring Summary Appendix B – General Fund Balance Appendix C – Housing Revenue Monitoring Summary Appendix D – DSG Monitoring Summary

Contact Mark Thompson	Service Business Services
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REVENUE MONITORING REPORT September 2021

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY

Directorate	End of Year Position					Comment on major areas of estimated over / (underspend) including impact from Covid 19
	Current Approved Budget	BAU Forecast (i.e. excluding Covid Impact)	Excl. Covid Net over / (under) spend	Covid Forecast	Incl. Covid Net over / (under) spend	
	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	
Resources and Assets	1,109	1,314	205	1,311	1,516	<p>BAU - £160k pressure from the dissolution of the Shared Legal Services and Internal Audit Shared Services with RBWM, £45k from budget risk due to lower number of schools signing up to managed services.</p> <p>Covid - c£500k Leisure Contract Impact. Working closely on a regular basis with Leisure partner to review the full year impact. c£600k relating to our property portfolio, primarily operational property. c£100k lost income from activity and prevention programmes.</p>
Chief Executive	8,696	8,696	0	0	0	No material variances identified.
Children's Services 25	36,560	36,560	0	461	461	<p>BAU - unbudgeted placement costs of individuals on remand, stepping down from inpatient mental health services and unaccompanied asylum seekers are being offset by cost savings in other areas as the Directorate drives forward the transformation programme. Expenditure on statutory Home to School Transport has outstripped previous projections, largely as a result of a significant rise in the number of children and young people with an Education Health & Care Plan. Under the governance of the Corporate Transport Review, a robust programme of actions has been established to bring costs back in line with financial planning assumptions.</p> <p>Covid - The £461k covid pressure reflects the ongoing financial impact on the service of supporting and safeguarding vulnerable children and families during the pandemic. Changes to that previously reported are increased legal costs on particular complex cases and further loss of income from community facilities.</p>
Adult Social Care & Health	55,677	55,677	0	150	150	<p>BAU - No material variances identified.</p> <p>Covid - The covid costs of £150k show the impact of early indications of increasing demand from the hospital discharge programme. The delay in the expected delivery of savings has been removed as the service is making significant progress towards achieving targets.</p>
Place and Growth	40,175	40,175	0	936	936	<p>BAU - No material variances identified.</p> <p>Covid - c£900k Covid pressures consists mainly of lost income across car parking which will be compensated for in part from income claims to government. The compensating income is shown within the line called "other" on the table above.</p>
Communities, Insight & Change	5,592	5,592	0	845	845	<p>BAU - No material variances identified.</p> <p>Covid - £845k Covid pressures relate mainly to additional costs for emergency accommodation and homelessness B&B costs. Additional resources to support communication on Covid 19. Some pressures relate to lost income (Libraries) and additional support service costs such as IT to support the WBC Infrastructure.</p>
COVID - Other	0	0	0	(300)	(300)	£300k income expected from Sales, Fees and Charge compensation scheme
COVID - Grant funding from Government	0	0	0	(3,187)	(3,187)	
Revenue Expenditure Total	147,809	148,014	205	216	421	

Emerging Pressures

- Duel Fuel Prices - currently protected against energy price changes until April 2022. Best estimates for 2022/23 suggest an increase of c30% which would equate to c£300k impact.
- Pay award - not yet resolved, supplementary estimate will be brought forward once agreed, likely impact is c£960k.
- ASC Reform - impact expected from October 2023

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Estimated General Fund Balance - 30th September '21

Note	£,000	£,000
1 Estimated General Fund Balance (as at 31/3/2021)		(£12,467)
Budgeted drawdown from general fund (as per MTFP)	£1,207	
		£1,207
<u>Supplementary Estimates</u>		
Mar 21 - Employment Hub	£10	
Mar 21 - Covid Winter Grant Scheme	£100	
Jun 21 - Digital Infrastructure Group	£16	
Jul 21 - Tone of Voice	£32	
Oct 21 - Equalities and Diversity programme	£151	
Oct 21 - Re-integration of Trading Standards and Environmental Health	£250	
Oct 21 - Deliberative Process Climate Emergency	£46	
		£605
<u>Service Variance (excluding COVID-19 Impact)</u>		
Adult Social Care & Health	£0	
Chief Executive	£0	
Children's Services	£0	
Communities, Insight & Change	£0	
Resources and Assets	£205	
Place and Growth	£0	
		£205
2 Estimated net impact from Covid - 19		£216
Estimated General Fund Balance 31/3/2022		(£10,235)

Notes

1. General balance as at 31/03/21 is estimated pending completion on the 2020/21 statement of accounts.

2. Based on assumption that no further funding comes from central government. The Council will continue to lobby for additional funding to cover the impact from Covid-19.

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REVENUE MONITORING REPORT September 2021

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Director: Steve Moore

Lead Member, Housing Services: John Kaiser

Service	Position at End of September			
	Full Year Budget	Full Year Forecast	Full Year Variance	
	£,000	£,000	£,000	
Rents	Expenditure	342	342	0
	Income	(15,006)	(15,006)	0
	Net	(14,663)	(14,663)	0
Fees & Charges / Capital Finance Charge	Expenditure	97	97	0
	Income	(125)	(125)	0
	Net	(28)	(28)	0
Housing Repairs	Expenditure	3,236	3,236	0
	Income	(30)	(30)	0
	Net	3,206	3,206	0
General Management	Expenditure	2,061	2,061	0
	Income	(110)	(110)	0
	Net	1,951	1,951	0
Sheltered Accommodation	Expenditure	266	266	0
	Income	(476)	(476)	0
	Net	(210)	(210)	0
Capital Finance	Expenditure	5,267	5,267	0
	Income	(59)	(59)	0
	Net	5,208	5,208	0
Subtotal Excluding Internal and Capital Charges		(4,535)	(4,535)	0
Internal and Capital Charges		4,535	4,535	0
Total		0	0	0

Housing Revenue Account Reserve	£,000	£,000
HRA Reserves as at 31st March 2021		(1,404)
- Planned contribution to reserves	(11)	
- Net Variance (Total)	0	
2021/22 - Net Spend against reserves		(11)
HRA reserves as at 31st March 2022		(1,415)

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REVENUE MONITORING REPORT September 2021
DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT MONITORING REPORT

	Position at end of September			Comment on major areas of estimated over / (underspend)
	Full Year Budget	Full Year Forecast	Full Year Variance	
	£000	£000	£000	
Schools Block including academies (excluding De-delegation)	120,919	120,919	0	No material variances identified
Early years	11,302	11,302	0	No material variances identified
High Needs Block	23,390	26,490	3,100	Continuing increase in the number of children and young people with EHCPs and demand for specialist placements. Movement in forecast reflects movements and additional placements for the new academic year.
31				
Central Schools Services Block (includes Growth Fund)	1,745	1,745	0	£0.5m in-year pressure on Growth Fund being funded from planned reserves
De-delegation	773	773	0	No material variances identified
Other schools grant	3,828	4,227	399	Offset by increased grants income below
Total expenditure	161,956	165,455	3,499	
Dedicated School Grant (DSG)	(158,128)	(158,121)	7	
Other School Grants	(3,828)	(4,227)	(399)	Increased grants passported to schools
Total income	(161,956)	(162,348)	(392)	
Total in-year (surplus) / deficit	0	3,107	3,107	In Year expenditure less income
Brought Forward (surplus) / deficit balance	0	6,535	6,535	Deficit brought forward from previous years
Total year end (surplus) / deficit	0	9,642	9,642	

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TITLE	Capital Monitoring 2021-22 - Quarter 2
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 28 October 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)

Effective use of our capital resources to meet the Council Plan investment priorities and delivering value for money for residents.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive is asked to:

- 1) approve and note the proposed rephrasing to the Capital Programme following the 'in-year' review, as set out in paragraph 3 and Appendix B. There is no financial / service impact from the reprofiling of budgets into 2022/2023;
- 2) note the position of the capital programme at the end of Quarter 2 (to 30 September 2021) as summarised in the report below and set out in detail in Appendix A;
- 3) To note the successful application for external funding of £98k, for allocation to new capital schemes to put in place a heat decarbonisation plan for 4 Leisure Centres, Bulmershe Secondary School and Waterford House (see paragraph 7 below).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report informs the Executive of the progress of the Council in delivering its capital programme for the financial year 2021/2022. The Executive have previously agreed to consider Capital Monitoring Reports on a quarterly basis and this report highlights the capital monitoring as at the end of the second quarter of the financial year (30 September 2021).
2. The COVID 19 pandemic continues to have a financial impact on the Council's finances, in terms of both its revenue and capital resources. It is therefore essential that the capital programme is closely reviewed to assess the assuredness of funding sources and if there have been any changes in service requirements. The Council on the other hand must recognise that capital investment will play an important role in local and regional recovery from the impact of the crisis.
3. The Council's finance team working with services across the council have conducted a review of the programme to identify rephrasing of projects to match expected delivery, taking account of the impact on the service delivery and project cost. The

review originally has identified £152.7 million of rephasing, in the second quarter of the year, this was adjusted to £184.9 million, and this is summarised below; a full list of the adjusted projects is at 'Appendix B - List of proposed rephasing of projects in Quarter 2' and Executive is asked to approve the updated rephasing of these projects.

4. The programme will continue to be monitored and reviewed throughout the financial year and any further rephasing will be notified to Executive for approval. Review of capital projects has identified a £8.2m savings (further detail in note 5 and on Appendix A).

Capital Monitoring Forecast Outturn Position for 2021/2022 (as at 30th September 2021):-

	£'million
Capital Programme approved at Council (Feb 2021)	204.4
Budget rephased from prior years (existing projects)	209.2
New Budgets added in year	0.8
Capital Approved Budget	414.4
Budget rephased to later years	(184.9)
Working Capital Programme	229.5
Forecast variances to the programme – savings	(8.2)
Forecast Capital Outturn	221.3

5. As at 30 September 2021, there are £(8.2)m savings variances to the capital programme identified. This are made up as follows:

<u>Analysis of material budget savings identified as at 30 September 2021</u>	£'million
<u>Place & Growth</u>	
GCN (Great Crested Newt) District Level Licence - External organisation to deliver requirements	(4.8m)
<u>Adult Social Care</u>	
ASC and Optalis Transformation Programme through utilisation of revenue budget to free up capital funding	(0.851)
Learning Disability Outreach and Overnight Respite Centre - Reduced scope of works via refurbishment rather than new build.	(0.7)
Following savings identified and projects to be considered as part of future MTFP projects	
Investment in Manual Handling Equipment to Reduce Domiciliary Care costs	(0.252)
Connected Care	(0.087)
<u>Resources & Assets –</u>	
Bulmershe Swimming Pool / Leisure Centre (new build) - Savings reflect efficiency achieved through streamlined procurement and design development, now operational post Covid	(0.766)

Town Centre Regeneration (Strategic acquisitions) – No further acquisitions expected	(0.714)
Total	(8.17)

The District Level Licence for £4.8m was a self – funded project, the other savings can be reinvested to fund other schemes in the capital programme.

6. All projects that have been rephased have been made in consultation with the project / programme managers and they confirm there is a nil or negligible impact of the re-phased programme on service delivery and the rephasing does not increase the cost of the project or have a revenue impact on the service area.
7. To note the successful application from the Salix, Low Carbon Skills Fund, for external funding of £98k, for allocation to new capital schemes to put in place a heat decarbonisation plan for 4 Leisure Centres (St Crispin’s, Arborfield, Loddon Valley and Ryeish Green), Bulmershe Secondary School and Waterford House.

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)	£221m	Yes	Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£185m	Yes	Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Tbc when 2022/23 budget set	Yes	Capital

Other Financial Information

None

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Stakeholders should be reassured of the effective management of the Council’s resources.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Equality assessments are carried out as part of each capital project

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 capital programme includes projects which help achieve our priorities in relation to climate change.

List of Background Papers
Appendix A: Capital Monitoring Summary Report for Quarter 2 (2021-2022)
Appendix B: List of proposed rephasing of projects in Quarter 2 to 2022-23

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CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT September 2021

Directorate	Current Approved Budget £,000	Current Approved Budget is split into:		Analysis of Current Year (Yr 1)		Comments on material variance (Under) / Overspend:
		Current Year (Yr 1) £,000	Next Year (Yr 2) £,000	Current Forecast £,000	(Under) / Overspend £,000	
<i>Notes</i>	1	2		3		
Adult Social Care & Health	16,783	5,898	10,886	4,008	(1,890)	- (£851k) Saving - ASC and Optalis Transformation Programme through utilisation of revenue budget to free up capital funding. - (£700k) Saving - Learning Disability Outreach and Overnight Respite Centre - Reduced scope of works via refurbishment rather than new build. The following in year savings identified and projects to be considered as part of future MTFP projects; - (£252k) Saving - Investment in Manual Handling Equipment to Reduce Domiciliary Care Costs - (£87k) Saving - Connected care.
Children's Services	22,993	14,058	8,935	14,064	7	No material variances identified at this stage
37 Communities, Insight & Change	9,667	9,080	587	9,085	5	No material variances identified at this stage
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	12,350	9,350	3,000	9,350	0	No material variances identified at this stage
Place & Growth	180,058	88,268	91,791	83,468	(4,800)	- (£4.8m) Saving - GCN (Great Crested Newt) District Level Licence - External organisation to deliver requirements.
Resources & Assets	172,485	102,791	69,695	101,310	(1,480)	£(766)k Saving - Bulmershe swimming pool/Leisure centre (New build) - Savings reflect efficiency achieved through streamlined procurement and design development, now operational post Covid £(714)k Saving - Town Centre Regeneration (Strategic acquisitions) - No further acquisitions expected
Total	414,336	229,443	184,893	221,285	(8,158)	

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 and amended quarterly into budgeted spend in current year and spend in next year.
- 3) Current forecast is estimated spend for the year.

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List of proposed rephasing of projects in Quarter 2 into Year 2 (2022/23)

The following table highlights the changes to the rephasing of the capital programme since Quarter 1. There is no material impact on service delivery or project cost.

Project	Amount £
Previous quarter 1 reprofiling into 2022/23	152,662,144

Since Q1, the following projects have been identified to be reprofiled to be spent in 2022/23.

Adult Social Care & Health

Older People's Dementia Home	250,000
Total - Adult Social Care & Health	250,000

Children's Services

Multifaceted Placement Hub (New build)	300,000
Sixth Form Expansion	250,000
Bohunt Secondary School	100,333
Care Leaver Supported Accommodation: Funding for renovation costs of Seaford Court	50,000
Care Leaver accommodation	50,000
Total - Children's Services	750,333

Place & Growth

SCAPE - Major Road infrastructure (distribution roads, etc)	17,596,310
Land Acquisition for Major Road Schemes	8,602,548
Toutley Highways Depot Modernisation	3,800,000
Self-Build Project	899,460
Borough Wide Non SDL Play Area Enhancement Project	690,000
New Eco-Crematorium	550,000
Completed Road Schemes Retention	327,570
Byways	188,502
Highway Drainage Schemes	120,000
Bus Stop Infrastructure Works to Support North Arborfield SDL Bus Strategy	62,500
Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) Additional Pitches	50,000
Total - Place & Growth	32,886,890

Resources & Assets

Renewable Energy Infrastructure projects	3,985,000
Wokingham Town Centre Regeneration - former Marks & Spencer's Site - Construction & refurbishment	500,000
Total - Resources & Assets	4,485,000

Further reprofiling into 2022/23	38,372,223
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The following three schemes were identified in quarter 1 as part of £153.6m reprofiling into 2022/23, these have now been identified as savings.

Adult Social Care & Health

Learning Disability Outreach and Overnight Respite Centre	(575,000)
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Place & Growth

GCN (Great Crested Newt) District Level Licence	(4,800,000)
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Resources & Assets

Bulmershe swimming pool/Leisure centre (New build)	(766,275)
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Savings identified	(6,141,275)
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Total reprofiling into 2022/23	184,893,092
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Agenda Item 55.

TITLE	Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 28 October 2021
WARD	None Specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Highways and Transport - Pauline Jorgensen

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

The Executive are being asked to agree to the publication of the BSIP document by 31st October 2021.

The BSIP document is a non-statutory document, however its publication is a national requirement by the National Bus Strategy (March 2021).

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive agrees to Wokingham Borough Council publishing the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) document by 31st October 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All local transport authorities are expected to publish a Local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) by 31st October 2021. The BSIP is a non-statutory document, written based on a nationally issued template, includes ambitious and aspirational policies, as well as locally set targets against nationally identified indicators. The BSIP will be reviewed annually and reported on every 6 months.

The BSIP is an opportunity to set out the Council's high-level ambition for future bus services which meet local needs. The BSIP does not include detailed schemes or consider improvements to specific services, this will be contained in a subsequent Enhanced Partnership agreement. The Enhanced Partnership agreement will need to be agreed with bus local transport operators by 31st March 2022.

Local transport authorities who publish a BSIP will be able to bid on future funding opportunities which form part of the £3 billion transitional fund for bus services. Local transport authorities may also receive a funding allocation based on how ambitious their BSIP is.

This item is being treated as an urgent item because a failure to publish a BSIP by 31st October 2021 will result in the loss of Bus Service Recovery Funding and potentially any future BSOG funding. Bus Service Recovery funding and BSOG funding is worth more than £500,000, with the exact amount to be determined by the level of on-board revenue taken by the bus operator during the Covid funding period.

BACKGROUND

The structure and content of the BSIP is based on a the nationally issued templated. The content of the BSIP is briefly outlined below with further details found in the attached BSIP document.

Section Heading	Contents
Overview	<p>Our vision and ambition for bus services:</p> <p>Vision: “for a bus network which provides our residents and visitors a choice in the way that they travel, reduces congestion on our roads, improves local air quality, and enables carbon neutrality by 2030.”</p> <p>Ambitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to enable local bus services to recover to pre-pandemic levels and then to facilitate the continued growth in bus passenger numbers - to grow our bus service provision to ensure the right level of service in the right place - a bus network which supports the continued economic growth of Wokingham Borough and the wider Thames Valley region - to improve accessibility to transport services and the local bus network for communities in more rural and low-density areas - to have a greener bus network which harnesses the greatest opportunities to reduce carbon emissions and provides residents with greener travel choices.
Current bus offer to passengers	<p>Analysis of existing local bus services compared to the BSIP outcomes which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frequency - Reliability and Speed of Local Bus Journeys - Fares and Ticketing - Comprehensiveness of the network - Ease of understanding the network - Integration with other transport - Bus Emissions and Green Vehicles - Customer Satisfaction - Innovation
Details of Spend	<p>Wokingham Borough Council is currently spending the following in relation to bus service provision each year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £810,400* towards supporting bus services - £920,400* on concessionary fares - £103,000 towards community transport and volunteer services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £ 16,6200* on Real Time Information (RTI) <p>In addition, the following S106 is spent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £380,000* supported bus services <p>(*based on 19/20 pre-covid spend and does not include BSOG or any COVID support funding which the Council will loss if the BSIP is not published)</p>
Targets	<p>The nationally set indicators which have locally set ambitious targets are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Average Journey Time - Punctuality (reliability) - Passenger Growth - Customer Satisfaction <p>The targets are not binding. Our progress against targets may affect future year funding allocations.</p>
Delivery	<p>Contains ambitious policies which the Council would want to implement, subject to funding, to achieve the ambitious local targets.</p> <p>Policies in the BSIP are split into two categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Area or corridor specific policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading- Wokingham – Bracknell Corridor - Reading – Shinfield – Arborfield – Wokingham - Reading-Three Mile Cross – Spencers Wood - Reading – Twyford – Wargrave – Henley - Earley /Lower Earley/ Maiden Erlegh - Woodley & North Earley - Wokingham and Surrounding areas - Rural and lower density areas 2. Theme based policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fares - Ticketing - Integrated with other transport (including Park and Ride) - Decarbonisation - Network Identify, Passenger Information, Promotion and Publicity - Modern Buses and Innovation - Passenger Charter <p>Our delivery against policies within the BSIP are not binding within the BSIP. Only those actions which are detailed in the Enhanced Partnership agreement are binding.</p>

Reporting	Provides details on the arrangements for reporting on each of the targets every six months and an annual review.
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Consultation

The timescale as defined by the DfT are extremely challenging and have preclude any significant consultation with residents. Key stakeholders such as bus operator, community and volunteer transport operators, rail operators, Town and Parish Councils and some community groups have been consulted.

A member working group has been set-up and meets on fortnightly basis. The working group has been informed of progress on the BSIP and spoken with local bus operators.

Next Steps

1. To publish the BSIP on the MyJourney website by 31st October 2021
2. To negotiate with local transport providers on detailed measures and facilities which will form part of the schemes to in the Enhanced Partnership.
3. Agree a passenger charter with local transport operators as to the level and quality of services our residents can expect.
4. To follow the statutory consultation process to make a legally binding Enhanced Partnership
5. To bring back an Executive report on the Enhanced Partnership Scheme prior to the Enhanced Partnership being made.

BUSINESS CASE

If we do not publish a BSIP, then we will lose between more than £500,000 (full year affect) in 2021/22. This amount is formed of the annual BSOG revenue funding and the potential loss of COVID Bus Service Recovery funding, which can vary depending on the level of on-board revenue taken by the bus operator on any given service as a result of COVID.

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	£150,000 is allocated from DfT.	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	TBC		

Following Financial Year (Year 3)	TBC		
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Other Financial Information
The recommendation will cost £0 if it is agreed and will avoid a revenue loss of more than £500,000 which is related to Covid Bus Service Recovery Funding and BSOG income that the Council receives in 2021/22 financial year.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
Consultation on the BSIP has been undertaken based on the advice provided by the Department for Transport.

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>
The BSIP includes ambitious policies which will help the Council reach carbon neutrality by 2030, for example by implementing electric buses.

List of Background Papers
Local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) <i>(Due to the size of this document it is not included in the agenda but can be found as a background paper on the agenda page on the website.)</i>

Contact Rebecca Brooks	Service Highways & Transport
Telephone Tel: 0118 908 8302	Email rebecca.brooks@wokingham.gov.uk

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TITLE	Community Deliberative Process for the Climate Emergency Proposal
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 28 October 2021
WARD	None specific;
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Resident Services, Communications and Emissions - Gregor Murray

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

The purpose of this report is to gain approval from the Executive to deliver a Community Deliberative Process for Climate Emergency as described in the proposal (Appendix A.) and to approve the funding required to deliver this process.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Executive:

- 1) approve the proposal to deliver a Community Deliberative Process for the Climate Emergency through deliberative peer groups and e-panels to engage the community with the Council's response to climate change;
- 2) approve £46,000 to fund the delivery of Community Deliberative Process for the Climate Emergency as described in the proposal (Appendix A);
- 3) note the key objectives and outcomes of the process for wider engagement with the community to empower stakeholders including but not limited to, Wokingham borough residents, young people, community groups and the business community to play as full a role as possible in achieving a net-zero carbon borough by 2030;
- 4) note that outcomes and recommendations from the process will be taken to Council next year with the commitment that their feasibility will be explored by officers. Officers will report back to Council to inform which recommendations will be incorporated into the Climate Emergency Action Plan to support further action.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 29th of July 2021 the Executive approved the recommendation to engage the community with the climate emergency through a community deliberative process.

Following this decision and based on the extensive review undertaken of deliberative engagement processes on climate emergency, the proposal to engage the community through deliberative peer groups and e-panels was developed (Appendix A). The proposal has been developed based on consultation with experts in the social research and community engagement fields.

The Community Deliberative Process will engage key stakeholders and a wide range of residents in discussions around the climate emergency and put forward recommendations to overcome our biggest challenges as a Council in achieving net zero carbon.

The key objectives of this process are:

- To empower residents, businesses, local organisations, schools and stakeholders to be part of the Borough's net-zero carbon 2030 vision.
- To support and improve the Council's response to the climate emergency by engaging the community and encouraging greater participation in the actions.
- To develop a greater understanding of the community's priorities in tackling the climate emergency that will inform decision making.
- To identify the key drivers and motivations for each audience so that our actions can be tailored to deliver improvements in these areas and encourage behavioural change.
- To generate recommendations for actions to achieve net zero carbon.
- To create a network of climate champions who will share learning and best practice.

Outcomes and recommendations from the process will be taken to Council to inform future decision-making and may be incorporated into the Climate Emergency Action Plan to help make Wokingham Borough net zero carbon by 2030 and address climate change, whilst improving the quality of life for all residents.

BACKGROUND

Tackling the climate emergency and addressing the levels of human derived carbon dioxide emissions is a national and international priority. In 2015, 191 parties of the United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change have committed to keep global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius or well below 2 degrees by the end of this century in the first ever legally binding global climate change agreement. Since then, the UK Government has committed to be reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050 by law, in the Climate Change Act (2008).

Wokingham Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019 and with it, committed to play as full a role as possible in achieving a carbon-neutral borough by 2030. The Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) was adopted in January 2020 followed by detailed annual progress reports approved at Council in July 2020 and July 2021. As part of the CEAP, the Council also committed to communicate and engage with residents and other stakeholders to work together to initiate education programmes and encourage behaviour change.

Community deliberative processes have been used by many local authorities and the UK government to discuss various issues including how to tackle the climate emergency. Policy decisions made to this end impact almost every policy area as well as the operational working of a governmental authority at any level. Due to the scale of the challenge, whichever combination of policy decisions are made, impacts the way every resident lives their lives and how every business and community group operates.

In April 2021, an extensive review of climate emergency community deliberative processes was carried out by the Council's climate emergency team. The Climate Emergency Community Deliberative Processes Options Appraisal Report was approved by Executive on 29th July 2021 with the commitment to present a proposal to Executive in October to establish the financial implications, timelines and expected outcomes from this process.

The Options Appraisal analysed fifteen varied options for community deliberation and scored these against factors which are of local importance to Wokingham Borough's particular challenges faced in tackling the climate emergency. The report incorporated information gathered from industry experts and case studies from other local authority's experiences in this field. Following this review, two methods of engagement were highly recommended: focus groups and e-panels.

To build on the results from the Options Appraisal and develop the proposal, further consultation with experts in the social research, public consultation and community engagement fields including APSE, the Consultation Institute, and Involve Community took place over the last few months. These organisations endorsed the process, giving constructive feedback which has been incorporated into the proposal set out below.

This proposal recommends the use of deliberative peer groups and e-panels to engage the community with the Council's response to climate change. The proposal explains how these methods will be incorporated into Wokingham Borough Council community deliberative process for the climate emergency.

Community Deliberative Processes Proposal

Deliberative peer groups

These are similar to focus groups in bringing sectors/audiences together, who will share similar experiences, challenges and motivations in tackling climate change. However, they differ in format and design as the groups will meet multiple times and will involve greater input and deliberation from them than is usually expected from a focus group. This option provides a level-playing field for ideas, greater opportunities for detailed discussion, a controlled space where all participants can contribute, bounce ideas off each other and generate new unique solutions to issues which the council may not have considered previously. Such high detail qualitative data is particularly useful to fully understand the motivations behind behaviours, what influences decisions and some of the barriers which may be preventing adoption of measures.

E-panels

In addition, the proposal includes the use of e-panels, to allow a wider group of residents the opportunity to be part of the deliberative process. Residents will be able to feedback on the recommendations made by the peer groups and grade them based on how effective they believe the recommendations will be in tackling the challenges at hand. This option is easy to use both for the council in terms of analysis and for residents to complete, being all done online. Enabling residents to input their ideas and feel included in the process, will increase their engagement with the climate emergency action plan and strengthen the commitment to become a net zero carbon borough by 2030.

By combining deliberative peer groups with e-panels, the council aims to verify the recommendations garnered from the peer groups within a wider audience. This will provide high quality feedback from the deliberation process and wider engagement with our community.

Project Delivery

There will be several parties, elements and stages to this extensive community engagement process.

There will be approximately 9 deliberative peer groups which are expected to be:

- Young People (Primary School age) & Parents
- Young People (Secondary School age)
- Teachers
- Residents (a representative and inclusive cohort including BAME residents)
- Voluntary Sector & Community Organisations
- Businesses
- Councillors
- Town & Parish Council Clerks
- Council Officers

Each group will be made up of around 10 participants. There will be exceptions to this limit on participants where necessary and is subject to change depending on the needs of the group and expert advice from facilitators.

As these are key stakeholder groups, those who agree to participate in these peer groups are likely to have a grounding knowledge or interest of or in the climate emergency. However, this does not mean participants will have the same views, level of knowledge or belief in climate change.

The recommendations from this deliberative peer group exercise will be collated and put to the residents E-panel. This is a wider ranging group of people who will be able to access these recommendations and grade them online before the report of the process is written up and recommendations are taken to Council to inform decision making.

The process will also include a Steering Group of experts in fields related to sustainability who will meet with the facilitators to act as a sounding board and critical friend to the process. The process will be overseen by the Oversight Panel to ensure the process is being followed and the aims and objectives are being met. Both of these groups will be consulted at the start and towards the end of the community deliberative process.

Facilitation services for all meetings are to be provided by a professional, independent organisation. This will have an associated cost as they will have expertise in community deliberation and consultation. The facilitation team should be external to the Council to ensure impartiality. This role should be carried out by experienced practitioners who can ensure that the deliberation environment is respectful.

The process will generate recommendations that will be taken to Council with the commitment that their feasibility will be explored by officers. Officers will report back to Council to inform which recommendations will be incorporated into the Climate Emergency Action Plan to support further action in Wokingham Borough to become a net zero carbon borough by 2030 and address climate change, whilst improving the quality of life for all residents.

Finance

The cost implications for the process as described in Part B include engaging skilled facilitators with experience in planning the discussion guides, selection and recruitment of relevant and diverse participants and supporting the delivery of the focus groups. Some costs may also arise from producing marketing materials, administrative capabilities and potential use of venues if the events are hosted publicly.

There is an assumption that participants will be volunteers, a scenario that is not unlikely due to the level of interest in this topic within the community. However, incentives have been considered in the cost of the process.

Internally, it will require significant staff time in preparation, support, delivery, and analysis of data. Some of these engagement methods are expected to be more resource-intensive than others and will require the support of multiple teams within the Council.

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)	£46,000	No	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	N/A	
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	N/A	

Other Financial Information
None

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
Stakeholder consultation will continue as we refine the process during the project planning stage. The Climate Emergency Action Plan is a council-wide project that requires all council services, investments and delivery projects to review and prioritise reducing carbon dioxide emissions where possible.

Public Sector Equality Duty
An Equalities Impact Assessment report has been completed and included as an Appendix to this proposal.

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>
The community deliberative process for the climate emergency will inform the Council in its future decision making around the climate emergency agenda through wide and extensive engagement with all key stakeholders and much of the wider community. The outcomes of this process will mean a more robust action plan to meet the commitment to become a net zero carbon borough by 2030.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
This is commercially sensitive because there will be a tendering process to support the project.

List of Background Papers
Appendix A. Proposal Community Deliberative Process for Climate Emergency Appendix B. EqIA Community Deliberative Process Part 2. Project Cost Description

Contact Diana Tovar	Service Place Commissioning
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Community Deliberative Process for Climate Change

• Introduction

Wokingham Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in July 2019, committing to becoming a net zero carbon borough by 2030. The council's Climate Emergency Action Plan to 2030 sets out the targets to be met and actions to be taken in order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions but this cannot be achieved by the council alone. Wide and holistic engagement is needed with the stakeholders and communities in Wokingham Borough in order to make the borough net zero carbon within this ambitious timescale.

To increase active engagement with the Climate Emergency agenda the council is putting forward a proposal to host a community deliberative process for climate change. This process will engage key stakeholders and a wide range of residents in discussions around the climate emergency and put forward recommendations to overcome our biggest challenges as a council in achieving net zero carbon.

Outcomes and recommendations from the community deliberative process will be taken to Council with the commitment that their feasibility will be explored by officers. Officers will report back to Council to inform which recommendations will be incorporated into the Climate Emergency Action Plan to support further action.

This document outlines the aims and outcomes of the community deliberative process, which parties will be involved, how the process will work as well as how it will feed back into the climate emergency action plan. Please note that this process is subject to change slightly based on further expert advice from the external facilitators once they are on board.

• Aims and Outcomes

The key objectives of this process are:

- To empower residents, businesses, local organisations, schools and stakeholders to be part of the Borough's net-zero carbon 2030 vision.
- To support and improve the council's response to the climate emergency by engaging the community and encouraging greater participation in the actions.
- To develop a greater understanding of the community's priorities in tackling the climate emergency that will inform decision making.
- To identify the key drivers and motivations for each audience so that our actions can be tailored to deliver improvements in these areas and encourage behavioural change.
- To generate recommendations for actions to achieve net zero carbon.
- To create a network of climate champions who will share learning and best practice.

• Background

In July 2021 the Executive approved the recommendation to engage the community with the climate emergency through a community deliberative process, following extensive research carried out to identify and assess different public deliberative methods. The research included the review of fifteen community engagement and deliberation methods, case studies from other local authorities engaging their residents with the climate emergency agenda and assessment of each method against evaluation

criteria. The criteria included cost, length of the process, number of participants, feedback detail, discussion potential, participant variation, and communication of results.

The proposal to engage the community through deliberative peer groups and e-panels was developed based on this extensive review and consultation with experts in the social research, public consultation and community engagement fields including APSE, the Consultation Institute, and Involve Community. These organisations endorsed the process, giving constructive feedback which has been incorporated into this proposal.

- **Elements of the Community Deliberative Processes**

Deliberative peer groups

These are similar to focus groups in bringing sectors/audiences together, who may share similar experiences, challenges and motivations in tackling climate change. However, they differ in format and design as the groups will meet multiple times and will involve greater input and deliberation from them than is usually expected from a focus group. This option provides a level-playing field for ideas, greater opportunities for detailed discussion, a controlled space where all participants can contribute, bounce ideas off each other and generate new unique solutions to issues which the council may not have considered previously. Such high detail qualitative data is particularly useful to fully understand the motivations behind behaviours, what influences decisions and some of the barriers which may be preventing adoption of measures.

E-panels

E-panels have been chosen because they allow a wider group of residents the opportunity to be part of the deliberative process. Residents will be able to feedback on the recommendations made by the peer groups, and grade them based on how effective they believe the recommendations will be in tackling the challenges at hand.

This option is online and user-friendly, making it accessible to most residents as well as providing quantitative data analysis for the council. Enabling residents to input their ideas and feel included in the process will increase their engagement with the climate emergency action plan and strengthen the commitment to become a net zero carbon borough by 2030.

By combining deliberative peer groups with e-panels, the council aims to verify the recommendations garnered from the peer groups within a wider audience. This will provide high quality feedback from the deliberation process and wider engagement with our community.

Participants

Local members of the community will come together to discuss the evidence and topic in order to make recommendations. All participants will be asked to rate how important they believe climate change is before participation in the process to ensure the council has a clear understanding of the bias behind the discussions and any outcomes. Likewise, demographic information will be gathered from participants to understand the level of inclusivity in the process.

Community participation will be carried out via two different methods:

- 1) Deliberative peer groups: will share knowledge and have honest discussions among their peers as to how these challenges impact their particular sector of the wider Wokingham Borough community.

In order to gain a wide and inclusive scope of consultation, discussion and deliberation we anticipate having approximately 9 peer groups and each group will be made up of around 10 participants. There will be exceptions to this limit on participants where necessary and is subject to change depending on the needs of the group and expert advice from facilitators. Identified groups are expected to be:

- Young People (Primary School age) & Parents
- Young People (Secondary School age)
- Teachers
- Residents (a representative and inclusive cohort including BAME residents)
- Voluntary Sector & Community Organisations
- Businesses
- Councillors (both borough and town and parish councillors)
- Town & Parish Council Clerks
- Council Officers

The council recognises that those who agree to participate in these peer groups are likely to have a grounding knowledge or interest of or in the climate emergency. Although the peer groups will be made up of people from specific stakeholders or sectors in the community, it does not mean they have the same views, level of knowledge or belief in climate change.

- 2) E-panel: participants will be recruited virtually through our own channels, ensuring that a wider audience can participate in the process, have a say on the recommendations made by the peer groups, and rank them by importance and effect.

Coordination team

The coordination team will be made up of officers within Wokingham Borough Council's Climate Emergency and Communication, Engagement and Marketing teams. The Coordination team will appoint the Facilitation team.

Facilitation team

Facilitation services for all meetings are to be provided by a professional, independent organisation, external to the council with cost associated. Facilitators will have expertise in community deliberation, engagement and consultation. The facilitation team should be external to the council to ensure impartiality and will be appointed by the coordination team. This role should be carried out by experienced practitioners who can ensure that the deliberation environment is respectful.

Facilitators will run each of the deliberative peer group sessions during the community deliberative process as well as the steering group and oversight panel meetings. The role of the facilitation team is to ensure that the deliberation is not dominated by one or a few people and that everyone has a chance to speak. The team should be sufficiently large to adequately support the number of participants and associated deliberative discussions. The facilitators will not have the opportunity to voice their own opinion but will ensure the entire process is balanced and robust and that the principles of community deliberation are followed.

The Facilitation team gather information and recommendations from each deliberative peer group discussion for feedback into the process.

Steering Group

The Steering Group for the community deliberative process will be a group made up of experts in sustainability industries. Those willing to volunteer their time to take part will meet twice, once at the start and once towards the end of the process.

The purpose of the group will be to:

- Give a steer to the direction of deliberative discussion and ideal outcomes via the facilitation team.
- Assess the quality of content of evidence presented to the deliberative peer groups to ensure they are robust and suitable.
- Be a critical friend to the process.

Oversight Panel

This group monitors the entire process and the other bodies in order to make sure that the community deliberative process is balanced and robust and that the principles of its design are followed.

Stages of the Community Deliberative Process

- a) Evidence videos are produced with experts
- b) Oversight Panel Consulted
- c) Steering Group – First Meeting
- d) Deliberative Peer Groups round 1: Learning phase
- e) Deliberative Peer Groups round 2: Deliberative phase
- f) Recommendations put to E-panel for ranking
- g) Report stage
- h) Steering group – Second Meeting
- i) Oversight Panel Consulted
- j) Outcomes and Recommendations Report to Council
- k) Final report shared publicly

• How the process will work

The deliberation process is planned to start engaging with participants in February 2022, following a 3-month lead time from November 2021 to appoint the facilitator, draft Terms of Reference for all groups, invite participants and arrange all venues as well as produce the evidence videos needed. The Terms of Reference documents will set out the scope, expected outcomes of the process, how discussions and/or recommendations will be used by Wokingham Borough Council and associated timelines. Careful consideration will be required to ensure participants understand the full context of Local Authority decision making and influence. Discussion topics will be decided during this lead-in time through internal consultation with officers involved in delivering the climate emergency agenda across the council's services, to identify gaps in the action plan and in the council's knowledge of community engagement in the climate emergency.

- a) Evidence videos are produced with experts

Evidence videos will be produced before the process begins to give accurate background information on the challenges and inform the discussion. The coordination team or the facilitation team will work with experts from the local area to produce evidence videos.

- b) Oversight Panel Consulted

This group are consulted to review the progress made, ensuring all elements of the community deliberative process are balanced and robust and clarify the principles of the design of the process to be followed during the next stage of the process where the peer deliberative groups will meet.

c) Steering Group – First Meeting

The purpose of this meeting will be to inform and advise the process. The Facilitation team will chair this meeting and will use the steer from the discussion when running the deliberative peer groups.

d) Deliberative Peer Groups – Round 1: Learning phase

The first round of Deliberative Peer Group meetings will be a learning phase with each of the approximate 9 groups meeting once.

- i. Attendants are presented with evidence in the form of videos
- ii. Discussion based on the evidence

e) Deliberative Peer Groups – Round 2: Deliberative phase

There will be a gap of at least a week between meetings to allow for the group to deliberate, research further and reflect on the evidence witnessed and immediate discussions during the first meeting. The approximate timescale of the deliberative peer group process is therefore 3 months.

- i. Deliberative discussion where attendants reflect on the previous meeting and share any reflections from between meetings
- ii. Recommendations formed by the group with help of the facilitators

f) Recommendations put to E-panel for ranking

Recommendations will then be put to an E-panel for enough time to allow for sufficient levels of participation. This will allow a wider group of residents the opportunity to grade the recommendations based on how effective they believe the recommendations will be in tackling the challenges at hand and give feedback.

g) Report stage

The outcomes of the process will be brought into a report.

h) Steering group – Second Meeting

This report will then be presented to the steering group as a sounding board opportunity for expert analysis of these final recommendations.

i) Oversight Panel – Second Meeting

The Oversight Panel will meet for a second time towards the end of the process to provide oversight of the deliberation at this stage and ensure the principles of the design of the process have been followed and objectives fulfilled.

j) Outcomes and Recommendations Report to Council

The final recommendations will then be taken to council where decisions will be made as to how these recommendations will be used or implemented.

k) Final report shared publicly

Outcomes of the process will be shared with participants of the process including how recommendations will be used to complete the feedback loop.

Impact of recommendations

Recommendations will be used to inform future decision making in the climate emergency agenda. These may be incorporated into the Climate Emergency Action Plan, where appropriate and feasible.

The Climate Emergency Action Plan is a live document where actions and targets are updated annually. Internal consultation will be needed to determine the feasibility, cost and carbon emission savings of recommendations.

Outcomes and recommendations from the community deliberative process will be taken to Council with the commitment that their feasibility will be explored by officers. Officers will report back to Council to inform which recommendations will be incorporated into the Climate Emergency Action Plan to support further action.

- **Proposed Project Timeline**

	Target Date	Duration
Appoint Facilitation Team	Nov 2021	1 month
Produce Evidence Videos	Nov 2021 – Jan 2022	3 months
Draft Terms of Reference for all groups, invite all participants & arrange meetings	Dec 2021 – Jan 2022	2 months
Initial meetings/consultation: - Oversight Panel - Steering Group	Feb 2022	2 days
Host deliberative peer groups	Feb – April 2022	3 months
Recommendation consolidation	May 2022	3 weeks
E-panel	May – June 2022	1 month
Second meetings/consultation: - Oversight Panel - Steering Group	June 2022	2 days
Final Report Writing	July 2022	1 month
Outcomes and Recommendations Report to Full Council Meeting	July – Sept 2022	3 months
Officer’s Report back to Council after feasibility & scoping work to incorporate new actions into the CEAP	October – December 2022	3 months
Feedback circulated to participants	Sept 2022	2 weeks

** These are estimated dates and subject to change*

- **Project Cost and resources**

The cost implications for the process include engaging skilled facilitators with experience in planning the discussion guides, selection and recruitment of relevant and diverse participants and supporting the delivery of the focus groups. Some costs may also arise from producing marketing materials, administrative capabilities and potential use of venues if the events are hosted in person.

There is an assumption that participants will be volunteers, a scenario that is not unlikely due to the level of interest in this topic within the community. However, incentives have been considered in the cost of the process.

Internally, the delivery of this project will require significant staff time in preparation, support, delivery, and analysis of data. Some of these engagement methods are expected to be more resource-intensive than others and will require the support of multiple teams within the Council.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: Community Deliberative Process Proposal for the Climate Emergency

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:	3/09/2021
Service:	Housing & Place Commissioning
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Community Deliberative Process Proposal for the Climate Emergency
Completed by:	Tabitha Shell
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	No
Signed off by:	Diana Tovar
Sign off date:	3/09/2021

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1. Policy, Project or service information:

This section should be used to identify the main purpose of the project, policy or service change, the method of delivery, including who key stakeholders are, main beneficiaries and any associated aims.

What is the purpose of the project, policy change or service change , its expected outcomes and how does it relate to your services corporate plan:

The Community Deliberative Process will engage key stakeholders and a wide range of residents in discussions around the climate emergency and put forward recommendations to overcome our biggest challenges as a council in achieving net zero carbon by 2030.

Expected outcomes of this process are:

- To empower residents, businesses, local organisations, schools and stakeholders to be part of the Borough’s net-zero carbon 2030 vision.
- To both support and improve the council’s response to the climate emergency, engaging the community and encouraging greater participation in the actions.
- To develop a greater understanding of the community’s priorities in tackling the climate emergency that will inform decision making.

- To identify the key drivers and motivations for each audience so that our actions can be tailored to deliver improvements in these areas and encourage behavioural change.
- To generate recommendations for actions to achieve net zero carbon.
- To create a network of climate champions that will share learning and best practice.

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

The Wokingham Borough Council Climate Team leads on the implementation and update of the CEAP, with cooperation from multiple departments across the council in delivering the actions. This **Climate Emergency Officers Group** meets monthly and is attended by officers from across all of the departments in the council. This group has been consulted with and informed of the project. Several of these officers will also be asked to take part in this deliberative process to make up one of the deliberative peer groups.

The Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee **Task and Finish Group** is made up of members to scrutinise the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan, emerging targets and key performance indicators underpinning the Action Plan. This group will be used to provide member oversight of this community deliberative process and ensure the design of the process is being followed. **Members** will also be invited to take part in the deliberative process itself.

Executive members are aware of this project as the Climate Emergency Community Deliberative Processes Options Appraisal Report was approved by Executive on 29th July 2021 with the commitment to present a proposal to Executive in October to establish the financial implications, timelines and expected outcomes from this process. Executive members are therefore informed of and the lead member for the climate emergency, **Cllr Gregor Murray** has been consulted during the development of this project proposal.

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

External stakeholders in the process will include the participants, including residents, young people, teachers, the business community, the voluntary sector, town and parish clerks, members and council officers and these are all the main beneficiaries of the project.

By delivering this community deliberative process, the council is demonstrating our commitment to engaging all of our residents and all sectors of the community in the climate emergency and working together to tackle the particular challenges within the borough. Recommendations will inform the climate emergency action plan while improving our transparency in detailing how we are planning to achieve net zero carbon.

This extensive engagement opportunity will allow for increased engagement in the climate emergency agenda and therefore increase participation with the actions in the climate emergency action plan and sustainable behaviour change associated with those actions.

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

The community deliberative process is designed to engage the community and key stakeholders in address the main challenges for Wokingham Borough in reaching net zero carbon by 2030 as well as taking initial steps to identify how sustainable behaviour change can be achieved. The process aims to identify the key motivations and barriers for the participants in taking steps to reduce their carbon footprints and how to council can support residents and businesses to make use of opportunities and overcome these barriers.

Although this is an engagement activity for the climate emergency, the overall aims of the project remain the same as the climate emergency action plan. The council has identified eight key priority areas (below) to focus on for reducing carbon dioxide emissions which are listed below, however, work is not exclusively limited to these areas.

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

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

Sustainable behaviour change is vital, alongside local authority intervention, to achieve these priorities. The deliberative processes aim to help better understand the views of our residents on the council's response to climate change, while raising the profile of the Climate Emergency Action Plan and encouraging residents to engage more with its existing actions, though ultimately helping to identify new actions to close the carbon emissions shortfall identified in the CEAP. Therefore, key topics will include:

- Driving less – reducing car ownership, modal shift to public transport, walking and cycling more, transitioning to electric vehicles
- Energy – reduce energy consumption by adopting better behaviours, improving our homes, adopting green technologies
- Waste - reduce the amount of waste generated and improve our recycling behaviours
- Food - eat less meat and dairy products, consume seasonable produce
- Conscious consumption - shop local, use less plastic, avoid fast fashion, staycation
- Support biodiversity - plant or adopt a tree, support local gardens, give home to nature

2. Protected characteristics:

There are 9 protected characteristics as defined by the legislation:

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

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

3. Initial Impact review:

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

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

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

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

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Race:	No/Neutral	All residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by Wokingham Borough being net zero carbon by 2030. By delivering this project, it demonstrates the council's desire to engage residents and all stakeholders in decision making, alongside our commitment to achieving the net zero goal. Completing this project will increase the likelihood of achieving this target in multiple ways, resulting in positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. When delivering this project, the council will ensure the deliberative peer groups and the e-panel are as inclusive and representative of all residents.
Gender:	No/Neutral	All residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by Wokingham Borough being net zero carbon by 2030. By delivering this project, it demonstrates the council's desire to engage residents and all stakeholders in decision making, alongside our commitment to achieving the net zero goal. Completing this project will increase the likelihood of achieving this target in multiple ways, resulting in positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. When delivering this project, the council will ensure the deliberative peer groups and the e-panel are as inclusive and representative of all residents.
Disabilities:	No/Neutral	All residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by Wokingham Borough being net zero carbon by 2030. By delivering this project, it demonstrates the council's desire to engage residents and all stakeholders in decision making, alongside our commitment to achieving the net zero goal. Completing this project will increase the likelihood of achieving this target in multiple ways, resulting in positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. When delivering this project, the council will ensure the deliberative peer groups and the e-panel are as inclusive and representative of all residents.
Age:	No/Neutral	All residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by Wokingham Borough being net zero carbon by 2030. By delivering this project, it demonstrates the council's desire to engage residents and all stakeholders in decision making, alongside our commitment to achieving the net zero goal. Completing this project will increase the likelihood of achieving this target in multiple ways, resulting in positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. When delivering this project, the council will ensure the deliberative peer groups and the e-panel are as inclusive and representative of all residents.
Sexual orientation:	No/Neutral	All residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by Wokingham Borough being net zero carbon by 2030. By delivering this project, it demonstrates the council's desire to engage residents and all stakeholders in decision making, alongside our commitment to achieving the net zero goal. Completing this project

		will increase the likelihood of achieving this target in multiple ways, resulting in positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. When delivering this project, the council will ensure the deliberative peer groups and the e-panel are as inclusive and representative of all residents.
Religion/belief:	No/Neutral	All residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by Wokingham Borough being net zero carbon by 2030. By delivering this project, it demonstrates the council's desire to engage residents and all stakeholders in decision making, alongside our commitment to achieving the net zero goal. Completing this project will increase the likelihood of achieving this target in multiple ways, resulting in positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. When delivering this project, the council will ensure the deliberative peer groups and the e-panel are as inclusive and representative of all residents.
Gender re-assignment:	No/Neutral	All residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by Wokingham Borough being net zero carbon by 2030. By delivering this project, it demonstrates the council's desire to engage residents and all stakeholders in decision making, alongside our commitment to achieving the net zero goal. Completing this project will increase the likelihood of achieving this target in multiple ways, resulting in positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. When delivering this project, the council will ensure the deliberative peer groups and the e-panel are as inclusive and representative of all residents.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	No/Neutral	All residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by Wokingham Borough being net zero carbon by 2030. By delivering this project, it demonstrates the council's desire to engage residents and all stakeholders in decision making, alongside our commitment to achieving the net zero goal. Completing this project will increase the likelihood of achieving this target in multiple ways, resulting in positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. When delivering this project, the council will ensure the deliberative peer groups and the e-panel are as inclusive and representative of all residents.
Marriage and civil partnership:	No/Neutral	All residents and businesses of Wokingham Borough will be equally and positively impacted by Wokingham Borough being net zero carbon by 2030. By delivering this project, it demonstrates the council's desire to engage residents and all stakeholders in decision making, alongside our commitment to achieving the net zero goal. Completing this project will increase the likelihood of achieving this target in multiple ways, resulting in positive environmental changes that will improve the quality of life of all our residents and help to avoid the impacts of climate change. When delivering this project, the council will ensure the deliberative peer groups and the e-panel are as inclusive and representative of all residents.

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...

Diana Tovar

Date: 3 September 2021

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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