



## **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A Meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **THURSDAY 21 JULY 2022 AT 7.30 PM**

Susan Parsonage  
Chief Executive  
Published on 13 July 2022

**Note:** Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting or participate in the meeting virtually, in line with the Council's Constitution. If you wish to participate either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams please contact Democratic Services. The meeting can also be watched live using the following link: <https://youtu.be/VvH3pwRU9dE>

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

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

<b>Our Vision</b>
<b><i>A great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great place to do business</i></b>
<b>Enriching Lives</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion excellent education and enable our children and young people to achieve their full potential, regardless of their background.</li> <li>• Support our residents to lead happy, healthy lives and provide access to good leisure facilities to enable healthy choices for everyone.</li> <li>• Engage and empower our communities through arts and culture and create a sense of identity for the Borough which people feel part of.</li> <li>• Support growth in our local economy and help to build business.</li> </ul>
<b>Providing Safe and Strong Communities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people.</li> <li>• Offer quality care and support, at the right time, to reduce the need for long term care.</li> <li>• Nurture our communities: enabling them to thrive and families to flourish.</li> <li>• Ensure our Borough and communities remain safe for all.</li> </ul>
<b>Enjoying a Clean and Green Borough</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play as full a role as possible to achieve a carbon neutral Borough, sustainable for the future.</li> <li>• Protect our Borough, keep it clean and enhance our green areas for people to enjoy.</li> <li>• Reduce our waste, promote re-use, increase recycling and improve biodiversity.</li> <li>• Connect our parks and open spaces with green cycleways.</li> </ul>
<b>Delivering the Right Homes in the Right Places</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer quality, affordable, sustainable homes fit for the future.</li> <li>• Ensure the right infrastructure is in place, early, to support and enable our Borough to grow.</li> <li>• Protect our unique places and preserve our natural environment.</li> <li>• Help with your housing needs and support people, where it is needed most, to live independently in their own homes.</li> </ul>
<b>Keeping the Borough Moving</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and improve our roads, footpaths and cycleways.</li> <li>• Tackle traffic congestion and minimise delays and disruptions.</li> <li>• Enable safe and sustainable travel around the Borough with good transport infrastructure.</li> <li>• Promote healthy alternative travel options and support our partners in offering affordable, accessible public transport with good transport links.</li> </ul>
<b>Changing the Way We Work for You</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be relentlessly customer focussed.</li> <li>• Work with our partners to provide efficient, effective, joined up services which are focussed around our customers.</li> <li>• Communicate better with customers, owning issues, updating on progress and responding appropriately as well as promoting what is happening in our Borough.</li> <li>• Drive innovative, digital ways of working that will connect our communities, businesses and customers to our services in a way that suits their needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Be the Best We Can Be</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be an organisation that values and invests in all our colleagues and is seen as an employer of choice.</li> <li>• Embed a culture that supports ambition, promotes empowerment and develops new ways of working.</li> <li>• Use our governance and scrutiny structures to support a learning and continuous improvement approach to the way we do business.</li> <li>• Be a commercial council that is innovative, whilst being inclusive, in its approach with a clear focus on being financially resilient.</li> <li>• Maximise opportunities to secure funding and investment for the Borough.</li> <li>• Establish a renewed vision for the Borough with clear aspirations.</li> </ul>

To: The Members of Wokingham Borough Council

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
21.		<b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence	
22.		<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 May 2022 and the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 22 June 2022.	13 - 48
23.		<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest	
24.		<b>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> To receive any announcements by the Mayor	
25.		<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 the Council  Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Council or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to <a href="http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions">www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</a>	
26.		<b>PETITIONS</b> To receive any petitions which Members or members of the public wish to present.	
27.	None Specific	<b>PRESENTATION BY THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AND THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER</b> To receive a presentation from the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police, John Campbell, and the Police and Crime Commissioner, Matthew Barber.  The presentation is expected to be approximately 20 minutes in duration after which there will be an opportunity for Member questions of no more than 10 minutes in duration.	

<b>28.</b>	None Specific	<p><b>ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022-23</b> To consider the Annual Pay Policy Statement.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> That Council approve the Annual Pay Policy Statement for 2022-23, as recommended by Personnel Board.</p>	<b>49 - 60</b>
<b>29.</b>	None Specific	<p><b>AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22</b> To receive a report from the Chairman of the Audit Committee on the work undertaken over the past year.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> That the Audit Committee Annual Report 2021-2022 be noted.</p>	<b>61 - 64</b>
<b>30.</b>	None Specific	<p><b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 201-22</b> To receive a report from the Chairman of the Standards Committee on the work undertaken over the past year.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> That the Standards Committee Annual Report 2021-2022 be noted.</p>	<b>65 - 72</b>
<b>31.</b>	None Specific	<p><b>WOKINGHAM BOROUGH WELLBEING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22</b> To receive a report from the Chairman of the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board on the work undertaken over the past year.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION:</b> That the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2021-2022 be noted</p>	<b>73 - 108</b>
<b>32.</b>	None Specific	<p><b>CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION</b> To receive a report from the Monitoring Officer setting out proposed changes to the Constitution as considered by the Constitution Review Working Group.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b> that Council agree the following changes to the Constitution, as recommended by the Monitoring Officer, via the Constitution Review Working Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) additional wording to be added to Chapter 4.2, as set out in paragraph 1 of the report;</li> <li>2) that 4.4.11 (Rules of debate Audit Committee) and 8.4.8 (Rules of debate Licensing and Appeals Committee), 9.1.9 Rules of Procedure (Standards Committee) be removed, and subsequent sections renumbered, as set out in paragraph 1 of the</li> </ol>	<b>109 - 112</b>

report;

- 3) additional wording to be added to Rule 4.4.19, as set out in paragraph 2 of the report.

33. None Specific

**ADDITIONAL COUNCIL MEETING**

Given that Council does not often manage to get through all its items of business at each meeting it is proposed that an additional Council meeting be scheduled in October in order to enable the transaction of further Council business.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council agree to amend the timetable of meetings to schedule an additional Council meeting on Thursday 20 October 2022 at 7:30pm.

34.

**MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

To answer any member questions

A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for Members to ask questions submitted under Notice

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

34.1 Charvil; Hurst;  
Remenham,  
Wargrave and  
Ruscombe;  
Sonning;  
Twyford

Michael Firmager has asked the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan the following question:

**Question**

Given that coalition Members have criticised the lack of development in Hurst, Twyford and the Northern Parishes, will the Executive Member for Planning explain how many houses the Council plans to build there?

34.2 Emmbrook

Phil Cunnington has asked the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing the following question:

**Question**

Does the coalition support the principle of a dementia care home in Toutley?

34.3 Barkham

Charles Margetts has asked the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan the following question:

**Question**

Can the lead member for Planning let me know what discussions are underway over the possible development of Rooks Nest Farm?

34.4      Winnersh

Laura Blumenthal asked the Executive Member for Housing the following question:

I met with residents of Grovelands Avenue in Winnersh who are concerned about how the Council's temporary accommodation there will impact on them. The new site is currently being built and their number one request is that there should be no access from the site to the road west of it. The main access is north of the site. Please can you guarantee that their request will be delivered?

35.

**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WARD MATTERS**

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

36.

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

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

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

37.

**STATEMENT FROM COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES**

To receive any statements from Directors of Council Owned Companies.

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

38.

**MOTIONS**

To consider any motions

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

**Motion 480 submitted by Rachel Burgess**

Wokingham Borough Council must continually review the support offered to families facing financial crisis to ensure a robust safety net is in place for those in need.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic there were already too many families in Wokingham struggling to make ends meet, and now many more families have been thrown into crisis, without the ability to pay their rent, heat their homes or feed their children.

The Local Welfare Provision Scheme exists to provide immediate financial support to households facing an emergency situation.

However the number of people helped by this scheme in Wokingham Borough has fallen by 76% since 2016-17, with just 21 people helped in 2020-21. In 2019-20 just £3,000 was spent providing support through this scheme. Over the three years to 2020-21 only 23% of the allocated budget was actually spent, on average.

Wokingham Borough Council will:

- Review the effectiveness of Wokingham's Local Welfare Provision Scheme
- Consult with residents and the voluntary sector to ascertain how those who need crisis assistance can be better supported
- Ensure residents in need of support can easily access the scheme and work to remove barriers to application
- Ensure effective signposting of the scheme in conjunction with the voluntary sector
- Ensure frontline staff are trained so that they are fully aware of the scheme and are able to advise residents on how to apply
- Consider prioritising the delivery of cash-first support, which is more empowering and respectful to those on lower incomes
- Aim to provide support within 24-48 hours of a successful application
- Consider relaxing the qualifying criteria and disclosure requirements for the scheme, ensuring that residents' dignity is respected throughout.

**Motion 482 submitted by Adrian Mather**

There needs to be a fundamental change in how we generate and consume energy in all aspects of our lives. Both electricity generation and distribution are undergoing rapid evolution, in both shape and scale.

The distribution grid, must now cope with power flows in both directions. In scale, electrification of heat and transport will require a quadrupling of electricity capacity. Local, community-based energy schemes can make a significant contribution to addressing both issues and encourage a sense of local empowerment to tackle climate change.

Community schemes encourage local generation and storage to match local demand thus relieving pressure on the grid. Local schemes would be given new impetus and be able to contribute more renewable energy if local people could buy their electricity directly from local suppliers. But the disproportionate cost of meeting regulatory approvals makes it impossible to be a local energy supplier at a local scale and so, under the current system, this local energy gets sold back to the central grid.

The Local Electricity Bill is a private members' bill with cross-party support that was introduced unopposed in June 2020. If this Bill was passed in Parliament it would give the energy regulator, OFGEM, a duty to create a Right to Local Supply. This would enable local community energy groups to achieve their vision of supplying generated energy back to the local area, help us as a Council to meet our carbon reduction aspirations for the Borough, and also bring multiple benefits to the local community. It is supported by many stakeholders, local authorities, and town councils and currently has the backing of 208 MPs.

Council Agrees to:

Resolve to support the Bill.

- Authorise the Leader to contact our MPs to discuss their support for the Bill and how they can enable its passage into law.
- Authorise the Chief Executive to write to the Minister of State for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, supporting the aims of the Bill and asking for these aims to be taken into account in the forthcoming Energy White



38.3      None Specific

**Motion 483 submitted by Sarah Kerr**

We are in a cost-of-living crisis. One of the factors is the sharp increase in energy bills. Insulating homes and generating renewable energy directly on homes not only helps our communities during this difficult time but has the added benefit of helping us reach our carbon neutral aspirations.

Little progress has been made in reducing emissions from the energy used for heating and cooling buildings in the UK. This is mainly due to the UK's poor standards of building insulation and an ageing housing stock, coupled with a heavy reliance on fossil fuels for heating.

In Wokingham Borough, housing is the largest source of carbon emissions, which needs to be tackled urgently if we are to become carbon neutral by 2030. Progress has been made in insulating some of the Borough's housing stock through the ECO and GHG-LAD schemes which assists low income and vulnerable residents. The majority of households do not qualify however, and insulation is just one of the tools that homeowners can use in reducing their carbon emissions.

In order to stimulate the market, the barriers of consumer inertia and the lack of trust and understanding need to be addressed. Investing hard earned income into home improvements can be daunting, especially when there's a wide range of options and combinations to consider, each property is unique, and there are cowboy tradespeople in the industry.

To overcome this, this Council seeks to facilitate the creation of a home decarbonisation service, to provide impartial advice for residents on the options available for:

- home insulation,
- alternatives to gas for heating,
- generating renewal energy, and
- energy storage,
- and to assist with assessing value for money from these options.

Officers are requested to prepare a business case assessing the feasibility and options for delivering

such a service and make a recommendation as to whether it should be operated in house, or as a shared service with other local authorities, as a partnership with the voluntary sector or others, or through a 3rd party, with the business case to be presented to council at the September 2022 meeting.

38.4      None Specific

**Motion 484 submitted by Charles Margetts**

Wokingham Borough Council believes in promoting alternatives to car travel wherever possible. The Council notes the successes of previous administrations in creating sustainable and active travel alternatives, such as greenways and footpaths, as well as working with bus companies to provide bus services across the Borough.

The rail service between from Earley to London Waterloo, including Winnersh, Winnersh Triangle and Wokingham, is ridiculously slow. The journey usually takes one hour and ten minutes to cover a distance of 36 miles to London. Some years ago, a scheme was proposed for trains on this line to not stop at intermediate stations between Twickenham and Waterloo, reducing journey times down by 15 minutes.

This Council calls on South Western Railway to implement measures to speed up journey times and make their service more competitive.

38.5      None Specific

**Motion 485 submitted by Gary Cowan**

Wokingham Borough Council:

- is concerned about the number of cases reported to the RSPCA each year, regarding pets given as prizes via fairgrounds, social media and other channels in England - and notes the issue predominantly concerns goldfish
- is concerned for the welfare of those animals that are being given as prizes
- recognises that many cases of pets being as prizes may go unreported each year
- supports a move to ban the giving of live animals as prizes, in any form, on Wokingham Borough Council land.

The Council agrees to:

- ban outright the giving of live animals as

prizes, in any form, on Wokingham Borough Council land.

- write to the UK Government, urging an outright ban on the giving of live animals as prizes on both public and private land.

### **CONTACT OFFICER**

**Madeleine Shopland**

**Email**

**Postal Address**

Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist

Madeleine.shopland@wokingham.gov.uk

Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN

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## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD ON 19 MAY 2022 FROM 7.00 PM TO 9.42 PM

### Members Present

Councillors: Caroline Smith (Mayor), Beth Rowland (Deputy Mayor), Sam Akhtar, Keith Baker, Parry Batth, Rachel Bishop-Firth, Laura Blumenthal, Chris Bowring, Shirley Boyt, Prue Bray, Rachel Burgess, Anne Chadwick, Stephen Conway, David Cornish, Gary Cowan, Andy Croy, Phil Cunningham, David Davies, Peter Dennis, Lindsay Ferris, Michael Firmager, Paul Fishwick, John Halsall, Jim Frewin, Maria Gee, David Hare, Peter Harper, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Graham Howe, Chris Johnson Johnson, Clive Jones, Norman Jorgensen, Pauline Jorgensen, John Kaiser, Sarah Kerr, Abdul Loyes, Tahir Maher, Morag Malvern, Charles Margetts, Rebecca Margetts, Adrian Mather, Andrew Mickleburgh, Stuart Munro, Gregor Murray, Alistair Neal, Jackie Rance, Ian Shenton, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Mike Smith, Wayne Smith, Bill Soane, Alison Swaddle and Shahid Younis

### 1. STATEMENT BY COUNCILLOR JOHN HALSALL

We are the healthiest, finest in the land on many counts, the healthiest, most prosperous, and one of the most desirable places to live, with the lowest level of deprivation. We have not cut services, rather we are opening leisure centres, and community centres, and libraries. We unusually collect bins every week. Our financial management and prudence are rated by CIPFA as amongst one of the best despite having one of the lowest levels of Government funding. It is the result of 20 years of good Conservative administration.

I am very proud to have been at the helm these last 3 years, to steer the Borough through extremely challenging waters of Covid, Ukraine and restructuring. I have never forgotten that we are only here to serve our residents. I have brought all our partners into the orbit of the Council, making it the Golden Thread which runs through the Borough, the indispensable partner. I wanted our Officers to be proud to work here, and this to be a place to work of choice, to be confident, innovate and to make decisions. I have never criticised Officers and never will.

I was the first Leader to declare a Climate Emergency. I was the first to forbid the discharge from hospitals into care homes against Government diktat. I successfully led the national campaign against the Government's Planning Reforms and proposed increase in housing numbers for Wokingham. Every field, tree and blade of grass lost is deeply painful to me. I am delighted that the Planning Reforms have been officially abandoned, but it is still necessary to substantially lower housing numbers in the Borough, giving control from developers to the local authority and residents. I have created the platform for job creation and prosperity for many decades to come. I was able to achieve a lot in a short period of time because of the whole hearted support of our professional team of Officers and Directors who are second to none. They espouse the 'can do' innovative behaviour that I wanted, and in making mistakes learning from them without fear of censure. We have done some remarkable things. I have been proud to be at the head of such a brilliant organisation, and well done to all. Working with Susan Parsonage, John Kaiser and Graham Ebers has been fun, stimulating, creative and very effective. We are truly blessed to have had them. I wish them all well and I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

We face difficult times ahead, with adverse winds and gale force increasing, but happily less severe than those that we have just endured. As a very desirable place, it means that

not a square inch of the Borough is not without an option. If the Borough does not have a current and approved Local Plan with a five-year land supply, speculative development will be rife. It has currently neither. All development to date has taken place under the Core Strategy, altered by Gary.

The exclusion of Wokingham in the ICS, changes to MRP, pressures on school places, the DSG deficit devolution, Ukrainian and other refugees et al. are huge challenges. Financially, Council tax increased 1.99%, inflation 9%, with hardship and poverty increasing, and Covid and Ukraine costs, but budgets must still be balanced. There are many Councils facing financial difficulties. A Council which is bust is no good to anyone. I would have relished being at the helm to navigate the Borough through these unfavourable waters and believe that we would have come safely to dry land without a qualm. However, the good residents of Wokingham have spoken and have voted for change. It happened on my watch therefore I am responsible. I have resigned as the Leader of the Conservative Group and of the Council, and John has done so as Deputy Leader.

I thank all those who voted Conservative and supported me. It has been the honour and privilege of my life, but it is now for others. The Council is now in the hands of the coalition. You inherit a pristine Rolls Royce firing on all cylinders with barely a scratch. Please treat it with respect, do not crash it as in the past. Lib Dems you must deliver on all the promises that you have made, which are numerous. You must become Liberal and Democrat, traits which presently seem absent. Our Independents are now independent in name only, having taken the Lib Dem whip, a path which has sadly seemed only too inevitable. Labour have abandoned Labour principles to become a driving force of the coalition. A vote for Lib Dems is get Labour both locally and nationally. I shall watch with interest how the future unfolds from the relative calm of the back benches, and hope and pray that Wokingham Borough succeeds and does very well in the future. Thank you Mr Mayor for the time.

## **2. ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2022/23**

Keith Baker, the current Mayor, welcomed recently elected Members. Councillor Baker thanked all those who had invited him to their events over his time in Office. He highlighted some of the events that he had attended and praised his chosen charity, Chance to Dance.

A number of Members thanked Keith Baker for his hard work during his year in Office and the fair approach that he had taken.

Keith Baker thanked Caroline Kelly, the Mayor's Assistant and Sophia Burr, Communications for their support over the year. He thanked his Deputy Mayor Abdul Loyes for his considerable support. Keith Baker went on to thank Anne Hunter, Democratic and Electoral Services Lead Specialist, for her hard work and support over his term of office.

At this point in the meeting Keith Baker resigned as Mayor with immediate effect. He indicated that his Group would be nominating him for Mayor, and he felt it inappropriate to preside over the nomination proceedings. The Deputy Mayor assumed the chairing of the meeting.

The Deputy Mayor called for nominations for the office of Mayor for the 2021/23 Municipal Year.

It was proposed by Clive Jones and seconded by Stephen Conway that Caroline Smith be elected as Mayor for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

It was proposed by Pauline Jorgensen and seconded by Stuart Munro that Keith Baker be elected as Mayor for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

Voting was as follows

<b>Keith Baker</b>	<b>Caroline Smith</b>
Sam Akhtar	Rachel Bishop-Firth
Keith Baker	Shirley Boyt
Parry Batth	Prue Bray
Laura Blumenthal	Rachel Burgess
Chris Bowring	Stephen Conway
Anne Chadwick	David Cornish
Phil Cunnington	Gary Cowan
David Davies	Andy Croy
Michael Firmager	Peter Dennis
John Halsall	Lindsay Ferris
Peter Harper	Paul Fishwick
Pauline Helliard Symons	Jim Frewin
Graham Howe	Maria Gee
Norman Jorgensen	David Hare
Pauline Jorgensen	Chris Johnson
John Kaiser	Clive Jones
Abdul Loyes	Sarah Kerr
Charles Margetts	Tahir Maher
Rebecca Margetts	Morag Malvern
Stuart Munro	Adrian Mather
Gregor Murray	Andrew Mickleburgh
Jackie Rance	Alistair Neal
Wayne Smith	Beth Rowland
Bill Soane	Ian Shenton
Alison Swaddle	Imogen Shepherd-DuBey
Shahid Younis	Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
	Caroline Smith
	Mike Smith

**RESOLVED:** That Caroline Smith be elected as Mayor for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

Caroline Smith made the statutory acceptance of office pursuant to Section 83 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Caroline Smith addressed the Council as follows:

I would like to thank you for electing me to be your Mayor and as the First Citizen to be representing the Council and the citizens of Wokingham Borough for the coming year is both very humbling and an awesome task that I will discharge to the very best of my ability. It is a huge honour so thank you for your confidence.

I would like to begin with another thank you to our outgoing Mayor. Keith Baker has done a brilliant job during his year in Office, and I do not just mean chairing these meetings with just the right amount of discipline and fairness. He has also done a great job in representing this Council at many, many functions. I intend to follow carefully in his footsteps, especially continuing in his strict working principles during full Council meetings. This means ensuring keeping to strict timings for all Councillors, and importantly keeping everyone to the point. This a new start for us and because everything is so finely balanced, I will be looking to work more collaboratively. We must ensure that the great work by our Officers is appreciated, and truly recognise that our residents come first.

As you probably know, as an Earley Town Councillor, I chair the Climate Emergency Working Group and am acutely aware that this Council's Climate Emergency targets of 2030 are fast approaching. As such in my role of Mayor, when opportunity arises, I will be encouraging residents to make positive changes.

On a different note, since 2020 we have had to deal with Covid. I have worked for 20 years in the voluntary sector and know first hand that we have amazing residents in Wokingham, with many stepping forwards to volunteer, keeping the vulnerable safe and fed. Covid has not gone away, so as Mayor I will be promoting the voluntary effort going forward. Whilst we are regarded as affluent in the Borough there are many residents who will be worried about inflation, the rising cost of living and the horrendous situation in the Ukraine, and we will need support from many sectors of the community. One of my most integral parts of being a Mayor is choosing a charity to support. With that in mind my obvious choice of charity is the Wokingham Food Bank. I will be counting on you for all this generous support for this very worthy local cause.

### **3. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2022/23**

The Mayor called for nominations for the office of Deputy Mayor for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

It was proposed by Clive Jones and seconded by Stephen Conway that Beth Rowland be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

It was:

**RESOLVED:** That Beth Rowland be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

Beth Rowland made the statutory acceptance of office pursuant to Section 83 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Beth Rowland thanked the Council for appointing her to the office of Deputy Mayor.

### **4. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence received.

### **5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 24 March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

### **6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.



## **7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

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

### **7.1 Jo Beales asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question:**

#### **Question**

My question is on child safety outside Maiden Erlegh and Aldryngton Schools on the Silverdale Road and surrounding roads. Last week there was an accident between a 13 year old child and a car on the Silverdale Road. The child was taken to RBH, due to their injuries. A couple of years ago, two primary school children were pinned against a wall by a car, with severe injuries, which required an Air Ambulance.

Child safety in this area needs urgent attention before a fatality occurs. Each school day at school drop off and pick up times, the roads around the school area are clogged with cars. Parents drive onto pavements, they block pavements to get into the Tesco car park to drop off or pick up their child(ren), so children have to walk on the main road to get to school! The parents don't care of the impact on surrounding pedestrians, as long as they can get as close to the school as possible.

We need to reduce the number of cars in this area around the schools, can we install parking restrictions on Sevenoaks Road and barriers along certain stretches of Silverdale and Sevenoaks Roads, to protect the pedestrians?

#### **Answer**

Thank you for your question, I completely agree with you about the issues around Silverdale Road and the school there. I cycled up there about six months ago to talk to the Headmaster about it, to try and work out some form of design to improve the school accesses. The issue we have got is that area is very constrained and not all the roads are in the control of the Borough Council, some of them are private. We talked about all sorts of things and I have had Officers look at the layout of the land in front of the caretaker's bungalow, and the land at the back of Aldryngton to see if there is anything that can be done. So far it is proving really, really difficult because of the layout and the very narrow entrance, but we are trying. I would therefore like to reassure you that we do understand the concerns of parents and residents over the traffic and road safety issues.

We are also working in partnership with schools to prepare travel plans that discourage unnecessary vehicle use during school days and introduce controls over on-street parking using waiting restrictions where this is possible to support residents. As I said, unfortunately, in this area we do not have control of all the roads, and that is very difficult.

Recently, in response to requests from residents, the Council has extended on-street parking controls in Silverdale Road to deter poor parking behaviour close to the schools. Residents may request additional controls at any time via the Council's website which will be fully assessed by Officers. There is a regular cadence of new parking controls as these get assessed, so please get that referral request into the website.

We are also limited about what we can do about people driving on pavements, and if you have evidence of that please will you contact the Police via 101, and they should do something about it as it is very dangerous. Unfortunately, we do not have the ability to

intervene on moving traffic offences at the moment.

### **Supplementary Question**

After the successful prioritising of the pupil safety and the introduction of School Streets by Reading Borough Council, is this something that Wokingham Borough Council would be prepared to investigate for the Maiden Erlegh and Aldryngton area?

### **Supplementary Answer**

I obviously cannot speak for my successor, whoever that may be, but certainly when the Highways Department was under my control, we were actively assessing School Streets.

## **7.2 Jan Heard asked the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement the following question:**

### **Question**

Just before the election, representatives of the main parties were interviewed on BBC Radio Berkshire regarding the proposed development on Hall Farm. Two declared opposition to 4,500 Houses on Hall Farm and wanted more information from Officers regarding other sites. Another subsequently made a pledge in writing to oppose overdevelopment. Two Independents also publicly stated their opposition to Hall Farm.

Given the outcome of the election, and stated opposition to Hall Farm of representatives of all parties, I ask the Executive Member of Planning the following: In a climate where 97% of new development has been in southern wards, and 4,500 doubles numbers of houses required in the period, will this Council take Hall Farm out of the LPU?

### **Answer**

I did not actually see the broadcast that you are referring to. I am sure that it was exciting. I do not feel that I should be answering this question but the process is the process so I will.

It was interesting reading your question that you refer to the Opposition, I do not know because I have not listened, to other sites. I would say that for the last six years, it started with David Lee and then it moved on to Stuart Munro, we have had cross party working groups. All sites have been discussed so it is not something that I have kept a secret. It has all been discussed and alternatives have been sought. If you want clarification on that I am sure our lead Officers will give it to you. What I would say is was that electioneering? I do not know. I would suggest that in the future you may come back at a later date and ask the new administration if they will take out Hall Farm. For now I will say that we have had a massive response to the Local Plan, compared to with regards to when we did it with Grazeley. We are going through those responses, but as I said, please come back and ask the new administration if they would take out Hall Farm.

### **Supplementary Question**

I appreciate that someone may well be in your place soon. I would like to leave my supplementary for people of all parties to ponder over. I would be really pleased if you would consider taking Hall Farm off of the Local Plan Update, but also to make sure that relevant policies and voices are given full weight in planning matters. If I can draw attention in particular to the Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan and also

Wokingham Council's Landscape Officer.

### **Supplementary Answer**

I think that will be up to the new administration.

### **7.3 David Spedding asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question. Due to his inability to attend the meeting the following written answer was provided:**

#### **Question**

How can the Council support safer roads around schools at drop off and collection times?

#### **Answer**

The Council is currently in the early stages of identifying schools to take part in a potential pilot project for School Streets in Wokingham. School Streets projects require the involvement of schools as it is the schools themselves that manage the temporary barriers. Once we have identified suitable schools, we will make contact with them to see whether there is any interest in participating.

From this financial year we also have funding allocated to a "Safer Routes to Schools" project which will seek to improve safety, and the perception of safety around schools and on key routes to schools to help encourage walking and cycling to school. Unfortunately, this funding will not enable us to address all schools in the first year so it is envisaged this will be a rolling programme over a number of years. Work is currently underway to identify which schools will be the first to receive the benefit of this funding.

In terms of cars parking dangerously around schools, particularly at drop off and pick up times, we do enforce illegal parking where restrictions are in place and can focus enforcement in particular areas for some periods of time, although we have limited resource so unfortunately, we cannot be everywhere at all times. We can also consider changing the parking controls and speed limits where data supports this, though an important first step would be for the school to develop and maintain a school Travel Plan which outlines how it expects its staff, pupils and visitors to travel and behave around the school. The My Journey Team is able to assist with this and also help each school attain Modeshift Stars accreditation which demonstrates their commitment to helping people travel more sustainably.

I would encourage those who have safety concerns at specific locations to contact the Council through our website and raise these concerns so that they can be investigated and addressed on a case by case basis.

### **7.4 Rachel Fielding asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport the following question. Due to her inability to attend the meeting the following written answer was provided:**

#### **Question**

As a local resident and parent of a child at Aldryngton Primary School, the number of cars driving and parking dangerously along Silverdale Road seems to be increasing. How can we improve the route to prioritise pedestrians and make it safer for children walking to school; Reading Borough Council have recently started implementing 'school streets',

would this be a path you would consider following?

**Answer**

As mentioned in the previous response, Officers are in the early stages of identifying schools to take part in a potential pilot project for School Streets in Wokingham. The Council recognises that Silverdale Route is an important link road for residents, businesses and schools and therefore closing it during school opening and closing times might prove challenging. However, there are a number of things we can look at to improve routes and make it feel safer for children walking to school. The Council's "Safer Routes to Schools" project aims to address some of the issues.

It is good to see that Aldryngton Primary is already engaged with us in travel planning and the Modeshift Stars scheme and that they are clearly interested in sustainable travel to school. The team working on the schools' projects will ensure that Aldryngton Primary is considered as part of their work.

As I set out in my response to CP1 earlier, Officers are also investigating whether there are any measures that might deter antisocial driving behaviours such as footway parking and have already discussed with the School, measures that might reduce issues on the private access roads serving the School and nearby shops.

**8. PETITIONS**

There were no petitions received.

**9. MAYOR'S OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Mayor's or Head of Paid Service's Announcements.

**10. RETURNING OFFICER'S REPORT ON MAY 2022 ELECTIONS**

The Council considered a report from the Returning Officer, which gave details of the results of the local elections held on 5 May 2022.

The report outlined the election process, the results and the turnout for each Borough ward contested.

It was proposed by Clive Jones and seconded by Stephen Conway that the report of the Returning Officer be noted.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That the report of the Returning Officer be noted.

**11. MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE**

Due to the resignation of the Leader of Council this item was no longer required.

**12. ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

Following the resignation of the Leader of Council and in accordance with the governance arrangements which were adopted by Council at its meeting on 18 November 2010, the Mayor called for nominations for the Office of Leader of the Council for a four-year term (or until the Leader's Term of Office as a Councillor expires).

It was proposed by Stephen Conway and seconded by Prue Bray that Clive Jones be elected as Leader of the Council for a four-year term.

It was proposed by Charles Margetts and seconded by Gregor Murray that Pauline Jorgensen be elected as Leader of the Council for a four-year term.

In line with Rule 4.2.15.5 of the Constitution Chris Bowring requested that a recorded vote be held.

Voting was as follows:

<b>Clive Jones</b>	<b>Pauline Jorgensen</b>
Rachel Bishop-Firth	Sam Akhtar
Shirley Boyt	Keith Baker
Prue Bray	Parry Batth
Rachel Burgess	Laura Blumenthal
Stephen Conway	Chris Bowring
David Cornish	Anne Chadwick
Gary Cowan	Phil Cunningham
Andy Croy	David Davies
Peter Dennis	Michael Firmager
Lindsay Ferris	John Halsall
Paul Fishwick	Peter Harper
Jim Frewin	Pauline Helliard-Symons
Maria Gee	Graham Howe
David Hare	Norman Jorgensen
Chris Johnson	Pauline Jorgensen
Clive Jones	John Kaiser
Sarah Kerr	Abdul Loyes
Tahir Maher	Charles Margetts
Morag Malvern	Rebecca Margetts
Adrian Mather	Stuart Munro
Andrew Mickleburgh	Gregor Murray
Alistair Neal	Jackie Rance
Beth Rowland	Wayne Smith
Ian Shenton	Bill Soane
Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	Alison Swaddle
Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	Shahid Younis
Caroline Smith	
Mike Smith	

**RESOLVED:** That Clive Jones be elected as Leader of the Council for a four-year term.

### **13. CONTINUATION OF THE MEETING**

At this point in the meeting, 8.31pm, in accordance with Procedure Rule 4.2.12 (m), the Council considered a Motion to continue the meeting beyond 9pm for a maximum of 30 minutes to enable further business on the Agenda to be transacted. The Motion was proposed by Prue Bray and seconded by Stephen Conway.

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

#### **14. STATEMENTS FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

##### **Clive Jones, Leader of the Council:**

Thank you once again Madam Mayoy, can I once again congratulate you most sincerely on your appointment as Mayor. Can I also congratulate Beth Rowland on her appointment as your Deputy. I hope that you really enjoy your terms of office.

I would like to begin by thanking John Halsall, the outgoing Leader of the Council, and his Executive colleagues for all of their work over the last three years. I am particularly grateful for John's willingness to bring other political groups into discussions on the Council's response to Covid, and to John Kaiser for agreeing to the request to share his budget thinking with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. I congratulate Pauline Jorgensen on becoming Leader of the Conservative Group, and I hope that we will be able to work together in the spirit of cooperation.

I would like to thank all of my colleagues including the members of the Wokingham Borough Partnership for giving me the honour of being the Leader of Wokingham Borough Council. They have placed enormous trust in me, and I will do my very best to serve all of the residents of the Borough in a professional, effective and efficient manner. There will be a willingness from myself and my colleagues to consult with others and to call on the skills and experience of Councillors of all parties to help us tackle the considerable challenges that the Borough faces. Now more than ever is the time for grown up politics, which puts the interests of residents and businesses above party political point scoring. The challenges that the Borough faces are great; the cost of living crisis is hitting individuals, families and businesses here in Wokingham. The Government has imposed an unsustainable new housing allocation on the Borough, which greatly exceeds local need.

A climate emergency requires urgent action, not just to protect us here and now, but for the security of our children and our children's children. Meanwhile Ministers are putting the Council's finances under intense pressure with an enormous bill looming for their Social Care Reforms, and new rules that require us to put aside more money to cover the financing of investments, assets and capital loans. The cost of living crisis is hitting many families here in Wokingham, but we can, and we must help to address its local consequences, including acute hardship for a growing number of residents and rising costs on businesses and the Council. We will be placing an emphasis on anti-poverty measures and working closely with local businesses to see what the Council can do to help them. I will take the Business, portfolio, and we have created a new position on the Executive. I am delighted that Rachel Bishop-Firth will be the Executive Member for Equalities, Inclusion and Fighting Poverty.

People need affordable and decent homes to live in. We must aim to improve on the Council's record of building social housing. Stephen Conway, as well as being the Deputy Leader of the Council, will also be responsible for Housing. Although there is a widespread recognition that some new housing is required, especially affordable housing for younger people in our community, and for those of all ages that are priced out of the market. There is a tremendous hostility as we saw in the recent local elections, to the Government's imposition on the housing market that greatly exceeds local need. The Liberal Democrats have petitioned the Secretary of State for Communities, Housing and Levelling Up and asked for a reduction to the excessively high housing allocation imposed

on us by the Government. The Council had previously tried to get the number reduced, and our Executive Member for Planning and the Local Plan, Lindsay Ferris, will continue to argue our case for a reduction. If the Government accepts our housing allocation should be reduced, we can reassess the less sustainable sites in the draft Local Plan, but whatever this Conservative Government eventually decides we do need to address the problem of flood risk. It cannot be right to argue that the development of land will increase the risk of flooding, and let me take this opportunity to say to developers that this Administration is determined to oppose housing development in the Green Belt.

We must do more to make a contribution to tackling the climate emergency. We are very conscious that some measures that the Council have already looked at, have the potential to be very costly. We want to be certain that taxpayers' money is spent wisely. We want to ensure that climate emergency projects are based on a full business case, including a carbon saving assessment, and will have undergone rigorous scrutiny. I am personally delighted that Sarah Kerr will be Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services. There is no better person on this Council than you to be taking on that role.

Our Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure, will be Ian Shenton. He will continue to promote our idea of a Covid memorial wood, to help meet the Council's tree planting ambitions, and to commemorate those in the Borough who have lost their lives in the pandemic.

We will use all the opportunities available to us to secure external funding for public transport and active travel initiatives, led by our new Executive Member for Active Travel, Highways and Transport, Paul Fishwick. Please note the emphasis on Active Travel.

There have been much needed changes and improvements in our Children's Services department in recent years. Only a few years ago they were in danger of being put into special measures. We have a very experienced Executive Member for Children's Services in Prue Bray. She will be working to continue this improvement and one of her priorities will be children's mental health.

As I said earlier, recent Government announcements on changes to the way the public pay for adult social care will mean significant changes for the Borough in the next few years. I am very pleased to have another very experienced Councillor, David Hare, to be taking on this role. He will be our Executive Member for Wellbeing and Adult Services, taking on this massive challenge.

The major financial challenges faced by the Council necessarily mean that we will need to work hard to ensure that the Council is on a firm financial footing. There are many things which are low cost but high impact that we would like to pursue. How many will be feasible will depend on the financial legacy left to us by the previous administration. Imogen Shepherd-DuBey will be our Executive Member for Finance, prioritising prudence, and stability. Madam Mayor, our new Lib Dem administration will seek to make the Council more open and more inclusive, as well as being financially sound. We have a vision of a caring, listening, responsive, Council, and we will happily work in partnership alongside anyone who shares that vision. Above all we will never forget that we are here to serve the people of this Borough. They have put faith in us. We are determined to show that we are worthy of that trust.

**Pauline Jorgensen, Leader of the Conservative Group:**

Before I start my speech, I would like to thank a number of people. Thanks to Keith and Abdul for their services as Mayor and Deputy Mayor in the last year. You have been a real credit to the Borough. I would also like to thank John Halsall for his three years as Leader of the Council, guiding us through the pandemic and the difficult economic aftermath, and for putting in such a huge amount of hours of service to the Wokingham Borough residents. Also, to John Kaiser for keeping a firm grip on the finances. I would like to thank all of the Officers who have worked with my Conservative colleagues over the years to make this one of the best places to live, work and raise a family.

Congratulations to Clive on his election as Leader. I will admit that it is interesting that his coalition has scooped up the votes of the other parties without offering them any seats on the Executive. In the interests of transparency maybe the coalition members will tell us what they have been offered to join a coalition. Residents that put their cross next to Labour candidates in the election may also be taken aback that those same councillors have now decided to dissolve their parties and to join the Lib Dems. A pity that was not mentioned when they were out asking people to vote. We intend to approach Opposition differently from how the Liberal Democrats did when we were in office. Given that the voters have ensured that no party was elected with a majority on the Council, we fully support the need to work together to tackle the challenges ahead. Where we believe that the Lib Dem Group are doing things that are of benefit to Borough residents then we will support them. We will also hold them to account when they fail. I hope that the coalition will look for new ways to introduce more challenge to the Council meetings, maybe dedicated questions to the Council Leader from the Opposition Leader, like PMQ. We will provide challenge where it is needed, but will support where we share objectives. In the past we have worked together to press for pilot programmes on housing, the Local Plan needs to be addressed with urgency. Failing to get one means that we would be at the mercy of developers. Various Lib/Lab coalition Councillors promised on their Election literature that they would protect their areas from development. As we all know the best protection is the development of a Local Plan. We look forward to conversations about how to progress the Plan and we would be willing to help the Liberal coalition continue the successful conversations that we have been having with Government, to reduce the housing numbers.

The message from residents is clear, we must put aside our differences and move to work for the benefit of the Borough. The Lib Dem/Labour coalition has inherited an enviable legacy of 20 years of Conservative rule. Wokingham Borough is one of the best places in the UK and is one of the healthiest places to live. Sound financial management means that we have been able to maintain and increase services, put investment into new services in the Borough and develop an income stream that is funding better outcomes for residents.

The coalition will benefit from new schools and sixth forms that we have secured, new leisure centres we are building and have built, and those new social homes that we have delivered, along with £57million we have set aside for building and modernising affordable social housing. We have delivered new greenways and cycleways, doubled the spending on road maintenance, and are in the middle of a programme to reduce congestion, something which I remember the Lib Dems opposed. We also provided unprecedented support for families and businesses during the pandemic and its aftermath, including millions of pounds in grants. The Administration must continue our policy of backing people during these difficult times.

I hope that the coalition will continue to build on the legacy and priorities that we have put in place, and that when the going gets tough, as it inevitably will for any new



Administration, I hope they won't fall back on the normal position of trying to blame the excellent situation that they have inherited. The exercise of power carries obligation to take responsibility.

Finally, I want to thank my Conservative colleagues for electing me as their new Leader. I have a fantastic team around me, and I am looking forward to working with them over the coming year. We will provide scrutiny and we will provide challenge to the coalition, and we will make the case to residents of this great Borough on why they should return a Conservative administration at the next election.

Finally, I would like to point out that along with the normal Executive Members or Shadow Executive Members that we would have, we have introduced a new post, which is being held by Laura Blumenthal, which will cover levelling up, equality and social housing.

## **15. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The Council considered a report regarding proposed changes to the Constitution, as considered by the Constitution Review Working Group.

It was proposed by Imogen Shepherd-DuBey and seconded by Prue Bray that the recommendations set out within the report be agreed.

Upon being put to the vote it was:

**RESOLVED** That:

- 1) Sections 11 Officers, be amended as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- 2) Section 5.5.1 List of items delegated to Individual Executive Members be amended as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report;
- 3) Section 12.1.16.24 Fees and Charges, be amended as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report.

## **16. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

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

### **16.1 Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey had asked the Executive Member for Highways and Transport a question**

This Member question was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

## **17. POLITICAL BALANCE OF THE COUNCIL AND ALLOCATION AND APPOINTMENT TO SEATS ON COMMITTEES AND BOARDS**

The Council considered a report on the political balance of the Council and the appointment to the Council's Committees and Boards, in accordance with the wishes of the Groups.

It was proposed by Clive Jones and seconded by Stephen Conway that the recommendations in the report be agreed.

Norman Jorgensen questioned the standing of the coalition group and what would happen should the Group dissolve. Members were advised that all 28 Members had formally signed up to join the Wokingham Borough Partnership Group and had met all legal requirements. It was clarified that for the purposes of political balance there were two political groups on the Council. Keith Baker sought confirmation that as far as the Council was concerned there was not a Liberal Democrat Group, or a Labour Group or an Independent Group. It was reiterated that for the purposes of political balance there were two political groups, however individual Councillors were still members of their respective political parties

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

**RESOLVED That:**

- 1) it be noted that the representation of the political groups on the Council, as advised to the Chief Executive, is 28 Wokingham Borough Partnership Group Members and 26 Conservative Group Members;
- 2) the appointment and composition of Committees and Boards as set out in Para 2.1, including the changes to those currently set out in the Constitution, be approved;
- 3) the allocation of seats on Committees and Boards on the basis that, of the 86 seats (as set out in Para 3.4), 48 be allocated to the Wokingham Borough Partnership Group and 38 be allocated to the Conservative Group;
- 4) the proposals submitted by the respective Group Leaders be approved and that those Members be appointed to the Committees and Boards as set out in Appendix 1 to the minutes;
- 5) that the principles of proportionality be applied when Members are appointed to Sub Committees, Panels or Working Groups;
- 6) it be noted that the Constitution states that the Chairman of the Standards Committee will be appointed at Annual Council and agrees that as with all other committees the Chairman will be appointed at the first meeting of the Standards Committee;
- 7) the appointment of the Independent Persons to assist the work of the Standards Committee and the co-opted Parish/Town Council Representatives as set out in Appendix 1, be noted;
- 8) the elected Member representatives on the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board, as set out in Appendix 1, as nominated by the Leader of Council in accordance with Section 194 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, be noted.

**Appendix 1 - Appointment to Committees/Boards**

**18. APPOINTMENTS TO PANELS/WORKING GROUPS, ETC**

Members were asked to refer to a list of nominations to various Panels, Working Groups, Joint Committees, and Various Bodies, as circulated at the meeting as Appendix 2.

Where more nominations had been received than places, individual votes were taken.

Pauline Jorgensen proposed the following amendment which was seconded by Chris Bowring.

“To increase the number of seats on the Constitution Review Working Group from 4 to 5, and thus improve the political balance so that there are 3 Wokingham Borough Partnership Members, and 2 Conservative Members to ensure the Working Group is more reflective of the balance of the Council.”

Gary Cowan suggested that the Constitution Review Working Group consider whether it wished to recommend that it increase in size.

It was clarified that the Constitution Review Working Group was politically balanced for a committee of four and that this was reflected in recommendation 5 of the Political Balance report considered earlier.

The proposer of the report Clive Jones did not accept the amendment.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

Upon being put the vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Members be appointed to the Council's Panels, Working Groups, Joint Committees and Various Bodies, as set out in Appendix 2 to the Minutes.

## **Appendix 2 - Appointment to Panels/Working Groups/Joint Committees and Various Boards**

### **19. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members were asked to refer to a list of nominations to various Outside Bodies, as circulated at the meeting as Appendix 3.

Where more nominations had been received than places, individual votes were taken.

At this point in the meeting 9.26pm, in accordance with Rule 4.2.13.11h) it was proposed by the Mayor and seconded by Pauline Jorgensen that Rule 4.2.8 be suspended to allow the meeting be extended for up to 30 minutes in order to complete the business on the agenda.

Following a vote, this was declared by the Mayor to be carried.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

**RESOLVED:** That Members be appointed to the Outside Bodies, as set out in Appendix 3 to the Minutes.

## **Appendix 3 - Appointments to Outside Bodies**

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### APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

<b>Audit Committee – 7 Seats</b>	
<i>Members of the Executive or Overview and Scrutiny Committees cannot sit on the Audit Committee</i>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (4)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (3)</b>
1 Maria Gee	1 John Kaiser
2 Tahir Maher	2 Peter Harper
3 Mike Smith	3 David Davis
4 Rachel Burgess	

<b>Licensing and Appeals Committee – 13 Seats</b>	
<i>(all members of the Licensing and Appeals Committee will also be members of the School Transport Appeals Panel)</i>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (7)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (6)</b>
1 Peter Dennis	1 Bill Soane
2 Mike Smith	2 Chris Bowring
3 Beth Rowland	3 Michael Firmager
4 Al Neal	4 Jackie Rance
5 Morag Malvern	5 Abdul Loyes
6 Rachel Burgess	6 Shahid Younis
7 Sarah Kerr	

<b>Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee – 11 Seats</b>	
1) <i>Members of the O&amp;S Management Committee cannot sit on the Audit Committee.</i> 2) <i>The O&amp;S Management Committee must include the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the three O&amp;S Committees</i> 3) <i>No Executive Members</i>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (6)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (5)</b>
1 Andrew Mickleburgh	1 Norman Jorgensen
2 Morag Malvern	2 Gregor Murray
3 David Cornish	3 Graham Howe
4 Adrian Mather	4 Alison Swaddle
5 Andy Croy	5 Stuart Munro
6 Jim Frewin	

<b>Substitute Members</b>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (6)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (5)</b>
1 Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey	1 Pauline Jorgensen
2 Chris Johnson	2 Michael Firmager
3 Al Neal	3 Wayne Smith
4 Peter Dennis	4 Bill Soane
5 Gary Cowan	5 Charles Margetts
6 Beth Rowland	

<b>Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 7 Seats</b>	
1) <i>Members of this Committee cannot sit on the Audit Committee.</i>	
2) <i>No Executive Members</i>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (4)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (3)</b>
1 Andrew Mickleburgh	1 Anne Chadwick
2 Morag Malvern	2 Graham Howe
3 Beth Rowland	3 Pauline Helliard-Symons
4 Shirley Boyt	

<b>Substitute Members</b>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (4)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (3)</b>
1 Al Neal	1 Alison Swaddle
2 Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey	2 Rebecca Margetts
3 Gary Cowan	3 Laura Blumenthal
4 Chris Johnson	

<b>Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 9 Seats</b>	
1) <i>Members of this Committee cannot sit on the Audit Committee.</i>	
2) <i>No Executive Members</i>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (5)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (4)</b>
1 David Cornish	1 Norman Jorgensen
2 Peter Dennis	2 Laura Blumenthal
3 Al Neal	3 Pauline Jorgensen
4 Chris Johnson	4 Gregor Murray
5 Shirley Boyt	

<b>Substitute Members</b>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (5)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (4)</b>
1 Adrian Mather	1 Michael Firmager
2 Gary Cowan	2 Anne Chadwick
3 Andy Croy	3 Chris Bowring
4 Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey	4 Abdul Loyes
5 Beth Rowland	

## Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 9 Seats

- 1) *Members of this Committee cannot sit on the Audit Committee.*
- 2) *No Executive Members*

Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (5)	Conservative Group (4)
1 Adrian Mather	1 Phil Cunnington
2 Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey	2 Rebecca Margetts
3 Al Neal	3 Alison Swaddle
4 Beth Rowland	4 Jackie Rance
5 Andy Croy	

## Substitute Members

Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (5)	Conservative Group (4)
1 Morag Malvern	1 Michael Firmager
2 Jim Frewin	2 Pauline Jorgensen
3 Chris Johnson	3 Sam Akhtar
4 David Cornish	4 Shahid Younis
5 Andrew Mickleburgh	

## Personnel Board - 7 Seats

Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (4)	Conservative Group (3)
1 Rachel Bishop-Firth	1 Stuart Munro
2 Clive Jones	2 Pauline Jorgensen
3 Stephen Conway	3 Pauline Helliard-Symons
4 Prue Bray	

## Personnel Board - Substitute Members

*(to substitute for members of the Personnel Board in relation to the appointment or dismissal of or disciplinary action in respect of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> tier Officers)*

Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (8)	Conservative Group (8)
1 Lindsay Ferris	1 Rebecca Margetts
2 Ian Shenton	2 Michael Firmager
3 David Hare	3 Peter Harper
4 Paul Fishwick	4 Dave Davis
5 Sarah Kerr	5 Graham Howe
6 David Cornish	6 Wayne Smith
7 Peter Dennis	7 Bill Soane
8 Imogen Shepherd-Dubey	8 Norman Jorgensen

### Planning Committee – 9 Seats

*All members of the Planning Committee will be members of the Commons Registration Committee.*

Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (5)		Conservative Group (4)	
1	Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey	1	Chris Bowring
2	Andrew Mickleburgh	2	Rebecca Margetts
3	Stephen Conway	3	Wayne Smith
4	David Cornish	4	John Kaiser
5	Gary Cowan		

### Special Council Executive Committee – 7 Seats

*The Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council will automatically be members of this committee. There will therefore need to be five other Members appointed and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor will count against their political party's allocation.*

Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (4)		Conservative Group (3)	
1	Caroline Smith	1	Pauline Jorgensen
2	Beth Rowland	2	Charles Margetts
3	Clive Jones	3	Stuart Munro
4	Stephen Conway		

### Substitute Members

Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (1)		Conservative Group (1)	
1	Prue Bray	1	Gregor Murray

### Standards Committee – 7 Seats

Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (4)		Conservative Group (3)	
1	Morag Malvern	1	John Kaiser
2	Imogen Shepherd-Dubey	2	Graham Howe
3	Adrian Mather	3	Sam Akhtar
4	Chris Johnson		

### Co-opted Membership and Independent Persons

#### Parish/Town Council Representatives

*Non-voting, Co-opted Members*

1	Sally Gurney
2	Roy Mantel
3	Sheena Matthews



<b>Independent Persons</b>	
1	David Comben
2	Paddy Haycocks
3	Nicholas Oxborough

<b>Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board – 4 Seats</b>	
<i>(Political balance rules are not applicable)</i> <i>(Only requires noting as elected Member Representatives are nominated by the Leader of Council)</i>	
<b>Conservative/Partnership Group</b>	<b>Opposition Member</b>
1 Leader of Council	1 Charles Margetts
2 Executive Member for Children's Services	
3 Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing	

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### APPOINTMENT TO PANELS / WORKING GROUPS / JOINT COMMITTEES AND VARIOUS BODIES

Adoption Panel – 1 Member	
Wokingham Borough Partnership Group	Conservative Group
1 David Hare	1

Adopt Thames Valley Regional Adoption Agency Governance Board – 1 Member	
<i>Must be Executive Member with responsibility for Children's Services</i>	
Conservative/Partnership Group	
1	Executive Member for Children's Services

Berkshire Local Transport Body – 1 Member plus substitute	
<i>Must be Executive Member with responsibility for Transport</i>	
Conservative/Partnership Group	
1	Executive Member with responsibility for Transport
Substitute	
Sarah Kerr	

Borough / Parish Liaison Forum – 5 Members	
Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (3)	Conservative Group (2)
1 David Cornish	1 Michael Firmager
2 Mike Smith	2 David Davis
3 Morag Malvern	

Substitutes – 3 Members	
Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (2)	Conservative Group (1)
1 Gary Cowan	1 Bill Soane
2 Beth Rowland	

Community Safety Partnership – 2 Members	
<i>1 Member from Wokingham Borough Partnership Group and 1 Member from Conservative Group</i>	
Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (1)	Conservative Group (1)
1 Ian Shenton	1 Peter Harper

<b>Constitution Review Working Group – 4 Members</b>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (3)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (1)</b>
1 Clive Jones	1 Stuart Munro
2 Imogen Shepherd-Dubey	
3 Prue Bray	

<b>Corporate Parenting Board – 9 Members</b>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (5)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (4)</b>
1 Andrew Mickleburgh	1 Graham Howe
2 Beth Rowland	2 Rebecca Margetts
3 Prue Bray	3 Alison Swaddle
4 David Hare	4 Peter Harper
5 Morag Malvern	

<b>Electoral Review Working Group – 9 Members</b>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (5)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (4)</b>
1 Clive Jones	1 Chris Bowring
2 Stephen Conway	2 Peter Harper
3 Prue Bray	3 Gregor Murray
4 Andy Croy	4 Alison Swaddle
5 Paul Fishwick	

<b>Fostering Panel – 1 Member</b>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group</b>	<b>Conservative Group</b>
1 David Hare	1

<b>Highwood Management Conference – 2 Members</b>	
<i>1 Member from Wokingham Borough Partnership Group and 1 Member from Conservative Group</i>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (1)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (1)</b>
1 Shirley Boyt	1 Laura Blumenthal

<b>Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) – 2 Members</b>  <i>Must not be an Executive Member and should ideally be on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</i>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (1)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (1)</b>
1 Adrian Mather	1 Phil Cunnington

<b>Joint Waste Disposal Board – 2 Members</b> <i>Must be Executive Members</i> <i>Appointment is for four years to 30 June 2026</i>	
<b>Partnership Group</b>	
1 Ian Shenton	
2 Clive Jones	

<b>PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London Adjudication Joint Committee – 1 Member</b> <i>Must be Executive Member with responsibility for Highways</i>	
<b>Partnership Group</b>	
1 Executive Member with responsibility for Highways	

<b>Schools Forum – 1 Member</b> <i>1 representative of the Local Education Authority. Under Regulations the Executive Member with responsibility for Education and the Mayor <b>are not</b> eligible for appointment to the forum. (Note: They may attend as non-voting observers)</i>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group</b>	<b>Conservative Group</b>
1 Morag Malvern	1

<b>Secure Accommodation Panel – 1 Member and Substitutes</b>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group</b>	<b>Conservative Group</b>
1 Prue Bray	1

<b>Substitutes</b> Any Member of the Corporate Parenting Board	
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<b>Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education – 2 Members</b>	
<i>1 Member from Wokingham Borough Partnership Group and 1 Member from Conservative Group</i>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (1)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (1)</b>
1 Adrian Mather	1 Jackie Rance

<b>Tenant and Landlord Improvement Panel – 4 Members</b>	
<i>2 Members from each Political Group</i>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group (2)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (2)</b>
1 Shirley Boyt	1 Laura Blumenthal
2 Stephen Conway	2 Phil Cunningham

<b>Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel – 1 Member</b>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group</b>	<b>Conservative Group</b>
1 Maria Gee	1

<b>Substitute (1)</b>	
1 Chris Johnson	1

<b>Wokingham Learning Disability Partnership Board – 1 Member</b>	
<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Group</b>	<b>Conservative Group</b>
1 David Hare	1

### REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2022/23

1 Member to be appointed on an annual basis unless otherwise stated

Organisation	Wokingham Borough Partnership Nomination	Conservative Nomination
Age Concern Twyford and District	Lindsay Ferris	
Age UK Berkshire	Shirley Boyt	
Atomic Weapons Research Establishment - Local Liaison Committee	Chris Johnson	
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Tahir Maher	
Berkshire Maestros	Sarah Kerr	
Berkshire Museum of Aviation	Andy Croy	
Berkshire Pension Fund Advisory Panel	Maria Gee	
Citizens Advice Wokingham	Rachel Bishop-Firth	
Finchampstead Baptist Church Advisory Board (Member should be a ward member from either Finchampstead North or Finchampstead South)	David Cornish	
Keep Mobile	Andy Croy	
Local Government Association (LGA) General Assembly (4 Members)	1. Clive Jones 2. Stephen Conway 3. Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	1. Pauline Jorgensen
Mid & West Berks Local Countryside Access Forum (Note: appointment is for 3 years until May 2025)		Wayne Smith

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Wokingham Borough Partnership Nomination</b>	<b>Conservative Nomination</b>
Readibus Management Committee	Mike Smith	
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (4 Members) (Note: appointments must be in accordance with the Council's political balance)	1. Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey 2. Mike Smith 3. Morag Malvern	1. Pauline Helliars-Symons
Royal Berkshire Hospital Foundation Trust - Board of Governors	Adrian Mather	
Sonning & District Welfare and Educational Trust		Michael Firmager
South East Employers (SEE) Full Committee (2 Members, 2 Substitutes)	1. Clive Jones 2. David Cornish	1. 2.
<i>Substitutes</i>	1. Imogen Shepherd-DuBey 2. Ian Shenton	1. 2.
South East Reserve Forces and Cadets Association ( <i>and Armed Forces Champion</i> )	Andy Croy	
Standing Conference on Archives	Stephen Conway	
Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association (SASIG)		Charles Margetts
Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership (1 Member, 1 Substitute)	David Cornish	
<i>Substitute</i>	Ian Shenton	
The Piggott Trust	Lindsay Ferris	



Organisation	Wokingham Borough Partnership Nomination	Conservative Nomination
The Polehampton Charity	Stephen Conway	
The Poors Land Charity (Note: appointment is for 4 years)	<b>For Information only: Abdul Loyes appointed until May 2023</b>	
White Waltham Airfield Consultative Committee		Wayne Smith
Wokingham and District Association for the Elderly ( <i>observer only</i> )	Beth Rowland	
Wokingham Borough Sports Council	Ian Shenton	
Wokingham Borough Sports Sponsorship Fund	Ian Shenton	
Wokingham Job Support Centre Management Committee	Andy Croy	
Wokingham Volunteer Centre	Rachel Burgess	
Wokingham Waterside Centre	Shirley Boyt	
Wokingham Youth Counselling & Information Service (ARC)	Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	
Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative (2 Members, 1 Substitute)	1. Shirley Boyt 2. Andy Croy	1. 2.
Substitute	Beth Rowland	
Woodley Volunteer Centre	Beth Rowland	

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF  
THE COUNCIL  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 22 JUNE 2022 FROM 7.30 PM TO 8.15 PM**

**Members Present**

Councillors: Caroline Smith (Mayor), Beth Rowland (Deputy Mayor), Sam Akhtar, Keith Baker, Rachel Bishop-Firth, Laura Blumenthal, Chris Bowring, Shirley Boyt, Prue Bray, Rachel Burgess, Stephen Conway, Gary Cowan, Andy Croy, David Davies, Peter Dennis, Lindsay Ferris, Michael Firmager, Paul Fishwick, Jim Frewin, Maria Gee, John Halsall, David Hare, Peter Harper, Pauline Helliars-Symons, Graham Howe, Chris Johnson, Clive Jones, Norman Jorgensen, Pauline Jorgensen, Sarah Kerr, Abdul Loyes, Tahir Maher, Morag Malvern, Charles Margetts, Rebecca Margetts, Adrian Mather, Andrew Mickleburgh, Stuart Munro, Gregor Murray, Alistair Neal, Jackie Rance, Ian Shenton, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Mike Smith, Wayne Smith, Bill Soane, Alison Swaddle and Shahid Younis

**20. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Parry Batth, Anne Chadwick, David Cornish, Phil Cunningham and John Kaiser.

**21. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**22. Public Question Time**

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

**22.1 Tony Johnson asked the Leader of the Council the following question which was answered by the Executive Member for Finance:**

**Question**

In the calculations for the costs of running elections, the standard "How Much will it cost / save" statement on the attached papers is zero for Years 1 - 3, yet in Appendix A there's a cost of just over £4 million allocated to "Disruption".

Please can you help the public understand exactly how the £2.032 million cost per year figure has been arrived at?

**Answer**

I think you are referring to this table here? None of these things that we are talking about tonight are going to happen in the current financial year, the next financial year or the following financial year. So how much it will cost/save, the answer is indeed zero for those.

In answer to your question about how did we get to the £2.032 million, all I can say is that how did we get there? The number that was calculated as a tangible saving

from three elections over a four year period versus one every four years, which is £316,000. This equates to £79,000 per year. The figure includes such things as the cost of staffing and the facilities needed to run events, including polling stations and printing costs. However, there is an estimate of a less tangible cost at £1million per year. This is the approximate cost of the opportunity of the Council not moving forwards with the Council's overall business as a result of disruption caused by having annual elections. I am informed that the less tangible costs were made from a high-level estimate made in consultation with the Council's Corporate Leadership Team. It is an estimation of the impact on Council business that is not taken forward as a result of the focus on Elections in the months building up to them, including the period know as Purdah, and similarly the focus after the elections formulating and orientating the new Administration of Councillors. This figure should be taken in the context that it is only 0.2% of the Council's annual size of business and that it is only an opportunity cost and therefore it actually does not translate into real cash. We also need to respect that the Council is not a commercial business and lots of its functions are not done for financial gain. It is here to serve the needs of our residents and must remain fully accountable to the public that it serves. Therefore, we cannot accept financial savings as being the only motivator to change our current system.

So, for clarity, the amount per year of tangible combined with less tangible costs, is just over £1 million not £2.032 million per year.

**Supplementary Question:**

Thank you for providing the answer to my question on behalf of the Council. You use the words 'estimate' and 'not real' as well as 'tangible', so my question comes almost in two parts based on those two items.

On the one hand if it is real then why did the Council not put in place an improvement programme to save that circa £1 million a year over the last 20 years under Conservative administration? If on the other hand it is a mathematical inexactitude, then why is it along with any other inexactitude sent to Members but not the public around 8.30am yesterday morning? Why was it released for this debate under a Liberal Democrat led administration?

**Supplementary Answer:**

I am assuming that you are referring to the report that was sent to Councillors and not publicly available? I am afraid I am not sure I really have an answer for that one because I think you are referring to something which is not in the public realm. Maybe that is the question. We can give you a written answer.

**23. Electoral Cycle Decision**

The Council considered a report regarding the Electoral Cycle.

The Mayor reminded Members that in order for the recommendation to be agreed, it required two thirds of those Members present at the meeting, to vote in favour.

The report was proposed by Clive Jones and seconded by Stephen Conway.

Clive Jones commented that the meeting marked the end of the process of considering whether the Council wished to move from elections by thirds to all out elections, every four years, which had begun prior to the Election. He found himself in the unusual position of proposing a recommendation which he would be voting against. Clive Jones felt that that elections by thirds provided a greater level of accountability, reduced the possibility of wholesale changes and losing a lot of experience at the same time, and gave the electorate more involvement in decision making. He was of the view that all out elections disadvantaged smaller parties and independent candidates, and highlighted that retaining elections by thirds required all wards to be of the same size with three ward Members.

Andy Croy disagreed with the proposal to move to all out elections. He highlighted the importance of moving to larger wards, which he believed created greater equity.

Keith Baker commented that 3,067 responses had been received to the consultation, only 1.08% of the Borough's population. In addition, the results had been close. He referred to the number of comments made under each option. He was of the view that cost should not be an influencer on how democracy was run. Keith Baker believed that whilst Wokingham was only one of sixteen unitary councils which elected by thirds it was important to do what was right for residents and that elections every four years weakened democratic accountability.

Prue Bray expressed concerns around the consultation and many people's understanding of it when responding. She emphasised that four yearly elections tended to favour larger parties and highlighted some of the benefits of retaining elections by thirds.

Gregor Murray felt that the consultation response highlighted that residents wanted to move to all out elections, and that this should not be ignored. He emphasised that all residents had been given the opportunity to respond to the consultation.

Gary Cowan commented that research into the benefits of the different electoral cycles was limited and that which did exist was from some time ago. He disagreed that there was confusion amongst younger voters and those of black and ethnic minorities around the voting systems.

John Halsall emphasised that the Council could not continue with its current system. He commented that it was more difficult for Councillors to be known by their residents within a larger ward and that they should be local champions. He believed that moving to all out elections was in residents' best interests and would save money.

Rachel Burgess felt that moving to all out elections would erode democracy and accountability. She was of the view that the consultation material and consultation process had been flawed.

At this point in the meeting, 8.01pm, Prue Bray proposed that in accordance with Rule 4.2.12n) the time limit for the item (as set out in 4.2.2.1) be extended by 30 minutes to enable all those who wished to speak to the item to do so. This was seconded by Stephen Conway. Upon being put to the vote the proposal was

agreed.

Pauline Jorgensen commented that the situation was finely balanced with arguments on both sides. Whilst she personally liked elections by thirds and single Ward Members this was no longer an option. Residents had responded to the consultation and indicated that they wished to move to all out elections. With regards to the consultation material, Pauline Jorgensen emphasised that the wording of the consultation had been produced by the Monitoring Officer.

Pauline Helliard-Symons was of the view that moving to all out elections would save a considerable amount of money which could be spent on other valuable services. Within her ward, Oaklands Schools had to close each time there was an election in order to be a polling station, which was very disruptive to children and their families.

Stephen Conway stated that consultations did not confer the same democratic mandates as elections did and that consultations helped Councillors to make an informed, rounded judgement. With regards to the cost of the current system, identified by the Chief Financial Officer, many were intangible, mainly representing staff time, which would not constitute a cash saving should a change be made to the system. The tangible saving estimated between 2024-27 of £316,000, represented an annual saving of £79,000.

In accordance with Rule 4.2.15.5, a recorded vote was requested. Voting was as follows.

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>	<b>ABSTAIN</b>
Sam Akhtar	Keith Baker	
Laura Blumenthal	Rachel Bishop-Firth	
Chris Bowring	Shirley Boyt	
David Davies	Prue Bray	
Michael Firmager	Rachel Burgess	
John Halsall	Stephen Conway	
Peter Harper	Gary Cowan	
Pauline Helliard- Symons	Andy Croy	
Graham Howe	Peter Dennis	
Pauline Jorgensen	Lindsay Ferris	
Norman Jorgensen	Paul Fishwick	
Abdul Loyes	Jim Frewin	
Charles Margetts	Maria Gee	
Rebecca Margetts	David Hare	
Stuart Munro	Chris Johnson	
Gregor Murray	Clive Jones	
Jackie Rance	Sarah Kerr	
Wayne Smith	Tahir Maher	
Bill Soane	Morag Malvern	
Alison Swaddle	Adrian Mather	
Shahid Younis	Andrew Mickleburgh	
	Alistair Neal	
	Beth Rowland	

	Ian Shenton	
	Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	
	Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	
	Caroline Smith	
	Mike Smith	

**RESOLVED:** That the proposed change to the electoral cycle to all out elections every four years from 2024, be not progressed.

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<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Annual Pay Policy Statement 2022-23</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Council on 22 July 2022
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Barbara Batchelor, HR Service Excellence Lead

**OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Compliance with s38 of the Localism Act 2011.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approve the Annual Pay Policy Statement for 2022-23, as recommended by Personnel Board.

**SUMMARY OF REPORT**

Pay Policy Statement

Under sections 38 to 43 of the Localism Act 2011 we are required to prepare, approve by Full Council and publish on the Council's website a pay policy statement each financial year.

The Pay Policy Statement enables residents to understand the Council's pay policy for senior staff and how it relates to the salaries of the lowest paid. It provides transparency and enables residents to assess whether salaries paid represent value for money

The Annual Pay Policy Statement is for your review and approval and reflects the Council's pay arrangements as at 1 April 2022.

## Background

**The Localism Act (2011)** brings together strands of increasing accountability, transparency and fairness in the setting of local pay and requires authorities to produce a pay policy statement for each financial year.

The statement should include the:

- policy on the level and elements of remuneration for each chief officer
- policy on the remuneration of its lowest paid
- policy on the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and other officers
- policy on other specific aspects of chief officers' remuneration: remuneration on recruitment, increases and additions to remuneration, use of performance-related pay and bonuses, termination payments and transparency.

The Hutton Review of Fair Pay in the public sector, published in March 2011, made several recommendations for promoting pay fairness in the public sector by tackling disparities between the lowest and highest paid in the public sector. The review recommended that the public sector should publish, track and explain their pay multiples over time.

The relationship between the remuneration of the chief officers and other officers is expressed as a pay ratio, or pay multiple, of X:1. The Council is required to report on the relationship between the highest paid individual and the lowest paid and on the relationship between the highest paid individual and the median for all employees. A ratio of 8:1 would mean that the highest paid individual earns 8 times more than the lowest paid individual. The larger the number, the greater the disparity between the highest and lowest paid individuals. If all salaries are ranked in order from the highest to the lowest, the median salary is the midway point. Excludes Casuals, Agency, Consultants/Supplier, Kickstart placements and Students.

Ratio	2021	2022
Highest:Lowest	8.1 : 1	8.1 : 1
Highest: Median	4.8 : 1	4.7 : 1

A new baseline of data was established last year, so it is not possible to include comparisons with previous years. There are no significant differences in the pay ratio data from 2021 to 2022.

The Hutton Review issued revised implementation guidance in 2021 regarding fair pay disclosures, which requires the disclosure by public sector entities of top to median, lower quartile and upper quartile staff pay multiples (ratios) and to monitor them over time. The table at 5.4.1 of the Pay Policy statement shows the relationship between the highest paid individual to the person on the lower quartile (25<sup>th</sup> percentile) of the Council's pay range, the median (middle), and the person on the upper quartile (75<sup>th</sup> percentile) of the Council's pay range. Quartiles and percentiles are calculated by arranging all the employees in order from the lowest to the highest paid and dividing into 4 equal groups for quartiles, or 100 for percentiles. This is the first year that this data has been reported in the Pay Policy Statement.

## Conclusion

Members are requested to approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 as attached at Appendix A.

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

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

None

#### Cross-Council Implications

None

#### Public Sector Equality Duty

Not required as this is a statutory report on current data.

#### List of Background Papers

Attachment 1 – Pay Policy Statement 2022-23

<b>Contact</b> Barbara Batchelor	<b>Service</b> Human Resources
<b>Telephone No</b>	<b>Email</b> <a href="mailto:Barbara.batchelor@wokingham.gov.uk">Barbara.batchelor@wokingham.gov.uk</a>

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# Pay Policy Statement 2022

## Purpose

This document covers the requirements to publish a pay policy statement under s38 of the Localism Act 2011.

Version	Date	Description
1	01/04/12	Annual Review
2	01/09/15	Updated to comply with regulations.
3	01/07/16	Updated to comply with regulations.
4	01/07/17	Updated to comply with regulations.
5	01/06/18	Updated to comply with regulations
6	01/05/19	Updated to comply with regulations
7	04/05/20	Updated to comply with regulations
8	04/05/21	Updated to comply with regulations
9	01/03/22	Updated to comply with regulations & pay award

Document Approvals	
Author:	Claire Eckett, Pay & Reward Specialist Consultant
Approval:	Corporate Leadership Team Personnel Board Full Council

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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This pay policy statement for the financial year 2022/2023 meets the statutory duty under sections 38 to 43 of the Localism Act 2011, to provide information on remuneration arrangements for staff directly employed by the Council, for approval by full council (as a Part 1 item) and to publish on the Council's website.
- 1.2 We may amend this statement during the financial year in which it is effective; however, any change must be approved by full Council. Any amended statement will be published on our website as soon as is reasonably practicable following the meeting.
- 1.3 In drawing up this statement, we have taken into consideration the guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government in February 2012 and the supplementary guidance issued in February 2013.
- 1.4 This statement does not include staff based in our schools as this is outside the scope of the legislation.
- 1.5 Wokingham Borough Council fully endorses and supports the requirement to be open and transparent about the pay of our employees.
- 1.6 This statement was approved by Full Council on (insert date).

## 2. Definitions used in this document

This statement sets out the Council's policy with regard to:

- the remuneration of "chief officers"
- the remuneration of the lowest paid employees
- the relationship between chief officers' remuneration and that of other officers

- 2.1 Under the current structure of the Council, the following posts in the top three tiers of the organisation are included in the definition of 'Chief Officer':

- (a) Chief Executive (Head of the Authority's Paid Service)
- (b) Deputy Chief Executive and Director, Resources & Assets (S151 Officer)
- (c) Director, Adult Social Care & Health
- (d) Director, Children's Services
- (e) Director, Place & Growth
- (f) Assistant Director, Human Resources (part of Chief Executive's Office)
- (g) Assistant Director, Digital & Change (part of Chief Executive's Office)
- (h) persons who, as respects all or most of their duties, report directly to or are directly accountable to the Head of the Council's Paid Service
- (i) persons who, as respects all or most of their duties, report directly to or are accountable to the posts listed in (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) above (other than staff whose duties are of a clerical or support nature).

The senior management structure of the organisation can be found on the Council's website [Senior council staff - Wokingham Borough Council](#) and in section 1 of the Council's Constitution [Constitution - Wokingham Borough Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#).

- 2.2 This policy does not cover the remuneration of other ‘workers’ employed by the Council, as employees of agencies or as self-employed consultants.
- 2.3 The highest paid employee is the Chief Executive (head of paid service) with a basic salary of £156,437 per annum (full-time).
- 2.4 The Council defines its lowest paid employee as an employee who is paid on the lowest level of pay for staff on non-casual or apprenticeship contracts of employment. The salary is £19,308 per annum full-time (37 hours per week) or £10.01 per hour.
- 2.5 Median salary is £33,486 (full-time equivalent). This is a measure of the ‘average’ salary for employees in the Council. It is defined as the ‘midpoint’ salary, such that there is an equal probability of falling above or below it.
- 2.6 Mean salary is £35,579.43 (full-time equivalent). This is an alternative measure of the ‘average’ salary for employees in the Council. The arithmetic mean is defined as the sum of all the salaries divided by the number of salaries.

### 3. Pay Policy from April 2022

#### 3.1 Policy on level and elements of remuneration for Chief Officers

3.1.1 The Council benchmarks its pay rates against relevant comparator groups. For Chief Officers the Council pays “spot salaries” (i.e. no incremental range) and seeks to position itself appropriately in the market in terms of pay.

3.1.2 The spot salaries are: Deputy Chief Executive £127,652 and Directors £117,531.

Their salary is increased by nationally negotiated increases agreed by the:

- Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Executives and
- Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Officers

Terms and conditions agreed nationally by these bodies are also applied, with local variations as appropriate.

3.1.3 There is a performance related pay (‘PRP’) scheme for Chief Officers, excluding the Chief Executive Officer, which pays up to 10% of salary against the achievement of targets. The bonus does not form part of base pay and is not pensionable. The performance of the Chief Officers is reviewed annually by the Chief Executive with involvement from the Lead Member to assess the extent to which objectives have been met and to determine the level of PRP to be paid.

3.1.4 Chief Officers receive the same level of employer’s pension contribution as all other employees.

3.1.5 Salary upon appointment will be made in line with 3.1.1



3.1.6 In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 and the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency, we publish annually the remuneration of our senior staff on our [website](#).

### 3.2 Policy on level and elements of remuneration for Senior Managers

3.2.1 Assistant Directors report to either the Chief Executive or a Director and are paid in the range £73,110 to £87,011.

3.2.2 The Returning Officer is an officer of the Borough Council who is appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983. The Assistant Director Governance performs the role of the Council's Returning Officer. Whilst appointed by the Borough Council, the role of the Returning Officer is one which involves and incurs personal responsibility and accountability and is statutorily separate from their duties as an employee of the Borough Council. As Returning Officer, they are paid a separate allowance for each election linked to duties undertaken for running national, or local elections/referenda. Payment arrangements for the local returning officer are in line with a formula operated by the Government for determining fees to all Returning Officers across the country.

3.2.3 All other terms and conditions are in line with all other employees and described in 3.3 onwards.

### 3.3 All other employees

3.3.1 The Council applies the national pay agreements reached by the:

- National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services
- National Joint Council (NJC) for Youth & Community Services
- Soulbury Committee

3.3.2 All jobs below Director (excluding those covered by national Youth & Community and national teaching related Soulbury grades) are subject to job evaluation to determine the appropriate grade.

### 3.4 Salary on appointment

3.4.1 Appointments will normally be made to the minimum point of the grade. Managers may consider the previous experience and skills of the employee to offer appointment above the salary minimum for the post.

### 3.5 Incremental progression

3.5.1 Each of the grades has a series of incremental steps. Colleagues progress by one spinal column point each year until they reach the maximum for their grade, which reflects the acquisition of skill, knowledge and expertise that comes with experience. Increments can be withheld in the event of unsatisfactory performance.

3.5.2 Progression by more than one increment, up to the maximum of the grade, can be made in acknowledgement of exceptional performance.

### 3.6 Additional payments – all employees

- 3.6.1 The Council will consider the use of market supplements to be applied to specific posts in the event of recruitment and /or retention difficulties. Where such supplements are introduced, they will be applied, reviewed and withdrawn in accordance with the Council's policy.
- 3.6.2 Additional payment may be made for additional hours, overtime, undertaking higher responsibilities, and for non-standard working arrangements such as stand-by, evening or weekend working, shift working, or for exceptional working conditions.
- 3.6.3 All employees can claim for qualifying payments under our travel and expense policy.

## 4. Policies on redundancy and pension enhancement

- 4.1 Our Policies and Procedures for Organisational Change, Retirement and Employer Discretions outline how we will approach redundancy including redundancy pay.
- 4.2 We calculate redundancy pay using the individual's actual weekly salary.
- 4.3 We do not enhance the number of statutory week's redundancy pay an individual is entitled to under the Employment Rights Act 1996.
- 4.4 The Local Government Pension Scheme contains provision for employers to enhance pension payments. Employers are required to determine how they will use these discretionary provisions. We have determined generally not to use our discretion to enhance pension payments by either additional years or additional pension.
- 4.5 In certain circumstances, eligible employees may request early retirement or flexible retirement. (Flexible retirement gives access to accrued pension, whilst allowing the scheme member to continue working). In both these cases, there must be sufficient financial or other benefit to the Council for such retirements to be approved and if there is a cost associated with the request, approval sought from the Personnel Board.

## 5. Pay ratios in the Council

- 5.1 The pay ratio, or pay multiple, is used to express the relationship between the remuneration of the chief officer/highest paid employee and that of other employees. The ratio between the highest paid employee, the Chief Executive, and the lowest paid employee is 8.1:1. The ratio between the highest paid employee and the median pay of all employees is 4.7:1.
- 5.2 This is based on the following salary packages:
- Highest paid (Chief Executive) = £156,437
  - Lowest paid (Grade 2 SCP 4) = £19,308
  - Median (average) = £33,486
- 5.3 The Hutton Review of Fair Pay in the public sector, published in March 2011, did not recommend a defined pay multiple, but instead recommended that the public sector should publish, track and explain their pay multiples over time. A new baseline of data was established last year, so it is not

possible to include comparisons with previous years. The table below compares the ratios for 2022 with those published for the previous year.

Ratio	2021	2022
Highest:Lowest	8.1 : 1	8.1 : 1
Highest: Median	4.8 : 1	4.7 : 1

There has been no significant change to the pay ratios since 2021.

**5.4** Revised implementation guidance regarding fair pay disclosures issued in 2021 requires the disclosure by public sector entities of top to median, lower quartile and upper quartile staff pay multiples (ratios) and to monitor them over time. In addition, for financial years 2021-22 onwards, there is also a requirement to publish:

- The percentage changes in the highest paid director's salary and allowances and performance pay and bonuses payable.
- For employees of the entity taken as a whole, the average percentage changes from the previous financial year of salary and allowances and performance pay and bonuses payable.

5.4.1 The pay ratios are as follows:

Year	Lower Quartile (25 <sup>th</sup> percentile)	Median (50 <sup>th</sup> percentile)	Upper Quartile (75 <sup>th</sup> percentile)
2022/23	6.3 : 1	4.7 : 1	3.7 : 1

This is based on the following salary packages:

- Employee on 25<sup>th</sup> percentile: salary £24,920
- Employee on 50<sup>th</sup> percentile: salary £33,486
- Employee on 75<sup>th</sup> percentile: salary £42,614

5.4.2 The Chief Executive's salary has increased in line with the nationally negotiated increases for 2020 (2.75%) and 2021 (1.5%).

5.4.3 Salaries for employees of the entity taken as a whole have increased by 5.77% over the past 12 months. The increase is due to a combination of:

- National pay agreement of 1.75% effective from 1 April 2021
- Incremental progression within grades
- New starters and leavers throughout the year
- Organisational Structural Changes

## 6. Review

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed at least annually and more frequently, if necessary, to respond to any changes.
- 6.2 The Personnel Board is responsible for recommending the policy statement for approval.

## 7. Other relevant Council documents

### **Policies & Procedures relating to:**

- Travel Expenses
- Retirement
- Honoraria
- Market Supplements
- Overtime
- Pension's discretions
- Organisational Change

### **Pay Scales relating to:**

- National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services
- National Joint Council (NJC) for Youth & Community Services
- Soulbury Committee



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Audit Committee Annual Report  
2021/22**

## **1. ROLE OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

The Audit Committee is required to provide to those charged with governance, independent assurance on the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting and annual governance processes, in place. In addition, the Committee monitors the implementation of the Councils' complaints process.

The effectiveness of the Committee was considered earlier in the year. This annual report forms an important assessment of the added value that the Committee has brought to the Council through its work in 2021/22 which is set out below.

### **(a) Internal and External Audit**

#### ***Internal Audit and Investigations***

The Audit Committee monitors the Council's internal controls and governance arrangements. In the previous municipal year, it had been agreed that the Shared Internal Audit and Investigation Service would move to a quarterly planning cycle rather than an annual one, due to the pressures of the pandemic. The Committee received the Quarter 2 work programme in July. The Committee received the internal audit work programme for the full year and progress made to September 2021, in September 2021, as work arrangements began to normalise once more.

The Committee considered the 2021/22 Internal Audit and Investigation Work Programme update to 31 October 2021, at its November meeting. Members noted that a number of audits of key corporate risks, including the Council's Governance Arrangements, were being undertaken.

#### ***External Audit***

Members were updated and asked questions about the work of the Council's external auditors, Ernst & Young, throughout the year.

### **(b) Risk Management**

The Committee has continued to review the Corporate Risk Register at each Committee meeting as part of its role in monitoring the Council's risk management arrangements. Directors were invited to highlight the corporate risks which were specific to their area and what measures were being put in place to mitigate against these risks. Members considered and challenged how individual risks were being managed and mitigated against and suggested where they felt improvements could be made.

Going forwards the Committee will continue to invite the Directors to future meetings to update on the risks in their areas, to enable the Committee to best understand the Council's approach to risk management. It will review the Council's Risk Management Guidance and Policy in the near future.

**(c) Statement of Accounts**

The Audit Committee is required to approve the annual Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 on behalf of the Council. The draft Statement of Accounts will be considered at an extraordinary meeting in March 2022. The Committee agreed to defer the agreement of the Statement of Accounts until issues relating to Pensions and infrastructure assets, both matters currently beyond the Council's sphere of control, had been resolved.

Officers have kept the Committee up-to-date on the progress of the Statement of Accounts. Members considered if the appropriate accounting policies have been followed and if they had concerns arising from the audit or the financial statements which Full Council should be informed of.

**(d) Corporate Governance**

Reviewing the Council's arrangements for corporate government and considering any required actions to ensure compliance with best practice, is a key function of the Audit Committee.

At an extraordinary meeting in March 2022, the Committee will consider an update on the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement, as part of its consideration of the Statement of Accounts. Members will consider any improvements and exceptions identified during the process and determine if they are satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement reflects the Council's risk environment and any necessary actions required to improve it.

**(e) Treasury Management**

In September 2021, the Committee considered the Treasury Management outturn report 2020-21, which detailed the Council's treasury management operations during the 2020/21 financial year and highlighted the balances at the year end. Members sought further clarification around various elements including adhering to the prudential indicators, the internal funded borrowing move between the Mid-Year and the Outturn report, and asset valuation.

In November 2021, the Committee considered received the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2021-22 and recommended to Full Council for approval. The Mid Year report was at the 30 September 2021 and gave a summary of where the Council was with its Prudential Indicators and the likely outturn at the end of the financial year in terms of level of debt, level of borrowing, and the return on investments. Members asked questions on and sought clarification on issues including revaluation losses, and losses on sales and capital expenditure.

In February 2022 the Committee considered and recommended the Treasury Management Strategy 2022-25, to Council.

**(f) Council's Corporate Complaints process**

The Committee received the 2020-21 annual report on corporate complaints and compliments, at its meeting in July 2021.

**(g) Self-Assessment – review of the effectiveness of the Audit Committee**

In September 2021, the Committee undertook a self-assessment against CIPFA's best practice which provided detailed guidance on the features of an effective local authority audit committee. The Committee found substantial evidence of compliance against best practice but identified five areas for further development – this included the appointment of an independent member to the Committee which is recommended to full Council in March 2022.

**2. FORWARD LOOK**

Early in the new municipal year, the Committee plans to undertake a review of its training and development needs as part of the self-assessment referred to above. This will provide a roadmap for further development and improvement.





**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Standards Committee**

**Annual Report**

**2021/22**

Submitted to the Council – July 2022

## **Introduction by John Kaiser, Chairman of the Standards Committee**

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Standards Committee for 2021/22.

The main aim of the Standards Committee is to promote and maintain the highest standards of conduct by elected Members representing the Borough, Town and Parish Councils. Local government impacts the lives of residents every day, providing essential services to those it serves. High standards are required in order to demonstrate that key decisions are taken in the public interest and to maintain public confidence.

Members' conduct should be underpinned by the seven principles of public life, also known as the Nolan Principles - selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

The Standards Committee met four times during the year and focussed on ensuring that the Borough Council's policies, as set out in the Members' Code of Conduct, were up-to-date, understood and underpinned by best practice. The Committee considered the updated Model Councillor Code of Conduct produced by the Local Government Association and recommended its adoption with some local variations.

The Committee also considered an independent review of the Council's arrangements for handling Code of Conduct complaints. The review concluded that the Council's procedures were broadly in line with good practice and made some recommendations for improvement which were accepted by the Committee.

Bearing in mind the significant challenges facing the Borough, Town and Parish Councils over the year, I am pleased to report that the level of Code of Conduct complaint activity in 2021/22 remained at a relatively low level compared to previous years.

Finally, I would like to record my thanks to the Borough, Town and Parish Members, Officers and Independent Persons who contributed to the work of the Committee during the year. I would also add a welcome to Councillor Sheena Matthews who filled the vacancy for a Town/Parish Council representative on the Committee.

**John Kaiser  
March 2022**

## 1.0 What does the Standards Committee Do?

The role of the Standards Committee is to promote, monitor and enforce probity and ethical standards amongst elected Members within the Wokingham Borough, including Town and Parish Councillors. The Localism Act 2011 removed the requirement for a national code of conduct and statutory Standards Committees. The Act introduced a locally focussed “light touch” framework for the adoption of a Member Code of Conduct, and processes for the receipt and consideration of complaints. Although not obliged to do so under the terms of the Localism Act, Wokingham Borough Council decided to maintain a dedicated Standards Committee.

In addition to maintaining an overview of Code of Conduct complaints against Wokingham Borough Council Members, the Committee is also responsible for overseeing complaints against Town and Parish Councillors. The Committee discharges this duty through regular consideration of update reports from the Monitoring Officer who is responsible for deciding on and dealing with complaints, except for those which are required to be referred to a Hearing Panel of the Standards Committee. If the complaints process determines that a Town/Parish Councillor is in breach of the Code of Conduct, recommendations will be submitted to the relevant Town/Parish Council as to the appropriate sanction. However it is for the Town/Parish Council to decide what action is to be taken.

### Role and Functions

The Standards Committee has the following role and functions:

- a) promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by Councillors, co-opted members, including church and parent governor representatives;
- b) assisting the Councillors, co-opted members, including church and parent governor representatives, to observe the Members’ Code of Conduct;
- c) advising the Council on the adoption or revision of its Members’ Code of Conduct;
- d) monitoring the operation of the Members’ Code of Conduct, the Officers’ Code of Conduct and the Council’s Whistleblowing policy and any other appropriate codes of conduct and procedures;
- e) advising, training or arranging to train Councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives on matters relating to the Members’ Code of Conduct;
- f) the exercise of (a) to (e) above in relation to the Parish/Town Councils wholly or mainly in its area and the members of those Parish/Town Councils;
- g) the presentation of an annual report by the Chairman of the Standards Committee to Council.

## 2.0 The Nolan Principles of Public Life

As mentioned earlier, elected Members should seek to carry out their duties in line with a set of principles known as the Nolan Principles. In 1994, Prime Minister John Major established the Committee on Standards in Public Life, chaired by Lord

Nolan. The Committee's first report established a set of seven guiding principles for conduct in public life.

The Principles of Public Life apply to anyone elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and everyone appointed to work in local government, the Civil Service, police, courts and probation service, etc. All public office-holders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources.

The seven Nolan Principles are:

**Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

**Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

**Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

**Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

**Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

**Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

**Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Building on the Nolan Principles, the Local Government Association (LGA) has developed the following general principles specifically for the role of councillor:

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person

- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

### 3.0 **Who Sits on the Standards Committee?**

The Committee is made up of seven Wokingham Borough Council Members. These Members are voting members of the Committee and are appointed on the basis of political proportionality. An elected Member from Wokingham Borough Council chairs the Committee. The Committee also includes three, non-voting, Town and Parish Council representatives. The 2021/22 membership of the Committee was:

#### **Wokingham Borough Council Representatives:**

- John Kaiser (Chairman)
- Prue Bray
- Abdul Loyes
- Jackie Rance
- Daniel Sargeant (Vice-Chairman)
- Imogen Shepherd-Dubey
- Caroline Smith

#### **Town and Parish Council Representatives**

- Sally Gurney (Wokingham Town Council)
- Roy Mantel (Twyford Parish Council)
- Sheena Matthews (Earley Town Council) – from January 2022

### 4.0 **Independent Persons**

Under the terms of the Localism Act 2011, Wokingham Borough Council is required to appoint an Independent Person (a member of the public, not a Council Officer or elected Member) whose views must be sought before a Hearing Panel of the Standards Committee takes a decision on an allegation.

The Independent Person's views may also be sought on an allegation prior to that stage. In addition, a Member who is subject of an allegation may seek the views of an Independent Person. Three people are currently acting in the Independent Person role:

- David Comben
- Paddy Haycocks
- Nick Oxborough

An Independent Person cannot sit as a member of the Standards Committee, but may attend meetings with the same rights as a member of the public.

### 5.0 **Who Supports the Standards Committee?**

The Committee is supported by:

- Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director, Governance and Monitoring Officer;
- Jennifer Lee, Senior Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer;
- Neil Carr, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist.

## 6.0 Standards Committee Activity in 2021/22

During the 2021/22 Municipal Year seven Code of Conduct complaints were received. The Standards Committee considered an update report on the complaints and investigations at each of its meetings. The complaints related to:

- conduct of an elected Member during a Council meeting;
- conduct of two elected Members relating to a planning matter;
- conduct of an elected Member during a Planning Committee meeting;
- two separate social media posts which allegedly breached the Code of Conduct;
- conduct of an elected Member during a private meeting;
- alleged inappropriate use of information for personal gain.

The complaints were considered initially by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Standards Committee and the Independent Person. In order to improve transparency, the Committee agreed previously that, in cases where no action was taken, the complainant and other interested parties would receive a more detailed explanation of the reasoning behind the decision.

A Standards Hearing Panel also met during the year to consider a complaint against a Town Councillor in relation to comments printed in a local newspaper. The Hearing Panel concluded that the Councillor had not breached the Code of Conduct.

It is worth reiterating that the number of complaints received should be seen in the context of there being 54 Borough Council Members and over 200 elected Members of Town and Parish Councils across the Borough. Whilst recognising that the level of complaint activity in 2021/22 was relatively low, the Committee continues to recognise the importance of dealing with every complaint seriously and expeditiously. It is also worth noting that the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in new types of complaint, including the alleged failure to maintain social distancing in line with the Government guidance. The pandemic also resulted in much more activity taking place on line, which changed the dynamic between elected Members, their Councils and their constituents.

## 7.0 LGA Model Code of Conduct

In December 2020, the Local Government Association (LGA) published a model Councillor Code of Conduct (the Model Code).

All councils are required to adopt a local Councillor Code of Conduct and the Model Code is provided for use by councils as a template to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments should they wish to. It is the role of the Standards Committee to determine whether to recommend the Model Code, amended or otherwise, to Full Council for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.

The Standards Committee considered the Model Code at its meeting on 8 March 2021 and agreed to recommend the Code to Council, subject to some local variations including the addition, as an appendix, of guidance on the use of social media. Council subsequently agreed to adopt the LGA Model Code with variations proposed by the Standards Committee.

## 8.0 Review of Policies and Procedures

An independent review of the Council's policies and procedures by Paul Hoey Associates found that they were broadly in line with best practice. However, a number of areas for improvement were identified including:

- The process for considering Code of Conduct Complaints – this detailed process document was available online but not on the WBC website.
- Receipt and acknowledgement of a complaint – WBC's internal timescale for acknowledgement of a complaint was three working days and this should be formalised.
- Timescale for the Subject Member to comment on the complaint – the Committee agreed that 15 working days was appropriate, with discretion for the Monitoring Officer to extend this period.
- In Parish or Town Council cases the process stated that the Monitoring Officer would seek the Clerk's views, but it was not clear what the Clerk was being asked to comment on – this should be on factual matters.
- Initial assessment of complaints currently undertaken by the Monitoring Officer in conjunction with an Independent Person and the Chairman of the Standards Committee – best practice indicated that the Monitoring Officer only consult with the Independent Person when carrying out the initial assessment and deciding on a course of action.
- Informal resolution – in cases where informal resolution had been pursued but has not been successful, the Council should reserve the option to refer the matter for formal investigation.
- Public disclosure of Subject Member's name - in cases where informal resolution had followed an investigation and finding of a breach of the Code of Conduct, the Subject Member's name should be disclosed.
- Hearing Panels meeting in Private – as a decision making body of the Council a Hearings Panel is covered by the rules relating to access to information and political balance - there should not be a blanket presumption towards closed hearings, with each meeting to consider the facts on their merits at the start of proceedings. The Committee agreed that the Hearings Panel could meet in public but the Panel would consider and make any decisions in private.
- The Committee agreed that political proportionality should apply to Hearings Panel meetings.

The Committee agreed to accept the recommendations of the independent review and to refer the matter to the Constitution Review Working Group and full Council for agreement. The recommendations were subsequently approved by Council.

## 8.0 Standards Committee – Future Actions

The Standards Committee will continue to make further improvements to the Code of Conduct and its supporting procedures in order to ensure continuous improvement in line with best practice. In so doing it will seek to maintain the credibility and good governance of the Borough, Town and Parish Councils.

The Committee will commission further training and support, as necessary, to underpin high standards of ethical behaviour by elected Members and Officers across the Borough. The Committee is keenly aware that high standards of behaviour help to build trust in elected representatives which is crucial to the democratic process.

As discussed above, an independent review found that the majority of the Council's procedures were in line with best practice. The Committee aims to build on this foundation by ensuring that the highest standards of behaviour are delivered and complaints are kept to a minimum. Any complaints received will be investigated thoroughly and fairly.



# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH WELLBEING BOARD

Annual Report 2021-22



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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## Introduction

From April 2013 upper tier local authorities were required, under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, to establish Health and Wellbeing Boards. Wellbeing Boards are forums where key representatives from health, social care, and the community work in partnership to reduce health inequalities locally and to improve the overall health and wellbeing of residents.

This Wokingham Wellbeing Board Annual Report details the work of the Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Board, and its subgroups, from April 2021 to March 2022. The report focuses on the progress that has been made across the partnerships to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Wokingham, as well as providing an opportunity to look at our objectives for 2022 and beyond.

## Membership and functions of the Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Board

The membership of the Wokingham Borough (WBC) Wellbeing Board for 2021-22 was as follows:

- Councillor Charles Margetts (Chairman, Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services, WBC)
- Councillor John Halsall (Leader of the Council, WBC)
- Councillor Graham Howe (Executive Member for Children's Services, WBC)
- Councillor David Hare (Opposition Councillor, WBC)
- Matt Pope (Director Adult Services, WBC)
- Susan Parsonage (Chief Executive, WBC)
- Dr Debbie Milligan (Vice-Chairman) (NHS Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group)
- Katie Summers (NHS Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group)
- Meradin Peachey, Director Public Health – Berkshire West (until January 2022)
- Tracy Daszkiewicz, Director Public Health – Berkshire West (from January 2022)
- Carol Cammiss (Director Children's Services, WBC (until January 2022)
- Helen Watson, Interim Director Children's Services (from January 2022)
- Steve Moore (Interim Director Place and Growth, WBC)
- Graham Ebers (Deputy Chief Executive, WBC)
- Jim Stockley (Healthwatch Wokingham Borough)
- Philip Bell (Voluntary Sector)
- Nick Fellows (Voluntary Sector)

## The key functions of the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board

- To lead the production of a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, which gives an overview of the Borough's current and probable future wellbeing needs
- Based on evidence detailed within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, produce a Joint Wellbeing Strategy, which details how needs identified will be met
- To create and publish a Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment, an overview of local pharmaceutical needs, services, and any gaps in provision
- To encourage integrated working between commissioners of health services, Public Health, and social care services, for the purposes of advancing the health and wellbeing of the people in its area. The Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board works through exercising strategic leadership of public, private and community services in the promotion of healthy communities
- To consider how resources can be shared effectively between partners and where appropriate, to pool budgets
- The local Clinical Commissioning Groups must involve the Wellbeing Board in the preparation or revision of their commissioning plans.

## Health and wellbeing across Wokingham Borough

Wokingham is often cited as one of the 'healthiest places to live' and data show that most Wokingham residents tend to live long and healthy lives. The life expectancy for men and women is over 2 years higher than the national average, overall deprivation is among the 20% lowest in the country, and salaries are comparatively high. The Wokingham population is less obese, and overweight compared to the national average, and it has one of the lowest smoking prevalence in England.

However, broad indicators of health and wellbeing mask the health inequalities that exist in Wokingham. And understanding our communities and populations within the Borough is key to addressing what is driving health inequalities.

We know the difference in life expectancy between those who reside in the least and most deprived areas in the borough are 6.6 and 3.3 years for men and women respectively. This difference is due to different outcomes in several major disease categories, the two with the biggest contribution to this difference are cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Smoking, obesity, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease are all unevenly distributed in our residents, with level of deprivation, sex, and ethnicity all having an impact. As an example, adults working in manual occupations smoke at about three times the rate of the overall population (23.4% vs 8.4%). And, while health in pregnancy and early years of life is generally good in Wokingham, approximately 6 out of 100 babies born are to mothers who smoke which puts them at risk. These mothers on average are likely to be young and from areas of higher deprivation in the Borough. In addition, only half of children in receipt of free school meals are 'ready for school' at 5 years old, compared with over 3 out of 4 of children who do not receive free school meals.

Cancer is also not distributed equally across our population and is a large contributor to the life expectancy difference in men between the most and least deprived. National data indicates that there are differences in screening uptake based on deprivation and socioeconomic factors. And as our local data show, cancer risk factors, such as smoking, are not evenly spread.

Covid-19 has also had a large impact on inequalities through the wider determinants of health: financial loss, job loss, and subsequent impact on health behaviours. An equitable recovery from the pandemic requires understanding these differences, including further study into Long Covid (which will likely follow similar inequality patterns as Covid-19 infection), as well as ensuring Covid-related health and wellbeing recovery meets the needs of different populations. We know that cancer referrals went down locally during the pandemic, and other services likely follow a similar pattern, which means that catching up equitably is going to be key to ensuring health inequalities are not further exacerbated.

Furthermore, the lifestyle behaviours of Wokingham residents have changed because of the pandemic. Evidence suggests that weight gain, increased alcohol consumption, social isolation and reportedly more mental ill health have all occurred.

The Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Board, working with partners, is best placed to address the broader determinants of health that underpin these inequalities.

## Wokingham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is a statutory document which all local authorities have. It helps the council, and its partners, assess the current and future health and wellbeing needs of the population of Wokingham, and to develop local evidence-based priorities and commissioning strategies.

The JSNA is a living document and an umbrella for a variety of information, providing easy access to in-depth evidenced based quality data. It supports such things as commissioning, planning, funding bids, research, and the development of local services. The JSNA is also a useful resource for those just wanting to know more about Wokingham Borough and the local service provision.

### The JSNA is moving home in 2022

From April 2022 the Wokingham Observatory will be the new home for the JSNA. In conjunction with the Berkshire West Shared Public Health Team the observatory site has been updated and now provides easier access to local JSNA data, along with improved options to download reports, graphics, and narrative.

The JSNA is a live document, and it will continue to evolve throughout 2022 as new/updated needs assessments and data sets are added, and through feedback from site users.

One of the biggest changes for 2022 is the support package that the Wokingham Public Health Team are now offering to help colleagues and partners engage, access, and make the most of the JSNA.

This dedicated support offer includes access to How to Guides, FAQs and training videos, along with the opportunity to book dedicated 1-1 or team sessions with the Public Health Team. These dedicated sessions will assist with using the new JSNA site and with more in-depth research support for specific projects.

In addition to preparing the observatory site for the hosting of updated JSNA data, several needs assessments have been completed and published over the past 12 months, including:

- The Berkshire West need assessment of children and young people aged 0-19
- The Berkshire suicide prevention data report
- Phase one of the mental health needs assessment

## Wokingham Wellbeing strategy – Strategy into Action

The Wokingham Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, known as Wokingham's Strategy into Action, was approved in the Autumn of 2021 with six clear priorities to create healthier and more resilient communities. The Strategy into Action priorities shape and underpin the work of the Wokingham Wellbeing Board and its partnerships.

### Developing Wokingham's Strategy into Action

Wokingham's Strategy into Action (SiA) is guided by the overarching principles within the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Berkshire West Strategy began development in 2019, overseen by a steering group consisting of members from Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire local authorities, the voluntary sector, NHS Berkshire West CCG, Healthwatch, NHS Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust and NHS Royal Berkshire Hospital Foundation Trust.

The Berkshire West Strategy identified five priorities to improve health and wellbeing across the area:

1. Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people
2. Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes
3. Help children and families during the early years of life
4. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people
5. Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults

While a shared vision and objectives across Berkshire West is a powerful vehicle to start the journey of improving population health, actions and interventions need to be locality specific to address the needs of different communities and populations, reflecting the local challenges that exist.

Local priorities should be informed by local communities, commissioners, private and voluntary sector service providers, and the Health & Wellbeing Board, who best understand the needs of the local population.

To this end a range of workshops, one for each of the five priorities within the Berkshire West Strategy, brought together local stakeholders to further explore health inequalities within Wokingham and the specific local priorities that would drive work to improve the health and wellbeing of residents.

In addition to the five priorities identified in the Berkshire West strategy, improving the physical activity levels of residents was deemed a key priority for the Wokingham Wellbeing Board. Thus, promoting physically active communities is included as a cross-cutting theme in Strategy into Action.

Building on the premise that local inequalities are best addressed at place, eight local partnership/action groups (some existing, some newly established) will tackle the specific Wokingham inequities identified via the Strategy into Action workshops.



These partnership/action groups bring together representation from across the community and feature, for example, HealthWatch, voluntary sector and private providers, local councillors, General Practice and officers from NHS Berkshire Clinical Commission Groups, NHS Trusts, and the local authority.

The community focused membership of the Strategy into Action groups promotes direct feedback on what is and isn't working locally. This improves responsiveness and supports collective decision making for the good of the community, rather than solely for the wider system.

Each partnership/action group has developed a detailed action plans setting out the interventions required to improve health and wellbeing across the borough. And each group is responsible for delivery of their action plan and for reporting progress to the newly established Strategy into Action Steering Group, who provide operational oversight of Strategy into Action delivery on behalf of the Wellbeing Board.

## Strategy into Action Partnership/Action Groups

### Children and Young People Partnership Board

The purpose of the Children and Young People Partnership board (CYPP) is to work in partnership with key stakeholders to have strategic oversight over emerging matters affecting the children, young people, and families within the borough and to share updated policy and guidance.

The CYPP brings together representation from education, health, social care, Thames Valley Police, and the voluntary sector and is co-chaired by the Director of Children's Services and the CEO of Involve community services.

#### Key activity over the last 12 months

The CYPP met eight times over the course of 2021. And despite the ongoing outbreak of Covid-19, and the significantly increased partner workload and responsibilities, all members have continued to be fully committed to driving forward the CYPP Plan.

The CYPP has had strategic oversight of the SEND Improvement Board (SIB) since its creation in September 2019 in response to the SEND Ofsted inspection. Regular updates were presented to the CYPP on the progress of the SIB. Following a re-inspection in May 2021 and the positive feedback provided, the organisation and governance of the SIB was altered to reflect the changing needs of the SEND provision in Wokingham; this was supported by the CYPP.

Under the new governance arrangements, the SIB transformed into the SEND Innovation and Improvement Programme (SIIP) whereby there is now an embedded rhythm for the four working groups, plus the coproduction group and has a systematic approach embedded on tracking actions across the groups. The SIIP provides a quarterly progress update to the CYPP which includes information, requests for support, decision making requests and highlights programme risks. The CYPP will continue to function in this manner and support the SIIP through the continuation of the improvement journey.

In the January 2021 board meeting, the focus was on health partners and for the board to get an overview of Public Health and health from an NHS perspective, to ensure full understanding of their role for children and young people, their current focus, and future endeavours. These presentations gave the board insight into the impact of covid on different health organisations and enabled better understanding of processes and how these connect with other key areas such as education and social care.

Serious violence in the borough has been examined by the CYPP throughout 2021 following an initial presentation from Thames Valley Police highlighting serious violence and exploitation and explaining how this can happen in the borough, and the establishment of a Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategic Board under the auspices of the Community Safety Partnership. This focus ties in with Early Intervention and Prevention focus and the SEND agenda. The Thames Valley Together project was launched in April 2021 and the CYPP receives updates on the

developments and provides feedback on the Serious Violence and Exploitation Dashboard.

The CYPP has also had sight of, and provided feedback for, key strategies in 2021, such as the Anti-Poverty strategy, Harm outside the Home strategy, Emotional Wellbeing strategy, Early Intervention and Prevention strategy.

The CYPP board agreed that a review of the current needs for children, young people, and families was needed, especially in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, and that these issues needed to be discussed and tackled using a multi-agency approach. Systems Leadership sessions were held in June and September 2021 with a feedback discussion in October. These sessions included a presentation from a keynote speaker from Ofsted, as well as focused discussions around key topics, with the objective for the CYPP to focus on 2 or 3 themes initially.

The themes discussed were Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, serious youth violence, domestic abuse and violence against women, impact of Covid-19 on the current and future delivery models, strengthening the approach to equality and diversity in partner organisations and the future of inclusion.

These sessions provided an opportunity to discuss the relevance of previous CYPP priorities and facilitated open discussions providing rich information to steer the future focus of the CYPP. The output of these sessions meant that the CYPP was in a practical position to effectively plan for the refresh of strategic priorities in line with the Wellbeing Board's Strategy into Action revision.

### Proposed Priorities and Plan for next 12 months

Following the Systems Leadership events during Summer 2021, the board agreed that a refresh of the focus and strategic priorities of the CYPP was needed to address the current needs of children, young people, and families, and be aligned to Strategy into Action. The current CYPP plan was drafted before the transformation of the SIIP, the development of the Harm Outside the Home strategy and the refresh of the Wellbeing Board's Strategy into Action. A refreshed vision, strategic priorities and key enablers was agreed by the board on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022 as being the initial focus of the CYPP.

*Vision: 'A borough in which all children and young people are safe and cared for, enjoy and achieve, are healthy, grow up ready for adulthood, and feel happy, hopeful, and loved'*

#### *Five strategic priorities:*

1. Help children and families during the Early Years of Life
2. Good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people
3. Wokingham Borough as a child friendly community (UNICEF)
4. Preventing and addressing Harm Outside the Home (Community Safety Partnership driven)

5. Better outcomes for CYP with SEND; right support, right place, right time (SIIP driven)

*These strategic priorities will be underpinned by four key enablers:*

1. Strategic partnership approach to Early Intervention and Prevention
2. Effective use of shared information, intelligence, and resources
3. Thriving and dynamic voluntary and community sector
4. Effective governance, accountability, and reporting

As the CYPP board have agreed these strategic priorities and enablers, the next piece of work is for a small group to meet to finalise and refine how the CYPP will deliver these priorities, what the accountabilities are and by what mechanisms; this will also include a review of the actions under Wokingham's Wellbeing Board Strategy into Action to ensure the actions under the two priorities specifically relating to children and young people are current.

To drive these priorities forward, task groups may be created specifically for the priorities that fall under the Wellbeing Board strategy – priorities one and two – which the CYPP board will have oversight and governance of. Getting the correct membership of any task groups will be critical and will be agreed by the CYPP. Priorities three to five have their pathways set (through the UNICEF child friendly programme and other partnerships respectively) but will be steered by the CYPP; regular updates on progress towards these priorities will be brought to CYPP meetings for information, support, and decision-making where appropriate.

### UNICEF Child Friendly Cities & Communities

In early 2021, Wokingham applied to become a candidate of the UNICEF child friendly cities & communities programme and regular updates on this application were brought to the CYPP for discussion as it involves partnership working and requires commitment and engagement from key stakeholders who are also CYPP board members.

In February 2022, it was announced that Wokingham had been accepted onto the initiative and that a 6-month discovery phase would take place for partners, children, young people, and families can come together to agree what will be done to become child friendly. The development phase will follow this, lasting around 2-3 months whereby an action plan is drafted and approved showing how WBC will achieve progress in the areas selected. WBC will then work with the local community and children and young people to carry out the action plan through the delivery phase which is between 2 to 4 years.

Being child friendly will support the voices, needs, priorities, and rights of children as being an integral part of WBC policies, programmes, and decisions. This will be one of the five strategic priorities for the CYPP going forward as the UNICEF child friendly status sits with the CYPP. UNICEF training has been offered to the board members and will take place between April and June 2022.

To progress effectively with the new focus and strategic priorities, a gap analysis will be undertaken that will identify operational gaps to understand the location and ownership of current workstreams and the extent of the existing problem; the task groups will support this activity. There will also be a creation of a reporting structure for each of these priorities and a dashboard for the appropriate priorities relating to Strategy into Action for reporting to the Wellbeing Board. The membership of the CYPP will be reviewed following the agreement of the focus and strategic priorities, followed by a revision of the Terms of Reference.

This approach will establish the function of the CYPP as:

1. Overseeing the delivery of some strategic priority areas
2. Steering key strategic partnership initiatives with formal governance elsewhere
3. Enabling a system improvement and better partnership working by
  - a. Joining up approaches to early intervention and prevention
  - b. Driving more effective use of shared information, intelligence, and resources
  - c. Helping to build a thriving and dynamic voluntary and community sector focused on delivering children and young people's priorities
  - d. Strengthening partnership governance and accountability

### Emotional Wellbeing Update and CIC CAMHS

Following a review of how we support children with emotional wellbeing needs, the Council and partners co-designed a new Emotional Wellbeing Model which aims to ensure children and young people with mild to moderate mental health needs receive the right support at the earliest opportunity.

A key feature of the new model included the development of a new emotional wellbeing hub for children and young people living in the borough. The hub, which launched in March 2022, will make it easier to access emotional wellbeing support.

The virtual hub acts as a central point of contact for children and young people, parents, and professionals across the borough, bringing together a mix of existing, redesigned, and new services. The emotional wellbeing hub is aimed at children and young people with mild to moderate emotional wellbeing needs up to their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. This could include issues such as anxiety, friendship and relationship issues, low mood, or exam stress. The hub includes a new way to access support, offering a more joined up approach to how the council and Berkshire Health Foundation Trust offers emotional wellbeing services in the community.

Typically, the support on offer from or via the hub will fall into four categories:

1. Signposting to a service that specialises in supporting specific issues, such as bereavement.

2. Self-help guidance, such as information and worksheets for parents and children, links to good sources for further information
3. Help to access support from ARC Counselling or our online counselling service provided by Kooth.
4. Referral to the Primary Mental Health Team 4 Youth (PMHT4Y), a re-designed Emotional Wellbeing Service, which has brought together services previously delivered by primary CAMHS and Schools Link. The service is delivered in partnership with Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust.

The new emotional wellbeing hub will also hold regular multiagency meetings, where professionals and partners can discuss more complex cases and agree the best support to meet need.

### Children in Care CAMHS Service

The mental health of looked-after children is significantly poorer than that of their peers, nationally almost half of children and young people in care meeting the criteria for a psychiatric disorder. In comparison one in ten non-looked-after children and young people suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder.

It is recognised that looked after children and their carers and families can have specific support needs and may need access to specialist support.

A CIC CAMHS Service is being established across Berkshire West to ensure that Children who are in care receive quicker access to mental health support through sharing information and knowledge, directly assessing the needs of CYP in care and providing interventions that meet needs where that is best for the child or young person.

The local transformation plan (LTP) for improving CYP mental health and wellbeing (September 2021) also prioritised needing a specific response to the mental health needs of Children coming and living in the care of the Local Authorities in the Berkshire West area.

Following extensive discussions between the CCG and the three Berkshire West Local Authorities', key points were agreed for the scope of a children in care CAMHS service:

1. Location: The service will be based within each of the 3 LA offices with the Children in Care teams but staff will be required in health offices of their employer on a regular basis
2. Employment: Staff and/or Practitioners will be employed by Berkshire Healthcare Foundation trust (BHfT) as the lead of the service but as described deployed into the Children in Care teams.
3. Management: line management, HR procedures and supervision stays with BHfT. However, a partnership agreement between the LA and BHfT will be put in place

4. Governance – Oversight of this service will be overseen by a regular steering group established between provider lead and individual LA.

The Children in Care CAMHS team will comprise of a 'skill mix' of clinicians to enable a range of interventions and training to be delivered which is cost effective, representing value for money. There is an expectation that the CIC CAMHS team for Wokingham will have the capacity to support up to 45 Children in Care per year.

### **Service Aims**

The service aims to improve life chances of Children in Care, by working towards increasing these resilience factors:

- Creating stability of the Child or Young person's home placement
- CYP able to maintain a relationship with family members and work to be re-united where that is possible.
- Fostering as strong an attachment as possible with the CYP foster carers or adults responsible for their care (if in a residential setting)
- Reaching as high as possible Education achievements and
- Creating local social networks, forming positive and meaningful relationships with peers and other adults.

### **Service Objectives**

- Provide evidence based mental health assessments
- Use these high-quality assessments to inform multi-disciplinary care planning and inform interventions (clinical and non-clinical)
- Share knowledge, expertise, advice, and guidance to professionals (including foster carers) so more informed decisions (both small and significant in scale) are made with CYP about their lives.
- Provide training to professionals (including Foster carers) about CYP presentation of need to enable adults to identify needs earlier, respond in a knowledgeable and empathic way and be confident that as adults they are doing the right things for that CYP.
- Provide evidenced based interventions directly with CYP and foster carers that support improved outcomes.

### **Priorities for the next 3 months:**

- Regular steering groups are held at a local level to oversee the implementation and mobilisation of the new service
- Recruitment for the CIC CAMHS team is underway at the moment
- The service is expected to launch in Autumn 2022



## Community Safety Partnership

The Community Safety Partnership's aims and overarching duty is to:

- Reduce crime and disorder
- Improve community safety
- Reduce re-offending

By addressing these three overarching outcomes the partnership serves to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in, or visits the borough. The focus for 2021-2024 is on the following three strategic priorities, underpinned by five specific aims:

### Strategic priorities

1. Listening to needs and concerns of residents
2. Intervening early and preventing issues escalating
3. Working together to protect vulnerable residents

### Specific Aims

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

Delivering on these priorities and aims supports Wokingham's wider Health and Wellbeing Strategy into Action aspiration to ***Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives.***

### Statutory and other partners

The borough is much better placed to tackle crime and disorder if everyone – local residents and businesses, community and voluntary groups, and city services – work together in a coordinated way. The local authority, police, health, probation, and fire services are statutory partners under the 1998 Act. However, in practice, the Community Safety Partnership works across a much wider range of partners at different levels and on different topics to work out what needs doing, who can help and to take action. There is good information exchange between those concerned, including with residents, so that agencies can listen and respond to the needs of local people.

### Setting our work in context

As well as the impact on individuals, the negative effects of crime and disorder draw widely on public services. Working in partnership and adopting a 'whole system approach' is essential. Our work contributes to the Police & Crime Commissioner's Police and Criminal Justice Plan and to the council's Corporate Plan as well as measures in the Public Health Outcomes Framework.



## What's been achieved over the past 12 months?

This past year the Wokingham Community Safety Partnership was Chaired by Susan Parsonage, Chief Executive of Wokingham Borough. The work of the board was supported by the Executive Member for Neighbourhood and Communities, Bill Soane.

Following the adoption of the Community Safety Partnership Strategy for 2021- 24 at the start of June 2021. The partnership has made positive progress on several of its workstreams

### Domestic Abuse Key Achievements

- Wokingham Domestic Abuse Policy 2021 – 2024 has been agreed and adopted to incorporate priority areas. This is in line with the new duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- New commissioned domestic abuse support service has been put in place from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 with the service operating from the Community Hub in Waterford House.
- Delivered over 28 Multi and single agency training sessions, involving over 20 different organisations, with over 1285 people attending increasing their education and insight.
- Developed and implemented a domestic abuse communications plan across various platforms including digital. This has raised awareness and provides information to victims about support options and includes a revamp of the domestic abuse webpages; new leaflets and resources have been produced with a series of information video's plus social media messaging and press releases.
- Increased our local understanding and created focused action plans developed to reach out to those currently under-represented within domestic abuse services, including those who have protected characteristics to increase access to services and drive improved service responses.

### Prevent & Channel

- Completed a review of compliance and identified gaps in line with the Prevent Duty 2015, compliance analysed against government guidance and toolkit with RAG status.
- Agreed and adopted a new local Prevent Action Plan 2021/22, including key objectives and actions to address local risk and comply with Prevent Duty benchmarks.
- Assessed and reviewed data and local profile information with regards to the Local Counter Terrorism risk assessment 2021.
- Updated and implemented Prevent Venue Hire Policy and Guidance to support Statutory requirement for booking venues to comply with guidance.
- Reviewed and updated Prevent Board terms of reference and membership to include recommended partners, Voluntary sector and Further Education college.

- Development and implementation of a Prevent training plan with tiered training to identify staff cohorts and targeted training requirements.
- Produced and delivered Prevent training sessions; Prevent Presentation and Q and A for councillors and staff teams.
- Produced Prevent communications plan and campaign material. Campaign took place week commencing 18 October, information also included in residents' newsletter.
- Updated and reviewed Prevent content for Council Website and intranet, including legal requirements – privacy notice and complaints procedure.
- Assessment of compliance against Channel Duty statutory guidance for local authorities and identified gaps, analysed against 2020 Channel guidance with RAG status.
- Updated Council constitution to include Channel Duty new legal requirement from 2020.
- Implemented new Information Sharing Agreements, Channel operational guide, Channel information Gathering template and Channel Support Plan template.
- Completed statutory Channel and annual assurance statement.

### Substance Misuse Key Achievements

- Commissioned service provider has issued over 500 naloxone kits to service users, partner agencies and residents.
- Delivered drug awareness workshops to over 800 students across the borough.
- Supported 91 young people with substance use issues.
- Supported over 500 adults with substance use issues.
- Supported 90 family members around their loved one's substance use.
- Established a well-attended service user forum to help shape the delivery of the service moving forward, feedback already being incorporated into service delivery for example - emotional wellbeing group created, off site groups implemented.
- Initial positive feedback from CQC inspection (awaiting final report).
- Commissioned service registered with AQA awarding body to be able to offer accreditation to young people for drug awareness and behaviour change modules.
- Improved engagement in the Drug Diversion Scheme (YP).
- Implemented colocation facility with Sexual health clinic and from Station Rd and drop-in surgery at Wokingham hospital.
- Establishment of an on-site hepatitis C treatment clinic resulting in 100% of clients referred to treatment completing treatment for hepatitis C.

## Anti-Social Behaviour

- Delivered borough wide multi-agency anti-social behaviour panel, dealing with medium and high-level complex cases.
- The anti-social behaviour panel took over 19 medium – high level cases
- 12 medium – high level ASB cases problem resolved and closed.
- Co-ordinating response, action plan in response to 2 Community Triggers, both investigated and closed with a satisfactory outcome.
- 4 Community Protection Warnings issued.
- 1 Acceptable Behaviour Agreement (ABA) issued.
- 86 separate reports of ASB received and resolved
- Attendance at Neighbourhood Action Groups
- Attendance and contribution at approximately 50 safeguarding meetings.
- Co-ordinated response to car meets, working with Thames Valley Police to target car meet hotspot locations across the Borough, including hire of private security, installing of mobile CCTV.
- Supporting Thames Valley Police led operations resulting in the issuing of 27 Section 59's warnings to drivers using cars in an anti-social manner.
- Undertaking public consultation for a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in relation to car cruising.

## Serious Violence and Exploitation

- Implementation of a Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategic Board
- Development of a Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy for the Borough
- Review of at risk of exploitation, missing, multi-agency risk assessment process and procedures and performance management.
- Integration with the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit's, Thames Valley Together Data Project, allowing more expedient and effective data sharing practices.

Whilst this has allowed us to lay the foundations of the serious violence and exploitation work. The overall aim is to ensure that: **Serious violence causes less harm to individuals and communities.**

### What we are working towards achieving:

- Fewer people harmed by serious violence
- Less crime involving weapons
- All parts of the community to be free of the fear of violence and confident to report
- A thriving night-time economy free from alcohol-related violence.

- A stronger preventative approach to serious violence through the better use of all available data.

### Exploitation (including modern slavery and human trafficking)

What we are working towards achieving:

- Prevent children, young people, and vulnerable adults from becoming involved with organised crime groups and gangs
- Safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults who are being exploited
- Provide a safe, effective pathway to enable children, young people, and vulnerable adults to exit involvement with organised crime networks
- Increase awareness of the signs and risks of all forms of exploitation among agencies and the wider community

### Violence Against Women and Girls

The Community Safety Partnership is proud to report on the progress of the work on domestic abuse. However, we recognise that continuous improvements are needed to ensure that the response for victims is not only meeting good practice but exceeding it.

The work and service improvements to date have laid the foundations, from this point on the Partnership can further strengthen and focus on wider work to address violence against women and girls.

#### **What we are working to achieve in 2022-23**

- A borough where domestic and sexual violence and abuse is not tolerated by our communities or our organisations.
- Victims to be believed not blamed, treated with dignity and respect, and supported to feel safe within their community, knowing that their offenders are being worked with to change their behaviour and/or brought to justice.
- All sectors, services, neighbourhoods, and communities across the borough to recognise that domestic and sexual violence is everyone's business and to overcome barriers to progress.
- More prevention and early intervention work. Evidence based approaches are needed to change attitudes and challenge behaviours in our communities, so victims are protected, and the cycle of offending is broken.
- A stronger criminal and civil justice response to perpetrators, and the development of sustainable proactive intervention and preventative programmes.
- Robust partnership working at both a strategic and operational level across a broad coalition of partners to enable consistent quality services, working across services and sectors and focusing on positive out.

## Wokingham Integrated Partnership

The Wokingham Integrated Partnership supports delivery of the local integration agenda. It brings local health and social care commissioners, providers, and the voluntary sector together to integrate services and improve outcomes for Wokingham residents. The partnership also oversees delivery of the Better Care Fund.

### What's been achieved over the past 12 months?

There has been good progress made against the 2021/22 integration work programme. Although COVID-19 has played its part, of the nineteen projects started, only one has been put on hold. Work within the programme includes the implementation of the Winter Plan, supporting COVID-19 vaccination efforts, welcoming new Hong Kong residents, as well as refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan.

The jointly agreed, integrated and coordinated programme set out this year with the following priorities:

- Mental Health & Social Inclusion
- Deconditioning/Rehab/Physical Activity
- Frailty Monitoring
- Inequality and Poverty
- Social Prescription (including Data & IT to support Integrative working)
- Better Care Fund, Monitoring and Administration

These priorities, lead to 19 projects. These projects enabled the partners to meet elements of the Wellbeing Strategy, alongside aspects of the GP DES/CES, Long Term Conditions Board, Urgent & Emergency Care Board, Primary Care Board, NHS Planning Priorities, Berkshire West ICP Flagship Priorities, Ageing Well, BOB ICS Service Priorities and the Urgent and Emergency Care Board.

Below are key highlights from select projects that support deliver of Wokingham's Strategy into Action:

### Implement MIND service & Establish MH Alliance

MIND run a wellbeing service to support people who are living with low level mental health issues, create a Mental Health Alliance for organisations and a forum for Mental Health First Aiders. This service supports GPs with a route to support people with their mental health issues.

### Overview of achievements

- Hired a team of Wellbeing Workers
- Engaged well with the Health and Social Care system to create a network

- Set up the service and received referrals from all PCN areas

### **Performance**

- Quarterly Alliance meetings are now taking place to support the system to work together on mental health
- Referrals are operating at 75% of capacity.
- Patients continue to report good outcomes & give good feedback
- A total 441 people have been supported by this service this year

[Implement Friendship Alliance Phase 2](#) (including Digital Inclusion for the most vulnerable in the community)

The Friendship Alliance is a project to support older people with loneliness and isolation. Phase 2 is an additionality of service, building on the base of Phase 1. This service reduces pressure on GP services, supports people to remain independent in the community, supports admission reduction and aides discharge from the hospital.

### **Overview of achievements**

- Friendship Month a massive success – Comms reached over 700 people – 240 people attended the 30 events (against a target of 15 – exceeding the target by 100%)
- Digital Devices issued to over 65 elderly people & families. A mid-year review has resulted in 25 additional assets

### **Performance**

- Friendship Champions have doubled expectation.
- Number of new activities identified/shared - 111 v target of 60.
- Number of volunteer Friendship Champions recruited exceeded target.
- Age UK Info/Advice Service- 646 calls to the service.
- Expansion of Age UK Berkshire's services: info/advice support - averages 27 per month v target of 20.
- The Link Express Befriending Service have been averaging 29 referrals a month against a target of 20 which demonstrates an impressive return.
- The Project Lead predicted 150 people attending the events and again exceeded the target significantly with 240 people attending – 62% over target.

### [Inequality and Poverty Analysis and Reporting](#)

BCF funding supported an analyst to join the public health team in the borough. The analyst set out to support Population Health Management (PHM) in the borough. There was a focus to support analysis linking to people with health inequalities and

those in poverty, as well as support to PCN to understand the populations that they support.

### **Overview of achievements**

- A Cantonese video about how to use the NHS was produced to help the newly forming Hong Kong community. It includes tips on how to register with a GP, using the NHS App, when to call 999 and 111, information about not needing a fit to work note until after 7 days and when to go to the doctor. Council and NHS staff worked with a local community champion who spoke Cantonese and helped to link them with three local churches with a large Cantonese community. Using their experience and knowledge of what people were struggling with, they helped to develop the webinar – delivered by Cantonese speakers from the local hospital, council and primary care. The film has been viewed by over 17,000 people, with 60 per cent of viewers from the UK and 30 per cent from Hong Kong. The materials from the project are also being used to support Afghan and Ukrainian refugees and the Council are now supporting this new and growing community from Hong Kong to settle in the borough with access to school places, housing and employment.
- Relationships established with key stakeholders, including primary care, CCG, and VCF Sector and the PHM Officer is working with clinical directors to develop PCN profiles with a focus on inequalities.
- “Keeping in Touch” Guides Pilot with Twyford and Wokingham Medical Centre is underway. These pilots will focus on patients experiencing frailty, depression, and presenting to the GP more than the average.

### **Virtual Group Clinics**

This project has supported people with several health issues (including, but not limited to, Menopause, COPD, Hypertension, Postnatal and Mental Health), in a group via online meetings.

This enables GPs to support patients more efficiently, reducing 1:1 appointment time where appropriate, offering support to people to self-manage their condition, achieving better long-term health and maintaining independence.

### **Overview of achievements and patient feedback**

- 611 patients have attended the various clinics.
- The first Long COVID Programme has been developed and was delivered this year with the support of Dr Ravindran, RNH’s Lead Clinician for Long Covid.
- “Video sessions lead by primary health care leads are vital to self-care”.
- “I don’t like visiting the surgery for non-urgent problems and these groups may help before such a trip is arranged.”



- “Good to get such a range of expertise from the speakers. Great to see the team adjusting to a digital platform to overcome challenges”.
- Improved Wellbeing.

### **Performance of Virtual Group Clinic Long Covid Programme**

- 100% of respondents advised that the programme exceeded their expectations.
- 100% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that the programme increased their confidence in caring for themselves.
- Improved self-management of Long COVID

### **WIP priorities for 22/23 include:**

- Discharge Management
- Minimising Health Inequalities
- Prevention and Admission Avoidance
- Monitoring & Reporting
- PCN Specific Projects

It is foreseen that the projects in these priorities will continue to support the Wellbeing Strategy into action as well as key priorities for all partners.

*These priorities are subject to change, as they are awaiting discussion and agreement at the May or June '22 Leadership Board.*

### **Better Care fund**

The Better Care Fund (BCF) is the national programme through which local areas agree how to spend a local pooled budget in accordance with the programme's national requirements.

The pooled budget is made up of CCG funding as well as local government grants, of which one is the Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF).

In 2020/21 the Better Care Fund (BCF) has worked well in Wokingham. The pooled budget resources have been used to deliver the integration of adult health and social care services, since its inception in 2014.

The schemes operating locally are:

- Voluntary Sector Partnership and Social Prescription
- Complex Case Management
- Maximising Independence (reablement services)
- Facilitated and Supported Discharges



The Better Care Fund also funded these Berkshire West wide schemes:

- Care Homes (Community Support) Project - incorporating RRaT (Rapid Response and Treatment)
- Connected Care
- Integrated Discharge Team (IDT) and Trusted Assessment
- Street Triage – Mental Health
- Falls and Frailty

Despite the ongoing pandemic, the Wokingham system has performed well. The system has met two of its five targets. Whilst the system has not met three targets, it is worthy of note, that it has delivered the best performance in the West of Berkshire and better than the England average, and we were close to these targets in performance.

NHS England (NHSE) required Integration Boards to target performance for hospital discharge at a rate that was better than during the height of the pandemic. Whilst the hospitals were very full, the number of people that were attending the hospital as non-electives were lower, an increase in staffing across social care and national restrictions meant that discharge performance was very good.

As the world ‘opened up’, there was a higher rate of COVID infection, meaning more staff were isolating and more people were using the hospital. This meant, amongst other reasons, that there was more pressure. The system has performed close to our projections (within 2%), and we will be requesting that NHSE take this into account when setting targets in 22/23.

The Board has received the plan for BCF this year (21/22) and will be receiving the end of year report for sign off. The Wokingham submission will be aligned with those of Reading and West Berkshire, where appropriate, and it was noted that the total pooled fund for Wokingham is £11.36m.

The Board will continue to receive quarterly updates on the programme performance and will continue to receive and review these in 2022/23.

## Carers Strategy Action Group

The carers strategic group is chaired and led by Strategy & Commissioning and has a diverse membership of Council colleagues from across Adult Social Care and Public Health. There is also healthy representation from the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector, including our commissioned carers services providers but also organisations that work extensively with carers of people who have experienced stroke, dementia and also carers advocacy leads. There is also representation from the CCG invited to the group.

The group's purpose is to implement the priorities in [Wokingham Carers Strategy 2020 – 2025](#) focusing on identifying and acknowledging carers, supporting young carers, enabling working age carers to maintain work and caring, and empowering carers to have a life outside of caring.

### How the carers group delivers on the Strategy into Action priorities

- **Priority: Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives**

The group's work fulfils this priority in improving identification of hidden carers, particularly those from seldom heard groups, and empowering them to take opportunities for respite through commissioned services as well as accessing support to balance their working life and personal self-actualisation with their caring role.

### Context: Caring in Wokingham

Unpaid or family carers deliver care to an estimated value of £132 billion nationally each year ([Carers Trust, 2022](#)). In Wokingham there are an estimated 2,300 carers in Wokingham and in 2021 we had knowledge of just 584 of them. A programme of welfare calls in January 2022 'found' a number of additional carers, taking the total number of carers known by the Council to approx. 1200 after three weeks of calls.

Caring for a loved one is a challenging role; carers frequently report being worn out, exhausted and experiencing poor mental health (Survey of Adult Carers in England (SACE), 2022). However, many also point out the positives in caring for a loved one, seeing that their cared for person is well looked after and supporting them to remain at home as long as possible.

Carers are known to be vulnerable to poor physical and mental health, often neglecting their own health and wellbeing while focusing on the cared for person. It is common for carers to be unaware that they are, in fact, carers – this is especially common in BAME communities where caring for family members is seen as a culturally normative behaviour. Supporting carers to acknowledge their caring role and signpost them to sources of support provides an important protective factor in their health and wellbeing.

The Borough is also home to an identified and registered 227 young carers who are supported in school and have access to groups and one-to-one support. The number

of young carers registered is only a small proportion of the total estimated young carer population of 1 in 12 of the 22,000 secondary school aged children in the Borough, approximately 1,800 young carers. All carers, including young carers, have the right under the Care Act to an assessment of their needs as carers, to be carried out by the local authority – this is independent of the cared for person's wishes to be assessed for other support.

### What's been achieved over the last 12 months?

- Carers Week 2021: The group worked with commissioned providers and our voluntary sector to provide a diverse and engaging profile for Carers Week, providing support to Carers throughout the Borough and raising awareness through talks and a promotional campaign delivered by our CEM colleagues.
- Sport and Leisure: The group has worked with Wokingham Borough Council's Sport & Leisure team to provide free or subsidised gym and swimming passes to carers
- Learning disability carers: Working with Promise Inclusion, the group has fed into the Learning Disability Partnership Board strategy implementation work, including via a specific LD carers workstream
- Welfare calls: Following another wave of Covid, a team led by S&C carried out 1200 calls to carers in January 2022
- Survey of Adult Carers in England: 253 adult carers in the Borough gave their feedback on life as a carer in the Borough. The responses are being collated and analysed at the time of writing.

### Carers group objectives 22/23

- Build on the work of the group to incorporate the adult social care reforms
- Improve identification of hidden carers
- Work with schools and other stakeholders to improve support to young carers
- Develop links between work with carers and wider VCS prevention offering

## Creating Physically Active Communities Action Group

The Creating Physically Active Communities Group is co-chaired by representatives from sports and leisure and public health. The group aims to encourage, facilitate and promote physical activity as a means to improve both the physical and mental wellbeing of Wokingham residents.

Group membership encompasses key partners and stakeholders to support maximum impact and includes:

- WBC Sports & Leisure
- Public Health
- Get Berkshire Active
- Sport in Mind
- Places Leisure
- Parks and Recreation Teams
- My Journey Team
- Mode shift STARS travel planning team
- WBC School games lead
- Air Quality Team
- Sports Council

### How the group delivers on the Strategy into Action priorities

- **Priority – Increase the physical activity levels of residents, reducing levels of obesity and improving general health and wellbeing**

### Physical activity in Wokingham

Improving the physical activity levels of Wokingham residents has been, and remains, a key priority for the Wellbeing Board. Creating physically active communities is an aim that incorporates work from multiple partners from creating a built environment that encourages active transport to building a social environment where physical activity is incorporated into everyday life. The Covid-19 pandemic is likely to have had an impact on activity levels across the life course and the impact of this is yet to be fully understood.

### What has been achieved in the past 12 months?

- To date 375 people have attended the Sports & Leisure GP Referral scheme, with the majority of these referrals continuing to be physical active having completed the programme.
- A variety of online offers were promoted locally to get people active throughout lockdown. The Tai Chi page was the most popular locally. The local online

offers continue post pandemic offering another option for people who want to get active.

- Wokingham schools remained engaged with the local Eco Travel, My Journey and School games teams throughout lockdown.
- Work is underway in 2022 to establish what sports and leisure activities will be popular now as many people are still not in the office and those that do not live in the borough will not travel to attend. Sports and Leisure are currently offering reduced costs to support workplace health for staff wanting to join the boxing gym and places leisure membership, football sessions.
- The Sports and leisure 'Kids camp' relaunched and has been rebranded as 'Power Up' the camp is at Loddon and have on average attendance of ~ 30 children per day. (this is straight in at 50% capacity following a gap of 2 years in the pandemic).
- After a successful pilot by sports and leisure funding was agreed to continue the Movement with confidence offer to decrease falls & prevent hospital admission. This programme went on to win the GBA 'physical activity hero award' in 2022. Additional funding has been identified for a further 12 months.
- Get Berkshire Active continued to offer free training for health professionals to enhance skills and confidence in having conversations with patients about promoting physical activity.
- Whilst many schools didn't achieve the 60 minutes activity a day throughout lockdown in 2021, a positive observation was that with fewer children outside at lunch/ break times, there was more room for children to run around and undertake active play. In addition, some schools brought in a fitness activity or gave classes extra break time supporting increased activity and some schools thought creatively and interpreted the activity guidelines differently, offering a shorter period of more intense activity rather than a longer period of less intense activity.
- Countryside and Parks supported safe activity offers throughout the pandemic and now focus on 'regular participation' - turning activity into a habit and 'Education' – educating children via schools and re-educating the community via other resources about healthy lifestyles, how, why, opportunities within the borough.

### Priorities for 22/23

The physically active communities group has three core objectives for 22/23:

- Facilitating physical activity to improve health outcomes irrespective of whether individuals achieve weight loss
- Promoting physical activity among target groups to reduce the risk of long-term conditions such as coronary heart disease and stroke
- Encouraging people to be physically active as a means to reduce premature mortality

## Dementia Steering Group

During 2021/22 a steering group was established to consider how best to support those living with dementia in the Borough and for those that care for them - to allow residents to live their best lives and to make the most effective use of our statutory and voluntary services, given the resources available.

### How the dementia steering group delivers on the Strategy into Action priorities

- **Priority – Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults**
  - support individuals living with dementia, and their carers

## Dementia in Wokingham

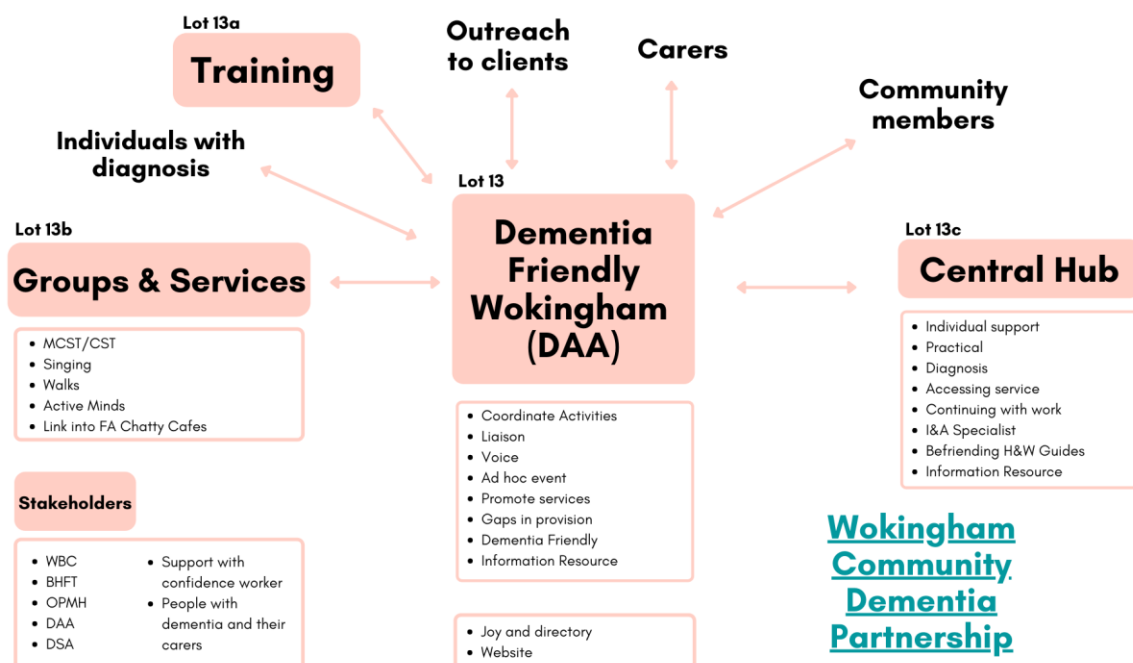
Dementia is a particular concern for the 1 in 4 people aged over 55 who already have a close relative with dementia. Although the prevalence of dementia increases with age, it is not inevitable and there is a lot that can be done to reduce chances of developing it. Risk factors include higher blood pressure, decreased mental stimulation and cardiovascular disease. Within Wokingham, 61% of care home residents are known to have cognitive problems, and the number of emergency admissions related to dementia is higher in Wokingham when compared with the national average.

### What's been achieved over the past 12 months?

Once established, the dementia steering group considered the epidemiology, the support currently available across the system, and any key gaps. An investment into the voluntary sector was proposed (as well as a small increase for WBC services) to secure a partner to coordinate a dementia partnership that would support improved service provision for those with dementia, and their carers. This was undertaken as part the wider VCS procurement process and invited bids based on:

- Governance and coordination of a Wokingham Dementia Partnership and subgroups.
- Activities to mitigate the impact of dementia, for both those living with the disease and carers
- Training and awareness across the community, including VCS, local businesses, and carers
- Information and support

The subsequent bids went out to tender and a consortium of organisations came together to provide them (AgeUK Berkshire – lead, Link Visiting Scheme and Understanding Dementia). The diagram below summarises their bid and how it connects with other initiatives such as the Friendship Alliance and WBC/BHFT services.



## Priorities for 22/23

The final structure and makeup of the Dementia Steering group and the Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) are still to be finalised, but are expected to deliver against the following broad objectives for 22/23:

- To oversee the commissioning and mobilisation of additional and improved support for individuals living with dementia, and their carers.
- To create a Wokingham Dementia Partnership (WDP) and foster a dementia friendly Wokingham movement which builds on the existing Wokingham Dementia Action Alliance (DAA) – stakeholder group.
- To assess the immediate gaps in support for those with or affected by dementia created by Covid-19 pandemic.
- To create a partnership between the WDP and Wokingham Dementia Action Alliance to ascertain wider views on local priorities and increase awareness and so to promote a dementia friendly community.
- To work in partnership with people and their carers from ethnic minority communities to offer support, raise awareness of existing services and groups, and customised prevention relevant to that community.

## Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (LDPB)

The Wokingham Learning Disability Partnership Board is the body through which planning for services for people with learning disabilities happen and campaigns for change are made. The LDPB facilitate regular champions meetings and roadshows to find out what's important to the learning disability community. People share their experiences of services that work well, and what could be done better.

### How the LDPB delivers on the Strategy into Action priorities

- **Priority – Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives**
  - Supporting individuals with a learning disability [LD] in the Wokingham Borough to live independent, healthy and safe lives

## Learning Disabilities in Wokingham

Wokingham has a higher per capita number of adults with learning disabilities receiving long-term support than other Boroughs within England, with 517 residents supported by the council in 2020. We know from national data that the average life expectancy of people with learning disabilities is 23 years lower than the general adult population, and that prevalence of mental health disorders, dementia, and epilepsy is much higher in people with learning disabilities. The Covid-19 pandemic has further exacerbated and laid bare these differences, with people with LDs dying of Covid-19 at 4.1 times the rate of the general population in England.

### Priorities for 22/23

The priorities listed below are those of the broader Wokingham LD transformation plan. The LDPB work with the Council to monitor delivery of the plan, and to make sure they are getting things right.

- Create a dedicated Learning Disability Service providing focused social work support and access to social care and voluntary services
- To develop a LD Commissioning and Market Development Plan that fosters greater choice and control within the market
- To increase the number of people with a Learning Disability who are in employment
- To create an enhanced and sustainable offer of support for carers, so they get the support they need to help them continue caring
- To work with our partners in health to integrate services and improve outcomes for residents with a learning disability
- To embed the Approaching Adulthood Team to support young people with a learning disability to transition into adulthood



## Social Isolation and Loneliness Action Group

The social isolation and loneliness action group brings together leads from voluntary sector providers and the council (in particular Sports & Leisure, Library Services and Public Health) to both identify the risk factors and causes for, and to reduce the overall reported levels of, social isolation and loneliness.

### How the SIL delivers on the Strategy into Action priorities

- **Priority – Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults**
  - *Reducing loneliness and social isolation*
  - *Reducing covid related social isolation*

### Social isolation and loneliness in Wokingham

Everyone feels lonely from time to time. But when people are always lonely, they are likely to suffer significant ill health and other negative consequences.

The health impacts of loneliness are thought to be on par with other public health priorities like obesity and smoking<sup>1</sup>. And lonely people are more likely to visit a GP or A&E and to enter LA funded residential care<sup>2</sup>.

The causes of loneliness will vary from person to person, and often be specific to the individual – for example, a person's personality or levels of resilience at a particular time. But there does seem to be some common themes, previous experiences or 'trigger' points that push a person to loneliness, as well as specific characteristics, including being aged 16 to 24, being widowed, having poor health, having a long-term illness or disability, having caring responsibilities and being unemployed<sup>3</sup>.

While levels or reported loneliness in Wokingham are lower than the national average, we know that feelings of loneliness increased during the pandemic, with 47% of residents surveyed saying they struggled with 'ability to connect with friends and family'. Furthermore, prior to covid-19, over 10,000 elderly residents were estimated to be living alone.

### What's been achieved over the past 12 months?

Service delivery continued to be impacted by the pandemic throughout 21/22. But SIL group members/services still delivered a range of activity to tackle isolation and loneliness across the borough, including -

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<sup>1</sup>Holt-Lunstad, J. et al. (2015) Loneliness and Social Isolation as Risk Factors for Mortality: A Meta-Analytic Review

<sup>2</sup>Social Finance (2015) Investing to tackle loneliness - a discussion paper

<sup>3</sup>Office for National Statistics (2018) What characteristics and circumstances are associated with feeling lonely?

- The Friendship Alliance set up 27 friendship tables and recruited 36 friendship champions. 29 events were held during 'Friendship Month' with over 240 attendees. Fortnightly newsletters published with over 274 community activities promoted.
- The Moving with Confidence service has supported over 90 vulnerable residents to improve their strength and flexibility, helping them get out and about again following the pandemic.
- The Link Visiting scheme supported over 400 residents, helping them connect with their local community.
- The Ability Cleaning programme (Optalis) supported residents with a range of disabilities to learn and develop workplace skills. The team provided commercial cleaning services across Wokingham, Windsor, and Maidenhead. All the team members are paid a wage while training and work alongside and are supported by employment coaches who worked with them outside of the programme to look for further employment opportunities in line with their goals and aspirations.
- The Supported Employment Service (Optalis) established twice monthly pre-employment workshops for Ukrainian Refugees.

### Priorities for 22/23

The SIL group has three core objectives for 22/23:

- Connect vulnerable residents with quality-assured services and activities
- Help people to build better social relationships to protect and improve physical and mental health
- Tackle the risk factors for social isolation and loneliness

## The Berkshire West Place-Based Partnership

Berkshire West's place-based partnership sees a Unified Executive, made up of local authorities and NHS organisations, lead partnership discussions alongside close working with Health and Wellbeing Boards and local integration boards to deliver the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Board strategic priorities.

The coronavirus pandemic has continued to impact on the work of Berkshire West partners in 2021/22. Local priorities were set to help address consequences of the pandemic (including social isolation, physical deconditioning, and job insecurity). These priorities very much shaped integration work programmes for the year. Work also included the establishment of step-down beds, an alternative to emergency inpatient care in an acute hospital setting, and the preventing of premature admission to long-term residential care.

Partners have continued to work together to support the Covid-19 vaccination programme, with vaccination clinics running at GP surgeries, schools, local pharmacies, and new walk-in centres such as Wokingham Library. Reducing health inequalities has been a core focus of the vaccination roll-out with significant community engagement efforts supporting the most vulnerable in our communities to get their vaccination.

As the vaccination programme has rolled out, reducing the risk of becoming seriously ill or being admitted into hospital, partners have commenced the recovery and restoration of services. We have developed better ways of working collaboratively to support urgent and emergency care, strove to ensure the timely diagnosis and start of treatment of people with cancer, and developed services to support the health and wellbeing of our younger population such as the Emotional Wellbeing model developed in Wokingham.

Looking forward to 2022/23, the Unified Executive has reviewed and refreshed its priorities, receiving input from a range of stakeholder organisations across Berkshire West including the three locality integration boards. The refreshed priorities are:

- Making the most of Multi-disciplinary Teams (MDTS) to reduce the risk of events such as emergency hospital admission.
- Using Additional Role Re-imbursement Scheme (ARRS) monies to improve the sustainability of the primary care workforce.
- Planning for and managing same-day urgent demand.
- Ensuring rapid community discharge for people fit to leave hospital.
- Tackling cardiovascular disease.
- Promoting the emotional health and wellbeing for children and young people.

Recent reflections from the Unified Executive and council elected members have reconfirmed the commitment of all partners to the work of Berkshire West placed-based partnership and partnership working more broadly. The national legislative

changes will see new Integrated Care Boards being put on a statutory footing from July 2022 with significant focus on delivery of integrated care through place-based partnerships. As part of this change, we have been planning for the transfer of statutory commissioning functions and staff from the CCG to the new Integrated Care Board across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West.

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Changes to the Constitution</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Council on 21 July 2022
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director, Governance

**OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Reviewing the Council's Constitution on a regular basis ensures that it is relevant and fit for purpose.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council agree the following changes to the Constitution, as recommended by the Monitoring Officer via the Constitution Review Working Group that:

- 1) additional wording to be added to Chapter 4.2, as set out in paragraph 1 of the report;
- 2) that 4.4.11 (Rules of debate Audit Committee) and 8.4.8 (Rules of debate Licensing and Appeals Committee), 9.1.9 Rules of Procedure (Standards Committee) be removed and subsequent sections renumbered, as set out in paragraph 1 of the report;
- 3) additional wording to be added to Rule 4.4.19, as set out in paragraph 2 of the report.

**SUMMARY OF REPORT**

Chapter 1.1.4 of the Council's Constitution states that the Monitoring Officer will monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure that its aims and principles are given full effect.

The report contains revisions to several areas in the Constitution which were agreed by the Constitution Review Working Group (CRWG) for recommendation to the Monitoring Officer, at their meeting on 8 July 2022.

## **Background**

### **1. Chapter 4.2 – Council Rules of Procedure**

At its meeting on 8 July 2022 the Constitution Review Working Group considered proposed amendments relating to rules of debate and the Special Council Executive Committee.

In February 2022 Council agreed a change to Rule 4.2.13.1 Rules of Debate which states that if no Member wishes to speak against an item on the agenda, then the Mayor/Chairman would put the matter straight to the vote.

The rules of procedure of many committees including Special Council Executive, Audit, Overview and Scrutiny and Licensing and Appeals all state that debates shall take place in accordance with the rules laid down in Chapter 4.2.

The Working Group felt that it was not appropriate that the Audit, Licensing and Appeals and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees should be bound by Rule 4.2.13.1 as it stifles the opportunity for any Member who is not against a particular recommendation but wishes to ask a question or raise a particular point to do so.

It is therefore proposed that the following be added to Chapter 4.2 Council Rules of Procedure:

#### **Application of Rules of Procedure to Committees and Sub-Committees**

All of the Council Rules of Procedure apply to meetings of the Council and its Committees and Sub-Committees (*except for Rules of debate which applies only to Council and Special Council Executive*).

The removal of the following and subsequent renumbering of following sections is also proposed:

#### **~~4.4.11 Rules of Debate~~**

~~Debates at the Audit Committee shall take place in accordance with the rules laid down in Chapter 4.2.~~

#### **~~8.4.8 Rules of Debate~~**

~~Debates at the Licensing and Appeals Committee shall take place in accordance with the rules laid down in Chapter 4.2.~~

#### **~~9.1.9 Procedure at Ordinary Meetings~~**

~~Ordinary meetings of the Standards Committee shall be conducted in accordance with the Council Rules of Procedure set out in Chapter 4.2~~

### **2. Chapter 4.4 – Committees of the Council**

At a recent meeting of the Special Council Executive Committee, it would have been helpful if the relevant Executive Member could have introduced the report under discussion and been able to answer any questions that the Committee might have had on the matter.

It is therefore proposed to add the following paragraph to Rule 4.4.19 Rules of Debate:

*“If the Executive Member responsible for the item under discussion is not a member of the Committee then they will be invited to attend the meeting in order to introduce the report and answer any questions that the Committee may have.”*

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION**

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

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

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

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### **Cross-Council Implications**

None

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

This report has had due regard to the public sector equality duty and where applicable and available has included information relating to impacts upon people with protected characteristics and inequality.

### **List of Background Papers**

Council's Constitution

<b>Contact</b> Madeleine Shopland	<b>Service</b> Democratic Services
<b>Telephone No</b> Tel: 0118 974 6319	<b>Email</b> madeleine.shopland@wokingham.gov.uk

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