



# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** will be held in Council  
Chamber - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN  
on **WEDNESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2022 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 15 February 2022

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

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 viewed live using the following link:  
<https://youtu.be/fWKCd8ELpCk>

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# 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 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

### Councillors

Pauline Helliar-Symons (Chairman)	Alison Swaddle (Vice- Chairman)	Sam Akhtar
Rachel Burgess	Paul Fishwick	Jim Frewin
Guy Grandison	Norman Jorgensen	Sarah Kerr
Rebecca Margetts	Jackie Rance	Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

### Substitutes

Keith Baker	Chris Bowring	Anne Chadwick
Jenny Cheng	Stephen Conway	Peter Dennis
Gary Cowan	Carl Doran	Lindsay Ferris
Barrie Patman	Simon Weeks	Vacancy

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
76.		<b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence.	
77.		<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 January 2022.	5 - 16
78.		<b>DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest.	
79.		<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any public questions. A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.  The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this Committee.  Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to <a href="http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions">www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</a>	
80.		<b>MEMBER QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any Member questions.	
81.	None Specific	<b>ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY 2022-26</b> To consider an update on the Borough's Anti-Poverty Strategy and Year 1 Action Plan.	17 - 44

<b>82.</b>	None Specific	<b>EQUALITY PLAN UPDATE</b> To consider an update on the Council's Equality Plan and the supporting Action Plans.	<b>45 - 58</b>
<b>83.</b>	None Specific	<b>CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE PROGRAMME</b> To consider an update on the Council's Customer Excellence Programme.	<b>59 - 64</b>
<b>84.</b>	None Specific	<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORTS</b> To consider the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Reports prior to their submission to Council in March 2022.	<b>65 - 84</b>
<b>85.</b>	None Specific	<b>CONSIDERATION OF THE CURRENT EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME</b> To consider the current published version of the Executive Forward Programme.	<b>85 - 92</b>
<b>86.</b>	None Specific	<b>COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMMES</b> To discuss the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees	<b>93 - 102</b>
<b>87.</b>	None Specific	<b>ACTION TRACKER REPORT</b> To consider the latest Action Tracker report.	<b>103 - 106</b>

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

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

**CONTACT OFFICER**

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## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 JANUARY 2022 FROM 7.00 PM TO 9.45 PM

### **Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Pauline Helliard-Symons (Chairman), Alison Swaddle (Vice-Chairman), Sam Akhtar, Rachel Burgess, Jim Frewin, Guy Grandison, Norman Jorgensen, Sarah Kerr, Rebecca Margetts, Jackie Rance and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

### **Other Councillors Present**

Councillors: Parry Batth, Gary Cowan, Lindsay Ferris, Gregor Murray and Shahid Younis

### **Officers Present**

Laura Buck, Green Infrastructure Special Project Manager  
Neil Carr, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist  
Andrew Collins, Specialist Climate Emergency Officer  
Rhian Hayes, Interim Assistant Director, Housing and Place  
Francesca Hobson, Service Manager, Green & Blue Infrastructure  
Steve Moore, Interim Director, Place and Growth  
Will Roper, Customer Insight Analyst and Performance Manager  
Grant Thornton, Category Manager, Economic Prosperity and Place  
Callum Wernham, Specialist, Democratic and Electoral Services

### **13. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Paul Fishwick and Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey.

Lindsay Ferris attended the meeting as a substitute.

### **14. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 November 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to:

Minute 19 – Anti-Poverty Strategy – the final paragraph being amended to include the following statement:

“In relation to the co-production of the strategy, it was highlighted that not all VCS partners feel like they are properly engaged and have a seat at the table to write and develop this strategy. It was confirmed that this would be happening going forward and a member or members of the VCS will be present at subsequent scrutiny meetings where this is on the agenda”.

Minute 20 – Unlawful Encampments – add new Resolution 5) as follows:

“5) the Committee receive further information on the outcome of national consultations relating to unlawful encampments”.

### **15. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **16. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

## **17. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

### **17.1 Gary Cowan asked the Chairman the following question:**

Agenda item 63 – Climate Emergency Action Plan.

#### **Question**

On carbon savings, the report states over the last year Wokingham Borough Council has worked in setting the ground to deliver projects that will increase the generation of renewable energy across the Borough....

And also the following:

My Journey completed summer and winter competitions in primary schools, and are currently running a film competition for secondary school students; but goes on to say that there are no new actions for this section.

My question is then: why did this Council create a situation where children who live In Arborfield Green, including those living directly opposite the new school gates were not allowed to go there and they have all had to be driven to other primary schools miles away from where they live. How will this achieve carbon saving?

#### **Answer**

At a strategic level our planning for the Borough's Strategic Development Locations (or SDLs) has been underpinned by principles of creating sustainable communities that can sustain local access to services and amenities whilst minimising the need to travel. This is also underpinned by sustainable transport options both within and between SDLs and with existing main towns. Ensuring primary school provision to meet future anticipated need within these new communities has always been a key priority and, although pre-dating our Climate Emergency, fully in line with the principles of sustainable development by reducing the need to travel and minimising carbon impact.

Of course, in detail at any one point in time changing the overall pattern of primary provision and seeking to balance demand versus school places available across the system will never be an exact science and there will always be some anomalies. It is anticipated that these will reduce over time as these new communities mature.

With regard to Arborfield Green, the new school premises could not open as a new school in 2021, as there was insufficient local need to ensure that all local schools, including potentially both the Farley Hill Primary School and the Coombes CofE Primary School, in the Arborfield ward, could remain financially sustainable. In theory, relocating the Farley Hill Primary School would enable significant numbers of children from the former Arborfield Garrison, Arborfield Green and Finchwood Park areas to benefit from a school they could walk to, at the earliest opportunity. It also addressed the long-standing issue of some undersized classrooms in the original Farley Hill School building.

There has never been any intention that the new school would accommodate all the children living in the garrison area. In all, ninety children living in the garrison area were admitted to Wokingham primary schools in 2021 – accommodating all of them in a new school would have effectively wiped out the intake to a number of schools.

In more detail, the decision to build the new school was taken before the pandemic, when experience in Shinfield was that new housing could lead to rapidly rising rolls. The intention was to avoid children having to be driven to school. It became apparent in 2020 that demand was unlikely to increase to a level to make a new school viable (as a stand-alone school) or, if it had been filled and so was viable, the significant fall in the rolls of other schools would have threatened their viability.

A significant contributor to this lack of demand was the cessation of house building in the early part of the pandemic. Therefore, the decision was taken to relocate Farley Hill school with a phased expansion from the current 30 places per year through 60 to 90, in line with the the expected growth in the number of families in the area currently served by Farley Hill and the Coombes.

So, although the plan is to expand the school to offer 60 places from 2022, there is no expectation that all garrison area families will be accommodated (as is clear in the November 2021 report to the Executive) and there was no expectation that this would be the case in 2021. Indeed, the January 2020 Executive paper was clear that expansion above 30 places hinged on the impact on the Coombes.

Incidentally, I share your concern, as do headteachers. As a former Executive Member for Children's Services and a former deputy head I am well aware that without a minimum number of children no school can be financed and, therefore, cannot function.

You may be interested to know that the newly formed Education Partnership, which includes 10 headteachers and the Director of Children's Services, are going to discuss school places at the first meeting at the end of January.

### **Supplementary Question**

Thank you very much, that is actually very helpful. The point really is that, if the developer had submitted a plan to build 2,000 houses on Arborfield Garrison and stated that he was not going to provide a primary school for the occupants of those houses the Council, quite rightly, would have refused that planning permission. So, it is very clear that the purpose of building that school was to accommodate the children on the garrison, for obvious reasons. The developer marketing those houses achieved sales because he offered a school on site – children could walk or cycle to school. This is all very "green" and is actually laudable.

My question is, how can the Council justify what you have just said and how does it bode for future large-scale developments? History shows that the Council cannot be trusted to deliver on the promises made, particularly on this site.

### **Supplementary Answer**

I think that the essence of supplementary the answer was contained in my first answer. I will highlight that part.

A school can only be viable if it has sufficient numbers of children. Otherwise, it does not attract the finances. If you put all the children into one school in an area, that has an impact on surrounding schools which, of course, we do not want to undermine. As for the Climate Emergency, everything is a balance. Yes, we are committed to it but, at the same time, we are committed to keeping existing schools open. Nothing is as straightforward as we would like it to be, unfortunately. The fact is that the Council is aiming to support all primary schools, not just one at the expense of another.

## **18. Q2 2021-22 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 65 to 82, which gave details of performance management for the period July to September 2021 (Quarter 2). The report gave details of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which measured how each service was delivering against its current objectives.

Steve Moore (Interim Director, Place and Growth), Will Roper (Customer Insight Analyst and Performance Manager) and Shahid Younis (Deputy Executive Member, Insight and Change) attended the meeting to present the report and answer Member questions.

The report included 46 KPIs which were intended to be SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely), taking into account historic trend information and benchmarking. The KPIs were assigned a RAG status (Red for on target, Amber for close to target and Red for missing the target).

The following KPIs were reported as Red for Quarter 2 of 2021/22:

- KPI AS1: Social work assessments allocated to commence within 7 days of the requests (counted at point of allocation).
- KPI AS4: Safeguarding timeliness – concerns completed within 2 working days.
- KPI AS7: Proportion of people receiving long term care who were subject to a review in the last 12 months.
- KPI RA3: Usage of Wokingham Leisure Centres.
- KPI RA4: Participation in leisure activities to support those who may be experiencing social isolation.

The report gave details of the corrective action being taken to address these Red KPIs. Of the five Red KPIs it was confirmed that the three adult social care indicators were deliberately stretching with the intention of driving improvement in the service. The other two Red KPIs related to the leisure service and reflected the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The report also stated that five KPIs had moved from Amber to Green whilst one KPI had improved from Red to Amber.

In the ensuing discussion, Members raised the following points:

Children's Services Challenges (page 22 of the Agenda) – Recruitment of qualified Educational Psychologists creating a capacity issue impacting on EHCP assessment performance. It was suggested that this issue should be referred to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny for further consideration. It was agreed that this issue would be considered at the next meeting of the Committee as part of its forward programme.

CS6: Percentage of 16/17 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) (Page 41) – this was a new indicator replacing the previous indicator Percentage of Care Leavers who were NEET. That indicator had set a target of 52% compared with the new target for all 16/17 year olds of 97%. It was queried why the original indicator had been



archived without reference to the Committee. It was felt that the KPI should have the same target for care leavers as for all other children. It was confirmed that the Interim Director of Children's Services would be happy to discuss this and other KPIs highlighted by Members. The process for identifying KPIs was also confirmed. This involved discussion between Directors and the relevant Assistant Directors, followed by agreement with the relevant Executive Member.

RA8: Capital Budget Monitoring Forecast Position (Page 54) – the indicator was reported as -3.69% against a target of +/- 1%. Consequently it was suggested that this indicator should have a RAG status of Red not Green, as reported. It was confirmed that this indicator would be checked.

Top 3 Wins – In relation to the format of the report, what was the process for identifying "Top Wins"? As an example (Page 20), two of the three Top Wins were not related to any KPIs. For example, the Top Win on Climate Emergency referred to activity that had taken place – the activity was only relevant if it led to a carbon reduction. The activity in Top Wins should be linked to measurable impact. It would be useful if the Top Wins and Opportunities were linked to the relevant KPIs. It was confirmed that KPIs only gave part of the story relating to a key priority. Other aspects were highlighted in order to give a wider picture and context. This include challenges relating to performance and service risks.

AS7: Proportion of people receiving long term care who were subject to a review in the last 12 months (Page 38) – performance against this indicator was consistent but had been below target for several years. Was this a SMART indicator? It was confirmed that the target was deliberately stretching in order to drive service improvement. The service was aiming for excellence.

PG21: Percentage of waste recycled from the kerbside (Page 51) – what were the reasons for the above-target performance of the service? Did it relate to the collection of food waste and the additional cardboard arising from deliveries during the pandemic? It was confirmed that the service had been working hard to engage with residents and encouraging greater levels of recycling. The collection of food waste had also been successfully delivered. The emerging Waste Strategy would pick up these themes and emphasise the waste hierarchy – reduce, reuse and recycle.

RA2: Occupancy rate of WBC-owned regeneration units (Page 52) – the indicator had moved from Green to Amber. Were there any issues relating to the letting of these units? It was confirmed that a number of deals were in the pipeline which would bring the RAG status back to Green.

AS1: Social work assessments allocated to commence within 7 days of the requests (Page 37) – concern was expressed at the reported vacant posts in the assessment team and their potential impact on the service. It was confirmed that the service was working on a recruitment and retention strategy and a workforce plan. Short term planning was in hand, but there remained longer term national challenges relating to the adult social care sector.

Report format – the Committee had previously discussed the amount of detailed information in the report and options to enable more focussed scrutiny. It was reported that a new reporting system and report format would be available for 2022/23. This would deliver more timely reports and enable Members to submit questions in advance the Committee meeting. This, in turn, would enable the relevant Executive Members and officers to be invited to attend the meeting.

Top Win: Reduction in the number of residents in B&B temporary accommodation (Page 23) – Officers were congratulated on the reported reduction in the use of B&B accommodation. It was confirmed that the Council had secured long term contracts with providers which reduced reliance on B&B. This was better for the residents and a much cheaper option for WBC.

PG13: Proportion of Highways Infrastructure Schemes on track for delivery (Page 50) – In Q1 two roads had been highlighted – the South Wokingham Distributor Road and the Western Gateway. These schemes had been reported as Red in Q1 but were now reported as Green. There was no explanation for the change in RAG status. Could the Committee be provided with an explanation for the change in RAG status and an explanation of how progress on these delivery schemes was measured and reported? It was confirmed that this information would be provided for the Committee.

Top Wins – WBC activity in response to the Climate Emergency – Dinton Activity Centre showcased at COP 26 (Page 20) – It was confirmed that COP 26 took place in Q3 not Q2. Could more detail be provided re activity in Q2?

Top Wins – Completed retender and route optimisation of the Home to School service (Page 24) – it was felt the problems which arose during this process and the impact on some families questioned its inclusion as a Top Win. It was confirmed that this was a big project which had produced a number of learning points which would be used to improve service delivery in the future. In that sense it could be described as a Top Win.

CIC8: Number of fly-tipping incidents (Page 44) – could WBC encourage the Government to increase the maximum fine for fly-tipping from the current level of £400? It was confirmed that WBC was one of the most proactive Councils in relation to fly-tipping. Progress continued to be monitored by the cross-party working group. As part of the reorganised public protection service a WBC anti-social behaviour team would be introduced. The new team would provide an increased focus on environmental crime. It was suggested that consideration be given to developing a KPI relating to the number of prosecutions for fly-tipping in the Borough.

Shahid Younis (Deputy Executive Member) commented that work was ongoing to refine the KPIs to be reported to the Scrutiny Committees. It was suggested that the new list of KPIs for 2022/23 be reported to the Committee for discussion and comment.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) Steve Moore, Will Roper and Shahid Younis be thanked for attending the meeting to answer Member questions;
- 2) the Q2 Performance Monitoring Report (July-September 2021) be endorsed;
- 3) further information be provided to Members in relation to the specific points and questions raised at the meeting.

## **19. CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**

The Committee considered the six monthly update to the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan, set out at Agenda pages 65 to 82.

The report gave details of highlights relating to each section of the Action Plan, along with deliverables planned for the next three months and new actions added to the Action Plan.

Gregor Murray (Executive Member for Residents Services, Communications and Emissions), Rhian Hayes (Interim Assistant Director, Housing and Place), Grant Thornton (Category Manager, Economic Prosperity and Place) and Andrew Collins (Specialist Climate Emergency Officer) attended the meeting to present the report and answer Member questions.

The report stated that, within the Borough-wide aim to achieve Net Zero, the Council aimed to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030. A breakdown of the Council's emissions in areas such as heating, business travel and waste was included in the report. 2021 was the first year in which these figures had been fully accounted for.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Action Plan was noted in areas such as public transport usage, which had still to recover to pre-Covid levels.

In the ensuing discussion Members raised the following points:

Electric vehicle charging points (Page 70) – further information was requested on the location of EV charging points (on-street and at public car parks) and the way in which they were funded. It was confirmed that a report had been submitted to the Executive recommending that a pilot scheme be introduced (supported by Government funding). Installing charging points at on-street locations was more challenging than off-street. Over 30 potential locations for on-street charging points were being explored across the Borough. Members would be consulted on the potential sites.

Local Plan Update (Page 77) – confirmation was sought that the supplementary planning guidance underpinning the updated Local Plan would include a commitment to net zero development, clean energy generation and maintenance of trees. It was confirmed that the Local Plan Update would have to comply with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – the Government's planning policies and how they should be applied. The Council had the power to set standards for carbon neutral buildings but needed to be aware of the impact, for example additional building costs. Further information would be provided for Members on the Council's powers to require solar panels on new homes.

The report (Page 69) referred to Transport as one of the key sectors contributing towards emissions in the Borough. Two of the most important targets in the Action Plan related to reducing the number of cars on the road and the distance travelled by residents. Yet there was little in the report on these two issues. It was confirmed that the report was the six-monthly update. There would be much more detail in the annual update report, submitted to Council in July. In the meantime, officers confirmed that a more detailed update on the Transport elements of the Climate Emergency Action Plan would be submitted to the February 2022 meeting of the Committee.

In relation to Engagement and Behaviour Change (Page 79), how would subject experts engage with residents taking part in the ongoing deliberative processes? It was confirmed that the deliberative processes, now badged as "Let's Talk Climate", would include video evidence submitted by relevant subject experts. Having viewed the experts' evidence, residents would then meet again to discuss ideas, supported by an independent facilitator. Ideas developed through the deliberative processes would then be submitted to Council for discussion. Council would decide which ideas should be subject to further investigation

and carbon budgeting. These ideas would then go back to Council for a final, public decision on which ideas to include in the Action Plan.

Based on the information currently available, was the Borough on track to achieve Net Zero by 2030? It was confirmed that, currently, there was a gap between the forecast position and Net Zero. The aim was to reduce this gap as new ideas and projects came forward over the next few years.

The report (Page 69) referred to the London Road trial installation of a 1,321metre stretch of plastic kerbing with a carbon saving of 40,555kg. How did the use of plastic kerbing deliver this level of saving? It was confirmed that the use of recycled plastic kerbs (instead of concrete) delivered a saving through a reduction in manufacturing, transport and construction. It was confirmed that further information would be provided on the methodology for achieving the carbon saving and how this fitted into the Transport section of the Action Plan.

In relation to the retrofitting of domestic properties, it was suggested that EPC ratings should be used to measure success. It was confirmed that the Government target of achieving EPCs of C or above by 2025 for all newly rented properties was reflected in the Council's targets.

Waste and Recycling (Page 76) – was the target of 80% recovery of wet paper achieved? It was confirmed that this target was met. Further information on the recovery of wet paper would be circulated to the Committee. It was also noted that the emerging Waste Strategy would build upon recent initiatives to deliver on the waste and recycling goals in the Action Plan.

Renewable Energy Generation (Page 72) – had the Barkham Ride solar farm now received the go-ahead? It was confirmed that further information would be circulated to the Committee on the current status of the project.

In relation to Transport, it was noted that car usage had returned to levels seen before the pandemic whilst public transport usage was still well below pre-pandemic levels. Increasing the usage of public transport would be a key element in delivering the targets in the Action Plan.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) Gregor Murray, Rhian Hayes, Grant Thornton and Andrew Castle be thanked for attending the meeting to present the update report and answer Member questions;
- 2) the six month update on the Climate Emergency Action Plan be noted;
- 3) further information be circulated to the Committee in relation to the points and questions raised by Members;
- 4) a further update report on progress against Transport targets in the Action Plan be submitted to the February 2022 meeting of the Committee.

**20. TREE STRATEGY**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 83 to 90, which gave details of the emerging Tree Strategy for the Borough. The Strategy would provide improved

direction for tree management and guide the Council's approach to trees across the Borough.

Fran Hobson (Service Manager, Green and Blue Infrastructure) and Laura Buck (Green Infrastructure Special Project Manager) attended the meeting to present the report and answer Member questions.

The report stated that the Tree Strategy would set out how the Council would manage its statutory responsibilities for trees and woodlands (including Council-owned trees), replanting policy, new planting schemes (including the 250k tree Climate Emergency project) and woodland management. The strategy would also cover the issues relating to the maintenance of newly planted trees in new development locations.

An early engagement survey had been carried out in November 2021 with the aim of gathering views from residents and other stakeholders about the key areas to be addressed in the strategy. The report gave details of the priorities identified in the survey, including species diversity, community involvement, preference for planting schemes, maintenance of newly planted trees and the creation and management of woodlands.

The report set out the proposed timeline for developing and agreeing the Tree Strategy. It was anticipated that the draft Tree Strategy would be ready for review in July 2022 with the aim of publishing the agreed strategy in January 2023.

In the ensuing discussion, Members raised the following points:

What was the process for residents to express an interest in planting a tree in their garden? It was confirmed that residents should contact Laura Buck at WBC – [laura.buck@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:laura.buck@wokingham.gov.uk)

Information was also set out on the Council's Engage platform.

The report referred to the establishment of a cross-party working group to steer the content of the Tree Strategy, with a suggested first meeting in February 2022. What was the process for identifying Members to sit on the working group? It was suggested that all Members be offered the opportunity to join the working group after liaison with the Group Leaders.

An important issue was the effective maintenance of new trees planted by developers. This was highlighted by residents in the early engagement survey. It was confirmed that the service was looking to recruit two additional officers which would increase capacity to address this and other issues. The Tree Strategy would also focus on this issue including the maintenance programme for the 250k tree Climate Emergency project.

Whilst the emerging Tree Strategy was welcome, it was too late for many new development sites in the south of the Borough where developers had not maintained newly planted trees and common areas. It was confirmed that lessons learned from these developments would be addressed in the Tree Strategy. A key issue was closer working relationships with Town and Parish Councils and local community/voluntary groups.

Recent incidents involving the loss of trees raised the question of the enforcement powers available to the Council. It was confirmed that the Council did have enforcement powers set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, for example through the use of Tree Preservation Orders. Anyone contravening a TPO was guilty of an offence and could be

fined. It was important to communicate the Council's powers to the relevant interested parties.

The 2019 Estate Infrastructure Task and Finish Group made a recommendation relating to the maintenance of newly planted trees. This would see the Council taking on the responsibility for maintenance, to be funded by a commuted sum. It was confirmed that progress against this recommendation would be investigated.

It was requested that the draft Tree Strategy be reported back to the Committee for comment before its submission to the Executive. It was confirmed that the draft strategy would be submitted to the Committee.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) Fran Hobson and Laura Buck be thanked for attending the meeting to present the report and answer Member questions;
- 2) the results from the Tree Strategy early engagement survey be noted;
- 3) the timeline and milestones for the emerging Tree Strategy be noted, with the request that the timeline be shortened if possible;
- 4) the draft Tree Strategy be submitted to the Committee for comment before consideration and approval by the Council's Executive.

## **21. TREE PROTECTION & BIODIVERSITY TASK & FINISH GROUP - UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 91 to 96, which gave details of progress made by the Tree Protection and Biodiversity Task and Finish Group.

The report stated that the Task and Finish Group had been approved by the Committee in July 2021. The Group met for the first time in late August 2021 and agreed its terms of reference which were set out in the report. The terms of reference were subsequently amended to include discussion of the November 2021 Council Motion on the potential declaration of an Ecological Emergency.

The report stated that the Task and Finish Group had been established in line with the political balance arrangements. Councillor Chris Bowring had been elected Chairman at the first meeting.

The Task and Finish Group had met several times and held discussions with a number of witnesses including WBC officers, Town and Parish Councils and the Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association. The Group had also considered a case study relating to the loss of circa 450 mature trees at Bearwood Lake.

The report stated that the Task and Finish Group would continue to meet with a view to submitting its final report to the Committee in February or March 2022. The Group's recommendations on the Council Motion relating to the declaration of an Ecological Emergency would be submitted to full Council for consideration.

In the ensuing discussion Members raised the following points:

The Task and Finish Group terms of reference referred a review of best practice. Could this include best practice from other countries? It was confirmed that this point would be discussed with the Task and Finish Group.

A suggested witness for the Task and Finish Group was a representative from the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). It was confirmed that BBOWT would be contacted about joining a meeting of the Task and Finish Group.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the progress report on the work of the Tree Protection and Biodiversity Task and Finish Group be noted;
- 2) any evidence or details of potential witnesses for consideration by the Task and Finish Group be submitted to Neil Carr in Democratic Services.

## **22. DEVELOPMENT OF THE O&S WORK PROGRAMMES FOR 2022-23**

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 97 to 102, which gave details of the process for developing the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programmes for 2022/23.

The report stated that, in line with best practice, the work programmes would be developed between January and March 2022 on the following basis:

January/February – initial consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Members, Executive Members, senior officers, partner organisations, Town and Parish Councils, residents and community/voluntary groups;

March – final work programmes to be agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee;

April – publication and implementation of the work programmes.

Members highlighted the need for separation of meeting dates in the Council calendar to enable time for comments/recommendations from the Committee to be included in reports to the Executive.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the process for developing the Overview and Scrutiny work programmes for 2022/23, as set out in the report, be approved;
- 2) the 2022/23 work programmes be approved at the Committee's meeting in March 2022;
- 3) each Overview and Scrutiny Committee carry out one or more detailed Scrutiny reviews during 2022/23;
- 4) future versions of the draft Council Calendar of Meetings be submitted to the Committee for comment before approval by full Council.

**23. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME AND INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION FORWARD PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered a copy of the Executive Forward Programme and the Individual Executive Member Decision Forward Programme, as set out at Agenda pages 103 to 112.

**RESOLVED** That the Executive and Individual Executive Member Decision Forward Programmes be noted.

**24. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMMES**

The Committee considered its Forward Work Programme and that of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as set out on Agenda pages 113 to 124.

The Chairman advised Members that an extraordinary "Call-In" meeting of the Management Committee would be held on Tuesday 8 February at 7.30pm.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Forward Programmes be noted;
- 2) the report of the Tree Protection and Biodiversity Task and Finish Group be added to the Management Committee's Forward Programme.

**25. ACTION TRACKER REPORT**

The Committee considered the latest Action Tracker report, set out at Agenda pages 125 to 128.

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) the Action Tracker report be noted;
- 2) the Chairman write to the Chief Executive in relation to setting up meetings with the Executive and CLT as per the Executive-Scrutiny Protocol.



<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-26</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 23 February 2022
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Chief Executive - Susan Parsonage

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

The Anti-Poverty Strategy aims to help prevent people falling into poverty, offer support to those already in it, and help those in poverty to get out of it, either as a result of short term changes following the pandemic, or as a more entrenched issue.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee are requested to review and comment on the strategy and year 1 action plan in order that comments can be considered along with ongoing public engagement to inform finalising the strategy for submission to Executive after the May elections.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

This report presents the Anti-Poverty Strategy as part of the consultation and engagement process. The Anti-Poverty Strategy aims to help prevent people falling into poverty, offer support to those already in it, and help those in poverty to get out of it, either as a result of short term changes following the pandemic, or as a more entrenched issue. It aims, through working in partnership, to promote an early intervention approach as part of the Council's role to prevent poverty.

The aim of the Anti-Poverty Strategy is to lessen the effects of poverty, enable people to overcome the barriers linked to poverty and prevent more people falling into poverty in the first place. It recognises that this is a longer-term aspiration and in the life span of this 4-year strategy the intention is to:

- Lessen the short-term effects of poverty
- Prevent more people falling into poverty
- Better support our residents who are living in poverty
- Enable residents to better address the barriers to overcoming poverty

In doing this the strategy will target three groups of residents:

- Persistent Hardship
- Just About Managing
- Asset Rich, Cash Poor

The objectives of the strategy over the next four years are to:

1. Support people in poverty
2. Strengthen communities in their resilience to poverty
3. Improve life opportunities for residents who are living in poverty

## Background

The draft Anti-Poverty Strategy, attached as Appendix 1, is being developed in partnership with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) who have been fundamental in the co-design and delivery. They have been engaged in discussions to inform development of the strategy since September 2021 and in December 2021 a Hardship Alliance was created to lead this work, engaging four key partners in the VCS who will form a link to the wider sector and work closely with the council to provide leadership to the strategy.

As part of the strategy development, there has been a programme of consultation and engagement activities:

- November 2021 – initial engagement with people in poverty
- January 2022 – public consultation began including an online survey, 4 stalls across the borough and focus groups of people in poverty
- February 2022 – formal consultation ends and results are analysed

Halfway through consultation, the online survey which had received almost 100 responses. A Cross-Party Working Group was established to oversee development of the strategy and this group will be looking at feedback from consultation in March along with proposed changes to the strategy so that the final strategy and action plan can be presented to the Executive after the May elections.

For the purpose of the Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation definition of poverty is being used:

*When a person's resources (mainly their material resources) are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs (including social participation)*

Within Wokingham Borough, we are maintaining a focus on relative poverty after household expenses have been taken into consideration: this is households with less than 60% of contemporary median income after costs for direct taxes and National Insurance, including Council Tax are taken into consideration and then rent or mortgage interest, buildings insurance and water rates are deducted.

Poverty definitions is a complex matter, with varying means of calculation – a more detailed explanation of the approach used is included within appendix 3 of the draft strategy attached.

The strategy aims to promote a prevention and early intervention approach to address poverty in the Borough, working towards the community vision for Wokingham Borough to be a great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business.

The aim of the Anti-Poverty Strategy is to provide equality of opportunity to all of our residents regardless of their financial circumstances. It recognises that this is a longer-term aspiration and in the life span of this 4-year strategy the intention is to:

- Lessen the short-term effects of poverty
- Prevent more people falling into poverty
- Better support our residents who are living in poverty
- Enable residents to better address the barriers to overcoming poverty

To enable a focus on this complex and challenging subject and to ensure residents in the most need are targeted, receive a personalised response and gain the best results

possible, a resident segmentation approach was developed. This has identified three groups of residents that are to be the focus of this strategy:

**Persistent Hardship** – These people are on low incomes claiming universal credit or other benefits and are the focus of most of the existing government support.

**Just About Managing** – These are people who were just getting by on their own means without qualifying for support, although frequently they have little or no money left at the end of the month; there is no financial resilience.

**Asset Rich, Cash Poor** – These are people who own their own home with limited savings and their financial assets are not easily accessible.

The strategy will mainstream the work that was started during the Covid-19 pandemic when, working with Citizen's Advice, the One Front Door was established and will look to transition this to a No Wrong Door approach: supporting those in poverty through whichever avenue they are comfortable with seeking support, without the need for them to repeatedly tell their story to different people.

The Anti-Poverty Strategy has three objectives which form the basis of the partnership approach to addressing poverty within the borough. The objectives are to:

1. Support people in poverty
2. Strengthen communities in their resilience to poverty
3. Improve life opportunities for residents who are living in poverty

This will be achieved through an action plan which will be refreshed each year to build on actions from previous years, whilst being able to react to emerging challenges and opportunities.

Instead of waiting for the strategy to be developed, a number of initiatives have already taken place to support those in poverty. These include:

- Implementation of the One Front Door through Citizens Advice Wokingham
- Launch of the Hardship Alliance
- Funding through the Household Support Grant
- Opening of the Charity and Community Hub
- Launch of the online Local Support Hub
- Holiday Activity and Food Programme
- Winter Warmer project
- Support for SHARE
- Helping residents reduce their energy bills
- Kickstart scheme
- Employment support
- Support for A Christmas Presence shop in Wokingham town centre
- Stay Warm and Well leaflet

Work is also continuing on communicating availability of support through Free School Meals, the Healthy Start Initiative, benefits take-up and other schemes to support people in poverty or on low incomes.

## Analysis of Issues

A significant amount of data is available at a national or local level to identify the increase in poverty within the borough. Work continues with council services and partners across the VCS to identify further data that is helpful to identify the scale of the challenge and areas where most support is needed.

Some of the main datasets used to inform this strategy are:

- Indices of Deprivation 2019, including the Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Unemployment figures
- Child poverty
- Free School Meals
- Mental Health
- Homelessness and Housing

A data analysis is included within the draft strategy, included as Appendix 1, which identifies that whilst Wokingham Borough is an affluent area placed within the least deprived 10% on the Indices of Deprivation, there are pockets of deprivation and the size of these is rising.

- There was a spike in Universal Credit claimant rates during the peak of the pandemic, but this quickly reverted towards, but remaining higher than, the pre-pandemic position.
- Those on lower incomes have fared worse and there has been a significant impact on younger age groups with more younger people, including graduates, either under-employed, or holding part-time rather than full-time jobs.
- Since the pandemic there has been an increase of 479 children receiving Free School Meals, which is an increase of around one quarter from the pre-Covid levels. It is intended to drive these numbers higher through further publicity of eligibility.
- Fuel poverty is becoming an increasing challenge for many households with recent rises, but an absence of data at a national or local level makes quantifying this particularly challenging.

There has also been initial consultation with people in poverty to identify their challenges and where they would go to seek support. This was responded to by 244 people and their views considered to inform the strategy.

Many people in poverty will approach a friend, family member of VCS organisation for support rather than coming to the council. The strategy recognises this and sets out mechanisms for working with and supporting the VCS to work in partnership in delivery of the strategy and identify opportunities for attracting grants and other external funding to deliver the strategy. It is hoped that this will support the organisations people rely on for immediate assistance: addressing the symptoms such as inability to buy food; whilst the longer term causes such as lack of job or training needs to gain better employment are worked on.

To achieve this the strategy takes an individual and customised focus rather than a more generic approach to support those in poverty.

## 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)	N/A		
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A		

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

Proposals and costings are being developed for consideration by the Executive.

### **Cross-Council Implications**

Adoption of this strategy will provide the basis for further work across the council and services to improve the way people in poverty are worked with and supported. The priorities and focus of this strategy should therefore be reflected in approaches taken by other services.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

Addressing poverty challenges within the borough in an equitable way will support delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The annual action plans and supporting lower-level actions will be subject to an equalities assessment.

### **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 only aspects related to carbon neutrality are measures around energy efficiency in council housing stock and the provision of support from those residents in fuel poverty.

### **Reasons for considering the report in Part 2**

None

### **List of Background Papers**

Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-26 Consultation Draft

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# **Wokingham Borough Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-26**

# 1. Introduction

Wokingham Borough has consistently been one of the least deprived unitary authority areas in England<sup>1</sup> but we've seen an increase in people and families on low incomes as well as those facing employment and financial insecurity for the first time because of the pandemic. It's fair to say that while we have all faced the same Covid storm these past 20 months, we have not necessarily all been in the same boat, and we want to address this.

Since the start of the year, we have been working closely with residents, partners in the voluntary sector and council colleagues to understand more about the inequalities that exist in the borough. We have used this information to build on the support we already offer and to create our Anti-Poverty Strategy to tackle the issues so we can ensure fairer and more equal opportunities for all. This isn't about quick fixes. It's about long-term changes that will make a real difference to our residents. We are continuing to gather knowledge and information to inform the annual action plans that sit beneath and support delivery of our overall strategy.

In doing this and by working with our partners, we will seek to empower our residents who are living through difficult times and look to providing them with greater choice and also safeguarding their dignity.

Poverty has existed for generations in society but has now increased through Covid with more people experiencing poverty, and many of those that were previously in poverty being pushed into or further into debt. Our partners across the voluntary and community sector are doing an excellent job to support those most in need and their efforts are appreciated by the council and across the wider community. Through this strategy we want to continue the work that the council has been doing along with our voluntary sector partners in providing support to our residents: to support this, we have created a Hardship Alliance with four leaders from our voluntary and community sector. This strategy will be delivered with the sector. We are also eager to ensure the provision of support at the earliest opportunity, preventing people falling into or further into poverty and a downward spiral of events impacting on their health and wellbeing.

## **Wokingham Borough Council**

Cllr John Halsall, Leader of the Council

Cllr Laura Blumenthal, Deputy Member for Anti-Poverty

Graham Ebers, Deputy CEO of the Council

## **Hardship Alliance**

Fiona Price, Age UK

Emma Cantrell, First Days

Amy Garstang, Wokingham United Charities

Jake Morrison, Citizens Advice

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<sup>1</sup> Ranking least deprived in 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation.



## 2. Purpose of the Strategy

The Anti-Poverty Strategy is designed to support those in poverty and help them to address the challenges in order that they are better placed to meet their own needs and aspirations for the future. It aims, through working in partnership, to promote an early intervention approach as part of the Council's role to 'prevent' poverty. This will achieve better results for those in, or at risk of falling into, poverty, rather than trying to resolve matters at a later stage when the solution is more complex. The strategy will help work towards the community vision for Wokingham Borough to be a great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business<sup>2</sup>, ensuring that everyone is included in the council's thinking and, where needed, supporting people to be better able to enjoy this aspiration.

The aim of the Anti-Poverty Strategy is to provide equality of opportunity through lessening the effects of poverty, enabling people to overcome the barriers linked to poverty and preventing further people falling into poverty. It recognises that this is a longer-term aspiration and in the life span of this 5-year strategy the intention is to:

- Lessen the short-term effects of poverty
- Prevent further people falling into poverty
- Better support our residents who are living in poverty
- Enable residents to better address the barriers to overcoming poverty

## 3. What is Poverty?

Everyone has their own personal idea of what is meant by poverty as there is no one specific definition. For consistency, the following definition is proposed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) as it refers to more than just income.

When referring to poverty, the most obvious element is income – but it can also include a lack of ability to source goods or access to essential services.

*When a person's resources (mainly their material resources) are not sufficient to meet their minimum needs (including social participation)*

Covid made clear the vital role that many people on lower incomes play within society, whether they are working in shops, providing care to others, or any of the range of other key roles: this strategy will help recognise and address the challenges faced by these people, living in a wealthy and higher-cost area such as Wokingham.

Poverty is not just about unemployment or low income and can often be linked to reduced cashflow or shortfalls resulting in people being unable to meet their immediate outgoings, which could be as a result of spiraling costs due to reasons out of their control. For many, poverty in Wokingham is particularly highlighted because households affected are surrounded by areas of affluence.

There are many definitions for poverty (see Appendix 3) and these can be calculated either before or after housing costs. Clearly, in an area such as Wokingham Borough, with high value and high-cost properties, housing costs present an added challenge. For the purpose of this strategy, the ambition is to address poverty after these housing costs are factored in.

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<sup>2</sup> Wokingham Borough Community Vision 2020 to 2024.

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## 4. National and Local Context

Around 1 in 5 people in the UK lived in poverty (2018/2019): that represents 14.5 million people living in poverty, which was before the impact of Covid-19. This is broken down into 8.2m working-age adults, 4.2m children and 1.9m pension-age adults<sup>3</sup>. Of these in poverty, over half are more than 50% below the poverty line and this proportion had not changed since the millennium through to the pandemic – the full impact of which is yet to be understood.

### Data & Analysis

There are a number of key datasets at a national and local level which are useful in understanding the extent of poverty and the groups affected. Some of the key data to support this strategy follows. Work will continue to baseline more data at a local level to further understand the depth of poverty, groups affected and progress made over the life of the strategy.

The datasets used to inform this strategy are:

- Indices of Deprivation 2019, including the Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Unemployment figures
- Child poverty
- Free School Meals
- Mental Health
- Homelessness and Housing

In developing this strategy, these datasets held nationally, along with locally held information have been analysed to understand the local context and the challenges faced within Wokingham Borough. Full details of the data used is contained within Appendix 2, whilst an analysis of the main points taken from this is summarised here.

### Data Summary

Wokingham Borough is overall, a very affluent area placed within the bottom (least deprived) 10% on the Indices of Deprivation, but when drilling down to a much more local level and looking at the Index of Multiple Deprivation, there are some areas<sup>4</sup> which are much more deprived than the overall borough picture. Even these areas perform well compared to the most deprived communities nationally, but this again masks the challenges faced by some households in these areas and more widely across the Borough. It should be noted that this most recent data is from 2019 and therefore before the full impacts of Covid were incorporated.

Looking at some of the underlying data aspects, it is clear that the employment picture is similar with Wokingham Borough overall performing better than the country as a whole. There was a spike in Universal Credit claimant rates during the peak of the pandemic, but this quickly reverted towards, but remaining higher than, the pre-pandemic position. Within this general picture those on lower incomes have fared worse and there has also been a significant impact on younger age groups. This is seen through more younger people, including graduates, either under-employed, or holding part-time rather than full-time jobs.

With the Borough having a higher rate of people employed in professional and managerial roles than either the South East or England average, there is greater resilience within the borough as a whole to bounce back.

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<sup>3</sup> UK Poverty 2020/21: Annual Report – Joseph Rowntree Foundation

<sup>4</sup> These are Lower Layer Super Output Areas which are areas of around 625 households or a population of around 1,500 (the boundary of which does not change to enable comparison): Office for National Statistics.

This disguises the underlying challenges faced by those who have lost their jobs and are leading to the doubling of people in receipt of Universal Credit.

The impact on families has been significant, nationally and locally, with almost one third of children nationally living in poverty: in Wokingham Borough the rate is significantly lower with under 8% in relative poverty. Alongside this, looking at the increase in Free School Meals provides a strong local measure for children in families in poverty. Since the pandemic there has been an increase of 479 children receiving Free School Meals, which is an increase of around one quarter from the pre-Covid levels: this is proportionately a higher increase than nationally. In part this increase reflects the strong position of the Borough pre-Covid, but also highlights the different impacts of the pandemic felt by a large number of families within the borough. It is hoped that this number will continue to increase in the short term as more people are encouraged to sign up and therefore access the support they are entitled to.,

Mental health concerns have increased for all communities during the pandemic, but there is an increased impact on those who are least well off. This is particularly linked to anxiety and depression, which is heightened for those experiencing job insecurity. Overall, the levels of people with mental health concerns are comparable with the South East.

## Case Study

People moving into new social housing receive their house with no carpets, washing machine, cooker or microwave. They also may not have any of the smaller electrical items required for day-to-day living such as a kettle. The **Make A House A Home** project supports people who can't afford it by providing carpeting and these white goods required to live in the home they have just received: this is essential for day to day living, avoids the health benefits of people "getting by" without carpeting and therefore suffering from the dust rising through floor boards. Through providing these essential items, families are able to start living and settle into their new home without the stress of then having to trawl around charity shops or spend over £1,000 in making their house fit to live in.

## 5. Understanding the Borough

To enable a focus on this complex and challenging subject and to ensure residents in the most need are targeted and gain the best results possible, a resident segmentation approach was developed. This has identified three groups of residents that are to be the focus of this strategy.

### **Persistent Hardship**

These people are on low incomes claiming universal credit or other benefits and are the focus of most of the existing government support.

### **Just About Managing**

These are people who were just getting by on their own means without qualifying for support, although frequently they have little or no money left at the end of the month; there is no financial resilience.

### **Asset Rich, Cash Poor**

These are people who own their own home with limited savings and their financial assets are not easily accessible.

## 6. The Approach

To deliver on the aims of mitigating short-term effects of poverty and enabling residents to better overcome the barriers to address poverty and to focus activity on the 3 resident groups identified a focused approach has been developed.

This approach entails challenging stigma through working in partnership with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and residents to combat the stigma of poverty, to enable access for all to the services and support available, whilst adopting a people-focused approach where the council works with VCS partners to better understand the experiences of residents who are living in poverty, enabling development of the workforce and a continued commitment to learn and grow.

Early intervention and prevention is at the heart of the strategy, so those in poverty can get support as soon as possible, whilst actions are taken to prevent others falling into poverty, or their position worsening. The partnership will continue to enable innovative solutions: develop innovative, sustainable, cross-Council and partner initiatives that can actively support those experiencing both long and short-term poverty impacts. The strategy will be the catalyst that connects other Council strategies, projects and plans, supports partnership working to ensure a whole community approach to tackling poverty that will have a positive impact on residents.

To support people in the best way possible, the council proposes to take a **No Wrong Door** approach, through which anyone seeking support via one of the avenues available can be signposted and introduced to the best place to receive the support they need. This recognises that asking for support is not easy and once someone has overcome this barrier, they shouldn't need to go through the same process again. The *No Wrong Door* approach will ensure that when someone has taken the step of asking for support, they aren't turned away and are guided through the support network, without the need to keep on approaching other organisations, or retelling their story. Through effective partnership working between the council, town and parish councils and the voluntary and community sector, coupled with introductions to other agencies the council and partners can work most effectively together. This will simplify access to receiving support for those that have taken the first step by asking for help.

Through this approach to focus activity, the three objectives of the Anti-Poverty Strategy will be delivered across the partnership.

### The Three Objectives

These objectives form the basis of the partnership approach to addressing poverty within the borough. They set out how the council and partners can collectively work together to enable delivery against the priorities set to focus the anti-poverty work.	
<b>Objective 1</b>	<b>Support people in poverty</b>
<b>Objective 2</b>	<b>Strengthen communities in their resilience to poverty</b>
<b>Objective 3</b>	<b>Improve life opportunities for residents who are living in poverty</b>



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## 7. Wokingham's Strategic Context

Within the Borough, this Anti-Poverty Strategy fits within a wider framework that sets out the Council's key priorities and delivery mechanisms across the borough. The main strategies that the Anti-Poverty Strategy aligns with, and this strategy's contribution is summarised here.

### Council Corporate Delivery Plan

In February 2020, the Council set out a vision of Wokingham Borough as "A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business". This vision is underpinned by five strategic priorities:

- Safe, Strong Communities
- Enriching Lives
- Right Homes, Right Place
- Keeping the Borough Moving
- A Clean Green Borough

These are underpinned by two inward-focused priorities, or enablers:

- Changing the Way We Work for You
- Be the Best We Can Be

This strategy is fundamental in delivering the vision for the Borough and has strong links with the first three of our priorities, whilst driving a change in the way the council works for and with our residents.

### Health & Wellbeing Strategy

There is a close link between poverty and poor health outcomes: poverty can be a cause or consequence of poor quality of life. A person's wellbeing is directly affected by their mental and physical health. Tackling the barriers faced by those on low incomes through increasing the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices and exercise, such as by accessible cycling schemes, will increase quality of life.

The Health & Wellbeing Strategy sets out three priorities:

- Cardiovascular Disease
- Cancer
- Covid recovery

There is an integrated approach to deliver these aspects of the strategy with health partners taking a lead, but addressing poverty is fundamental to delivery of all three of these priorities as a way of enhancing wellbeing.

### Other Strategies

There are several other strategies that the Anti-Poverty Strategy aligns with. The key ones of these are:

- Recovery Strategy
- Equality & Diversity Strategy
- Voluntary & Community Sector Strategy
- Domestic Abuse Strategy

## 8. Developing the Action Plan

This strategy will be underpinned by annual action plans developed each year to address the immediate impacts felt by residents and work to move more people out of poverty. This partnership-developed approach and action plan requires working closely with and relying on the support of the strong voluntary and community sector within the Borough.

The strategy presents short-term actions such as communications, signposting and removing barriers, building on the one front door successes to lead into a *No Wrong Door* approach, providing a short-term response whilst progressing through to longer-term actions working with residents using a personalised approach to address the root causes of their poverty.

The action plan will be delivered over a five-year period and refreshed each year to ensure that it remains relevant, builds on actions from the previous years and is able to develop innovative and personalised solutions to addressing challenges faced by people within the Borough.

## 9. Delivering & Funding the Strategy

The council provided a temporary Anti-Poverty Officer for up to one year to support development of the strategy and accompanying action plan, as well as developing networks within the council and VCS as key delivery partners. To have a successful delivery of the Anti-Poverty Strategy this will require a community-led response that includes working in partnership across the council departments, with the VCS and the town and parish councils.

In addition to this staffing capacity, the Council is looking to provide initial funding to support delivery of the strategy: this is on top of money received from the Government to support initiatives such as the Holiday Activity Fund and the Covid Local Support Grant which provided funding for meals to support school children on free school meals through the holidays. These funding streams from the government have provided £1.2m for Wokingham Borough to directly support those most in need.

To deliver the strategy, it is important that grant funding can be attracted to support VCS partners in continuing the work they do to support local communities: the Council will work with the VCS to support these funding bids. This leveraging of local and national grants to support the anti-poverty ambitions will be in conjunction with a medium-term investment of council resources.

## 10. Measuring Success

The strategy is supported by an action plan, which will be reviewed each year to ensure that actions are delivered, develop the next year's actions and ensure that the strategy with accompanying measures remains relevant. These actions will contribute towards the ambition of lessening the short-term effects of poverty and enabling people to overcome the barriers linked to poverty. The published strategy will include a basket of key performance measures.

Progress towards this ambition will be difficult to gauge in the short-term, so there will be a poverty scorecard to sit alongside the strategy, looking at some of the shorter-term measures which will enable progress to be measured. In the short-term it is intended that some measures demonstrate increased demand, which gives the council and partners more visibility of the scale of poverty within the borough and identifies the people or families who may require support. Accessing this support will help these people in the longer-term to move out of poverty, leading to an improvement in the scorecard and contribution towards the ambition.

An annual update on delivery of the strategy will be published alongside the next year's action plan.

## Appendix 1 - High Level Action Plan

This high-level action plan will set out some of the key actions to be taken by the council and partners to support delivery of the Anti-Poverty Strategy.

Through further engagement with services and voluntary sector partners, the establishment of workstream leads and identification of current actions from other strategies and initiatives this will be populated to identify key actions for the life of the strategy.

The Action Plan for Year 1 is below, which will be built on in subsequent years to take forward existing actions, address challenges faced and pick up emerging opportunities.

Objective 1 Support People in Poverty		Timescale		
Theme	Year 1	Q1	Q2-3	Q4
Target communication, advice and guidance to ensure residents are supported and signposted to the right support available to ensure their immediate needs are met	1. Embed dedicated learning for all resident access points on how and where to signpost residents who are experiencing poverty.			
	2. Development & promotion of the Local Support Hub to better enable residents to access support and advice as they need it.			
	3. Review of all "debt" related communications to ensure the language, tone and content is signposting those that need support to the right place, at the right time in the right way.			
	4. Develop a targeted communications campaign to promote take-up of support and advice that is available across the borough e.g. Free School Meals / Healthy Start Initiative / Mental & Physical Health services.			
	5. Implement text messaging service for key teams across the council to provide key messages to residents via their mobiles: increasing access and impact.			
Work with the VCS to provide debt advice & support people to tackle their debt and to develop budgeting skills	1. Invest in a dedicated Debt Advice worker within the VCS to enable people to deal with their debt and claim support they are entitled to.			
	2. Improve training and support to help people develop budgeting skills to avoid increasing debt in the future.			
	3. Establish mechanisms for signposting and cross-referral between the VCS, Town / Parish Councils and the Debt Advice Worker to provide the support people require.			
Develop a <i>No Wrong Door</i> initiative that ensures residents can choose how they seek support, through enhanced partnership working with the VCS groups, Town & Parishes & Council services	1. Continue support for the One Front Door initiative that helps VCS partners support people in poverty with advice and access to services.			
	2. Promote Community Navigators self-referral opportunities and embed this within working practices.			
	3. Determine how the No Wrong Door will work, as a successor to the ongoing activity driven through the VCS One Front Door, and attract funding to support the continuation of this support.			





<b>Objective 2 Strengthen Communities in their Resilience to Poverty</b>		<b>Timescale</b>		
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2-3</b>	<b>Q4</b>
Provide support to people most in need, enabling them to understand and overcome their debt	1. Develop the Community Support model, working with residents to break down the fear associated with debt and provide coaching to overcome challenges and empower them.			
	2. Provide joined-up support or early intervention within the VCS and clear links into the council to reduce evictions and prevent homelessness.			
	3. Work with Berkshire Credit Union, the VCS and debt advisors to promote saving and sustainable borrowing.			
Enhance opportunities to work with residents who are digitally excluded to open up new ways of engaging and accessing support	1. Continue and expand the digital donations project, targeting those most in need and supported by a roll-out of the digital champion's scheme.			
	2. Work in partnerships with schools and VCS groups to improve the digital access for young people across the borough, supporting all children to continue to learn from home.			
	3. Extend digital skills programmes available (including those offered by adult and community learning team and VCS partners).			
Establish a range of job and training opportunities for those looking to enter employment or improve their earning potential	1. Establish an outreach model for additional employment support covering all age-groups and utilising local venues to reach out into communities.			
	2. Provide accessible careers guidance and support for all residents who wish to return to work: linking in with local business to address employment gaps.			
	3. Review procurement social value requirements to increase emphasis on provision of paid work / apprenticeship opportunities within the borough, including for people who are disadvantaged or vulnerable.			

<b>Objective 3 Improve Life Opportunities for Residents who are living in Poverty</b>		<b>Timescale</b>		
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2-3</b>	<b>Q4</b>
Make social and temporary housing accessible for those that need it and improve affordability of running costs	1. Develop the Make a House a Home scheme which supports residents who move into Local Authority Housing, Social Housing & temporary accommodation to have their homes equipped to live in.			
	2. Undertake a stock condition survey of the whole council housing stock to develop an energy benchmark.			
	3. Continue to deliver the "Warmer Winter" project with First Days and Share.			
	4. Promote installation of and support available for LED lighting, cavity wall, loft insulation, boiler controls and other ways to make the property consume less energy and to reduce energy bills.			

Ensure the Equality Impact Assessments are widened to include Poverty, so that Council decisions are viewed through a hardship lens meaning real life impacts are understood	1. Add poverty / socio-economic factors as a consideration to be used within all Equality Impact Assessments.			
	2. Update project documentation requirements to place the needs of low-income households and those facing poverty at the heart of decision making.			
	3. Review council fees and charging policies, to better consider the impact on low-income households of any changes to fees or charges.			
Recognise the links between poverty and mental health to improve services that provide support & ensure that the needs of residents are understood and responded to	1. Increase health promotion of lifestyle choices around nutrition, healthy eating and exercise that support people on low incomes.			
	2. Review opportunities for making the sports, arts and cultural offer more accessible to those on lower incomes within the borough.			
	3. Promote the mental and physical health benefits of walking, cycling, green spaces, Wokingham Bikathon, Cycle Hubs as affordable ways of getting exercise.			

# Appendix 2 – Data for the Strategy

## Key Datasets

A number of key datasets were used in developing this strategy, drawing data together from both national and local sources. The data from these and key points for each is summarised below. The timing for the data varies, with some not yet being available to fully understand the impact of Covid.

The one additional dataset which is missing is that from the Census since this data is so far out of date to make it meaningless and the newest data will not be available for several months. When the 2021 Census data becomes available, this will feed into the next annual review of the strategy.

### Indices of Deprivation 2019

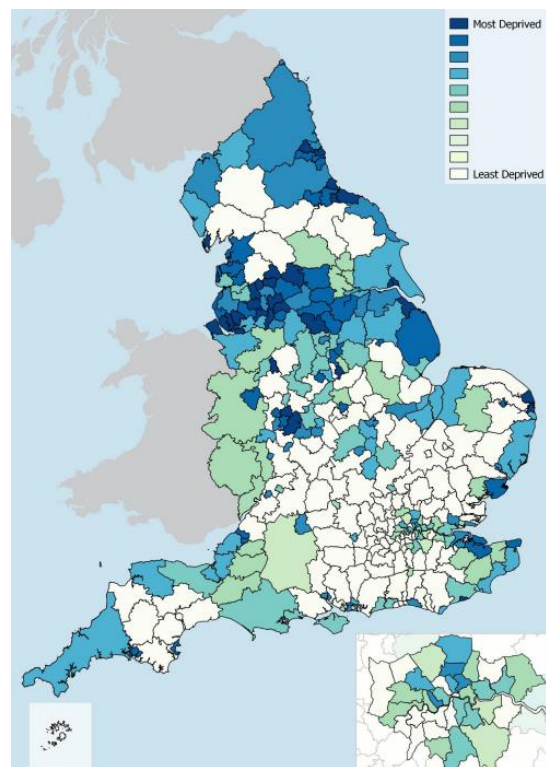
The Indices of Deprivation are a unique measure of relative deprivation at a small local area level (Lower-layer Super Output Areas) which represent a small part of a ward: often being only a few streets. Data on these has been produced by Office for National Statistics since 2000. The Indices of Deprivation 2019 (IoD 2019) is the most recent release. The Indices provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small areas across England, based on seven different domains, or facets, of deprivation:

- Income Deprivation
- Employment Deprivation
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation
- Health Deprivation and Disability
- Crime
- Barriers to Housing and Services
- Living Environment Deprivation

At the national level, the index paints a useful picture of the distribution of poverty across England. The map<sup>5</sup> shows a picture, at a given point in time, of the levels of deprivation experienced in each local authority across England.

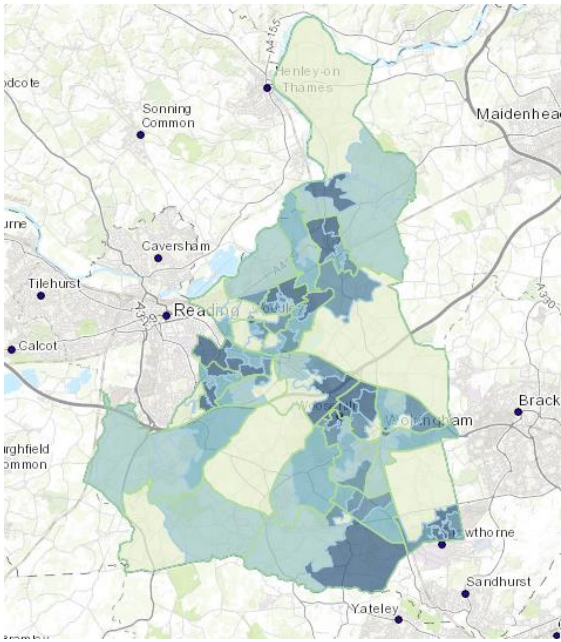
The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) also allows us to look at a more local level. The below map shows the relative levels of deprivation across the Borough. As at the national level, locally we can see pockets of more deprived areas and we can identify our 5 most deprived wards as:

- Wokingham Without
- Norreys
- Loddon
- Finchamstead South
- Bulmershe and Whitegates



The map also clearly shows that whilst there are pockets of deprivation, deprivation isn't restricted to these areas and show whilst local targeted solutions are important, they must be supported with more wide-reaching approaches to ensure everyone has the support they need.

<sup>5</sup> Office for National Statistics: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 – Distribution by local authority based on proportion of neighbourhoods in the most deprived decile nationally.



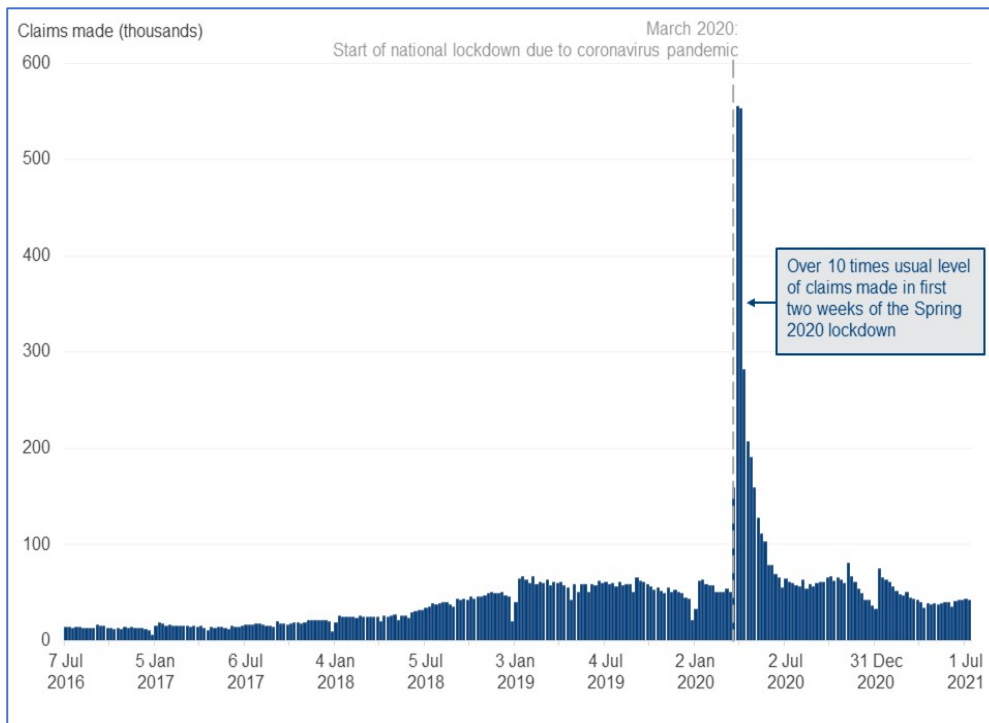
### LSOA

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)  
Rank|2019



## Unemployment & Low Income

As the latest UK figures for number of claims for Universal Credit show, unemployment has been a big challenge over the lockdown period, despite furlough. However, it is worth noting that the number of claimants continues to fall following the removal of Covid restrictions.

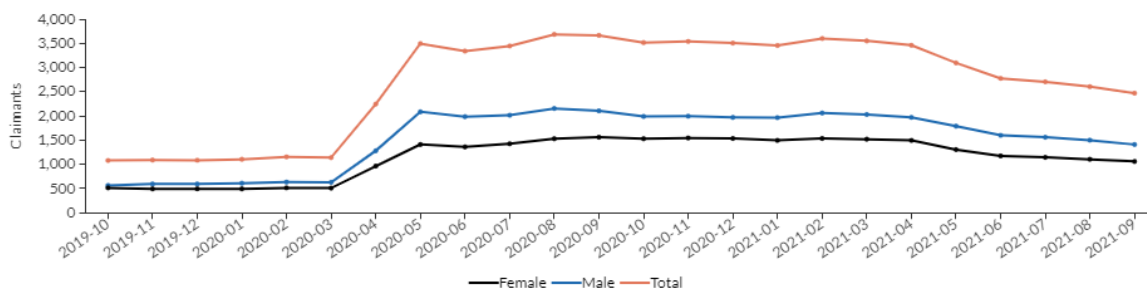


Universal Credit Claims made Weekly 7 July 2016 to 8 July 2021

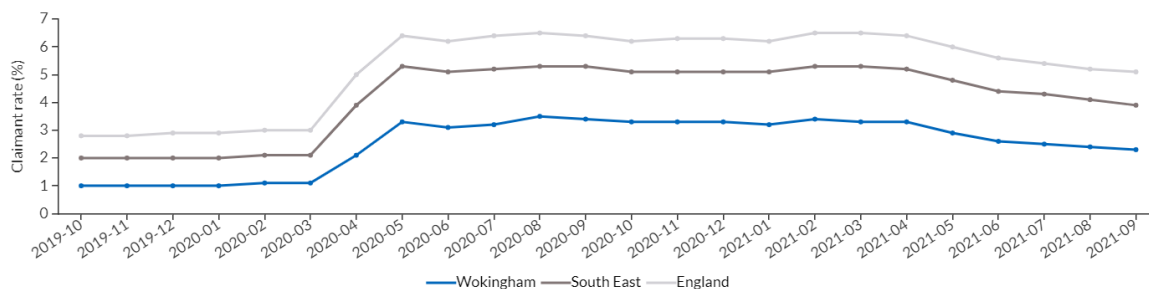
<sup>6</sup> Indices of multiple deprivation 2019 by LSOA taken from the Berkshire Public Health's data observatory.

Poverty significantly impacts on those who are not working. In 2018/19, 51% of working-age adults in workless families were in poverty, compared with 15% of those in working families.

The below graph<sup>7</sup> shows the claim count of universal credit since October 2019 to September 2021 for the Borough in total and split by gender. We see a similar uptick in the level of universal credit and job seekers allowance claims, with a slow but gradual decline in levels from a peak around February.



Placing those levels into context the below graph shows the claim rates for Wokingham Borough, the South East and England as a percentage of the population of each area.



Whilst this graph suggests the situation in the Borough is much better than in the country more widely the total figures are still significant. Claimant rates in the borough peaked at 3,685 residents in August 2020 reducing to 2,815 in June 2021 (a reduction of almost 24%). CAB Wokingham data supports this, showing that Universal Credit and Tax Credits were the most popular queries with 2,029 people seeking support in this area in FY19/20<sup>8</sup>. Claimant numbers in September 2021 came to 2,470 claims in total for all persons aged 16+ (a reduction since the peak of over 33%). This is made up of 1,410 males and 1,060 females. Pre-pandemic claimant levels hovered around 1,000 people. The current trend continues to show reducing claimant numbers though uncertainty regarding the full impact of furlough ending remains.

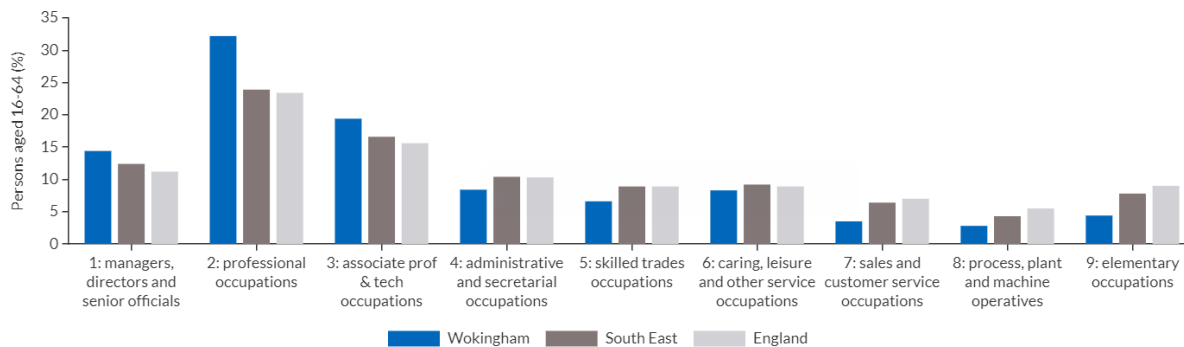
At the end of August 2021 there were 68 (1.8%) young people aged 16-18 who were unemployed in the borough, compared to 46 (1.1%) in 2019 before the pandemic and the same as this time last year. As a further challenge, young people who are leaving the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) group are tending to go into part time employment or jobs with no training and the number of young people who have been NEET for 6 months or longer is increasing.

The economy has recovered beyond expectation at the national level. Locally our jobs market is skewed towards high skilled professional, managerial and technical occupations<sup>9</sup>. Whilst this means a high level of average earnings and prosperity because those roles are well paid, the absence of entry level and more vocational level jobs may prove a blocker to accessing employment for more long term unemployed or for young people with lower educational outcomes.

<sup>7</sup> Universal Credit and Job Seekers Allowance claimants - for persons aged 16 and over in Wokingham by month. Data from the ONS via the Berkshire data observatory

<sup>8</sup> CAB Wokingham – Key Statistics Overview – FY20/21

<sup>9</sup> Occupation type from the ONS Annual Population Survey 2021.



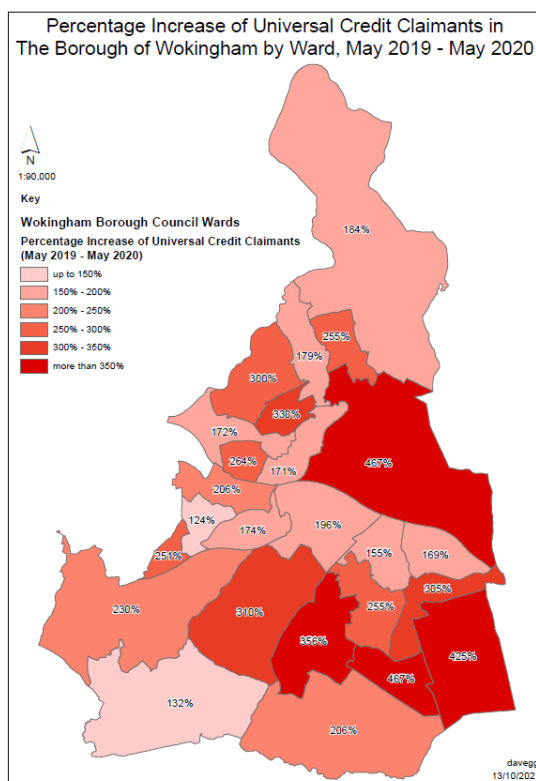
Some of these opportunities may, however, be available in the wider Berkshire employment market. The same data for Reading and Bracknell Forest shows that they have 7.3% and 8.1% of jobs in elementary occupations compared to just 4.4% for Wokingham Borough. Whilst some areas of mass employment are near our areas in most need this does not always mean they are easily accessible. A trip from Wokingham Without to Doncastle Road in Bracknell’s Western Industrial area is only a few miles and 10 minutes in the car. Using a combination of foot and public transport however it can take close to an hour. Enabling routes into employment, be it skills development, economic development in the borough or providing communication routes that allow residents access to jobs outside the borough is an important aspect to improving employment and earning potential for residents: particularly those living in more deprived areas.

Analysis by the Institute for Fiscal Studies shows that for people to stand still financially they need to see annual pay increases of around 7%<sup>10</sup>. This is not realistic for most people, which is likely to see more people becoming less financially secure and some of these starting to lead to an increase in Universal Credit claimants from in-work but low-pay households.

## Child Poverty

Nationally, child poverty has increased significantly, particularly since the pandemic. There were 4.3 million children living in poverty in the UK in 2019 /20.<sup>11</sup> This is 31% of children, or 9 in a classroom of 30. Children from Black and minority ethnic groups are more likely to be in poverty with 46% now in poverty, compared with 26% of children in White British families.

Locally, ONS data from the Department of Work and Pensions in 2019 shows that 6.8% of families in Wokingham Borough are in absolute poverty and 7.7% in relative poverty. This is a much better position than the national and regional figures. Nationally, 15.3% of families are in absolute poverty and 18.4% in relative poverty. This percentage comparison masks the actual number of people involved. In 2019 in Wokingham Borough 2,407 families were in absolute poverty and 2,741 families in relative poverty<sup>12</sup>.



<sup>10</sup> Institute of Fiscal Studies: Analysis of Government Fiscal Events 2021.

<sup>11</sup> Local indicators of child poverty after housing costs Report’ 2019/20.

<sup>12</sup> Local indicators of child poverty after housing costs, 2019/20.



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## Free School Meals

Nationally, the number of free school meal pupils<sup>13</sup> (FSM) has risen from 1.44m in January 2020 to 1.63m in October 2020. This represents 19.7% of children being eligible for free school meals in October 2020, up from 17.3% in January 2020.

Although the number of children eligible from FSM in the Borough is considerably lower than the national average (8.5% as at May 2021), this is 2,421 young people. This represents an increase of 479 young people from January 2020 through to May 2021. Whilst some of this increase can be accounted for by an overall growth in school pupils, the percentage of those receiving free school meals has increased by almost 25% (likely to be in line with national growth, which showed an increase of 13% to October 2020, although Wokingham Borough started from a lower significantly level).

In Wokingham Borough in 2019, only 28% of children receiving Free School Meals obtained English and Maths GCSE at grade 5 or above, lower than the national average, compared to 58% of children who do not receive Free School Meals<sup>14</sup>. Poverty is having a huge impact on the future of these children.

## Mental Health

The impact of poor mental health affects every part of our community and this has been magnified by the effects of Covid. Those who have never experienced mental illness find themselves grappling with anxiety, depression and loneliness for the first time.

There is a causal link between poverty and mental health<sup>15</sup>, with the 20% least well-off people in the UK being two to three times more likely to develop mental ill health than the richest 20% of the population. In trying to further understand the impact of Covid on mental health, 58% of survey<sup>16</sup> participants living in a household receiving benefits were regarded as currently having poor or very poor mental health.

In 2019 Wokingham Borough had a rate of 1,991 per 100,000 people living with all mental health disorders. This is above the average rate in South East England of 1,971 per 100,000<sup>17</sup> and indicates that all types of mental health impact our population. Further, 15% of the Borough's residents had a formal diagnosis of depression in 2019 with more than 40% of GP consultations relating in some way to mental health issues.

The recently launched Wokingham Wellbeing Service (supporting people referred by GP living with mental health issues) has received 50 referrals between April-June 2021 rising to 112 referrals between July-September 2021, demonstrating the underlying need in our community.

## Homelessness

Wokingham Borough has one of the lowest levels of Homelessness in the South East, as shown in Graph 1. Covid has impacted on this situation with around 1 in every 1,000 households in the Borough declared homeless, reaching a peak of 1.17 per 1,000 in April-July 2020, demonstrated in Graph 2. This represents around 100 households in the borough being declared homeless.

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<sup>13</sup> Autumn Term 2020/21 - Free school meals: Autumn term. gov.uk

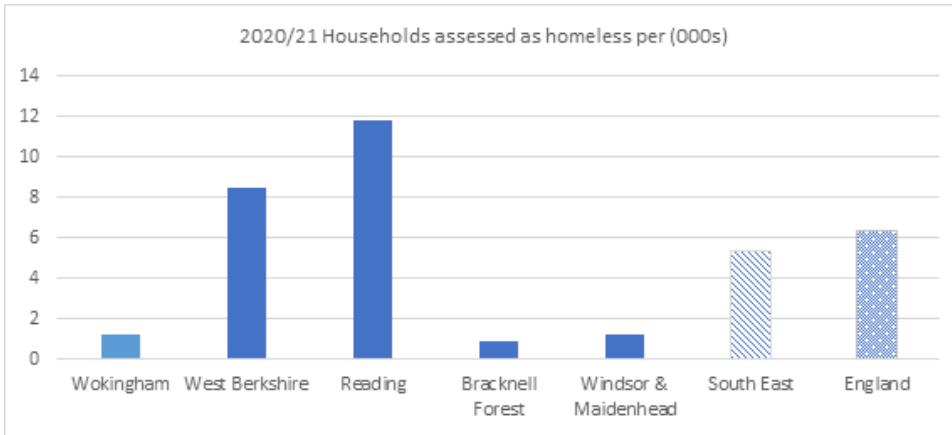
<sup>14</sup> First Days – Annual Report 2020/21

<sup>15</sup> The Mental Health Foundation.

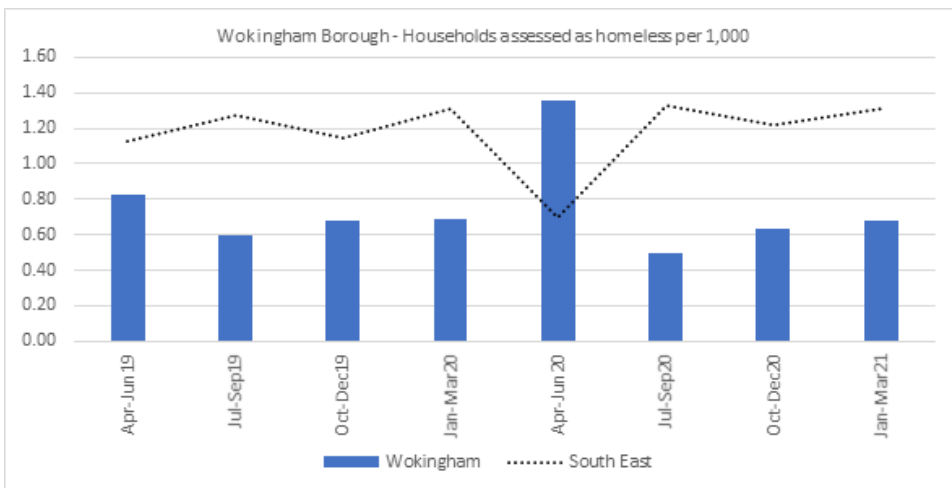
<sup>16</sup> MIND - The Consequences of Coronavirus for Mental Health

<sup>17</sup> Mental Health Disease Burden – The Global Burden of Disease project





Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities



Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

There are around 45 to 50 people in temporary accommodation at a given point in time and an average of around 5 people rough sleeping each month. 45% of those approaching the council are successfully prevented from becoming homeless.

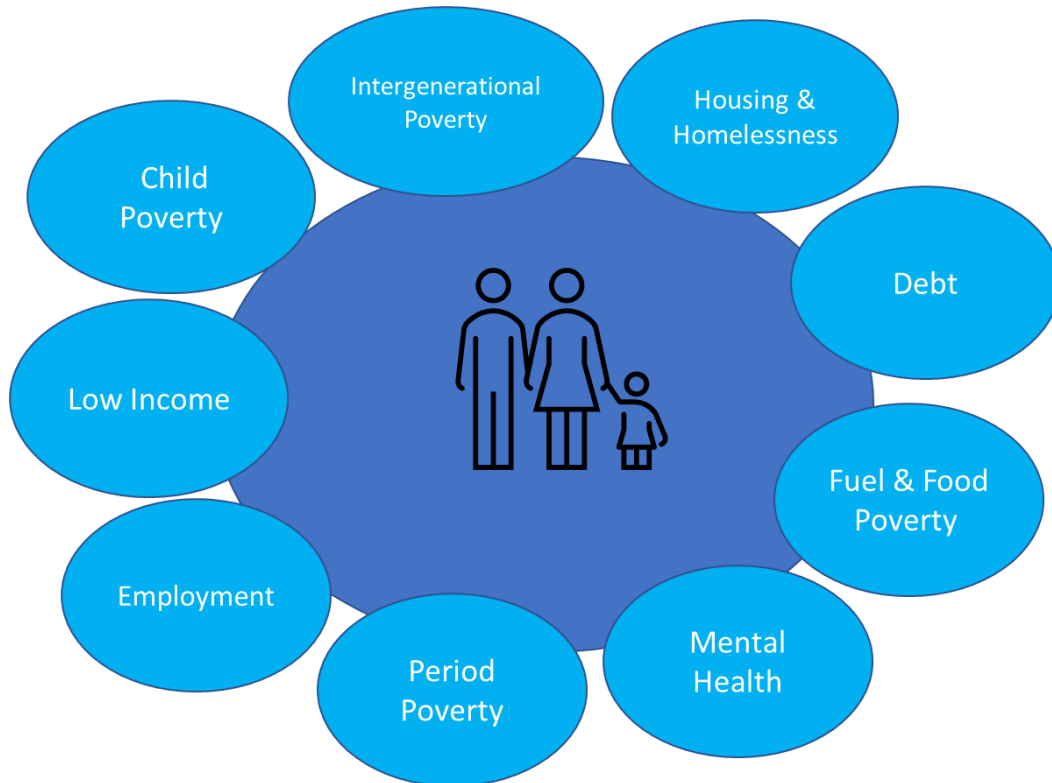
## Fuel Poverty

Data for this is old and taken from a snapshot produced by the Office for National Statistics in 2018 but does not form part of their regular data collection programme. It shows that at that time 4,046 households were in fuel poverty. This represents 7.1% of households in the borough, comparing favourably to a national average of 11.4%. Clearly this is likely to have changed a lot when the impact of Covid is able to be captured.



# Appendix 4 – Key Aspects of Poverty

In the council, our person-centric approach identifies 9 key aspects affecting poverty, one or more of which may impact on people facing poverty within the Borough. Many people in entrenched poverty will be affected by several, if not all, of these aspects.



These aspects have been identified from an analysis of research by JRF and others into poverty brought up to date to give increased prominence to aspects such as food and fuel poverty which have increased in visibility since the start of the pandemic.

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<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Equality Plan Update</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 23 February 2022
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers

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

The Equality Plan and accompanying year on year action plans help to ensure that the council continues to meet its equality obligations for the Borough and residents: progressing towards the “Achieving” level for re-assessment in 2023/24.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee are requested to consider progress on delivery of the year 1 action plan and note the year 2 action plan which will continue to deliver progress against the Local Government Association’s equality framework.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

During 2021 the Council approved the Equality Plan 2021-25 to deliver a programme of improvements against the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG). This report presents an update on what has so far been achieved during the first year of the plan.

A Cross-Party Working Group was established to work with officers in the development and delivery of the Equality Plan: they have been actively involved throughout.

The year 1 action plan set out 29 actions which would progress towards the “Developing” level of the award, meaning that “The organisation has established the building blocks for each priority. It has made an organisational commitment to improving equality. It is putting in place processes to deliver on equality issues and is meeting the statutory requirements.”

The EFLG is comprised of four themes around which the action plan has been structured and on which progress will be monitored. These themes are:

- Understanding and working with your communities
- Leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Responsive services and customer care
- Diverse and engaged workforce

The self-assessment completed earlier this year demonstrates that the council has achieved the “Developing” level across each of these themes. This is on track for delivery of the overall ambition of the Equality Plan.

Key aspects of the action plan are set out within the report and more details provided in Appendix 1. The approved action plan for year 2 is included as Appendix 2.

## Background

In approving the Equality Plan 2021-25, the Council set out its commitment to tackling inequality for all our communities, presenting three priorities and eight objectives to be delivered across the lifetime of the Plan. These are detailed below:

### ***Priority 1 – Listen to and learn from our communities and use this to deliver services that work well for everyone***

- We will improve the collection of data about our communities.
- We will engage and communicate with our residents to encourage participation.
- We will use feedback from residents to identify barriers to equality of opportunity.

### ***Priority 2 – Act on our commitments to equality, diversity, and inclusion in the way we plan, deliver, and shape our services***

- We will embed our commitments to equality into the way we plan, purchase, and deliver.
- We will model active community leadership through collaboration and coproduction.
- We will strengthen and improve our use of Equality Impact Assessments.

### ***Priority 3 – Build a diverse and engaged workforce, where everyone is respected***

- We will equip staff with the right tools to tackle inequality and meet the needs of our increasingly diverse community.
- We will honour the commitments agreed in our Equality Workforce Monitoring Report.

These priorities and objectives reflect the broad scope of the ambition required to make comprehensive progress against the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG).

The goal of the EFLG is to mainstream the deliberate consideration of equality issues across the business of the organisation. Put simply, the EFLG aims to make sure we are thinking about the needs of different groups of people in everything that the council does: in our provision of services; in how we work with our partners; and in how we meet our responsibilities as an employer.

There are three levels of award against the EFLG, as follows:

- ***Developing*** - The organisation has made an organisational commitment to improving equality. It is putting in place processes to deliver on equality issues and is meeting the statutory requirements.
- ***Achieving*** - The organisation has policies, processes and procedures in place and is delivering some good equality outcomes. It is exceeding statutory requirements.
- ***Excellent*** – The organisation has mainstreamed equality throughout the organisation and can demonstrate that it is delivering significant outcomes across its services that are making a difference in its communities. The organisation is an exemplar council for equality and diversity.

In addition to the above levels of the award, there is also the baseline position of those not yet at the “Developing” level. This would be relevant for councils that are not yet able to evidence that they are meeting the statutory requirements.

Delivery of the Equality Plan is supported by an annual action plan. The year 1 action plan, which runs from April 2021 to March 2022, set out 29 actions and has been foundational, enabling the council to securely self-assess (and evidence achievements) at the ‘Developing’ level of the framework.

Set out below are some of the highlights of what has been achieved in the first year of the programme. A summary of the progress made against each of the 29 actions has been set out in Appendix 1.

***Priority 1 – Listen to and learn from our communities and use this to deliver services that work well for everyone***

- A Resident’s Equality Forum has been established to provide a voice for the borough’s diverse groups and communities, with representation to be across the 9 protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010.
- Equality data monitoring has been introduced into the council’s complaints process to help identify existing or emerging issues for equality groups.

***Priority 2 – Act on our commitments to equality, diversity, and inclusion in the way we plan, deliver, and shape our services***

- A programme of communications is underway celebrating the diversity of the borough and showcasing the work across the council to promote equality.
- Revised Equality Impact Assessment guidance and training has been made available to colleagues.

***Priority 3 – Build a diverse and engaged workforce, where everyone is respected***

- A review of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Learning and Development offer for members and colleagues across the organisation has been undertaken.
- An internal equality, diversity and inclusion intranet page was established to provide a central source of information and resources for colleagues across the Council.

**Analysis of Issues**

The year 2 action plan, attached as Appendix 2 to this report, comprises 11 actions targeted at supporting the council’s continued trajectory across the EFLG, towards the ‘Achieving’ level of the framework. .

The EFLG has four improvement modules and 17 priority themes as detailed below:

***Understanding and working with your communities***

1. collecting and sharing information
2. analysing and using data and information

3. effective community engagement
4. fostering good community relations
5. participation in public life.

***Leadership, partnership, and organisational commitment***

6. political and officer leadership
7. priorities and working in partnership
8. using equality impact assessment
9. performance monitoring and scrutiny.

***Responsive services and customer care***

10. commissioning and procuring services
11. integration of equality objectives into planned service outcomes
12. service design and delivery.

***Diverse and engaged workforce***

13. workforce diversity and inclusion
14. inclusive strategies and policies
15. collecting, analysing, and publishing workforce data
16. learning, development, and progression
17. health and wellbeing.

The 11 actions set out in the year 2 action plan have been informed by a detailed self-assessment against these priority themes and build on the progress achieved to date. They have been considered by the Cross-Party Working Group and signed off as the focus for delivery from April 2022.

In delivering year 2 of the equality programme, the Council will continue to build the supporting infrastructure, knowledge, and skills to further develop an (equality) data led cycle of improvement ensuring services are responsive to and reflective of the borough's communities.

**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)	£1515,000	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	TBC		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	TBC		

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



<b>Cross-Council Implications</b>
Set out in the report.

<b>Public Sector Equality Duty</b>
Due regard has been taken of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Equality Framework for Local Government is an improvement tool which supports organisations to enhance performance in delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The actions set out in the attached appendices detail activity that directly delivers against the council's Public Sector Equality Duty. An equality impact assessment was undertaken for the Equality Plan 2021-22.

<b>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></b>
This decision will not have any negative impact on carbon neutrality, but through the consideration of equalities within detailed service planning (as part of the action plan), it should help ensure that all communities are considered in council decisions progressing toward achieving a carbon neutral borough.

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

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
NA

<b>Contact</b> Bryony Gibbs & Mark Gwynne	<b>Service</b> Insight, Strategy & Inclusion
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## Appendix 1: Achievements and ongoing work of the Equality Programme Year 1 (2021-2022)

Action	Update
1. Publish Equality and Diversity Information on Website	Internal and external pages established. Wokingham Borough Equality Profile published.
2. Review and identify any potential areas of change to improve our equality monitoring form and monitoring practices	Equality Monitoring Toolkit to be produced in Q4.
3. Introduce an Easy Read Equality Monitoring Form	Easy Read training scheduled for 28 February 2022 to support production of form.
4. Conduct service audits to identify any potential gaps in equality monitoring data	To be undertaken by March 22 to support Year2 Equality action.
5. Develop approach to Resident Equality Forum	Forum established: first meeting held in January 2022. Further officer support planned for Y2.
6. Support the 'BME' Forum to deliver on its objectives, purpose, and activities	Involve have supported the Forum in progressing the next steps.
7. Improve Experience of residents who need to communicate in other languages	A Framework Agreement for Translation and Interpreting Services will be in place for the end of March 2022.
8. Support staff to offer Easy Read for new public documents	Easy Read training scheduled for 28 February 2022 Training to be undertaken by colleagues from Communications, Engagement and Marketing Team and Digital Solutions Team to support creation of Easy Read documents and toolkit for the organisation.
9. Introduce Equality Monitoring into our complaints processes	Proportionate equality monitoring is undertaken within the complaints process and gov-metrics.
10. Listen to a diverse range of community groups and partners to gather insights (ongoing)	Ongoing action in part to be delivered by the Residents Equality Forum.

Action	Update
11. Review our consideration of modern-day slavery in contract and commissioning activities	Adjustments to be made to contract templates to include specific clause on Modern Slavery.
12. Review equality standards for procurement activities	Additional equalities questions added to the Standard Questionnaire Template.
13. Creation of a wider Councils Equality Forum	Berkshire Council's Equality Forum established.
14. Engage and support collaboration with councillors	Members' Equality Cross Party Working Group established.
15. Celebrate successes made in tackling inequality (publish three case-studies)	First case study published and others to be published by the end of March 22.
16. Support partners to tackle inequalities - schools, public health and community safety partnership	Equality Officer on groups including: Health Inequalities Action Group; Domestic Abuse Network Group; Domestic Abuse Partnership Group; Racial Equity in Schools Group; and Pupil Premium Group.
17. Role Model behaviour that promotes, encourages, and showcases the benefits of diversity in our community	Diversity calendar created and communications undertaken for key dates. Equality training arranged for Communications, Engagement and Marketing Team. CEM team supporting on process to ensure accessible documents are produced for the organisation.
18. Review EIA training and procedures	Revised forms, tools and guidance provided on intranet page and communications undertaken to support this.
19. Self-Assessment to be undertaken against the Equality Framework for Local Government	Assessment undertaken, supporting development of Year2 Equality Action Plan.
20. Deliver against the 5 principles of the Race at Work Charter	Details of the action taken is included in the Workforce Equality Monitoring Report and actions to continue to deliver will be included in the Workforce Development Strategy.

Action	Update
21. Review equality training offered to staff and councillors and identify gaps	Undertaken and discussed with Members Cross Party Working Group, programme to be rolled out over 2022/23.
22. Equip staff with demographic tools to help understand the diversity of the borough	Equality Profile created, to be reviewed on a regular basis. Review due after spring 22 following the first release of new census data.
23. Create an internal equality page for staff to collect and share information to support a diverse workforce	Internal and external website pages established.
24. Review our commitment from the staff survey to undertake actions needed for protected groups	Equalities review of Staff Survey results undertaken, and feedback provided to Human Resources for action.
25. Disclosure - Promote self-declaration of protected characteristics amongst staff	Internal communications undertaken. Ongoing action.
26. Monitor and address gaps in relation to employees with protected characteristics in our workforce	Workforce Equality Monitoring Report to be published March 2022.
27. Review the feasibility of actions that will support diverse recruitment in senior roles	Undertaken and to be taken forward in the Workforce Development Strategy and implementation plan.
28. Review recruitment practices to attract underrepresented groups	Undertaken and to be taken forward in the Workforce Development Strategy and implementation plan.
29. Demonstrate anti-racist practice by understanding gaps support could be offered to staff exposed to racism through their work.	Undertaken and to be taken forward in the Workforce Development Strategy and implementation plan.

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## Appendix 2: Equality Action Plan Year 2 (2022-2023)

We have an action plan so that we can measure progress in achieving our three priorities for 2021-2025. It does not include everything that we hope to achieve in the coming years or 'business as usual': it focuses on actions that will support a clear progression against the Equality Framework for Local Government and deliver the greatest impact for the council and the borough's residents.

What are we going to do?	How will we know we have achieved it?	Key Milestones
<b>Equality priority 1 - Listen to and learn from our communities and use this to deliver services that work well for everyone</b>		
Objective 1	We will improve the collection of data about our communities	
Action 1	Support key services to establish proportionate collection and systematic analysis and use of equality data.	Service user equality data evident in Equality Impact Assessments. Launch support offer. (April to June)
Objective 2	We will engage and communicate with our residents to encourage participation	
Action 2	Support the development of the Resident's Equality Forum throughout its inaugural year, undertaking community capacity building to address gaps in representation.	Membership has been expanded to address gaps in representation. Agree approach to capacity building for underrepresented groups. (April to June) Annual report to Full Council. (January to March 2023)
Action 3	Agree and deliver a programme of activity with internal and external stakeholders to mark key diversity dates across the year.	Diversity calendar published and events held. Events held across the year.
Action 4	Review and address barriers to participation in public life, with a focus on elected members and other formal appointments with the council.	Targeted communications and outreach activity undertaken. Diversity profile of elected members and other relevant positions. Targeted communications and outreach. (July to December)
Objective 3	We will use feedback from residents to identify barriers to equality of opportunity	
Action 5	Coordinate a programme of accessible communications to mark key diversity dates.	Regular communications are issued. Accessibility Toolkit is available to colleagues. Publication and promotion of diversity calendar. Support production of accessible communications toolkit. (April to June) Communications throughout the year.

What are we going to do?	How will we know we have achieved it?	Key Milestones
<b>Equality priority 2 - Act on our commitments to equality, diversity, and inclusion in the way we plan, deliver, and shape our services.</b>		
Objective 4	We will embed our commitments to equality into the way we plan, purchase, and deliver.	
Action 6	Build on examples of good practice within the organisation to develop a Social Value Framework, or equivalent mechanism, which includes equality outcomes.	<p>Guidance and recommendations for wider application of social value is available.</p> <p>Agree social value criteria for application to regeneration and residential development schemes. (April to June)</p> <p>Review learning and identify steps for wider application of social value. (January to March)</p>
Objective 5	We will model active community leadership through collaboration and coproduction	
Action 7	Consult and engage the Resident Equality Forum and other key internal and external partners in the development of the Year 3 Equality Action Plan.	<p>Year 3 Action plan is produced.</p> <p>Agree approach and schedule of engagement. (April to June)</p> <p>Draft plan agreed. (October to December)</p> <p>Plan approved. (January to March)</p>
Objective 6	We will strengthen and improve our use of Equality Impact Assessments	
Action 8	Following the release of 2021 census data, use this data to support a refresh of the Corporate Delivery Plan and support service areas to understand and use this insight by undertaking an equality impact assessment to inform service planning and the setting of service-level equality objectives.	<p>Equality Impact Assessments for key service areas are available to view.</p> <p>Update Equality Profile. (April to June)</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessments conducted for priority areas, informing Equality Objectives in service planning. (July to September)</p>



What are we going to do?	How will we know we have achieved it?	Key Milestones
<b>Priority 3 - Build a diverse and engaged workforce, where everyone is respected</b>		
Objective 7	We will equip staff with the right tools to tackle inequality and meet the needs of our increasingly diverse community.	
Action 9	Develop corporate equalities offer to continue to enhance the profile of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion within the organisation and support the council to meet its equality objectives.	<p>Formalised arrangements for existing and new staff networks.</p> <p>Updated EqIA guidance and training.</p> <p>Proposals developed for Staff Network and Champions. (April to June)</p> <p>Updated Equality Impact Assessment guidance, training and support. (April to June)</p> <p>Launch of new Staff Networks. (January to March)</p>
Action 10	Deliver and review an ongoing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Learning and Development programme for elected members.	<p>Events held.</p> <p>Members report increased knowledge or confidence in the subjects addressed.</p> <p>Learning and Development events throughout the year.</p> <p>Induction events for new Members. (July to September)</p> <p>Review and agree proposals for Members L&amp;D programme. (January to March 2023)</p>
Objective 8	We will honour the commitments agreed in our Equality Workforce Monitoring Report.	
Action 11	Embed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion considerations in the Workforce Development Strategy and Implementation Plan, setting and delivering clear targets for 2022/23 to continue to build and support a diverse workforce.	<p>Increased workforce development opportunities for underrepresented staff groups.</p> <p>There is enhanced reporting of workforce equality data.</p> <p>Relaunch internal equalities governance arrangements. (April to June)</p> <p>Enhanced workforce and recruitment equality data monitoring. (January to March 2023)</p> <p>Targeted Workforce Development opportunities. (January to March 2023)</p>

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# Customer Excellence Programme

## Approach

59

# 2021 - 2026

December 2021

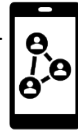


**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Agenda Item 83.

## WBC Access Points

**Social Media**  
Facebook, Twitter,  
YouTube & Instagram  
Social media handles <14



**Written**  
Borough news  
Cyclical post (Ctax, benefits, schools)



**Face to face**  
Libraries x9  
Children's centres x5  
Leisure centres x5  
Polling stations x60  
Officer visits (CS, ASC, P&G),  
Members, Towns & Parish Council



**Website**  
Portals x19  
Microsites x10



**Customer**



**Phone**  
Telephone numbers <40  
Mobiles <1,700

69

From

To

**Customer Experience**

Inconsistent customer experience across WBC – pockets of excellence but the belief is customer experience is owned by Customer Delivery not org-wide

Standardised customer service across departments, and ownership of customer experience to be org-wide

**Website**

Feedback from customers and employees tell us that it is not always easy to navigate digital sites

New website centred on needs of our residents

**Customer Insight & Analytics**

Customer insight performed on ad-hoc basis. Not done consistently across departments/access points so unable to use it to drive improvements

Customer insight used proactively as part of a customer centric strategy and drives continuous improvement across WBC

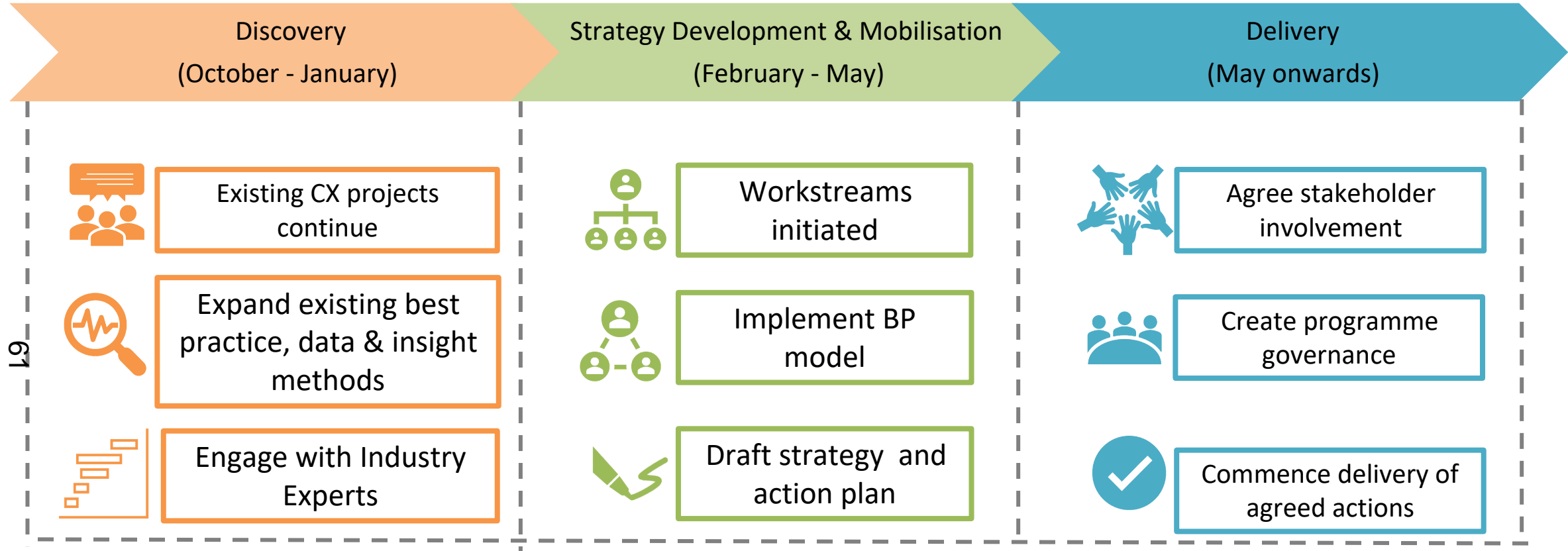
**Customer Journey Management**

Customer journeys not always clearly identified or managed. Customers tell us that it is not always easy to navigate council processes

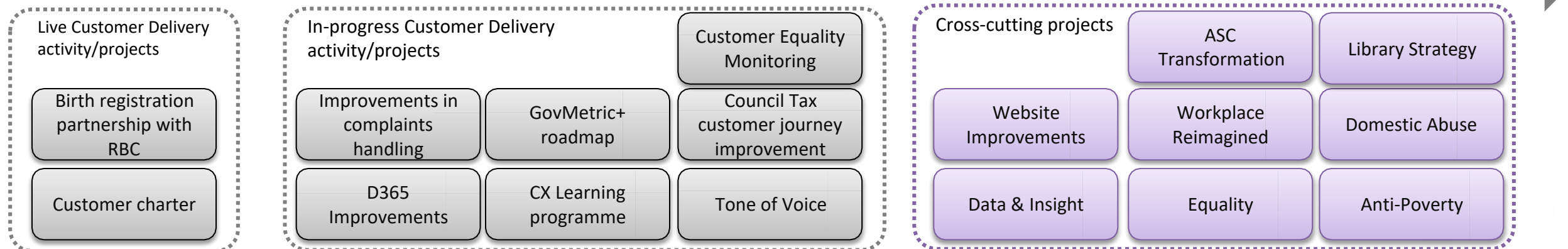
Easy to use, streamlined customer journeys that are focused on customer need. Clear organisational accountability for the success of customer journeys

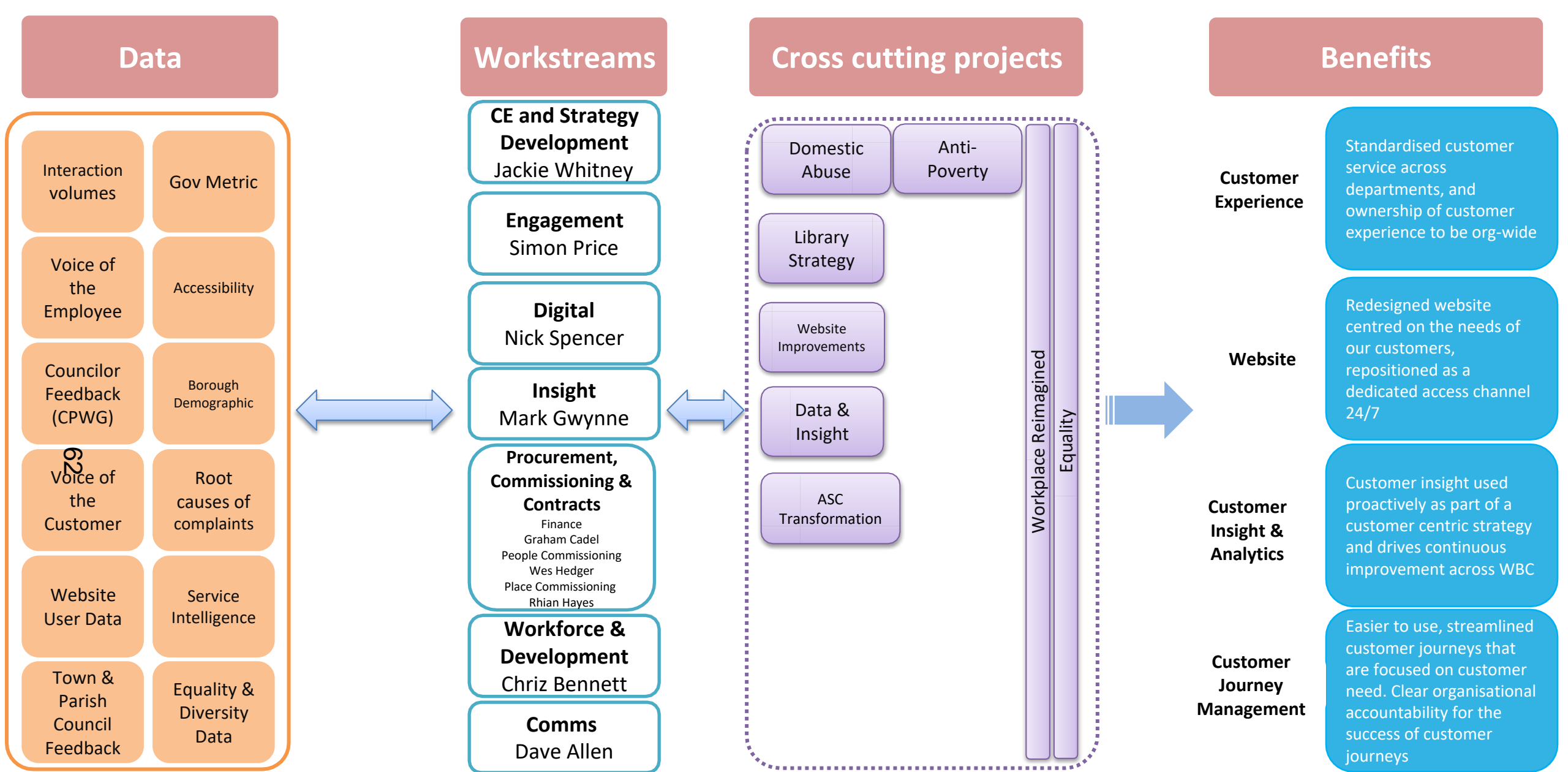
# Current picture and future aspiration

# CX Where we are going | 5 year change programme



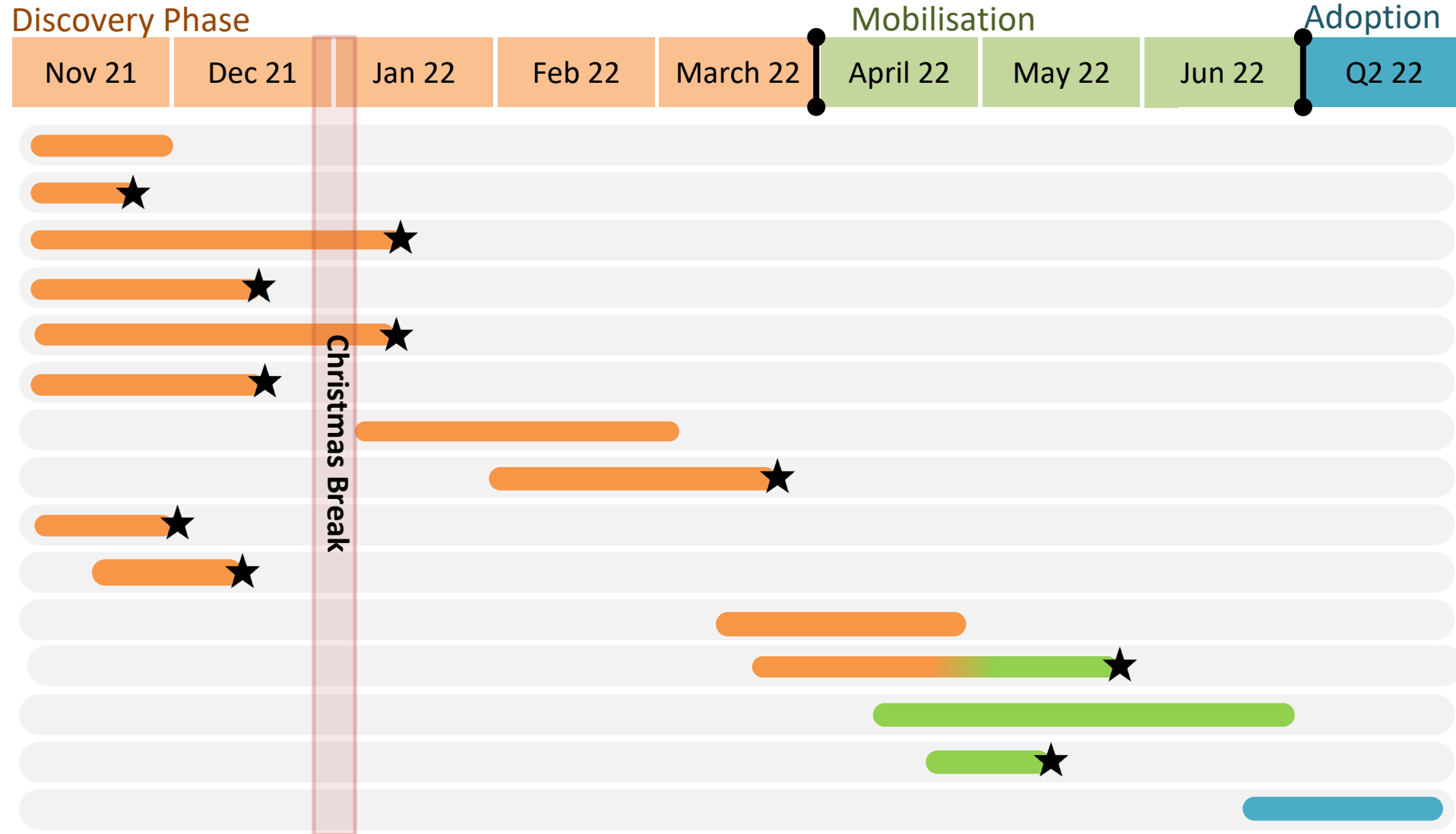
Continue with existing projects & activities





# Governance | How we realise the benefits

# Customer Excellence Timeline



The roadmap date and time schedule will be finalised in collaboration with Workstreams and Governance.

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# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

### **Annual Reports 2021/22**

Produced: February 2022  
Received by Council: 24 March 2022

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**Foreword by Councillor Pauline Helliars-Symons,  
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny  
Management Committee**

Welcome to the Annual Reports of Wokingham Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2021/22.

The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to hold decision makers to account, both inside and outside the Council. The Committees provide independent "critical friend" challenge to the Council and other public service providers across the Borough. The Committees also play a role in developing and reviewing policy and ensuring that the Council and its partners are working effectively to improve services for residents, businesses and visitors. Effective scrutiny is an important element of the successful functioning of local democracy.

Previous Annual Reports highlighted the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic alongside a number of major challenges facing the Borough. These included financial uncertainty, demand and cost pressures, the funding of social care, provision of school places, housing numbers, traffic congestion and the Climate Emergency. These challenges have not gone away. The Council has spent much of the past year in continuing to respond to the pandemic. The response has continued to be positive and has once again demonstrated the dedication and commitment of Council and school staff, partner organisations and the hundreds of community volunteers across the Borough. During the year Members scrutinised the Council's Covid Recovery Strategy and welcomed the strengthening of partnerships with the voluntary and community sector, culminating in the opening of the Wokingham Charity and Community Hub in Erfstadt Court.

Members recognise that the impact of Covid-19 will continue for the next few years as it moves from pandemic to endemic. Its financial impact will force the Council to seek new ways of working and new ways of delivering services. To date the signs are positive that the Council will be able to maintain key front-line services allied to innovation and continuous improvement. Members scrutinised the Council's continuous improvement programme alongside its plans for developing customer excellence. These are ambitious plans which will benefit from ongoing scrutiny as the Council seeks to become a high performing authority.

The Annual Reports for 2021/22 demonstrate the wide range of issues considered during the year. They reflect the hard work and commitment of residents, community stakeholders, Members and officers who contributed to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny function.

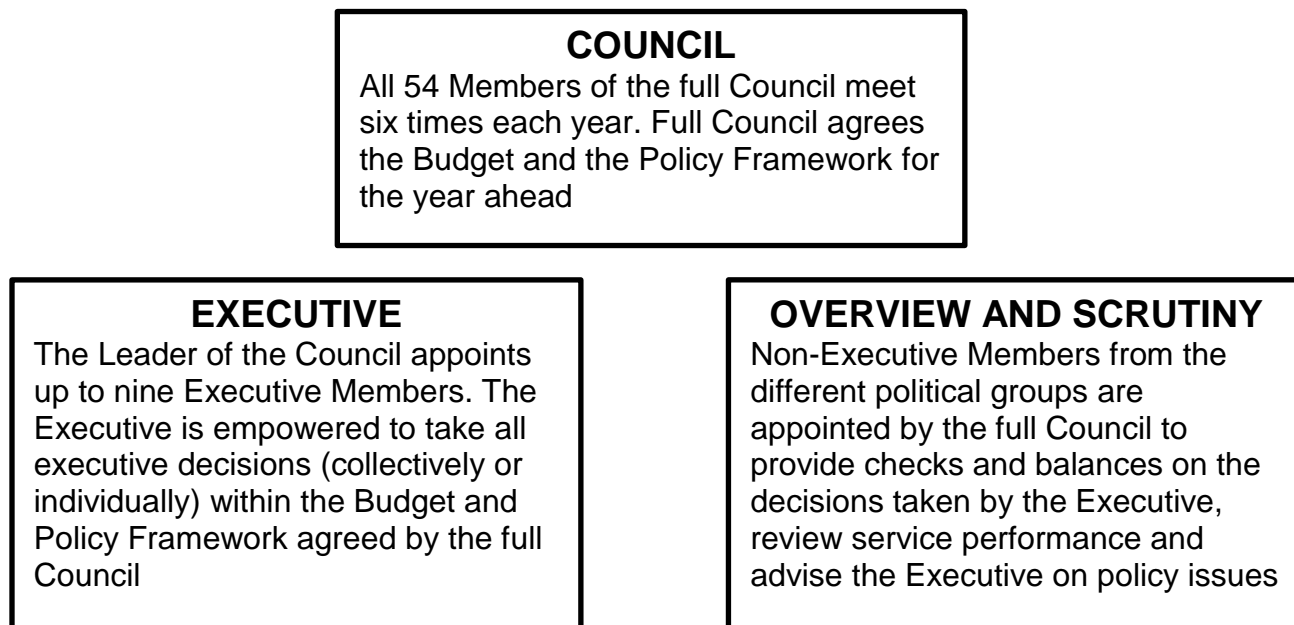
**Pauline Helliars-Symons,  
February 2022**

## SECTION 1 – WHAT IS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY?

Wokingham Borough Council is a large, complex organisation with over a thousand employees and an annual budget of £145m. The Borough’s Community Vision (February 2020) is to make the Borough “a great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business”. The Council makes major strategic decisions which affect the long-term future of the area and its communities. It also makes decisions on a daily basis which affect the lives of some of the Borough’s most vulnerable residents. Other public service providers such as the NHS, Thames Valley Police and the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service also make key decisions which affect the residents of the Borough. In order to ensure that the Council and other service providers spend public money wisely and make well informed decisions about key services it is essential that an effective system of checks and balances is in place.

A distinction is drawn between “Overview” which focuses on the development of policy and “Scrutiny” which looks at decisions that have been made, or are about to be made, to ensure that they are fit for purpose. In this document “Scrutiny” refers to both Overview and Scrutiny.

The Council’s Executive takes decisions within the financial and policy framework set by the full Council. Non-Executive Members of the Council (representing each of the political groups) are appointed to the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review those decisions and the performance of key services. The relationship between Council, Executive and Overview and Scrutiny is illustrated in the diagram below:

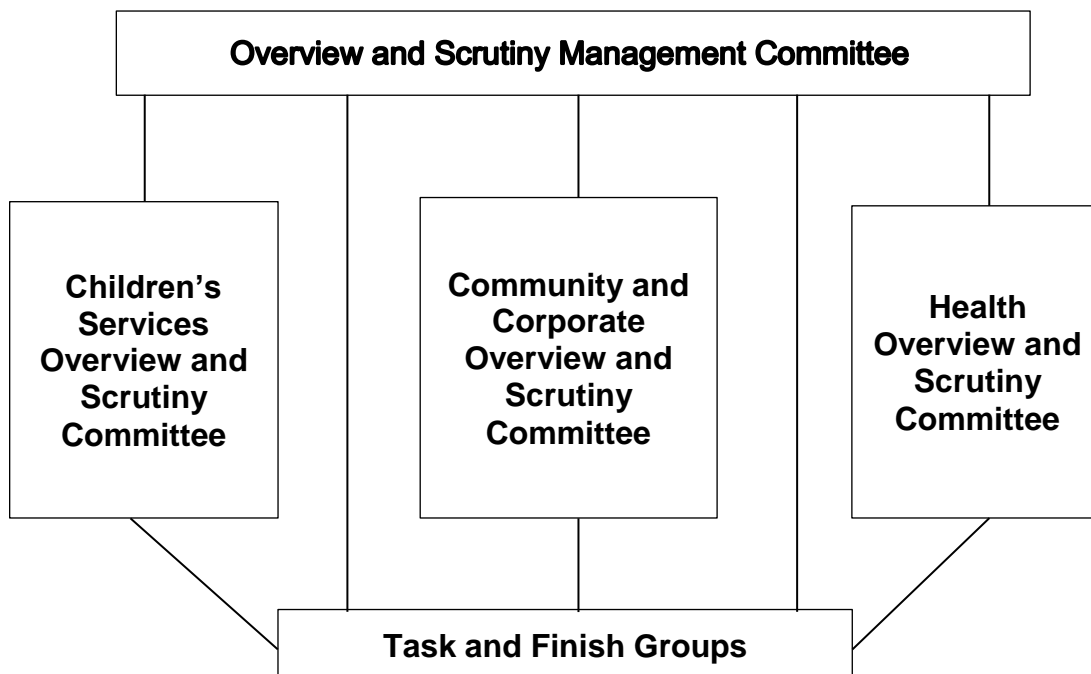


In order to deliver the Overview and Scrutiny function the Council has established the following Committees:

- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee – responsible for overseeing the Scrutiny function and developing an annual work programme for each of the Committees.

- Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – responsible for scrutiny of services relating to schools, safeguarding and child protection, looked after children and children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee - responsible for scrutiny of Council services, crime reduction and community safety and flood risk management.
- Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – responsible for scrutiny of local NHS bodies, public health arrangements and the work of the Local Healthwatch service.

The Committees consider issues at their regular meetings or by setting up time-limited Task and Finish Groups. The Council’s Overview and Scrutiny structure is illustrated below:



**Four Principles of Effective Scrutiny**

- Constructive “critical friend” challenge to the Executive and external service providers;
- Channelling the “voice” of the public and representing all the Borough’s residents;
- Members reaching bipartisan conclusions based on the weight of evidence;
- Driving continuous improvement which promotes community wellbeing and quality of life.

**Limitations**

Overview and Scrutiny is not about the investigation of minor matters or individual complaints. The Council has a separate corporate complaints procedure which is used to investigate individual complaints about services. Similarly, Overview and Scrutiny does not look at quasi-judicial matters such planning or licensing issues. Finally, Overview and Scrutiny is not used for raising issues of a party political nature as these matters can be addressed through debate at full Council meetings.

## SECTION 2

### REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



**Pauline Helliar-Symons, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has three important roles. Firstly, to develop and oversee the annual work programmes of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Secondly to investigate specific issues within its own work programme. Thirdly, to ensure that Scrutiny Members have the relevant skills, training and support.

During 2021/22, the Council continued its wide-ranging response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Committee scrutinised a number of related issues including the Council's Covid Recovery Strategy and the impact of the pandemic on the most vulnerable residents through, for example, scrutiny of the Council's emerging Anti-Poverty Strategy. The Committee met with the Council Leader and Chief Executive to discuss priorities over the year ahead and considered a number of other issues including the quarterly performance management report on key services, unauthorised encampments, the Council's website and the emerging Domestic Abuse, Waste and Tree Strategies. We also held a "Call-In" meeting to review an Executive Member decision relating to an Off Street Car Parks Order.

The Climate Emergency Task and Finish Group submitted its second report in June 2021. The report made further recommendations aimed at strengthening the Climate Emergency Action Plan in areas such as transport, homes, renewable energy and behaviour change. The majority of the Group's recommendations were accepted by the Executive. A second Task and Finish Group was established during the year to consider Tree Protection and Biodiversity.

The Committee also requested an annual report, to each November meeting, on progress made on Motions passed at full Council as Members, even those proposing and seconding them, often did not know what action had been taken and with what results. This year the report will come to the March meeting when it will contain information from the last three years since it is the first report, and thereafter annually in November.

Looking ahead, the Management Committee will continue to focus on initiatives to strengthen the Overview and Scrutiny process. This will include further emphasis on pre-decision scrutiny and policy development, additional training and support for Members, greater involvement from residents and community groups and closer liaison with the Council's Executive. Finally, I would like to thank the Members, officers, residents and community groups who contributed their time, effort and insights during another challenging year.

**Pauline Helliar-Symons**

## Remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee oversees the Council's Scrutiny function and is responsible for developing and co-ordinating the work programmes and support for the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

### Membership

Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons (Chairman).

Councillors Alison Swaddle (Vice-Chairman), Sam Akhtar, Rachel Burgess, Paul Fishwick, Jim Frewin, Guy Grandison, Norman Jorgensen, Sarah Kerr, Rebecca Margetts, Jackie Rance and Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey.

**Substitute Members:** Councillors Keith Baker, Chris Bowring, Anne Chadwick, Jenny Cheng, Stephen Conway, Peter Dennis, Gary Cowan, Carl Doran, Lindsay Ferris, Barrie Patman and Simon Weeks.

**Officer contact:** Neil Carr      [neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk)

## Highlights from the Year

### Covid-19 Pandemic

Following the Committee's earlier review of the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020/21, Members scrutinised the Council's Covid Recovery Strategy. The Strategy set out a number of key areas of focus including physical and emotional health and wellbeing, resilient communities, supporting the local economy and developing the Council's staff and its operating systems. Members welcomed the increased focus on mental health and wellbeing and the improved transparency, communication and engagement arising out of the response to the pandemic.

### Anti-Poverty Strategy

The Committee considered an update on the emerging Anti-Poverty Strategy, being developed in partnership with partners in the voluntary and community sector (VCS). Members were informed that the Strategy would focus on challenging the stigma of poverty and delivering more joined up solutions which impacted positively on those in most need. Members welcomed progress on the Strategy but were keen to ensure that it was co-produced with VCS partners. To this end, VCS representatives were invited to attend a meeting of the Committee to give their feedback on the process.

### Performance Management

The Committee received quarterly Performance Management reports setting out details of the Council's performance against a number of financial and operational indicators. Members used the quarterly data to probe on areas of underperformance and select issues for more in-depth scrutiny. The importance of genuinely SMART targets (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely) was stressed. Members welcomed proposals to introduce a more effective performance management system in 2022/23, which would help to generate reports which were more focussed and timely. This would enable the Committee to invite specific Executive

Members and officers to provide evidence on recent service issues based on accurate, recent and relevant data.

### **Climate Emergency**

The Climate Emergency Task and Finish Group met again and produced its second report in June 2021. The Task and Finish Group comprised Councillors Swaddle (Chairman), Croy, Helliar-Symons, Kerr and Richards. The Group's report focussed on transport, homes, renewable energy and behaviour change. The Group received evidence from WBC officers, the Executive Member, Reading Buses, Giki Zero and a range of external academics and policy experts. The Group's report was submitted to the Executive in September 2021. The majority of its recommendations were accepted. The Committee subsequently scrutinised the Council's proposals for establishing community deliberative processes in order to engage effectively with residents on the key themes in the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

### **Tree Protection and Biodiversity**

The Committee established a second Task and Finish Group with a remit relating to Tree Protection and Biodiversity. The Group comprised Councillors Bowring (Chairman), Cowan, Firmager, Fishwick and Rance. The Group scrutinised the Council's existing policies, the impact of the Environment Act and the effectiveness of partnership working with Town and Parish Councils and local groups such as the Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association. The Task and Finish Group was also asked to advise on a Council Motion which proposed the declaration of an Ecological Emergency alongside the Climate Emergency declaration already in place. The Group's report is expected in March 2022.

### **Member Training**

The Committee recognises the importance of ongoing training and development to ensure that Members' skills and knowledge are constantly upgraded. Training sessions have been held on key elements of effective Overview and Scrutiny including preparing for meetings, questioning techniques and the development of key lines of enquiry. Specific sessions were also held on Budget Scrutiny and Scrutiny of Health and Adult Social Care. We will deliver further training for Members in 2022/23 and will work with the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to ensure that our policies and procedures are in line with best practice.

### **Scrutiny Impacts**

Effective Scrutiny should have a defined impact on the ground, with the Committees making recommendations that make a tangible difference to the work of the Council and other public service providers. Over the past year the following impacts are highlighted:

- Covid-19 Pandemic – the Committee highlighted the impact of the pandemic on vulnerable groups and the importance of developing strong partnerships in order to ensure that everyone received the necessary help and support.
- Climate Emergency – the Task and Finish Group highlighted the importance of training for Members and staff and the embedding of Climate Emergency awareness into every service and every key decision.
- Unauthorised Encampments – the Committee requested improved information on the Council website and additional support for private landowners.



## SECTION 3

### REPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



**Norman Jorgensen, Chairman of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee's work is split almost equally between children's social work and educational attainment. As well as monitoring all the recommendations put in place by earlier Committees and Task and Finish Groups, the new work that has been carried out is outlined below. This keeps the Committee in touch with how the Service and schools, especially in the context of the current challenges brought in by the pandemic, are performing.

This year there was a continuous focus on the local authority's response to the pandemic in relation to children's social care and education.

The Committee was pleased to note the dedication and hard work which was displayed by the Service under the additional pressures brought on by the pandemic, with particular praise to the work undertaken by the Covid Task Force.

I would like to thank all members of the Committee, and the substitutes for their commitment to and interest in the work that we do, and for all the positive and genuinely useful contributions that they have made.

**Norman Jorgensen**

## **Remit of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutiny and policy development in relation to services for children and young people. This includes schools, early years' settings and children's centres, safeguarding and child protection, children in care and services for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

### **Membership:**

Councillors: Norman Jorgensen (Chairman), Rebecca Margetts (Vice-Chairman), Prue Bray, Anne Chadwick, Pauline Helliar-Symons, Morag Malvern, Andrew Mickleburgh and Jackie Rance.

**Parent Governor:** two vacancies

### **Substitute Members:**

Councillors: Sam Akhtar, Phil Cunnington, Guy Grandison, David Hare, Sarah Kerr, Barrie Patman and Alison Swaddle.

Representatives of the Church of England Diocese and the Roman Catholic Diocese are also able to attend meetings of the Committee when Education issues are being considered. At the moment these posts are vacant.

**Officer contact:** Luciane Bowker [luciane.bowker@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:luciane.bowker@wokingham.gov.uk)

## **Highlights from the Year**

### **Children's Services response to Covid-19**

The Service adapted in order to continue delivering its statutory duties throughout the pandemic. The Early Help service, which is not statutory, also continued to provide support to families via telephone and online. Support continued to be provided to schools and early years settings. Help with interpreting legislation and updates on new government guidance was provided at weekly meetings with senior school leaders, as well as assistance with dealing with local outbreaks and advising on mitigating measures.

The Education Welfare Service (EWS), which is normally a traded service, was provided for free during the pandemic and school attendance remained good in the Borough. The Committee asked that the EWS continue to be offered beyond the pandemic.

There was a holistic approach to provide mental health and emotional wellbeing support to children and young people. The service worked with Social Care, Health and other professionals to provide a joined up offer. The Committee asked that the offer of Kooth (digital mental health care) be extended to 25 year olds.

### **Performance Indicators**

The Committee took the decision to scrutinise performance indicators at certain times during the year, when this is most relevant. The Committee challenged the information contained in the reports, suggesting areas of improvement. It was noted that there had been an

improvement in the timeliness of completion of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP), as compared to previous years. However, the total number of EHCPs was increasing and this was challenging. This was a complex situation, and the service was developing a number of strands of work to tackle this challenge.

### **Unicef application**

The Committee was pleased to be informed of the successful bid by the Council to join the Unicef's programme Child Friendly Cities and Communities Programme. The aim of this programme is to give all children a chance to have their voice heard, and Wokingham is very proud to take part in this project. The Committee will continue to follow with interest the progress of this initiative.

### **Education, Schools Performance Indicators, Ofsted Reports and Schools Causing Concern**

Education in the Borough continued to be one of the main focus of the Committee and this was monitored at every meeting.

Ofsted suspended inspections at the beginning of the pandemic and were undertaking Section 8 survey visits which did not produce a rating. The School Improvement Team continued to monitor schools by visiting schools virtually and asking the same questions that Ofsted used to ask during research visits. Ofsted inspections have now been reinstated, although there is a delay of approximately six months. It was pleasing to note that the Forest School was awarded a 'Good' rating, which was an improvement since its last inspection. The Committee will continue to monitor the outcomes of inspections.

Due to the suspension of Ofsted inspections, the Committee temporarily ceased to receive the Schools Causing Concern report, this is now being reinstated.

Additionally, there were no performance tables available for two years running, as formal tests have not taken place, with no national or local data available. The service is continuing to give advice to schools in preparing to use the Teacher Assessment grades system. This process is new and has added to teachers' workload.

The Committee was pleased to be informed of the work being undertaken with schools in relation to equality and diversity, learning that a wide range of offer is in place.

### **Secondary School Sufficiency**

The Committee was informed that additional places were created in agreement with some schools, and this agreement had secured places for all Year 7 applicants. Most children were allocated one of their preferences. It was noted that parental preference had not been sufficiently taken into account at an early planning stage and this was a learning opportunity for future planning of school places.

A bulge was being projected until 2027 and the Committee urged officers to make plans for this, including considerations of where (geographically) surplus places might be needed.

### **Children Missing Education**

The EWS provided assistance to schools in respect of school attendance and helping children re-engage with education. It was noted that in order to improve school attendance it was

important to be able to offer suitable places to meet the children's needs. It was of concern that there was a disproportionate number of permanent exclusions of Special Educational Needs (SEN) children. The Committee requested to continue to review the data on permanent exclusions and added a review of EWS in its forward programme.

### **Children's Services Strategy**

A Children's Services Strategy is being developed to cover a period of three years, it is being designed to align the service delivery of the priorities. The Committee thoroughly scrutinised the strategy and made comments and suggestions to improve it, including strengthening the voice of children.

It is of concern that the new SEND school will not open in September 2022 as anticipated. However, the Committee was re-assured that places were being secured for children in alternative provisions. Negotiations are ongoing with the DfE to establish when the school would open.

### **Review of Home to School Transport Processes**

The Committee challenged the service about the processes which had been undertaken that had resulted in some residents being dissatisfied with service. There had been lessons learnt during the review of home to school transport, and the Committee would continue to monitor the development and delivery of this service, which involved Children's Services and Corporate Transport.

### **Wokingham Education Partnership**

The Committee was informed of the newly formed Wokingham Education Partnership. The partnership sought to enable collaboration and co-production to find solutions to strategic issues in relation to education in the Borough. The Committee was in support of this initiative and will receive regular updates on its development.

### **Children's Services Covid Task Force**

Much work had been undertaken to support schools during the pandemic, including coordinating additional resources, disseminating and signposting information, working with local and other partners, supporting schools with local outbreaks, helping to interpreting national guidance from central government and health agencies.

The Committee commended the work undertaken by the Task Force.

### **Scrutiny Impacts**

- Improved transparency and accountability across all services.
- Response to the Coronavirus pandemic – challenging the Service to achieve the best outcomes in the current context and to extend best practices beyond the pandemic.

## SECTION 4

### REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



**Guy Grandison, Chairman of the  
Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

During the past year, the Committee has continued its focus on the delivery of Council services to ensure that they provide value for money for the Borough’s Council Tax payers. Executive Members and officers were invited to attend meetings of the Committee to give evidence and answer questions on priorities and performance. Conducting Committee meetings in a hybrid format has allowed greater access and convenience for the public to engage with the Overview and Scrutiny process.

This year marked the third consecutive year that Overview and Scrutiny have looked at the proposed Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) in detail, prior to its journey through the February 2022 Executive and Budget Council meetings. This exercise has continued to add value to the Budget setting process by challenging Executive Members and Directors to explain the rationale for spending proposals in a clear and understandable way.

The Committee considered a range of other issues during the year including receiving regular progress updates regarding bringing the functions of the Public Protection Partnership back in-house, receiving the annual update from the Community Safety partnership, and overseeing aspects of the Council’s vegetation maintenance strategy.

In developing its work programme the Committee is keen to ensure that the “voice” of local residents and community groups plays a bigger part in its deliberations. The Committee recognises that involving residents, community groups and local “experts” in Overview and Scrutiny reduces the risk of a partisan approach as Members are able to hear directly from those stakeholders whose interests they are representing. The Committee will continue to promote greater public involvement in Overview and Scrutiny over the coming year and will share any relevant learning with the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

I thank the Members of the Committee, officers, residents and other stakeholders who took part in our meetings for their valuable contributions during the year.

**Guy Grandison**

## **Remit of the Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for the scrutiny of internal Council operations and partnership working across the Borough. It also has responsibilities under the Police and Justice Act 2006 which involves oversight of the operation of the Borough's Community Safety Partnership. The Committee is also responsible for the scrutiny of flood risk management.

### **Membership**

Councillor Guy Grandison (Chairman).

Councillors Alison Swaddle (Vice-Chairman), Sam Akhtar, Shirley Boyt, Anne Chadwick, Phil Cunnington, Paul Fishwick and Clive Jones.

**Substitute Members:** Councillors Rachel Burgess, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Norman Jorgensen, Rebecca Margetts, Barrie Patman, Jackie Rance, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey and Caroline Smith

**Officer contact:** Callum Wernham: [callum.wernham@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:callum.wernham@wokingham.gov.uk)

## **Highlights from the Year**

### **Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022-25**

The Committee undertook a detailed overview of the proposed 2022-25 MTFP. Executive Members and Directors were invited to attend the meetings to present their bids and explain in detail how the requested funding would be used to deliver key services. Members welcomed the continued inclusion of 'plain English' detailed bid sheets which provided key figures and descriptive narratives in a format that Members and members of the public could understand and interpret. The Committee probed bids within key service areas, including a demand management strategy within Children's Services, a new dementia care home within Adult's Social Care, income generation projects within Resources and Assets, substantial capital bids for example highways infrastructure within Place and Growth, and the Continuous Improvement Programme within Communities, Insight and Change. The role of the Committee was to challenge assumptions within the budget setting process and to encourage key decision makers to think about their proposals from a different perspective. The Committee appreciated this continued level of transparency on the proposed MTFP and budget setting process, and looked forward to this process continuing and improving in future years.

### **Bringing the Public Protection Partnership Back in-House**

The Committee have received a series of updates detailing progress in bringing the functions of the Public Protection Partnership back in-house. Delivery of this project forms a key part of the Council's strategy to deliver more localised services to residents, backed up by increased local knowledge and involvement from residents, Town and Parish Councils and Ward Councillors. Members received assurances regarding the engagement and consultation process with staff, and were given updates on the experienced senior management who would be joining the new in-house service. Members were pleased to be able to review and question this key process throughout the 2021/22 municipal year.

## **Review of Library Service Provision**

The Committee received an update regarding the provision of library services across the Borough. Officers explained that the three larger town libraries were well used by a variety of residents, however the smaller libraries and 'micro libraries' across the Borough also served as key community hubs for activities and groups. Members were pleased to hear committed support for libraries in a variety of localities which would become gateways for cultural events, art exhibitions, and learning opportunities in addition to their core function of providing literature to residents. The Committee thanked officers within the Library Service for their tireless work to innovate and improve on existing offerings.

## **Vegetation Maintenance Strategy**

An update was provided on the three primary maintenance contracts: the grounds maintenance contract with Tivoli Group Ltd, the highways reactive maintenance contract with Volker Highways, and the street cleansing contract with Volker Highways, which was sub-contracted to Urbaser Ltd. Members probed issues including the different service level agreements for each contract, how highways inspectors picked up on issues related to vegetation, and how issues could be raised by the public. The Committee reiterated a previous suggestion for officers to explore the possibility of developing a WBC app for reporting vegetation and street cleansing issues directly to the relevant team.

## **Scrutiny Impacts**

- Budget and budget setting process transparency – information regarding the budget and the budget setting process has been thoroughly reviewed by the Committee, and made publically available in an easy to read 'plain English' format. Transparency around crucial issues such as the Budget forms an essential part of the checks and balances that Overview and Scrutiny provides. Agreement was reached to assess the mid-year financial position during the 2022/23 municipal year, to ensure that assumptions made within the proposed MTFP were being met within the backdrop of a number of uncertainties including inflation, future funding arrangements, and the high cost of construction.
- Close working relationship with Executive Members and Directors – Executive Members and Directors were invited to, and attended, a number of Committee meetings. Answers to Member queries were frank and detailed, providing a solid foundation for transparent Overview and Scrutiny.
- Oversight of delivery of key Council Services – continued monitoring of key Council Services to ensure that they are delivering value for money for residents. Probing Services to think about service delivery and value for money is key in delivering cost effective services for residents. Services demonstrated continued resilience in delivering vital services during periods of national restrictions due to the ongoing pandemic.
- Ensured that the process of bringing the functions of the Public Protection Partnership back in-house was being monitored in a public setting. Policy directives of such importance and impact on our residents should be monitored by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee, where appropriate and possible.

## SECTION 5

### REPORT OF THE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



**Alison Swaddle, Chairman of the  
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

This year the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has focused on health and social care matters that affect local residents.

The Committee has received updates on a range of issues, including NHS Dental provision, GP practices and GP services, the Covid and flu vaccination programmes, public toilet availability and how the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust has been operating during the pandemic.

Throughout the year we have monitored performance against the Adult Social Care Key Performance Indicators.

We continue to work well with Healthwatch Wokingham Borough, the independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of residents, and have been kept informed of their work and issues of resident concern, at most meetings.

All members of the Committee and their substitutes are invited to attend training to keep up to date with any new legislation and service developments. Training is also arranged during the year should a specific need arise.

I would like to thank the members of the Committee, substitutes, Officers, and other partners who took part in meetings for their contribution throughout the year.

**Alison Swaddle**



## Remit of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) scrutinises issues relating to the planning, provision and operation of health and wellbeing services in the Borough. This includes acute and community health services, adult social care services, family and public health services and health related services commissioned jointly by the Council, health bodies and the voluntary sector. The Committee exercises powers conferred to it through the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.

### Membership

Councillor Alison Swaddle (Chairman).

Councillors Jackie Rance (Vice-Chairman), Sam Akhtar, Rachel Bishop-Firth, Jenny Cheng, Carl Doran, Michael Firmager, Tahir Maher, Adrian Mather, and Barrie Patman.

**Substitute Members:** Chris Bowring, Rachel Burgess, Anne Chadwick, Guy Grandison. David Hare, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Clive Jones, Norman Jorgensen, Caroline Smith, and Simon Weeks.

All attendees at HOSC meetings, including members of the public, may ask questions after each report or presentation is presented.

**Officer contact:** Madeleine Shopland [madeleine.shopland@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:madeleine.shopland@wokingham.gov.uk)

## Highlights from the Year

### Adult Social Care Priorities

At its meeting in July 2021 the Committee was briefed on the Adult Social Care priorities for 2021-22, in addition to responding to the pandemic. Priorities included the launch of the first voluntary sector hub, a review of the voluntary care sector contracts procurement exercise, the launch of new Voluntary sector Mental Health Service, and the Care and support Procurement Framework.

### Adult Social Care Key Performance Indicators

Throughout the year the Committee has monitored performance against the Adult Social Care Key Performance Indicators.

### Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust

The Committee received an update on the operation of the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust at its November 2021 meeting, from Raghuv Bhasin, Director of Systems Partnerships. Members scrutinised issues such as how service provision had been impacted by Covid, how backlogs in services were being addressed, current key areas of focus, impact of Covid on finances, staff morale during the pandemic, retention and recruitment and how the Trust communicated with the wider community, including local authorities.

*Winter Plan* - The Committee will receive a presentation on the delivery of the Winter Plan at an extraordinary meeting in February 2022.

*Maternity Services* – Members have sought an update on maternity services at an extraordinary meeting in February 2022, covering what issues the services had faced particularly during the pandemic, such as staffing levels.

### **Response to Covid – Vaccinations**

The Committee sought an update on the Covid vaccination programme at an extraordinary meeting in September 2021. Information regarding the different phases of the programme was provided. The Committee also received an update on the seasonal influenza vaccination programme. Members asked questions around matters such as locations of vaccine sites, how information was communicated successfully to the community, take up amongst particular groups, and pressure on the services delivering the vaccinations.

### **GP Provision and GP services**

This year access to GP services has continued to be a national and local issue, and has worsened during the pandemic. Healthwatch regularly raised this as an issue of concern to residents to the Committee.

In November 2021, the Committee received a presentation on GP Provision and GP services. The Committee was provided information on the pressures that Primary Care were facing during the pandemic. Members sought information on and asked questions about, what action was being taken to increase access, particularly face-to-face appointments. They learned that many patients, particularly those who worked, preferred a hybrid approach to appointments. Members agreed that the system had to fit patient need. The Committee was informed that funding was being provided to improve access and availability.

The Committee expressed concern that four GP practices in the Borough continued to score less well in the national GP Patient Survey.

### **Health Scrutiny Arrangements across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West Integrated Care System**

In July 2021, the Committee considered and recommended to Council, a proposal to form a new, mandatory, joint committee with health scrutiny powers to consider matters affecting patient flows across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West Integrated Care System geography. This would help to improve the planning, development, operation and integration of health and care services, and in turn would improve health outcomes for local residents.

### **NHS Dentistry**

At the Committee's September 2021 meeting, Hugh O'Keeffe, Senior Commissioning Manager Dental, NHS England and NHS Improvement – South East, provided a briefing on access to NHS dentists during the pandemic. The Committee sought information on issues such as waiting lists, action being taken to increase appointment availability, funding, and service resilience.

### **Optalis**

David Birch, Chief Executive Officer Optalis, and Matt Pope, Director Adult Services, provided a presentation on the performance of Optalis to the Committee's September 2021 meeting, and advised that whilst maintaining operational standards through the pandemic had been a

challenge, staff had met it well. Members were pleased to note the success of schemes such as the Out & About service and the Ability Travel Scheme.

### **Public Toilet Provision**

The Committee sought to understand the toilet facility provision available to the public across the Borough, to establish whether it was sufficient in number and location. Members received information regarding the Local Loo scheme and also information from Crohn's and Colitis UK about difficulties that sufferers could face. The Committee recommended that the Council lead the undertaking of a review of signage and publicity of the Local Loo Scheme and other toilets publicly available within Wokingham Borough, facilitating information from businesses and the Town and Parish Councils.

### **Healthwatch**

The Committee have continued to work well with Healthwatch Wokingham Borough and receive frequent updates on their work and issues of resident concern such as:

- Residents' views on services accessed during the pandemic;
- Accessing GP and NHS dentist appointments;
- Caring during Covid;
- Ageing Well;
- Continence service.

### **Scrutiny Impacts**

- Ensuring that residents' needs are considered as part of the commissioning and delivery of local health services and continuing to work with Healthwatch Wokingham Borough to raise the profile of matters raised by residents.
- Gaining an overview of key health and social care services that serve the Borough.
- Championed the undertaking of a review into the accessibility and publicity of toilets available for public use, in the Borough.

## SECTION 6

### GETTING INVOLVED IN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Council is committed to making Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings accessible to all residents of the Borough. A key aim is to increase public involvement in the process and to remove barriers to participation.

Residents can get involved in Overview and Scrutiny by attending meetings - all Overview and Scrutiny meetings are open to the public and are held in the early evening to make attendance easier. In addition, copies of Agendas including reports to be considered are published five working days before each meeting and can be accessed on the Council's website:

[www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings)

During the Covid-19 pandemic, meetings were held virtually using Microsoft Teams. These meetings are accessed via a You Tube link set out on the meeting Agenda. Residents are now able to attend in person or view the meetings on line.

Residents can also elect to receive automatic notification when new Overview and Scrutiny Agenda and Minutes are published.

Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting includes a Public Question Time session which allows residents to raise issues of general interest and/or specific issues relating to the items under consideration.

Members of the public are also able to contribute to Scrutiny reviews by giving evidence either as an individual or as part of a community group. Residents can also request that a specific item is considered by Overview and Scrutiny as a review item. Residents can complete an online Scrutiny review suggestion form at:

[www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings/decisions/ask-for-a-scrutiny-review](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings/decisions/ask-for-a-scrutiny-review)

During 2022/23 the Council will continue to use local and social media to raise awareness of issues coming before the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and to allow residents to provide comments and feedback.

The Council's Twitter feed is accessible here: [WokinghamBorough@WokinghamBC](https://twitter.com/WokinghamBC)

If you want to learn more about Overview and Scrutiny or want to discuss a specific issue, please contact Neil Carr, the Council's Scrutiny Officer:

by telephone: 0118 974 6000, or

by email: [neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk) or by post:

Democratic Services, Wokingham Borough Council, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN.

# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME

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

## Executive Forward Programme - February to May 2022 Update

Updated 15 February 2022

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why / Explanation for any deferment of item
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### Executive Meeting - 17 February 2022

WBC1246	<p><b>Co-ordinated Schemes for Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools</b></p> <p>Purpose: To determine the Co-ordinated Schemes for Admission to Primary and Secondary Schools (incorporating Wokingham Borough Council's Admission Arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools) for entry to schools in 2023/2024</p>	Executive	WBC Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes and WBC Admissions Policy 2023-24 WBC proposed local In-year Co-ordinated Scheme 2023-2024	Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson/ Zoe Storey	Executive Member for Children's Services - Graham Howe	N/A
WBC1254	<p><b>Commercial Waste and Recycling Contract</b></p> <p>Purpose: To consider the procurement business case for the Commercial Waste and Recycling Contract. This is a traded services contract managed by Procurement on behalf of commercial sites in the Wokingham Borough that can opt into this service</p>	Executive	Procurement Business Case	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Abi Culton	Deputy Leader of the Council - John Kaiser	N/A

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why
WBC1256	<b>Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022/23</b> Purpose: To consider the Housing Revenue Account Budget for the 2022/23 financial year	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser	N/A
WBC1257	<b>Capital Programme and Strategy 2022-2025</b> Purpose: To agree the Capital Programme and Strategy for 2022-2025	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser	N/A
WBC1258	<b>Treasury Management Strategy 2022-2025</b> Purpose: To agree the Treasury Management procedures, limits and objectives for 2022/23	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser	N/A
WBC1259	<b>Medium Term Financial Plan 2022-2025 Including Revenue Budget Submission 2022/23</b> Purpose: To provide the Executive with the key revenue budget extract for 2022/23 of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022-2025 for submission to Council	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser	N/A
WBC1261	<b>Contracted Bus Services</b> Purpose: To gain approval to retender local bus services which are provided under contract to Wokingham Borough Council	Executive	Executive Report	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore/ Rebecca Brooks	Executive Member for Highways and Transport - Pauline Jorgensen	N/A Yes - it is likely that part of the report will be considered at a private meeting of the Executive. This is because it is likely that the report will contain information relating to the business or financial affairs of individuals.

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why
WBC1262	<p><b>Gorse Ride Regeneration Project Changes to Delivery Model</b></p> <p>Purpose: To seek a decision to make changes to the Gorse Ride regeneration project delivery model to ensure that the Council accesses the best financial outcomes and addresses possible risks to site assembly</p>	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers, Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore/ Rhian Hayes	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser	N/A
<b>Extraordinary Executive - 7 March 2022</b>						
WBC1253	<p><b>Corporate Peer Challenge Report and Action Plan</b></p> <p>Purpose: To consider the results of the recent Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge and agree the action plan arising</p>	Executive		Chief Executive - Susan Parsonage/ Andrew Moulton	.Leader of the Council - John Halsall	N/A
WBC1265	<p><b>Wokingham Borough Secondary School Places (11 to 16) Strategy</b></p> <p>Purpose: To adopt a strategy to ensure there are sufficient secondary school places over the next decade.</p>	Executive	Report and appendix	Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson/ Piers Brunning	Executive Member for Children's Services - Graham Howe	N/A
WBC1267	<p><b>Anti-Poverty Strategy - Position Statement</b></p> <p>Purpose: To provide a position statement and update on development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy 2022-26</p>	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Gwynne	.Leader of the Council - John Halsall	N/A

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why
WBC1268	<b>Corporate Delivery Plan Review 2022/23</b> Purpose: To update the Corporate Delivery Plan to pick up emerging priorities and feedback from the LGA Peer Review	Executive		Chief Executive - Susan Parsonage/ Mark Gwynne	.Leader of the Council - John Halsall	N/A
WBC1269	<b>Delivering the Gorse Ride Regeneration Project - Procurement of Construction Works and Services</b> Purpose: To approve the procurement strategy of the construction works and services as relevant to the Gorse Ride Regeneration project	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Katie Meakin, Arnab Mukherjee	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser	N/A Yes - it is likely that part of the report will be considered at a private meeting of the Executive. This is because it is likely that the report will contain information relating to the business or financial affairs of individuals.
<b>Executive Meeting - 31 March 2022</b>						
WBC1255	<b>Children's Services Strategy and Delivery Plan</b> Purpose: To review the Children's Services Strategy and Delivery Plan	Executive		Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson/ Viki Elliot-King	Executive Member for Children's Services - Graham Howe	N/A This report has been deferred from the March meeting due to the fact that some additional work is required on the Strategy following structural changes in Children's Services
WBC1260	<b>Enhanced Partnership</b> Purpose: To approve an Enhanced Partnership Agreement for Local Bus Services	Executive	Enhanced Partnership Agreement	Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore/ Rebecca Brooks	Executive Member for Highways and Transport - Pauline Jorgensen	N/A
WBC1250	<b>Winnersh Farm Access</b> Purpose: To seek Executive approval to enter into an option agreement with Taylor Wimpey in respect of	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Craig Hoggeth	Executive Member for Business and Economic Development - Stuart Munro	N/A Yes - it is likely that part of the report will be considered at a private meeting of the Executive. This is because it is



Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why
	the access across Council owned land to serve development site promoted as part of the LPU					likely that the report will contain information relating to the business or financial affairs of individuals. This report has been deferred from the February meeting in order to afford Officers time to review and further consider the matter before bringing it to the Executive
WBC1264 68	<b>Temporary Closure Remenham Footpath No 4 Henley Festival</b> Purpose: To consider a request for the temporary closure of Remenham Footpath 4 to allow the Henley Festival to be organised and run in a safe manner	Executive		Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore/ Andrew Fletcher	Executive Member for Environment and Leisure - Parry Bath	N/A
WBC1266	<b>Delivering the Gorse Ride Regeneration Project - Compulsory Purchase Order</b> Purpose: To confirm the Compulsory Purchase Order of land and property at the Gorse Ride Estate, Finchampstead	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Katie Meakin	Executive Member for Finance and Housing - John Kaiser	N/A Yes - it is likely that part of the report will be considered at a private meeting of the Executive. This is because it is likely that the report will contain information relating to the business or financial affairs of individuals.
WBC1270	<b>Trading Standards, Environmental Health and Licensing Services</b> Purpose: To update the Executive on the provisions for the inhouse service including settlement	Executive		Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore/ Stephen Brown, Sean O'Connor	Executive Member for Neighbourhood and Communities - Bill Soane	N/A Yes - it is likely that part of the report will be considered at a private meeting of the Executive. This is because it is likely that the report will contain information relating to the business or financial affairs of individuals.

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why
<b>The Executive will not be holding a meeting in April therefore there are no items programmed for this month</b>						
<b>Executive Meeting - 26 May 2022</b>						
WBC1240	<b>Anti-Poverty Strategy</b> Purpose: To consider and confirm the Anti-Poverty Strategy so that it can go out to consultation	Executive		Chief Executive - Susan Parsonage/ Emma Brook	.Leader of the Council - John Halsall	N/A This item has been deferred from the December Executive in order that further consultation and engagement can be undertaken with the voluntary and community sector and residents to inform the Council's approach.

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

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	Original Schedule Date	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Explanatory notes
WBC1263	<b>Twyford Library - Update</b> To present the revised financial assessment for the new library in Twyford	Executive		Director, Place and Growth - Steve Moore/ Mark Redfearn	Executive Member for Neighbourhood and Communities - Bill Soane	This item was deferred from February Executive in order that further work can be undertaken on the project
WBC1231	<b>Corporate Plan - Annual Review</b> To report on the Council's delivery of it's strategic priorities as per the Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan	Executive		Chief Executive - Susan Parsonage/ Will Roper, Louise Griffin	.Leader of the Council - John Halsall	This item is to be deleted as the information contained in the report will now be included as an appendix to the Corporate Plan item being considered at the 7 March Executive meeting

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why
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**Members of the Executive:-**

John Halsall	Leader of Council
John Kaiser	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Finance and Housing.
Stuart Munro	Business, Economic Development
Graham Howe	Children's Services
Gregor Murray	Resident Services, Communication and Emissions
Parry Batth	Environment and Leisure
Charles Margetts	Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services
Pauline Jorgensen	Highways and Transport
Wayne Smith	Planning and Enforcement
Bill Soane	Neighbourhood and Communities

Note:

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

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## **DRAFT WORK PROGRAMMES 2021/22**

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

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

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2021/22 WORK PROGRAMME

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
17 March 2022	<b>Waste Strategy</b>	To scrutinise progress on the emerging Waste Strategy	Work Programme	Richard Bisset
	<b>Q3 Performance Management</b>	To scrutinise the Q3 Performance report on KPIs	Work Programme	Will Roper
	<b>Five Year Land Supply</b>	To consider progress relating to the Borough's Five Year Land Supply	Work Programme	Ian Bellinger
	<b>Continuous Improvement Programme</b>	To consider progress relating to the programme in 2021/22	Committee Request	Sally Watkins
	<b>Bus Improvement – Enhanced Partnership</b>	To consider an update on the development of the Enhanced Partnership with local bus service providers (subject to deadlines)	Committee Request	Andy Glencross
	<b>Tree Protection &amp; Biodiversity</b>	To consider the report of the Tree Protection and Biodiversity Task and Finish Group	Committee Request	Neil Carr
	<b>Council Motions</b>	To scrutinise the process for monitoring the Implementation of agreed Council Motions	Committee Request	Neil Carr
	<b>O&amp;S Work Programmes 22/23</b>	To agree the Overview and Scrutiny work programmes for 2022/23	Work Programme	Neil Carr
	<b>O&amp;S Work Programmes 21/22</b>	To consider the work programmes for each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2021/22	Regular update	Neil Carr
	<b>Action Tracker</b>	To consider the regular Action Tracker report	Regular Update	Neil Carr

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## CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2022 WORK PROGRAMME

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
21 March 2022	<b>Adoption services</b>	To review the adoption services.	Challenge item	Children's Services/ Adam Davis
	<b>Specialist Accommodation</b>	To review progress with development of Specialist Accommodation.	Challenge item	Children's Services/ Hayley Rees
	<b>Strategy to Tackle Serious Youth Violence, Child Sexual Exploitation and Extra Familial Harm</b>	To review and comment on the strategy.	Challenge item	Children's Services/ Matthew Booth
	<b>Resource Base Units at Schools – Sufficiency Review</b>	To consider the sufficiency of school places.	Challenge item	Children's Services/ Sal Thirlway
	<b>Schools Causing Concern – Part 2</b>	To consider the working being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session.	Challenge Item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	<b>CSO&amp;S Forward Plan</b>	To consider the forward plan of the Committee.	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker

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<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>REASON FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER</b>
<b>May 2022</b>	<b>Education Update</b>	To update the Committee on developments relating to Education and Learning Achievement and Partnerships, including information about narrowing the gap.	Challenge item	Children's Services/ Sal Thirlway
	<b>Early Years' Service Review</b>	To review the provision of Early Years, including pre-school planning of provision.	Challenge item	Children's Services/ Sal Thirlway
	<b>Fostering Transformation</b>	To review progress with Fostering Transformation.	Challenge item	Children's Services/ Adam Davis
	<b>Schools Causing Concern – Part 2</b>	To consider the working being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session.	Challenge Item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	<b>CSO&amp;S Forward Plan</b>	To consider the forward plan of the Committee.	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>REASON FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER</b>
<b>July 2022</b>	<b>SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme Update</b>	To update on progress with delivery of the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme.	Challenge item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	<b>Update on Children's Strategy Delivery</b>	To update on progress with delivery of the Children's Services Strategy.	Challenge item	Children's Services / DCS



	<b>Schools Causing Concern – Part 2</b>	To consider the working being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session.	Challenge Item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	<b>CSO&amp;S Forward Plan</b>	To consider the forward plan of the Committee.	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker
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<b>September 2022</b>	<b>Fostering Transformation update</b>	Update on progress with Fostering transformation.	Challenge item	Children's Services/ Adam Davis
	<b>Schools Causing Concern – Part 2</b>	To consider the working being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session.	Challenge item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	<b>CSO&amp;S Forward Plan</b>	To consider the forward plan of the Committee.	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>REASON FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER</b>
<b>November 2022</b>	<b>Travel Assistance Policy Implementation</b>	Update on outcomes from implementation of the Travel Assistance Policies (formerly Home to School Transport policies).	Challenge item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	<b>Schools Causing Concern – Part 2</b>	To consider the working being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session.	Challenge item	Children's Services / Sal Thirlway
	<b>CSO&amp;S Forward Plan</b>	To consider the forward plan of the Committee.	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker

Currently unscheduled items:

- Review of Home to School Transport Processes
- Key Performance Indicators
- Wokingham Borough Education Partnership update
- Education Welfare Service Review
- Secondary School Strategy
- Schools Causing Concern (Part 2 report)

## COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
<b>23 March 2022</b>	Flood Risk Management Update	To consider an update relating to flood risk management within the Borough	Work Programme	Francesca Hobson
	Police & Fire Update	To receive an update from the Local Police and Fire Services	Work Programme	Simon Price
	New Domestic Abuse Contract 6 Month Update	To consider the implementation of the new Domestic Abuse Contract	Committee Request	Narinder Brar
	Bringing the PPP back in-house	To consider an update on bringing the PPP back in-house	Work Programme	Steve Moore
	<b>Work Programme</b>	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2020/21	Standing Item	Democratic Services

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**NOTE**

Items in the process of being scheduled for the next municipal year: Arts & Culture Strategy implementation, Borough Wide Parking Management Strategy, Burial Grounds capacity

## HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD PROGRAMME 2021-22

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
19 January 2022	Public toilet provision	To understand provision across the Borough	Referral from Community and Corporate O&S	Place and Growth
	Health Consultation Report	Challenge item	Challenge item	Democratic Services
	Healthwatch update	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough

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DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
21 February 2022 (extraordinary)	Maternity Services	To seek assurance	To seek assurance	RBH
	Update on implementation of Winter Plan	To seek assurance	To seek assurance	RBH

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
16 March 2022	<b>Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan</b>	To scrutinise implementation of the refreshed Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan	To seek assurance	Public Health
	<b>Health Integration</b>	To receive an update on the integration programme of work	To seek assurance	Lewis Willing
	<b>Mental Health Services Post Covid-19</b>	To seek assurance – Children’s Services O&S be invited to hear discussions re Children’s mental health		
	<b>Ambulance Services</b>	Update on operations	To seek assurance	SCAS
	<b>ASC KPI’s</b>	To seek assurance		Matt Pope
	<b>Health Consultation Report</b>	Challenge item	Challenge item	Democratic Services
	<b>Healthwatch update</b>	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough

#### Currently unscheduled topics:

- Optalis - To receive a further briefing on potential changes to services in Wokingham
- Update on implementation of recommendations from Healthwatch report re carers
- Update on Winter Access Fund – CCG
- 2022 – Update on ICS and implications for Wokingham Borough
- Autism Strategy
- Continence Service

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## Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee – Action Tracker 2021/22

<b>O&amp;S Management Committee – 20 January 2021</b>		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
WBC Response to the Covid-19 pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairman to write to the Leader with two additional recommendations;</li> <li>• Funding for early years settings to be considered at Children’s Services O&amp;S;</li> <li>• Add two new work programme items – Green Recovery and New Ways of Working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
O&S Work Programmes 2021/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin process for developing 2021/22 work programmes;</li> <li>• Report to February meeting on ways to improve horizon scanning and work programme development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
<b>O&amp;S Management Committee – 24 February 2021</b>		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Q3 Performance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written responses to Member questions;</li> <li>• Report to March meeting with options for making quarterly KPI reports more effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed Report to June meeting</li> </ul>
Improving O&S Work Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite Leader and CEX to June meeting;</li> <li>• Regular meetings with Executive and CLT as per the Executive-Scrutiny Protocol</li> <li>• Each O&amp;S Committee to develop an Action Tracker report for 2021/22</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
O&S Annual Reports 2020/21	Submit to March Council meeting	Completed
<b>O&amp;S Management Committee – 23 March 2021</b>		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
O&S Work Programmes 2021/22	Each O&S Committee to consider work programme and prioritise items	Ongoing
O&S Member Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up induction/refresher training on 15 June</li> <li>• Agree dates for further O&amp;S training sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed – Budget training on 27 Sept</li> </ul>
Action Tracker Report	Each O&S Committee to set up an Action Tracker report	Ongoing

<b>O&amp;S Management Committee – 16 June 2021</b>		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Q4 2020/21 Performance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response to Member questions</li> <li>• Report to September O&amp;S on ideas for improving the KPI report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Climate Emergency Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response to Member questions</li> <li>• Further report to October meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Climate Emergency Task & Finish Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amend recommendations</li> <li>• Submit recommendations to the Executive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Work Programme	Amend Work Programme	Completed

<b>O&amp;S Management Committee – 7 July 2021</b>		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Discussion with Leader and CEX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate additional information in response to Member questions</li> </ul>	Completed
Community Deliberative Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor progress through updates on Climate Emergency Action Plan</li> </ul>	Completed
Tree and Biodiversity Task & Finish Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene first meeting of the Group to agree Terms of Reference</li> </ul>	Completed
Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amend Work Programmes as discussed</li> </ul>	Completed

<b>O&amp;S Management Committee – 20 September 2021</b>		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Q1 2021/22 Performance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate additional information in response to Member questions</li> <li>• Future item on timeline for improved KPIs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Council Motions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual report on Motions to the November meeting of the Committee</li> <li>• Include details of Motions on WBC website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amend as discussed</li> </ul>	• Completed



<b>O&amp;S Management Committee – 18 October 2021</b>		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Minutes of Previous Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review list of Substitute Members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Domestic Abuse Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues raised by Committee to be addressed in final version of the Strategy</li> <li>• Annual refresh of the Strategy and full review (2024) to be scrutinised by the Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
WBC Website Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments from the Committee to be incorporated into plans to improve the website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Waste Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further update to be submitted to the Committee in January 2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing – March meeting</li> </ul>
Climate Emergency – Executive Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues raised by the Committee to be addressed in next CEAP update</li> <li>• Next update report on CEAP to the O&amp;S meeting in January 2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amend as discussed</li> <li>• Clarify timing of report on Tree Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>

<b>O&amp;S Management Committee – 17 November 2021</b>		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Minutes of Previous Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amend as discussed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Recovery Strategy Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member comments and suggestions to inform delivery of the Recovery Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Anti-Poverty Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further report to O&amp;S prior to submission of Strategy to the Executive in March 2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed – February 2022</li> </ul>
Unlawful Encampments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pass on thanks to officers for the progress made in 2021</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Bus Services – Enhanced Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestions from Members to inform development of the Enhanced Partnership</li> <li>• Further report to O&amp;S prior to approval by the Executive (subject to deadlines)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Ongoing - tbc</li> </ul>

Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amend as discussed</li> <li>• Clarify timing of Q3 Performance Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
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<b>O&amp;S Management Committee – 11 January 2022</b>		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Minutes of Previous Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amend as discussed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> </ul>
Q2 Performance Management Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further information re Member comments to be circulated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
Climate Emergency Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further information re Member comments and queries to be circulated</li> <li>• Further update on Transport targets in the CEAP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
Tree Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timeline noted – with a request to shorten the timeline if possible</li> <li>• Draft Tree Strategy to be considered by O&amp;S prior to submission to the Executive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
Tree Protection & Biodiversity Task & Finish Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task &amp; Finish Group report to be considered by the March 2022 meeting of the Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>
O&S Work Programmes for 2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be considered at the March 2022 meeting of the Committee</li> <li>• Committee to consider the draft calendar of Meetings prior to approval by Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed</li> <li>• Ongoing</li> </ul>