



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** will be held in David Hicks 1
- Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on
TUESDAY 18 JULY 2023 AT 7.00 PM

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 10 July 2023

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

Note: Non-Committee Members and 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 viewed live using the following link:

https://youtube.com/live/LqMevz_ahOw?feature=share

This meeting may 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.

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

MEMBERSHIP OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Councillors

Alistair Neal (Chair)	Andrew Mickleburgh (Vice-Chair)	Andy Croy
Norman Jorgensen	Pauline Jorgensen	Adrian Mather
Stuart Munro	Alison Swaddle	Chris Johnson
Catherine Glover	Caroline Smith	

Substitutes

Charles Margetts	Graham Howe	Peter Dennis
David Cornish	Morag Malvern	Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
Bill Soane	Jane Ainslie	Ian Pittock
Phil Cunningham	Marie-Louise Weighill	

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
13.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.	
14.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 June 2023.	5 - 12
15.		DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest.	
16.		PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions. A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice. The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this Committee. Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions	
17.		MEMBER QUESTION TIME To answer any Member questions.	
18.	None Specific	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL To consider a presentation from the Leader of the Council on challenges/opportunities for the year ahead – followed by Q&A.	13 - 20

19.	None Specific	ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2022/23 To consider the Annual Formal Complaints Report for 2022/23.	21 - 34
20.	None Specific	BUS ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP AND SCHEME To consider and comment on the draft Bus Enhanced Partnership and Scheme.	35 - 100
21.	None Specific	CONSIDERATION OF THE CURRENT EXECUTIVE AND IEMD FORWARD PROGRAMMES To consider the current published version of the Executive Forward Programme and the Individual Executive Member Decision Forward Programme.	101 - 114
22.	None Specific	O&S COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMMES To discuss the work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees.	115 - 140
23.	None Specific	ACTION TRACKER REPORT To consider the regular Action Tracker report.	141 - 144

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

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

CONTACT OFFICER

Neil Carr

Tel

Email

Postal Address

Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

07889 669359

neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk

Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 JUNE 2023 FROM 7.00 PM TO 10.00 PM

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Alistair Neal, Andrew Mickleburgh, Andy Croy, Norman Jorgensen, Adrian Mather, Alison Swaddle, Chris Johnson, Catherine Glover and Caroline Smith

Other Councillors Present

Councillors: Prue Bray, Graham Howe and Ian Shenton

Officers Present

Neil Carr, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist
Graham Ebers, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources & Assets
Giorgio Framalocco, Director, Place & Growth
Emily Higson, Head of Insight, Strategy & Inclusion
Louise Livingston, Assistant Director, HR & Organisational Development
Sally Watkins, Chief Operating Officer
Callum Wernham, Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

The Committee elected a Chair for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED: That Al Neal be elected as Chair of the Committee for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

The Committee appointed a Vice-Chair for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED: That Andrew Mickleburgh be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Pauline Jorgensen and Stuart Munro.

Graham Howe attended the meeting as a substitute.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee, held on 15 March 2023, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to an amendment on Page 7, second paragraph:

“...KPIs were assigned a RAG status (Red for on target.....amend to Green for on target.

5. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

7. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

8. THAMES WATER

Further to a request from the Committee, Richard Aylard, Thames Water's Sustainability Director, attended the meeting to give a presentation and answer Member questions on matters of interest to residents and local communities. James Bentley, Thames Water's Operations Director, joined Richard for the Q&A which followed.

The presentation covered the following issues:

- How does a sewage treatment works operate?
- Why do flows increase after rainfall? Causes - infiltration, missed and unauthorised connections, inundation and physical damage.
- Why do flows increase after rainfall – dual manholes.
- Impacts on river water quality – reasons for not achieving Good status in the Thames River Basin.
- Event Duration Monitor (EDM) – showing the number and duration of overflows at sites in the Borough.
- Storm Discharge Interactive Map – showing storm discharge activity indicated by Thames Water's EDM at sites in the Borough. The map has been updated to include improvement plans.
- Thames Water Investment Plans – Wokingham Borough:
 - Arborfield Sewage Treatment Works (STW) – an upgrade is planned to improve the ability to treat the volumes of incoming sewage, reducing the need for untreated discharges in wet weather. Due to complete in 2026.
 - Remenham STW – is a small treatment works, currently operating well with no major upgrade schemes planned.
 - Longwater STW – ongoing work to improve the efficiency of its sludge system.
 - Ash Ridge (Wokingham) STW – an upgrade is planned to improve the ability to treat the volumes of incoming sewage, reducing the need for untreated discharges in wet weather;
 - New Mill STW – is currently operating well and there are no plans for major upgrade schemes.
 - Wargrave STW – is being upgraded to improve its ability to treat the volumes of incoming sewage, reducing the need for untreated discharges. The scheme is due to complete in 2026. Assessments for future upgrades are also being considered to cater for future growth in the Wargrave system.

In the ensuing discussion, Members raised the following points and questions:

The Wargrave STW supported a large catchment area and a population equivalent of 119k. Local Members were interested in the planned investment plans from 2026 onwards. Richard Aylard stated that Thames Water would be happy to deliver a tour of the site for a small group – up to six people. Generally, Thames Water would be happy to deliver talks to local communities, perhaps via the relevant Town and Parish Councils.

It was noted that a number of STWs in Reading had an impact on Wokingham Borough. Reading STW was one of the biggest and newest STWs, so there were no immediate plans for investment. There were eight sewage discharges into the Kennet in 2022 which was relatively low, but still too high.

There were ongoing issues at the Grazeley Road pumping station and a new station at Three Mile Cross – the system appeared to take a long time to switch back on following incidents, resulting in problems such as sewage in gardens. Were there any plans to address this? Richard Aylard and James Bentley undertook to investigate and provide a response for Councillor Chris Johnson.

In relation to ongoing investment in infrastructure, would Thames Water be using its own money? Richard Aylard explained that the regulatory system required the water companies to carry out the works and recover the costs from customers over the life of the works. In recent years shareholders had put more investment into Thames Water, but there was a limit. Companies needed incentives to invest and the regulator (Ofwat) had to ensure that the process worked. Over the past decade, bills have reduced at the expense of increased investment.

The presentation highlighted some positives in relation to investment, but it appeared that, in the 30 years since the water companies were established, there had been insufficient investment. Richard Aylard confirmed that this was accurate, but the water companies had been constrained by what Ofwat allowed them to do. There was also an enormous challenge in relation to the state of the infrastructure (Victorian pipes, etc.) and EU Directives relating to clean and waste water. The focus on keeping water bills low had limited the funds for investment. Thames Water were now carrying out a forensic examination of all its assets and was working on a submission to Ofwat on the price review process. This submission could be shared with Members once it was finalised.

There had been two incidents relating to sink holes in Elms Field and Evendons. What learning had been taken from these events? Was Thames Water happy with the work of the contractors involved in those events? Richard Aylard confirmed that there could have been more effective communication with elected Members and residents. Thames Water were happy to look at specific points raised by Members and were willing to talk to local Members and residents.

In relation to the cost of living crisis, what measures were there to help people who were struggling to pay their bills? James Bentley confirmed that people who were struggling could receive up to 50% off their bills under the social tariff: "Waterhelp". It was noted that WBC officers needed to be aware of the help that Thames Water was offering so that residents of the Borough could be advised. James Bentley confirmed that Thames Water would welcome closer working with WBC on issues relating to affordability and on more general issues affecting residents.

In relation to the payment of dividends, could Thames Water provide clarification on payments to internal shareholders and the movement of funds within the company structure? It was confirmed that a written response could be provided to clarify this issue.

In relation to new housing developments and their impact on the supply of water, how was Thames Water working with local councils? It was confirmed that Thames Water tried to work with councils on Local Plans and tried to establish a long term view on new housing and its implications for water and sewage treatment services. If development was not

carried out properly, for example resulting in increased amounts of surface water, then problems could arise. Thames Water was a statutory consultee for local plans but not for individual planning applications. As the Council was currently working on a new Local Plan, it was important to ensure that Thames Water were involved in the process.

Richard Aylard explained that smart metering was being rolled out in 2024. Thames Water would like to talk to WBC in September about the benefits of smart meters. Compulsory smart meters would be rolled out in Berkshire from the beginning of 2024.

Thames Water suffered from a high level of leaks through burst water mains, etc. What steps were being taken to address this issue? It was confirmed that this was a top priority for the company with regular high-level meetings to discuss incidents and progress. Failure to meet leakage reduction targets resulted in financial penalties for the water companies. It was confirmed that feedback on the current situation relating to water leakages in the Borough could be fed back after the meeting.

In relation to new housing developments, there appeared to be delays in the adoption of infrastructure such as new roads as a result of inaction by Thames Water. James Bentley confirmed that the company would be happy to discuss individual cases and see what lessons could be learned.

In relation to the Climate Emergency, what steps were being taken to meet water reduction targets? It was confirmed that smart meters had an important role to play as they could result in significant reductions in water usage. Thames Water was working with developers and offering discounts for water efficient works. It was also important to provide hints and tips for residents to limit their daily water usage. Effective communication was important and councils had a part to play.

The Chair thanked the Thames water representatives for attending the meeting and engaging in a constructive debate with the Committee.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) Richard Aylard and James Bentley be thanked for attending the meeting and answering Member questions in a constructive manner;
- 2) the Chair write to Thames Water with a summary of the issues discussed and an invitation to attend the Committee's meeting on 16 January 2024, in order to discuss progress on the matters discussed;
- 3) Members consider the invitation from Thames Water for small groups to visit local sewage treatment works, such as Wargrave STW, perhaps in conjunction with representatives for Town and Parish Councils;
- 4) Town and Parish Councils be alerted to the opportunity for briefings from Thames Water on local water/sewage-related issues;
- 5) further discussions be held with local Members on the lessons learned from the two sinkhole incidents (Elms Field and Evendons), potentially via a meeting with residents;
- 6) a meeting be arranged for Thames Water to brief WBC staff on the measures developed to support residents who were struggling to pay bills – the briefing to

include Thames Water's priority service register (for older/disabled residents) and the social tariff;

- 7) a meeting be arranged with Thames Water in September 2023 in order to discuss the pros and cons and rollout of smart water meters across the Borough in 2024;
- 8) Thames Water hold discussions with WBC planners and highways staff on ways to remove blockages in the process for adopting new estate infrastructure;
- 9) Thames Water and WBC officers consider ways of delivering water efficient homes through the planning process and implementation of the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Q4 2022/23 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 21 to 68, which set out the Q4 Performance Monitoring Report for 2022/23 (January to March 2023).

Prue Bray (Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Children's Services) attended the meeting to present the report on behalf of Sarah Kerr (Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services).

Louise Livingston (Head of HR & Organisational Development) introduced the report and highlighted some inconsistencies in the figures, including the pie charts at the start of the report.

Overall, Q4 showed good performance in spite of ongoing challenges relating to inflation and financial uncertainty at a national and international level. Of the 41 KPIs reported, 23 were Green, 7 were Amber and 4 were Red. Seven KPIs were in the process of being categorised and assigned SMART targets..

The four Red KPIs were:

- RA 10B – Completion to time and budget of regeneration works (residential works);
- CS3 – percentage of children in care who were 20 miles + from their homes and out of the Borough;
- CS4 – Percentage of Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessments completed within 20 weeks of referral;
- AS2 – Social work assessments allocated to commence within 28 days of the request (counted at the point of allocation).

The report gave details of the measures being implemented to bring these KPIs back on track.

The report also gave details of the top wins, top opportunities and challenges facing each of the Council's service directorates.

In the ensuing discussion, Members raised the following points and questions:

RA4 – Return on investment portfolio – Property Investment Fund – would it be useful to include a valuation for the assets in the Council’s property portfolio? Graham Ebers commented that the return on investment was the most useful information for Members. However, further consideration would be given to this suggestion about valuation, with feedback provided to Members.

RA8 – Capital Budget monitoring forecast position – what factors lay behind the 11% underspend on the Capital Budget? Graham Ebers stated that there were a number of factors. High inflation and high interest rates had led to a focus on avoiding Capital expenditure in certain areas in order to mitigate the impact of the current financial situation. The detail would be reported to the Executive in July 2023.

CS3 – Percentage of children in care who are 20 miles + from their homes and out of the Borough – what factors had led the KPI to move from Red to Green? Prue Bray commented that children could still be in care if placed with family members. Some families had moved out of the Borough but were still included in the report. There was also an issue around unaccompanied asylum seeker children. The KPI covered a number of complex issues. Andrew Mickleburgh commented that this KPI would be closely scrutinised by the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Pages 29 and 33 – Challenges for Place and Growth and Children’s Services – were action plans in place to address these challenges? Prue Bray stated that action plans were in place in relation to the Children’s Services challenges. These action plans would be considered by the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course. In relation to Place and Growth, Graham Ebers commented that 2023/24 would be a challenging year for all services. A service corporate efficiency target of £12m had been set, which was twice the target in any other year. High levels of inflation, interest rates and the cost of living were ongoing challenges in addition to emerging pressures, such as home to school transport and homelessness.

Recruitment and retention appeared to be an issue across the organisation, along with sickness absence. What steps were being taken to address these? It was confirmed that the HR team were working on a new People Strategy, linked to the new Community Vision and Council Plan. Work was also ongoing to improve absence management. The report stated that the absence rate for Q4 was slightly above target but still well below the public sector average.

RA3 – usage of Wokingham Borough leisure centres – was the aim of the service to achieve financial break-even? Graham Ebers confirmed that the Council had an arrangement with the contractor (Places for People) which involved a management fee. Increased usage resulted in an increased management fee. It was noted that some of Borough’s leisure centres (such as the Carnival Hub) were achieving better results than others.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) Prue Bray and supporting officers be thanked for attending the meeting to present the performance report and answer Member questions;
- 2) officers review the layout and content of the charts at the beginning of the report to ensure that they were providing accurate information and adding value to the report;

- 3) the KPI relating to use of the Borough's leisure centres (RA3) be reviewed by the Executive Member and Director in light of the recent improvement in attendances;
- 4) leisure centre attendance, targets and performance be the subject of a further report to the Committee;
- 5) officers consider the Member request for the inclusion of asset values in KPI RA4 - Return on investment portfolio – Property Investment Fund;

10. CONSIDERATION OF THE CURRENT EXECUTIVE AND IEMD FORWARD PROGRAMMES

The Committee considered a copy of the Executive Forward Programme and Individual Member Decision Forward Programme, as set out on Agenda pages 69 to 82.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Forward Programme and Individual Member Decision Forward Programme be noted.

11. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMMES

The Committee considered its forward work programme and that of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees as set out on Agenda pages 83 to 96.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) Scrutiny suggestions from Town and Parish Councils and residents (reported to the March 2023 meeting) be allocated to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- 2) all Scrutiny reports and presentations be included in the published Agenda ahead of the Committee's meetings;
- 3) the Chair and Vice-Chair discuss the format and timing for the proposed Scrutiny item on Air Quality – progress against the improvement action plan.

12. ACTION TRACKER REPORT

The Committee considered the regular Action Tracker report.

RESOLVED That:

- 1) the Action Tracker report be noted;
- 2) each Overview and Scrutiny Committee develop its own Action Tracker.

This page is intentionally left blank

Leader Update

Overview & Scrutiny

13

July 2023



An update on the Challenges

Finance



Unprecedented financial position with spiralling inflation coupled with a budget gap

Joint Exec/CLT 'Challenge Sessions' continuing ensuring there is a system wide review of the use of council funding and understanding of impacts of difficult budget decisions

Cost of Living



Cost of Living Crisis, rising inflation and growing financial pressure on our communities

Development of the year 2 tackling poverty action plan led by the Hardship Alliance in conjunction with a team of Assistant Directors to drive impact

Partnership



Inconsistency in partnership relationships, leading to missed opportunities for collaboration

Progressing the development of a vision for the borough, system wide approach introduced on partnerships across the Council inc Education, Town and Parish Councils, VCS

Governance



Opportunity to improve governance, scrutiny and review

Dedicated project plan developed in response to the Centre of Public Scrutiny recommendations

Community Vision...What have we done so far



External workshops held
between January to March 2023

15



With c. 150 attendances
across the workshops



With community representation from
50+ organisations e.g. Town and Parish
Councils, NHS Royal Berkshire, CLASP,
Age UK and TVP

During these workshops, six key themes were identified:

**Health and
well-being**

**Equality,
inclusion and
opportunity**

**Environment
and
Sustainability**

**Community,
engagement,
action and
empowerment**

**Engaging with
young people**

**Engaging with
businesses**

**Leading to the development of an internal and external Steering Group structure
being created to co-own and co-create the vision for Wokingham**

High level summary of the Vision sessions with external partners



Building on strengths

- Support and buy-in to drive a vision that is co-designed and co-owned by the community
- Strong belief in positive opportunities for creating a partnership harnessing support of Wokingham Borough's diverse communities
- Collaboration between partners is strong and has led to real change and positive impact for communities



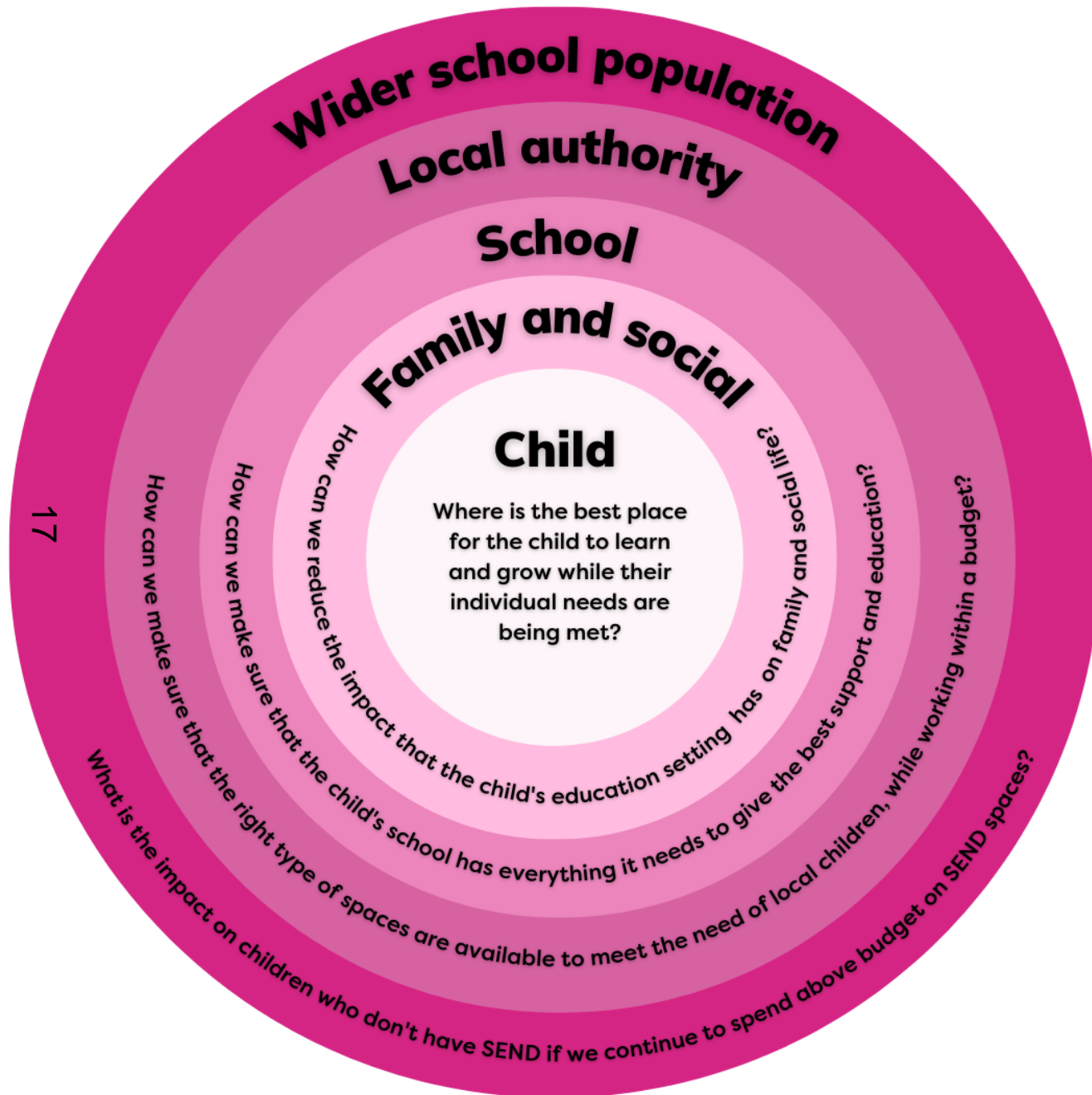
Working together

- Being truly inclusive and representative is key to building a vision that is owned by the whole community
- Understand the steps to develop the vision and what role each community group / partner has to play
- The need to remove formality and create “safe spaces” for open and honest conversation
- Ask for feedback often, and regularly update communities about progress



If the vision did one thing...

- Inspire and be aspirational about the future we want
- Empower residents, communities, partners and TPCs
- Improve quality of life for residents
- Reduce inequality and increase opportunities for all
- Be focused on outcomes and deliver on promises
- Build on strengths by deepening collaboration between partners



Working together to improve SEND education

Our vision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in the borough is simple.

We want all children and young people to have access to good quality education that meets their individual needs in a way that is most effective for all.

Through the creation of the Safety Valve programme, working with schools, parents and our communities we are committed to delivering our vision.

Having an impact

Crowdfund launched to support **cost of living** crisis response with council and partners providing an extra £2 for every £1 donated by public

Adult Education Service maintains **'Good'** Ofsted rating

First **Vision for the Borough** event held

January 23

18

DfE approve **the council's bid** for 2 special educational needs schools

Awarded **£3.1 million** to help purchase 17 new homes for Ukrainian refugees

Decision made to move to new waste collection scheme to **encourage recycling and reduce costs**

March 23

Launch of new scheme with local charity **Kaleidoscopic** UK to support children affected by domestic abuse

Council awarded £6.3 million funding from the DfE to help deliver new services supporting SEND children and young people locally

May 23

February 23

Council hosts first **youth politics** event to support better involvement in decision making

Council **extends subsidies** of key local bus routes

Social rents **capped at less** than the maximum increase

April 23

Council receives 4 nominations for MJ Achievement Awards, the highest number of nominations for one Council nationally

June 23

Winners of **two MJ awards**: Best Social Housing initiative and Delivering Sustainability & Social Value.

Loddon Court the residential short breaks service for adults with learning disabilities, reopened following a £400,000 investment to modernise the building

Next Steps

- Continuing to provide a safe budget position now and in future years for the organisation, whilst protecting the most vulnerable within the Borough
- Moving forward with our Vision for the Borough, through co-production and community engagement
- Work in partnerships with more organisations to drive better outcomes for our borough

This page is intentionally left blank

Formal Complaints – Annual Report Summary

2022/23



Formal Complaints | Executive Summary

78% of complaints were resolved early without formal escalation to Stage 1. Across all stages, 32.5% were upheld/partially upheld, 55% not upheld and 12.5% undetermined.

Deliverables and business context for 2022 - 23

- Complaints are complex and challenging:
 - Multiple stakeholders, require coordinated communication between the Council, utility companies, and residents
 - Waiting lists for care commissioned services, delay SEN health reports and EHC plans
 - Cold weather conditions, heavy rain and freezing conditions, saw a rise in potholes and delays in road maintenance. The weather also caused a rise in demand for tenant maintenance repairs
 - Media focus on one-off events and topical issues such as mould and potholes cause spikes in Service demand
 - Place & Growth dedicate resource to streamline complaint management and improve customer experiences
 - Housing Services received 51% of all complaints, which is higher than previous years. This is directly related to the introduction of the new Housing Ombudsman complaints policy which removed the early resolution stage. Prior to this policy change, Housing resolved most complaints informally.
- 22 Complaints about inadequate service or poor communication are usually resolved at Stage 1. Most Stage 2 complaints are not upheld because the decision was reached without fault.
- 79% of all complaints resolved early, related to Place & Growth services. These complaints reported incidents that disrupted people's routines and/or resulted in poor one-off experiences e.g. road/utility works causing traffic delays, rude construction workers, perceived lack of road work signage. Whilst no procedural failure was found, customers felt their interests were ignored.

Directorate	Total Formal	Early Resolution
ASC	35	32
Chief Executive Office	8	35
Housing	198	6 (from April 2022 only)
Children's Services	71	53
Place & Growth	65	587
Resources & Assets	14	33
(344 Unique case) TOTALS	391	746

What is the learning...

- If early resolution cannot be achieved, then timely escalation to Stage 1 should be actioned. Use letter templates and '3 C' writing guidance
- Remind officers of the resources available to them (templates and quality assessors) to ensure complaint responses align with 3C values.
- There has been a continuous rise in cases resolved early. This suggests confidence in the complaints process, as more customers use it to have their frustrations heard and understood.

Key actions completed 2022/23:

- 122 colleagues completed the 3 C workshops. This has improved the quality of complaint responses and with fewer Stage 2 escalations, higher customer satisfaction.
- Complaint policy re-written using 3 C principles.
- Successful implementation of the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code.
- Improved customer/colleague awareness of the Council's complaint process.

Areas of focus for 2023/24:

- Housing Ombudsman's 'Make things right' campaign.
- LGSCO complaint handling code introduction, that is earmarked for quarter 3.
- Consider impact of Ombudsman financial remedies.
- Consider data on timeliness of Council responses.

Formal complaints | Insight



Environment

- May 2022, Housing Services began managing complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code. This required the Council to respond to all complaints at Stage 1 and resulted in Housing Services making up a larger percentage of all complaints received by the Council; 51% as compared to averaging between 25-30% over 2021-22.
- The death of a 2-year-old boy, Awaab Ishak, in 2020 and a subsequent coroner report in November 2022, highlighted the failings of a social housing provider. Awareness of the need to control damp grew, contributing to a rise in tenant service requests, at a time when workloads (boiler repairs) were already high from the cold season. To manage the impact on Service delivery, a new mould and damp policy was introduced.
- Adverse weather caused delays to planned pothole and road maintenance. The re-scheduling of these works was impacted by National Highways planned improvements on the M4 network. This meant the Council had to first seek agreement from National Highways on the closure of relevant motorway slip roads, before it made its own road closures. The postponement of these works caused frustration and a rise in complaints about pothole related vehicle damage.



Ownership

- ASC recruited an Autism Lead to review the staff training programme on neurodiverse conditions and how this may impact delivery of service. This ensured clients with neurodevelopmental conditions receive information they can access and understand.
- The Children's Social Care team have managed to de-escalate complaints by being pro-active in addressing dissatisfaction early. The effort to understand the concerns of the complainant and agree on an appropriate resolution, mitigated the number of formal complaints submitted. Responses are also more transparent; where something has gone wrong, an apology is issued early with an explanation on what will be done to reduce a reoccurrence.
- Complaints regarding poor service from the contractors managing the gardens at sheltered schemes, resulted in the Asset Management team collaborating with other teams to resolve the issue.



Customer Expectations

- Customers confuse a decision they find disagreeable, with poor performance. These complaints make up most Stage 2 escalations and are not usually upheld, but they do highlight opportunities to improve how we communicate.
- Tenant group meetings with officer attendance, improved customer understanding of the Housing complaints policy and what they can expect when they complain.

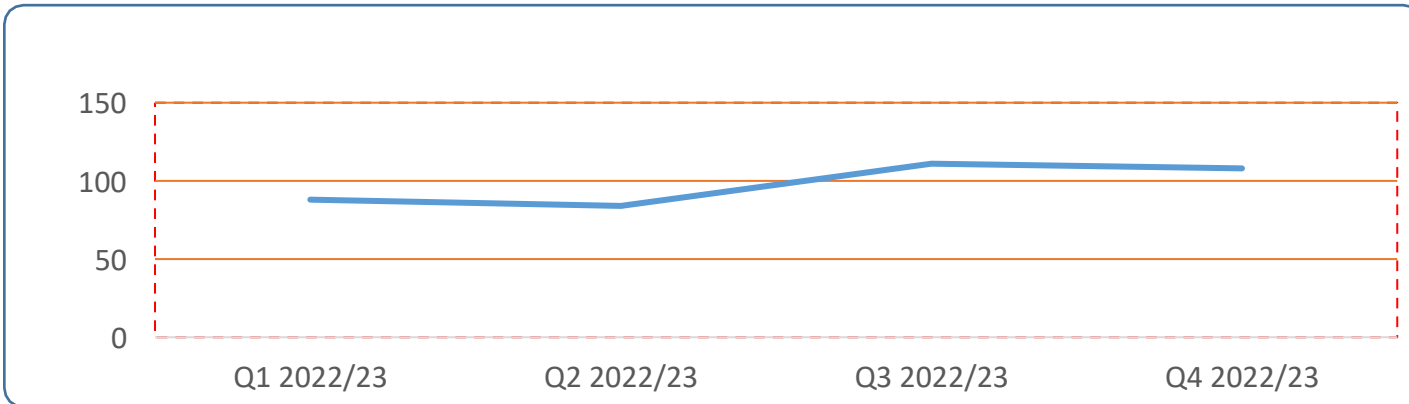


Suggested Improvements

- To better evaluate the volume of complaints received, the reporting changed to not include undecided cases raised in a previous quarter. This reduced the number of cases recorded at the LGSCO/HO stage, because their investigations often exceeded 3 months.
- Directorate complaint representatives, attended a LGSCO workshop in May 2022 on effective complaints handling.
- Three C's Writing workshops were made available to all staff. By the end of the March 2023, 122 colleagues had completed the workshop.
- Regular internal communication on what tools and services are available to officers in managing complaints effectively e.g. Quality assessors .

Formal Complaints | Volumes

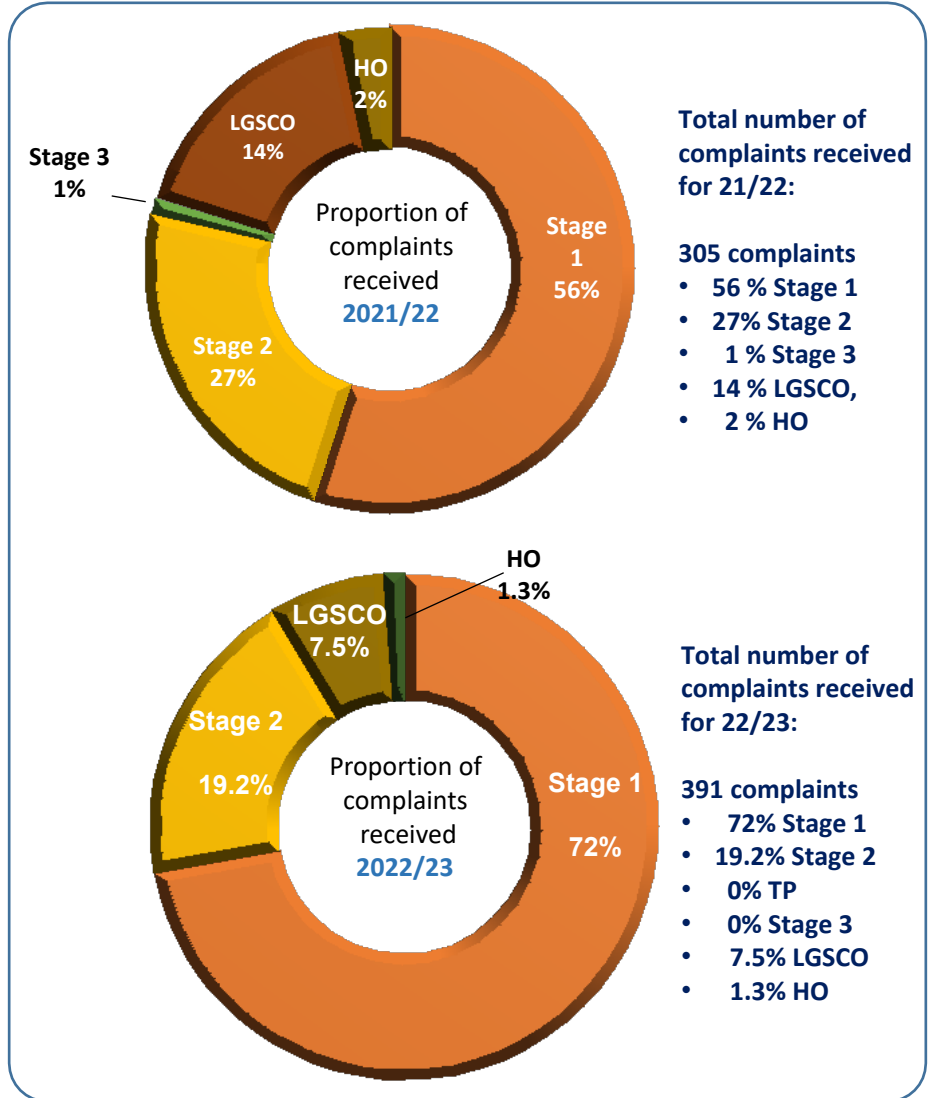
The number of formal complaints increased (28.2%). This was driven by the rise in Stage 1 complaints submitted (63%) and the change this year to only reporting on new cases received in any particular quarter.



Reporting is compared to previous Quarter

Period	Stage 1	Stage 2	TP ⁱ⁾	Stage 3 ⁱⁱ⁾	LGSCO	Housing ombudsman	Total	RAG Direction of Travel
Q1 2021/22	46	17	N/A	1	6	0	70	Green
Q2 2022/22	41	25	N/A	0	11	0	77	Red
Q3 2021/22	38	19	N/A	0	10	3	70	Green
Q4 2021/22	48	21	N/A	1	15	3	88	Red
Year end 2021/22	173	82	N/A	2	42	6	305	Blue
Q1 2022/23	64	18	0	0	6	0	88	Yellow
Q2 2022/23	57	12	0	0	13	2	84	Green
Q3 2022/23	84	21	0	0	4	2	111	Red
Q4 2022/23	77	24	0	0	6	1	108	Green
Year end 2022/23	282	75	0	0	29	5	391	Blue

ⁱ⁾Tenant complaint Panel ⁱⁱ⁾ Complaints at Stage 3 only apply to Children's statutory social care

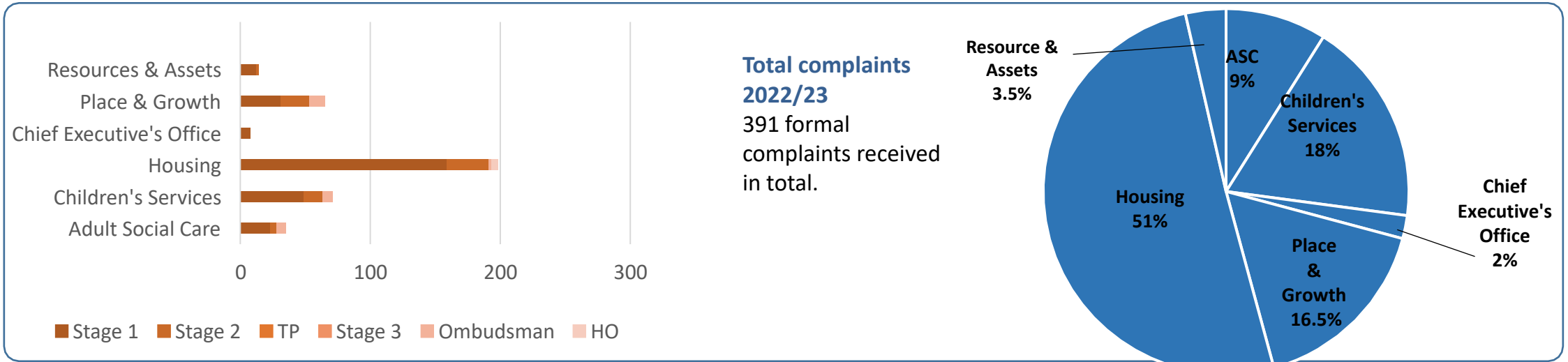


- The number of Stage 1 complaints increased by 109 cases (63%). This rise resulted from the introduction of the Housing complaint handling code.
- There were seven fewer (8.5%) Stage 2 requests, thirteen fewer (31%) LGSCO cases and one less Housing Ombudsman inquiry. This is noteworthy as it indicates greater satisfaction with the management of complaints at early resolution and Stage 1.
- The Council managed 347 unique cases.

Formal Complaints | Directorates and Service areas

Housing and Children’s Services received the highest volume of complaints at 51% and 18% respectively. Since the introduction of the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code, Housing increased it’s share of total formal complaints submitted.

25



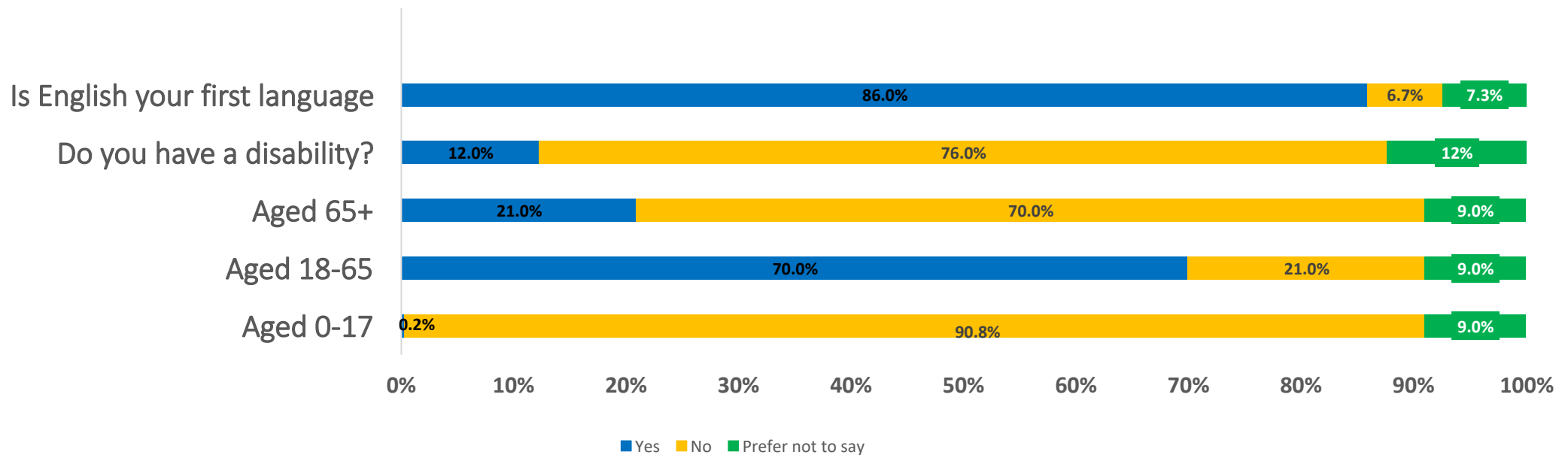
- **ASC** complaints totalled thirty-five, with twenty-three at Stage 1, five Stage 2 requests and seven LGSCO cases.
- **Place and Growth** complaints totalled sixty-five, with thirty-one at Stage 1, twenty-two at Stage 2 and twelve LGSCO cases.
- **Resources & Assets** complaints totalled fourteen, with twelve at Stage 1, and two escalating to Stage 2.
- **Housing** complaints totalled 198, with 159 at Stage 1, thirty-two Stage 2’s, two LGSCO cases and five Housing Ombudsman inquiries.
- **Children’s Services** complaints totalled seventy-one, with forty-nine Stage 1’s, fourteen at Stage 2 and eight LGSCO cases.
- **Chief Executive’s Office** complaints totalled eight complaints, all at Stage 1.

Equality monitoring data | 2022-2023

The following data was collected from 1252 completed/partially completed online complaint forms:

- 6.7% of the complaint forms were completed by customers with English not as a first language. This was consistent across all quarters.
- 12% of the complaint forms were completed by customers with a disability.
- 70% of the complaint forms were completed by those aged between 18-65.
- The results align with what is seen in the 2021 Census data for Wokingham.*

26



*Data taken from Berkshire Observatory [Population - UTLA | Wokingham | Report Builder for ArcGIS \(berkshireobservatory.co.uk\)](https://berkshireobservatory.co.uk). The 2011 Census was used to compare the data for “Is English your first language?” result.

CUSTOMER COMPLIMENTS

"Since Brittany became involved, she has been very proactive in trying to action and support as well as working with us to find possible solutions, which we have been grateful for as I know she is very busy and has heavy case load"

SEND team February 2023

"All the parts that have been missed all year have been done and it looks so much better and tidier .. So, on behalf of us all, thank you so much to yourself and the maintenance team"

Cleaner & Greener team November 2022

"I want to thank my social worker and my PA. They are such hard workers and they have helped me a lot I just love them and I just can't describe them by words. Finally, I want to thank all the other personal advisers"

*Children's Social Care team
November 2022*

"The summary setting out what is needed to comply is clear, uncomplicated... I believe the summary you provided would save anyone considering solar panels much time and consternation"

*Development Management team
September 2022*

"I want to praise for your professional response and advice to make the process less complicated. I have encountered many planning officers in different boroughs, your positive attitude and patience is certainly exceptional in handling our application... Thank you"

*Development Management team
June 2022*

"Just to say what an amazing day we had last Wednesday planting trees. The children all loved it and most of them have memorised where their tree is and named it! The men were fantastic with them and have done a brilliant job!"

*Westende Junior School for
work by Green Infrastructure
team
January 2023*

"very caring, understanding & highly professional. An absolute credit to her profession and to the position she holds at Wokingham Borough Council"

ASC team February 2023

27 "Please pass on my thanks and regards to the 'Sweepers'. They probably don't get too many thank-yous, so please let them know that I am really chuffed to have had all your help"

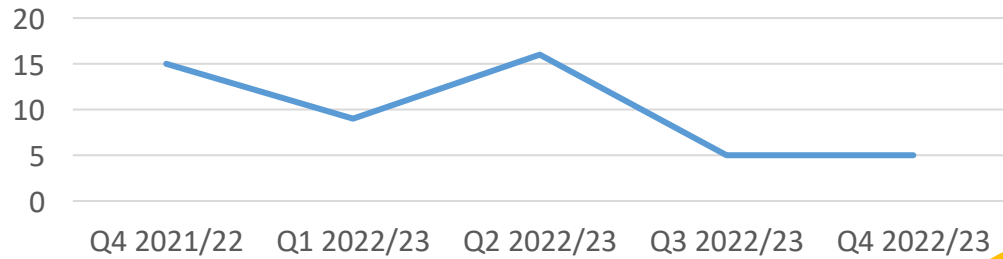
Clienting team January 2023



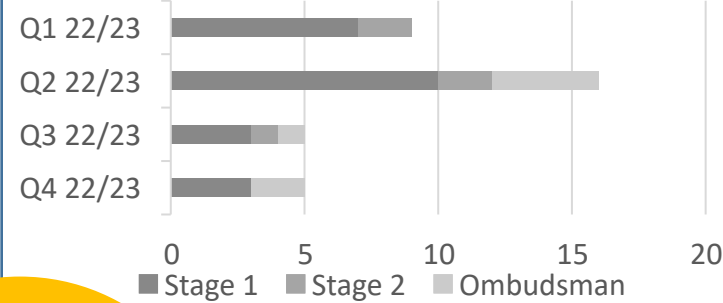
Formal Complaints | ASC

32 complaints were closed at Early Resolution. ASC managed thirty-five formal complaints of which 10 were upheld/partially upheld and 25 not upheld.

Total Formal complaints



Complaints per stage



Total complaints 2021/22

- 34 complaints
- 21 Stage 1
- 9 Stage 2
- 4 LGSCO

Total complaints 2022/23

- 35 complaints
- 23 Stage 1
- 5 Stage 2
- 7 LGSCO

28

How did we receive the complaints?



12

Web form



2

Email/Post

Which services were complaints submitted to?

Adult Social Care & Safeguarding (35)

What were our residents dissatisfied with?

Safeguarding



1

Poor communication



6

Financial assessment/decision



16

Decision



2

Inadequate Service



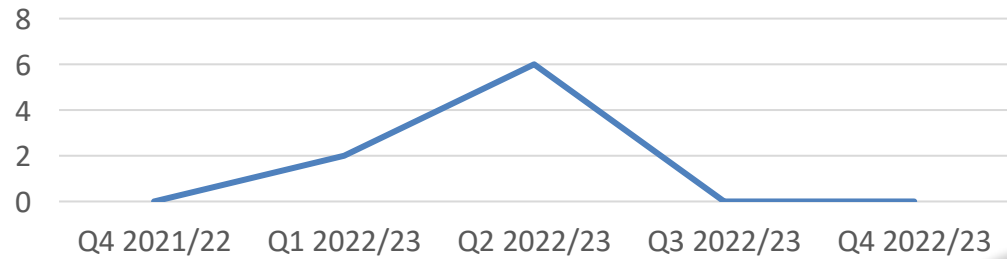
10

- The Service resolved **32** complaints outside the formal complaints process. The number of individual cases totalled 33. Over the year there was a downward trend in the volume of complaints received with the majority resolved at Stage 1. Of the Stage 2's, one case found fault in how the invoice payments were calculated.
- The complaints showed the importance of providing clear guidance and transparency around specialist housing/accommodation, and in how the Council determined it's discharge of duty rate. There were instances of insufficient collaboration between teams who assess and fund support. To remedy this, workers were reminded to regularly update the information they share with providers, especially when needs are high and where there are significant difficulties sourcing a suitable placement. When sourcing a placement is difficult, workers will be invited to attend a Placement Panel, so that an action plan can be agreed and committed to.
- Finance and Budget Holders have provided a series of training (Budget Reflection) sessions to all supervisors and managers to assist in the more complex aspects of support planning and placements.
- There were concerns that Social Workers lacked awareness about people living with autism or neuro-divergent conditions. An Autism Lead was recruited to review the staff training programme and offer training on neurodiverse conditions and how this may impact delivery of service.
- 7 new Ombudsman inquiries were made in Quarter 2. Three cases were closed without investigation because there was no evidence of fault. On the other four cases, which related to safeguarding, care home options and the service offered to a neuro-diverse client, one case was upheld for an inaccurate assessment. The complaint from the previous year reached a decision and was upheld, resulting in an apology, procedural changes and a financial remedy.

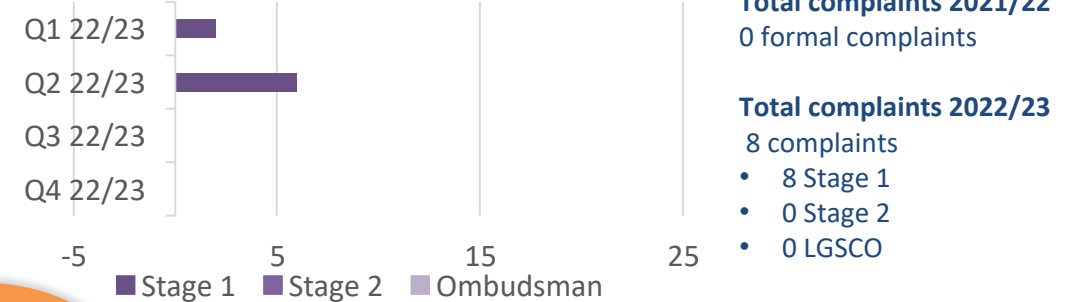
Formal Complaints | Chief Executive's Office

33 complaints were closed at Early Resolution. A single issue caused a dramatic rise in Qtr.2 and is not representative of the past and current trends seen in complaint volumes. Of the 8 complaints received, none were upheld.

Total complaints



Complaints per stage



29

How did we receive the complaints?



0

Via phone



8

Via webform/email

Which services were complaints submitted to?

Libraries Service
(8)

What were our residents dissatisfied with?

Decision



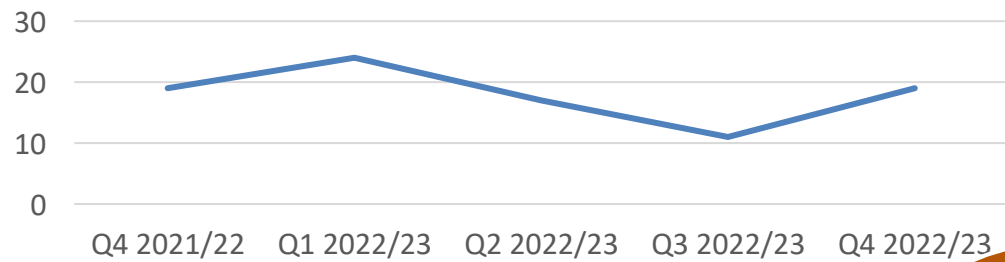
8

- **33** complaints were resolved outside the formal complaints process. The libraries Service formally managed **8** individual cases.
- Eight Stage 1 complaints related to the Libraries Service hosting a series of diversity and inclusion performances. The complaints were not upheld, but offered an opportunity to explain more fully the reason behind hosting the performances and what safeguarding measures were taken to ensure they were age appropriate. As a result, the commissioning process requires the performer to submit their publicity to the Council for approval, prior to it being made public.
- Callers to the Customer Service team, can feedback on their experience and the quality of service received. The Registrar's team achieved an overall satisfaction rating of 'Good'. Blue Badges, General Enquiries and Libraries achieved an 'Average' overall satisfaction rating.
- No formal complaints were raised in Quarters 3 and 4.

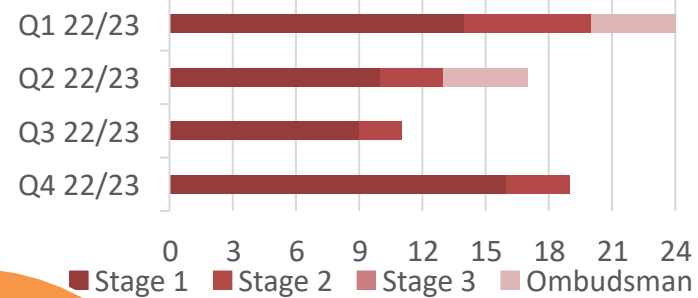
Formal Complaints | Children's Services

53 complaints were closed at Early resolution. Children's Services managed seventy-one formal complaints, of which 33 were not upheld, 22 upheld/partially upheld and 16 undetermined.

Total complaints



Complaints per stage



Total complaints 2021/22

68 complaints

- 35 Stage 1
- 17 Stage 2
- 2 Stage 3
- 14 LGSCO

Total complaints 2022/23

71 complaints

- 49 Stage 1
- 14 Stage 2
- 0 Stage 3
- 8 LGSCO

How did we receive the complaints?

30



22

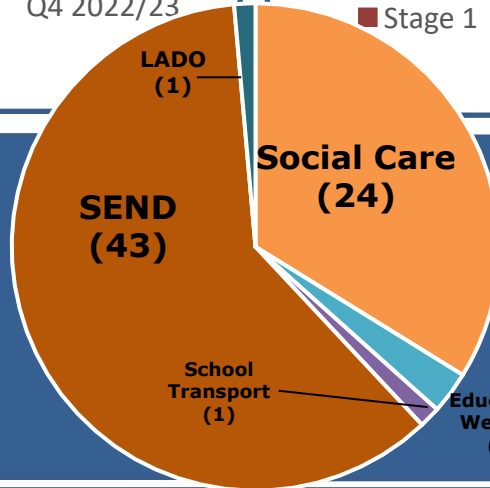
Web form



49

Email/post

Which services were complaints submitted to?



What were the key areas our residents were dissatisfied with?

Inaccurate recordkeeping



7

Inadequate communication



10

Decision



11

Inadequate service/delays



41

Staff Conduct

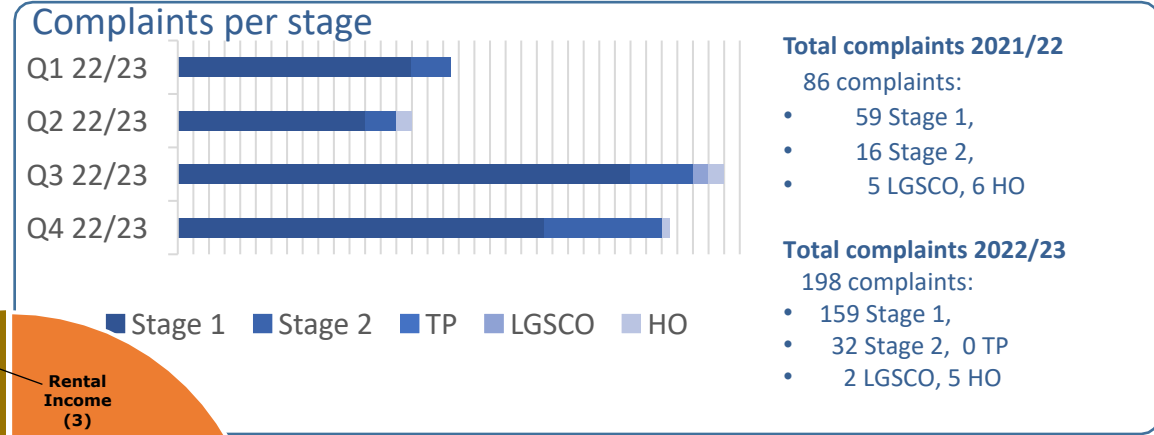
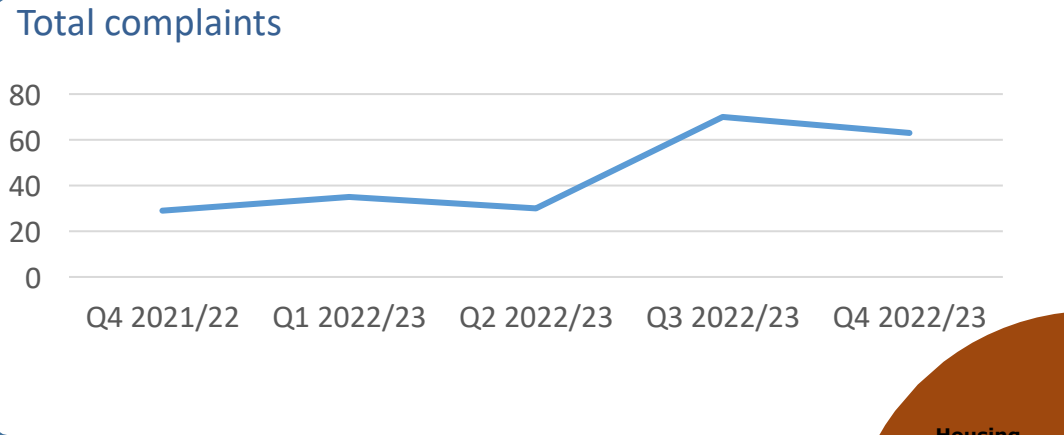


2

- 53 complaints were resolved outside the formal complaints process (24 social care and 29 Corporate). The Service managed 65 individual complaint cases.
- Children's Services Social care teams, responded to 16 complaints at Stage one and 5 cases at Stage two. These cases did not represent any identifiable trend, as the cause of dissatisfaction varied as well as the team which was seen to be at fault. Similarly, root causes were diverse; misunderstanding on what information needed to be amended in a report/assessment, alleged failure to respond to safeguarding concerns, alleged failure to fund support in a timely manner. The Social Care team received positive feedback for being attentive to young person opinions and the comprehensiveness of reports/assessments presented at Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) meetings.
- SEND issued 31 Stage 1 responses with 9 cases escalating to Stage 2. The complaints related to delays in issuing and/or reviewing an Educational Health Care (EHC) plan. The delays were often caused by demand for health reports exceeding the capacity of the local NHS trust. The number of complaints received for the SEND Service represented 2.5% of the entire EHCP cohort.
- The other Corporate complaints were closed at Stage 1 and were not upheld, but there was an unnecessary delay in issuing one response. The fourth quarter saw a reduction in the number of cases escalating to Stage 2 and the LGSCO, suggesting greater satisfaction with Stage 1 responses.
- The Council received 8 LGSCO inquiries. 3 cases (one related to the LADO Service) were not investigated and one was still to be determined. 4 cases received a Final decision in Quarter 3 and found fault against SEN and the school transport service. Recommendations included an apologies, financial payments and a review of processes to ensure statutory obligations are met in relation to EHC plans.

Formal Complaints | Housing

6 complaints were closed at Early Resolution and 159 at Stage 1. From 9th May 2022, the Service implemented, a new complaints, compliments and compensation policy. This policy requires all complaints to be issued a Stage 1 response. This contributed to the upward trend in cases requiring a formal response. Of the 198 complaints received, 88 were upheld/partially upheld, 80 not upheld and 30 undecided.



Total complaints 2021/22
86 complaints:

- 59 Stage 1,
- 16 Stage 2,
- 5 LGSCO, 6 HO

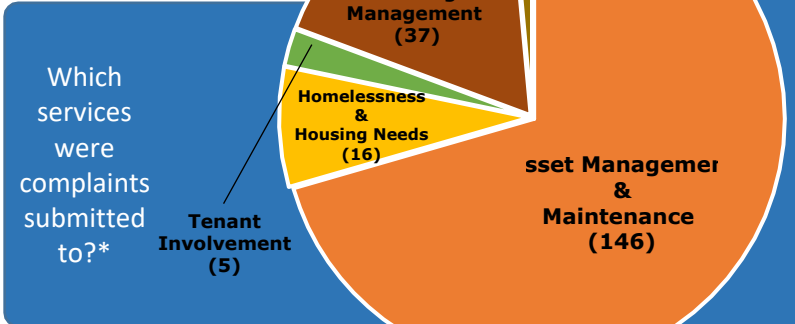
Total complaints 2022/23
198 complaints:

- 159 Stage 1,
- 32 Stage 2, 0 TP
- 2 LGSCO, 5 HO

3 How did we receive the complaints?

46 Webform

152 Email/Post



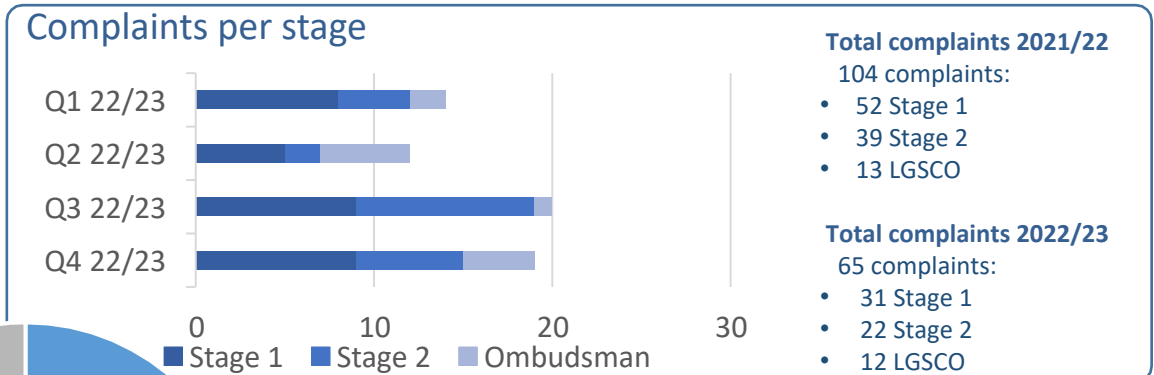
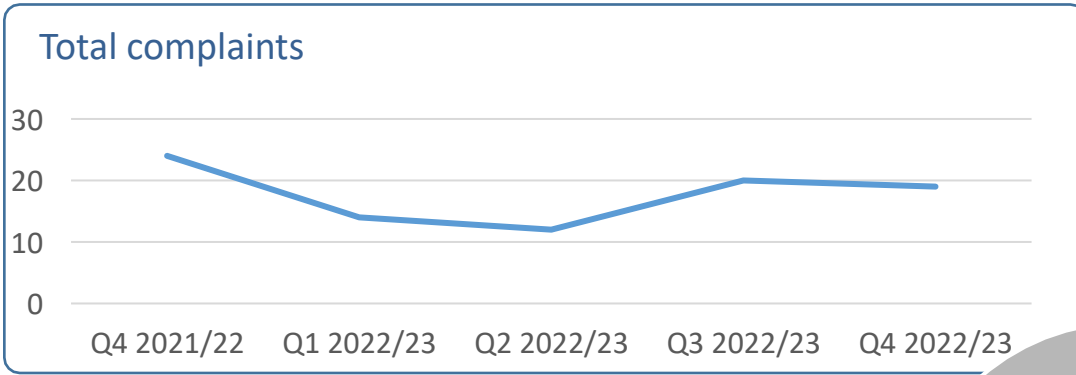
What were our residents dissatisfied with?*

Issue	Count
Decision	7
Mould & Damp	10
Maintenance repairs	87
Inadequate service	46
Lack of communication	39
Staff Conduct	20

- The Service formally managed **171 individual** complaint cases and received 113 compliments. * totals may not add up, as complex cases can involve more than one issue and Service.
- On 9th May 2022, a new Housing complaints policy was implemented. This policy removes the early resolution step and requires all cases to be issued a Stage 1 response. The impact of the new complaints policy cannot be underestimated; Qtr.1 saw a 30% rise in Stage 1 cases. This increase was centred around inadequate communication and service from the Asset & Management & Maintenance team. The number of complaints partially and fully upheld increased, with 10 out of 15 complaints closed in June identifying fault.
- In Qtr.2 tenant complaints dropped, but there was an increase in Cllr enquiries, FOIs and the amount of contact regarding a complaint that turned out to be a first request of service. This stretched the capacity of the Housing Services Customer Care team and was addressed with additional resource.
- In Qtr.3, Housing Services managed 34 more Stage 1 complaints. This increase centred on complaints about the out of hours telephony service and mould/damp concerns. Whilst complaints about mould are not unusual, Qtr. 3 saw a substantial rise in tenants reporting this issue. National media coverage of a toddler's death from mould exposure within a home environment, contributed to the surge in demand to address such issues.
- In Qtr.4, there were fewer Stage 1's, but more Stage 2's. because of delays in completing resolution outcomes at Stage 1. These delays arise from contractor's priorities shifting daily. The Customer Care team now closely monitor timeframes and request updates to remind Service teams of approaching deadline resolutions.
- The updated version of the Housing Complaints, Compliments and Compensation policy was approved by TLIP to ensure compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. This policy update will be presented in a new accessible format (agreed with Tenant Volunteers) and will then be uploaded to the website.
- The 'Make things right' campaign was launched by the government and Department for Levelling up. This campaign has a strong presence on social media platforms and encourages tenants to raise complaints to the Housing Ombudsman. The Service are therefore prepared for an increase in complaint inquiries from the Housing Ombudsman.

Formal Complaints | Place & Growth

587 complaints were closed at Early Resolution. Place & Growth managed sixty-five formal complaints, of which 5 were upheld/partially upheld, 59 not upheld and one still to be determined.



Total complaints 2021/22
104 complaints:

- 52 Stage 1
- 39 Stage 2
- 13 LGSCO

Total complaints 2022/23
65 complaints:

- 31 Stage 1
- 22 Stage 2
- 12 LGSCO

32

How did we receive the complaints?



23

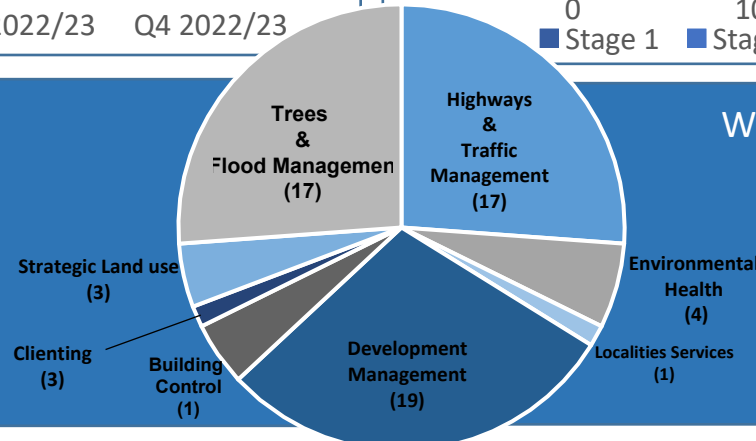
Web form



42

Email/Post

Which services were complaints submitted to?



What were our residents dissatisfied with?

Decision



32

Inadequate Service



11

Inadequate communication

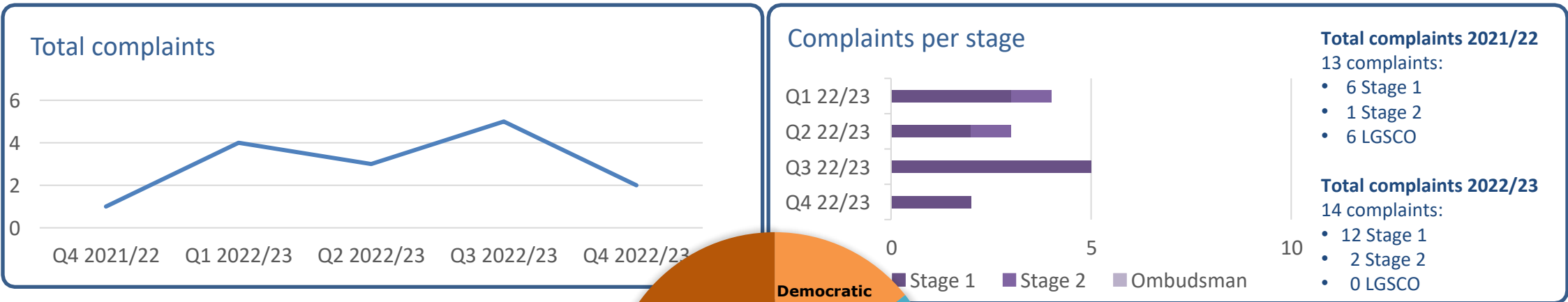


22

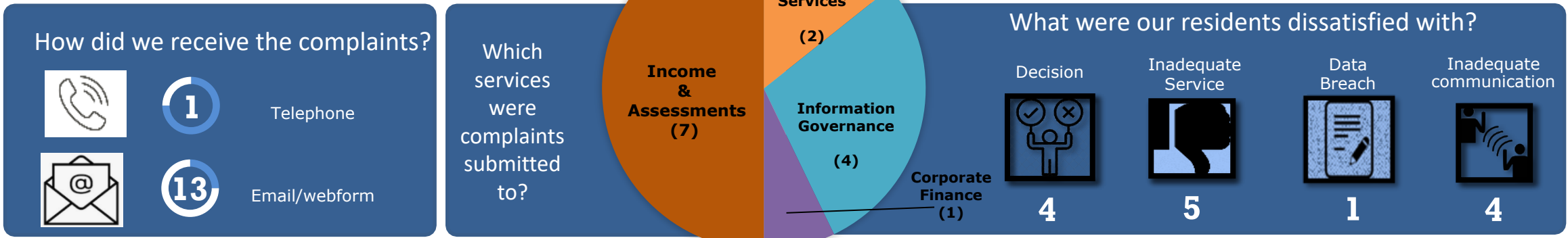
- 587 complaints, were resolved outside the formal complaints process. The Service formally managed 55 individual complaint cases.
- Compared to last year's total the volume of Early resolution complaints increased by 376%. These complaints centred on incidents that caused an immediate negative customer experience, with the majority allocated to the waste/recycling team and Highways. Regarding waste, many complaints centred on overflows at flat bin stores, garden collections deprioritised because of freezing weather and the behaviour of crews. Complaints were also raised about the blue bag rollout. For context, of the weekly collections made from 70,000 properties, 99.9% were completed successfully .
- Many complaints about road traffic diversions, were submitted with an acceptance that disruption was inevitable. These matters were resolved informally and shows a degree of customer confidence in having their voice heard through the complaints process. The high number of complaints resolved early by the Highways team, was down to improved complaint tracking that allowed for swifter replies and de-escalation.
- Of the thirty-one Stage 1 complaints, twenty-two escalated to Stage 2. Most of these complaints were not upheld and in the main related to unhappiness with a decision made without fault.
- Two formal complaints were upheld against Highways and Traffic Management and Environmental Health for inadequate communication. The Blue and Green infrastructure team plan to review the information online that details the application/procedural process, so that customer expectation are better managed.
- None of the Stage 2 cases were upheld.
- The LGSCO cases concerned Locality Services, Development Management, and Trees & Flood risk management. These cases were either not upheld or investigated due to insufficient evidence of fault. One case remained undetermined. Two LGSO cases from the previous financial year were resolved without finding the Council at fault; breach of Planning control was "properly considered" and no injustice was caused by the issue of a Tree Preservation Order.

Formal Complaints | Resources & Assets

33 complaints were closed at Early Resolution. Resources & Assets managed fourteen formal complaints, of which 4 were upheld and 10 not upheld.



33



- **33** complaints were resolved outside the formal complaints process. The Service managed **12 individual** cases.
- Of the four complaints upheld, all were at Stage 1 (three for Income & Assessments and one for Corporate Finance). They related to either inadequate service and/or poor communication. These were one-off instances and resulted in additional training via the new online Customer Experience Learning Programme, or a reminder to officers on the purchase order process. None of the complaints regarding Democratic Services or Information Governance were upheld.
- The recovery team have put processes in place to support those customers who have arrears or outstanding invoices on their accounts and are being affected by the rapid change in the cost of living. Customers are offered various payment options / support and where relevant signpost to debt advisers or key stakeholders.
- By December, approximately 36,700 households received their energy rebate. £200,100 was paid out to vulnerable households under the discretionary energy rebate scheme and collection for Council tax and Business rates was on track. The Income & Assessments team received 141 'Good' ratings via phone feedback on Gov metrics.
- The Service managed the delivery of over 70,000 annual council tax bills and 4,500 business rate bills. Payment grants have been administered of £400 and £200, to nearly five hundred eligible households totalling £145,600.

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE	Bus Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee on 18 th July 2023
WARD	(All Wards);
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Georgio Framalicco

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Improved bus services which better meet the local needs of our residents by improving access to jobs, health care and other services and amenities. The wider benefits will be reduced congestion, improved air quality and reduced carbon emissions.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is requested to:

- 1) Review the Draft Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme
- 2) Provide relevant comments on the Draft Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The National Bus Strategy published in March 2021 required all Local Transport Authorities (LTA) in England and outside of London, to publish a local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and agree an Enhanced Partnership (EP). An EP is a legal partnership agreement which is agreed following the publication of the BSIP.

The aim of the BSIP and EP is to raise the standards of local bus services and ensure that local bus services meet local needs. The Levelling-Up white paper (February 2022) highlights the important role of bus services for access to jobs, retail, and services, as well as for business-to-business connectivity and achieving positive health outcomes. The Council's second BSIP was published on 27th January 2023 and is available here: <https://myjourneywokingham.com/bus-travel/enhanced-partnership/> All LTAs are required to review their BSIPs on an annual basis.

Wokingham Borough Council had been unsuccessful in achieving any BSIP grant funding but have recently been allocated £400,000 for year 2023/4. It is understood that to receive the full funding that an Enhanced Partnership would need to be adopted by the end of September. Additional funding, of a similar value, is expected in year 2024/5, subject to the making of the EP.

The Enhanced Partnership aims to create a close relationship with the operators who have already input to the document and are in agreement with the contents. It now necessary to contact key organisations who have a right to object to the contents.

The next steps to publishing a making an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme are:

- 28-day statutory objection period from 20th July 2023
- 21-day consultation with statutory consultees from 18th August 2023
- Executive Committee approval – 28th September 2023
- Publish Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme – 29th September 2023

Background

Enhanced Partnership Agreement

The Enhanced Partnership (EP) Agreement, once formally made, forms a legal agreement between Wokingham Borough Council and local bus operators who operate qualifying local bus services. Qualifying local bus services are all registered local bus services, with the exceptions set out in 2.3.1.

If the EP Agreement is approved at the Council's Executive Committee on 28th September 2023, the Agreement will be formally made on 29th September 2023 and commence 70 calendar days after this date.

The EP Agreement is formed of two key components, the Enhanced Partnership Plan (EPP) and the Enhanced Partnership Scheme (EPS). The EPP sets out the Council's vision for local bus services and the key objectives and outcomes for improvements to local bus services. The EPP aligns with the Council's adopted Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), which was adopted in January 2023. The EPP has no end date and will be reviewed every 5 years.

EPS form the basis of the EP Agreement and provide details of which party will deliver which improvements and by when for local bus services. As the delivery of improvements to local bus services in the borough is subject to funding being provided by the Department for Transport (DfT), the EP Agreement presented for approval at this stage is a "shell agreement" which consists of headings, which can later be varied to include appropriate facilities, measures, routes or operational requirements as funding becomes available.

Once made the Enhanced Partnership Agreement can only be varied using either the powers adopted under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 or the bespoke variation arrangement, as detailed in Section 5 of the EP Agreement.

Governance Arrangements

The governance arrangements are detailed in Section 5 of the EPS. An EP Forum will be set-up to oversee and direct the work of the EP Scheme. The members of the EP Forum are detailed in Section 5.1.1 and can include:

- Wokingham Borough Council Officers
- Local Bus Operators
- Representatives of key stakeholders, including businesses, anchor institutions, community transport operators, Towns and Parish Councils and passenger focus groups.

The EP Forum will be chaired by The Executive Member for Active Travel Transport & Highways. The EP Forum will meet every 6 months and decisions will be taken on a simple majority basis. The votes will be allocated as followed:

- 1) All bus operators who run qualifying bus services (1 vote per operator that exceed 20% of bus mileage and **2 votes** for an operator that runs more than 50% of the bus mileage. Operators which function as more than one company but are part of the same financial entity will be treated as a single operator).

- 2) A bus Operator and any of its Group Companies that operate less than 20% of the aggregate miles operated by all Bus Operators in respect of Qualifying Bus Services within the Scheme Area, **1 vote** in total to represent all of those Operators interests.
- 3) Wokingham Borough Council Executive Member for Active Travel Transport & Highways (chair, **1 vote** and **casting vote**).
- 4) Wokingham Borough Council Officers (Highways and Transport) (1 vote each up to **2 votes**).

All other members of the EP Forum would be non-voting members. All decisions made by the EP Forum are subject to any relevant approvals which are required by Wokingham Borough Council's Constitution or any legislation, regulation, or statutory guidance.

Funding

The DfT have recently indicated that they will provide £400,000 towards facilities, measures, routes, or operational requirements which could be included in any EPS. The DfT expects Councils to include existing funding for local bus services in an EP.

The Council also has available S106 funding associated with new development sites. The S106 funding could be used to support bus services. Similarly, S106 funding has been secured for the provision of bus infrastructure associated with the new development sites.

Further developer funding forms part of the My Journey programme and can be used to contribute towards the promotion and marketing of local bus services.

Local bus operators are expected to contribute any planned expenditure which they have for the purpose of fleet upgrades, fleet renewals or route improvements.

Any suggestions made by the committee for measures, facilities, route requirements or operational requirements must be accompanied by a costed proposal. The costed proposal must demonstrate sufficient funding is available to allow their implementation and to achieve the desired outcomes.

Next Steps

- **20th July to 16th August 2023** – 28 days operator objection period
- **18th August 2023 to 8th September 2023** – 21 days consultation with statutory consultees.
- **28th September 2023** Executive Committee Approval
- **29th September 2023** Publish Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces unprecedented financial pressures as a result of; the longer-term impact of the COVID-19 crisis, Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the general economic climate of rising prices and the increasing cost of debt. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are optimised and 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)	Potential loss of £200,000 of grant funding	n/a	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Potential loss of £400,000 of grant funding	n/a	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	n/a	n/a	n/a

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

The Department for Transport have recently stated that £400,000 will be made available to support the implementation and delivery of the BSIP and an Enhanced Partnership Agreement. Subject to receiving formal terms and conditions, the DfT have indicated that 50% of the funding will be provided before the EP is made, the remaining 50% will be provided the month following the making of the EP. The DfT have also suggested a similar amount of funding will be awarded for 2024/25, subject to the making of the EP.

It should be noted that local bus services have been supported by Department for Transport funding throughout the pandemic. Local bus services are currently at 84% recovery levels.

Cross-Council Implications

Local bus services play an important part in allowing residents access to employment, education, health care and wider local amenities including leisure opportunities. Improving local bus services will have a positive impact on young people, older people, those with mobility impairments and residents with low-income. On this basis positive benefits may be seen for team working in the areas to social isolation, adult social care, childrens services, economic development, air quality, public health, behaviour change and congestion.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The BSIP and EP allow the Council an opportunity to improve local bus services, which will have a positive impact on those residents with protected characteristics. A Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment will accompany the Executive Report.

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

The EP Agreement will oversee and govern local bus service improvements which contribute reducing the number of miles driven, reducing carbon emissions and reducing congestion on local roads.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
None

List of Background Papers
Draft Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme September 2023 BSIP2 January 2023 Bus back better available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-back-better

Contact Rebecca Brooks	Service Place
Telephone No Tel: 0118 908 8302	Email rebecca.brooks@wokingham.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN AND SCHEME (DRAFT)

September 2023

41



CONTENTS

42

	page no.
Part 1 – Enhanced Partnership Plan	
1.1 Introduction	3
1.2 Extent of Wokingham Borough Council’s Enhanced Partnership	6
1.3 Policy Context	8
1.4 Challenges and Opportunities for Bus Travel	11
1.5 Overview of Local Bus Network	13
1.6 Bus Passenger’s Priorities for Improvement	15
1.7 Congestion and Journey Speeds	17
1.8 Reliability and Punctuality	19
1.9 Roadworks	19
1.10 Enhanced Partnership Plan Outcomes	19
1.11 Funding Arrangements	23
1.12 Governance Arrangements	24
1.13 Monitoring and Consultation	25
Part 2 – Enhanced Partnership Scheme 1	26
1 EP Scheme Content	26
2 Scope of the EP Scheme and commencement date	27
3 Obligations on the Local Authorities	30
4 Obligations on Bus Operators	42
5 Governance Arrangements	45
6 Dispute and Resolution Arrangements	50
Annex A Bus Priority Facilities	52
Annex B Real Time Information	53
Annex C Contact Details	55
Annex D Routes and Vehicles	56
Annex E Definitions	57

PART 1 – ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN

(1st October 2023 – 30th September 2028)

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The Wokingham Borough Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan is made in accordance with Section 138G(1) of the Transport Act 2000 by Wokingham Borough Council ('the Council').
- 1.1.2 Wokingham Borough Council and local bus operators have been working in partnership to deliver bus services across the borough. This has been a major factor in the steady growth in passengers over the past 10 years, which contrasts with the national trend and that seen in the wider Southeast region. The success of local bus services is a result of continued investment in local bus services for growth areas such as Shinfield, and investment by bus operators in bespoke service brandings and new vehicles.
- 43
1.1.3 Most local bus services in Wokingham Borough already support new technologies such as contactless payment, audio, and visual announcement, wi-fi and USB charging which enhance the passenger experience of bus travel. Wokingham Borough Council has promoted bus travel to residents and employees, both existing and new through its My Journey brand. Meanwhile, Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses have developed an award-winning mobile application to bring journey planning, ticketing, and live information all in one place.
- 1.1.4 The pandemic has had a significant effect on bus travel across the borough. Following the publication of the National Bus Strategy, Bus Back Better, Wokingham Borough Council and local bus operators have entered into an Enhanced Partnership agreement to formalise partnership working. The vision for the Enhanced Partnership is:

Vision

The Council's vision for Bus Services in Wokingham Borough is for a high-quality bus network for residents and visitors that contributes towards improving accessibility, local air quality, reducing road congestion and enabling carbon neutrality by 2030.

1.1.5 The objectives and the approach of the Enhanced Partnership are summarised below.

Objectives

Objective 1: Grow passenger numbers to pre-pandemic levels and to continue that growth.

Whist bus passenger journeys in Wokingham Borough increased against the national trend for the 10-years leading up until 2020, the effects of the pandemic have been significant. Bus passenger levels are at about 85% of their pre-pandemic levels and concessionary travel remains the most affected. Residents place a high importance on high quality, affordable and accessible local bus services.

Objective 2: Return bus services to pre-pandemic levels, improve levels of service and extend to new areas of travel demand.

By 2037, the population of Wokingham Borough is projected to reach 180,900 people, which is the equivalent to adding 20 people a day. Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy and Local Plan update set out the plans for the delivery of 10,000 new homes and the associated communities and infrastructure across the borough. As the borough continues to grow local bus services must support and enable residents to make the journeys they need to make. It is also part of the growing Thames Valley region.

Objective 3: Improve bus journey times, reliability and punctuality along key transport corridors.

Along many of the main transport corridors buses are delayed in traffic especially during peak periods. While there are physical constraints along sections of road due to the nature of the road network, every effort is needed to deliver bus priority measures with bus lanes, bus gates and traffic signals in both physical and virtual form. There is also potential to speed up boarding times with ticketing systems. Reducing journey time variation so there is greater reliability is also important.

Objective 4: Make fares affordable and simpler.

As the cost-of-living increases, keeping fares affordable is more important than ever. Fares in Wokingham Borough are below the national average for an average 3-mile journey. Targeted fare reductions have already taken place in some areas of the borough because of feedback from passengers where there is the opportunity to grow patronage commercially. Coordinated thinking with the Reading Borough BSIP has led to the introduction of a discounted day ticket across the whole of greater Reading, benefitting many residents in Wokingham borough. The opening and relaunch of park and ride sites in the borough present a good opportunity to consider a strategy for seamless, affordable fares and ticketing schemes with the aim of attracting more passengers back to these services. Future tap-on tap-off fare capping schemes will help to provide confidence that customers will always get the best value fare without having to plan in advance, and help to speed up boarding.

Objective 5: Deliver a greener bus network by reducing carbon emissions and provide residents with attractive greener travel alternatives.

The Council is aware of the pressing concerns of the climate change and has committed to reaching carbon neutrality by 2030. The way residents travel and the distances covered have a significant impact on the borough's carbon footprint. One bus has the potential to take 75 cars off local roads, reduce congestion and reduce the associated carbon footprints by 111 tCO₂e. With approximately 5,101 miles driven in the Borough for each of these cars per year, we will encourage residents and visitors to make greener choices in the way that they travel.

Objective 6: Improve bus integration with rail passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and car drivers.

Interchanges and bus stops need to be convenient, easy to use, comfortable and safe. Rail passengers require easy access to bus services. Bus stops should be the appropriate standard (Gold, Silver or Bronze) and be well maintained. Our Park & Ride services will need to offer a seamless, comfortable, and convenient travel experience to make them attractive and ensure viability. Park & Ride can be the first step car users make towards using ordinary local bus services, and form an important part of growing overall bus usage.

Objective 7: Improve passenger engagement and satisfaction of bus services.

It is important that passengers are satisfied with the services provided to both retain and attract more passengers to local bus services. The National Highways and Transport surveys for Wokingham Borough helps identify aspects of bus travel which are most important to residents and those aspects where there is least satisfaction, to allow for effective targeting of improvements.

Objective 8: Improve accessibility to transport services and the local bus network for communities in more rural and low-density areas.

In rural communities the difficulty some residents experience with poor accessibility to public transport due to low population density, and the effect this can have on their ability to access key services, is understood and needs to be improved upon subject to funding.

Objective 9: Ensure bus travel is a safe means of transport.

Bus travel is a relatively safe mode of transport, mainly due to a strong regulatory system for drivers, vehicles and operators. Personal safety can however be an issue at bus stops and the routes to/from them, as well as whilst on buses themselves.

Competition Test

- 1.1.6 Wokingham Borough Council has been subject to the Competition Test as set out in Part 1 of Schedule 10 of the Transport Act 2000. Wokingham Borough Council believes the Enhanced Partnership Agreement will not or is unlikely to have a significantly adverse effect on competition, for the purposes of Part 1 of Schedule 10 of the Transport Act 2000. The Enhanced Partnership Agreement is aimed at delivering

improvements to bus services for passengers in a deregulated environment. The Enhanced Partnership will not impact on competition, as operators will be free to amend and introduce services in the area if the standards which universally apply to all operators are met.

1.1.6 The Competitions and Marketing Authority have been formally consulted on the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme and have not made any significant comments in relation to the Competition Test, as set out in Schedule 10 of the Transport Act 2000.

1.2 Extent of Wokingham Borough Council's Enhanced Partnership

1.2.1 Both the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Scheme cover the full administrative boundary of Wokingham Borough. The full administrative boundary and the area within the borough are shown in Figure EP1-1. Any changes to the area covered by the Enhanced Partnership Scheme will be subject to an EP Scheme Variation, to be agreed as per Section 5.

4.6.2 Wokingham Borough Council has worked closely with neighbouring authorities to ensure a consistent approach to the Enhanced Partnership for cross-boundary travel. The Council has worked closely with Reading Borough Council in particular, given the significant daily movements between Wokingham and Reading Boroughs. Neighbouring authorities will continue to be engaged with the Enhanced Partnership on a non-statutory basis through the Enhanced Partnership Forum.

Figure EP1-1 – Enhanced Partnership Plan Area - Wokingham Unitary Authority Boundary

WOKINGHAM BOUNDARY

WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL



1.2.3 The EP Plan has no end date and will be reviewed at least every five (5) years from the commencement date on 1stth October 2023 or until it is varied or revoked in accordance with Section 5. The Enhanced Partnership is formed of the following Schemes:

Scheme 1. – Borough wide Enhanced Partnership Scheme

1.2.4 Scheme 1 will be in place for a period of five years and commence 70 days after the adoption of the Enhanced Partnership (1stth October 2023) or until it is varied or revoked in accordance with Section 5.

1.2.5 Additional Schemes may be added at any time subject to the mechanism set out in Section 5.

1.2.6 Each of the EP Schemes will be reviewed annually in line with the annual review of the Bus Service Improvement Plan. An annual progress report will be produced and published on the anniversary of the adoption of the Enhanced Partnership Plan (30th September each year). A full review of the Enhanced Partnership Plan (including its extent, objectives, and partnership governance) and Schemes (including measures and facilities provided, and requirements imposed) and compliance of both with competition legislation will take place in the 12 months prior to 30th September 2028.

47

1.2.7 The implementation of any changes to an EP Plan will be in accordance with the Bespoke Arrangements in Section 5.

1.2.8 The implementation of any changes to the EP Scheme will be in accordance with the Bespoke Arrangements in Section 5.

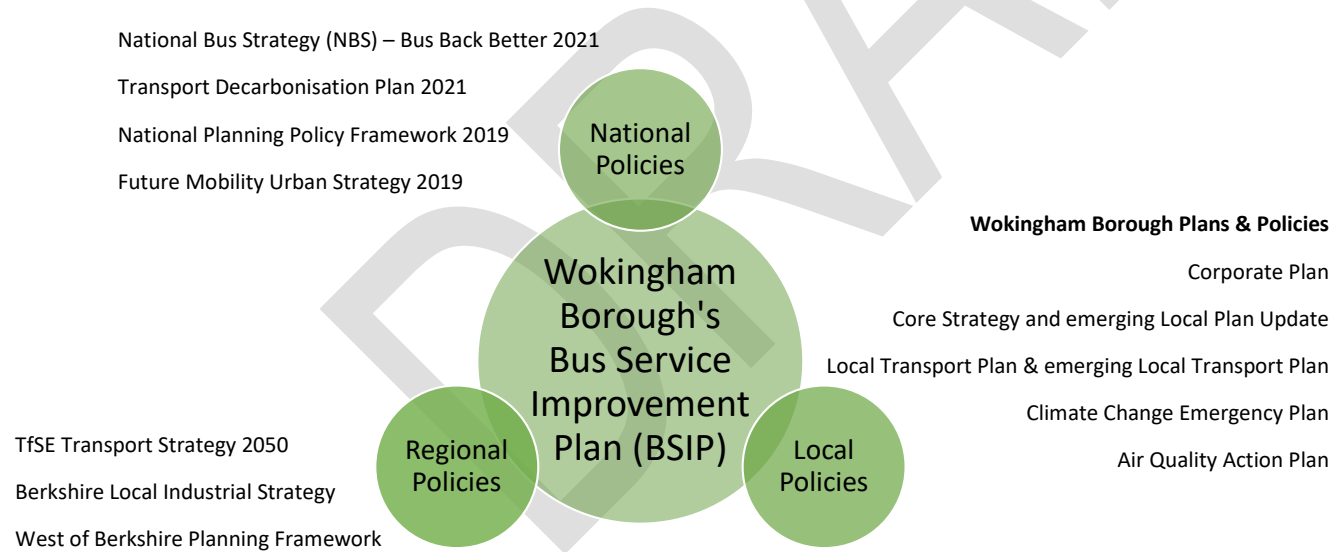
1.2.9 Engagement with key stakeholders has been undertaken in preparation of the Local Bus Service Improvement Plan, including all local bus, rail, and community transport operators as well as those in the volunteer sector. The Council's engagement has extended to Town and Parish Councils who represent the views of their residents, in addition to some local resident associations. Discussions have also been undertaken with representatives of the Department for Work and Pensions, young and elderly carers, and the local Mental Health Alliance Partnership. The responses to engagement for the Local Bus Service Improvement Plan have informed the Enhanced Partnership implementation of any changes to the EP Scheme will be in accordance with the Bespoke Arrangements in Section 5.

1.2.10 Independent comprehensive passenger surveys for the two largest local bus operators in the borough, Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses, have been used to inform the Enhanced Partnership and will be used to monitor and evaluate its success subject to available funding. Residents' annual responses to the National Highways and Transportation survey have been considered in relation to satisfaction with local bus services and will be used to monitor and evaluate the success of the Enhanced Partnership.

1.3 Policy Context

1.3.1 The EP Report aligns with key national, regional, and local policies as shown on Figure 1.4. In particular, the objectives highlighted in the National Bus Strategy (NBS) to “get bus use back to what it was before the pandemic [and] then ... increase patronage and raise buses mode share”. With one of the highest levels of car ownership in the country, buses in Wokingham Borough will truly need to meet the NBS’s aspiration of being an attractive alternative to the car for far more people.

Figure EP1-2 – The Policy Framework



The Report is fully aligned with our emerging fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4). One of the challenges which our Corporate Plan highlights is to manage and balance need with the requirements for new housing, whilst protecting the quality of our environment and the sustainability of our existing communities. The number of households in the borough is growing which provides an opportunity for greener travel and particularly an increase in bus travel. We will work in partnership with local bus operators to achieve a virtual cycle of improvement, with an increase in services and frequencies to match any growth in bus travel.

The Council's Core Strategy sets out the Council plans for accommodating up to 10,000 new homes in the borough by 2026, as required by Central Government housing allocations set for Wokingham Borough. Figure 1-3 shows where most new homes are accommodated in one of four strategic development locations, these are: North Wokingham (yellow), South Wokingham (green), the area to the South of the M4 (blue) and in and around Arborfield (orange).

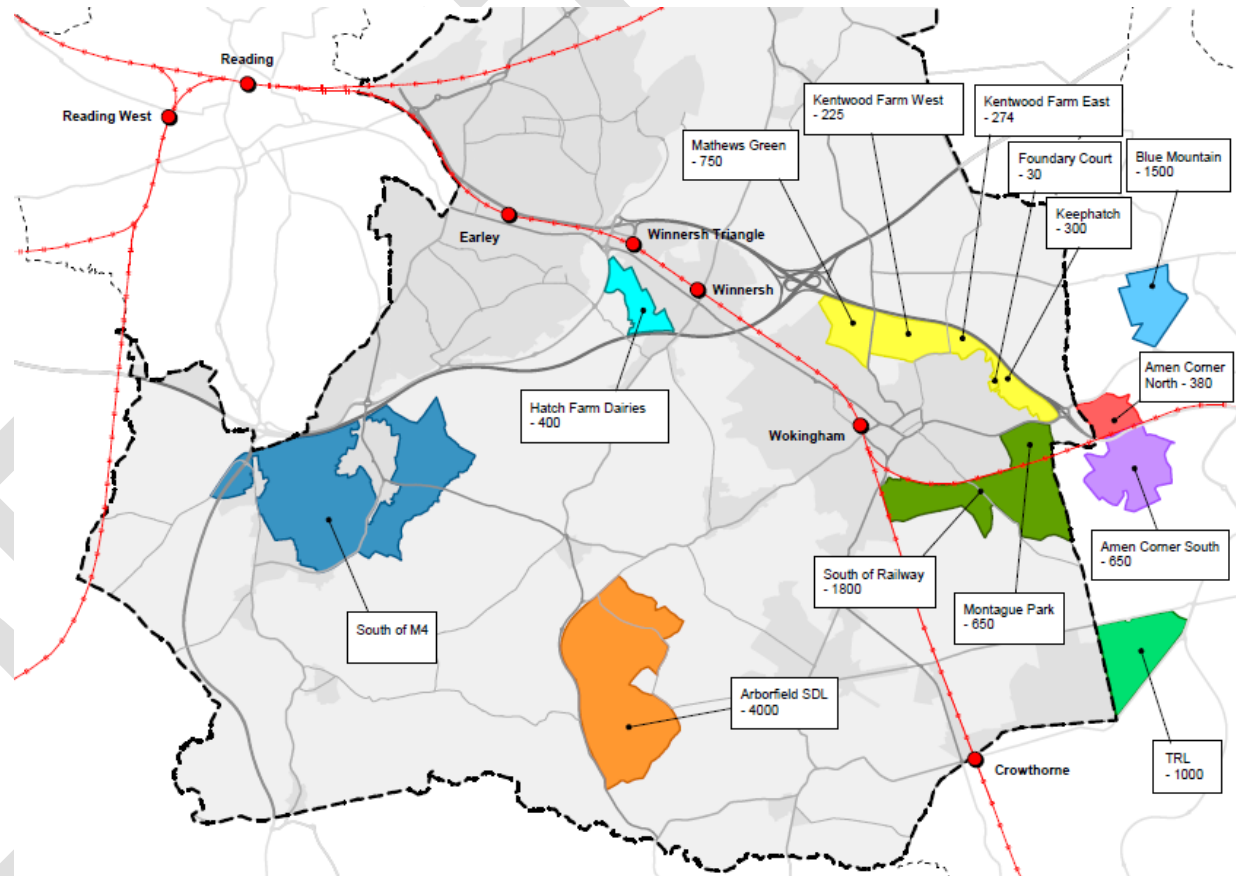


Figure EP 1-3 – Strategic Development Locations

1.3.2 Key plans and strategies the EP aligns with are listed below:

- **Local Transport Plan 4** – to reduce congestion and improve productivity, tackle climate change, reduce social exclusion, improve network resilience and future-proof transport networks for new and emerging technology.
- **Climate Emergency Action Plan** – the promotion of active and sustainable travel choices, encouraging greater use of public transport networks, encouraging transport operators to use greener vehicles and the use of intelligent transport systems to prevent future congestion.
- **Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2011-2026** – a focus on sustainable travel, particularly in our Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in Wokingham Town and at Twyford Crossroads. Emissions from vehicles can negatively impact on the levels of air quality, and therefore present a particular challenge for buses with their stop, start nature.
- **Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021** – creating a borough where businesses can thrive and encouraging innovation and technology to build a competitive environment. For local bus services this means increasing links in and around Wokingham Borough, particularly with strategic transport hubs such as Twyford where Crossrail is introduced.
- **Intelligent Transport Strategy** (draft) – maximising the use of new technology in making the most efficient use of road and junction capacity for all users. The focus is on digital technologies which aim to reduce congestion and improve journey times. Digital technologies can be used to provide live information to residents on the day to day running of transport networks, including live data on actual journey times, air quality levels, availability of car share vehicles, integrated ticketing, and bus arrival times.
- **Local Walking and Cycling Implementation Plan (LCWIP)** (draft) – with the development of local walking and cycling networks across the borough. By co-ordinating the approach of the Local Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership Plan with that of the (LCWIP) the Council can ensure direct and convenient points of access to the bus network for people who walk and cycle and therefore enable bus travel to form part of longer journeys.

1.3.3 Complementary policies and legislation which also have an impact on residents' decision to travel by bus and the operation of bus services in the borough include:

- Traffic Management Policies
- Car Parking Plans and Policies
- Traffic Management Act 2004

1.4 Challenges and Opportunities for Bus Travel

1.4.1 These are grouped into four headings and are set out below with 14 challenges and 17 opportunities:

1.4.2 Pandemic and economic recovery:

Pandemic and Economic Recovery	
Challenges	Opportunities
1) Inflation from driver and fuel cost increases with driver costs the highest outside London. This is increasing costs of services and making viability more difficult.	1) Passenger demand returns and stabilises after the pandemic with services returning to a pre pandemic levels.
2) Bus driver shortages causing buses to be cancelled and services become less reliable. This is especially a problem for Thames Valley Buses and relates to the above driver cost inflation.	2) The BSIP presents an opportunity to reconsider the current public transport provision and how the network can be revised and simplified to better meet the needs of existing and future communities.
3) Changes in travel patterns post pandemic, with more people working from home. The Borough has a high proportion of professionals who are able to work from home 2-3 days per week. This reduces peak hour travel demand, less bus travel and reduced fares income.	3) Through the Customer Charter and the annual review of the BSIP, bus passengers in the Borough will be given more of a voice in the way that local bus services are delivered.

1.4.3 Travel choices and alternatives:

Travel Choices and Alternatives	
4) Ensure that ticket integration between bus operators continues.	The Reading All-Bus ticket allows inter ticketing.
5) The cost of travel and journey times for rail passengers is increased by poor accessibility to local stations. The lack of seamless ticketing and through fares between bus services and between bus and rail (other than the PlusBus offer which is not sufficiently comprehensive).	5) Increases in fuel costs, cars and general cost of living will increase the attractiveness of buses. Plus Bus offers most the requirement, but need to be able to extend Plus Bus sale via app and smart card.
6) Some corridors and local routes have low frequency which is not sufficiently attractive to non-public transport users or occasional users.	6) An increase in the Borough's parking charges will make bus travel more price competitive.
7) The rise of Uber and other private hire schemes are able to compete with bus fares especially if in a shared vehicle.	7) Providing bus priority measures to reduce journey times and variations in times will make buses more efficient and attractive. Continue to develop bus group ticketing options.
8) By providing segregated cycle routes in line with LTN1/20 road space may be allocated to cycles in preference to bus lanes. The Council will need to carefully consider the use of road space for local bus services and balance the needs of all road users.	8) By co-ordinating the approach of the BSIP with the Local Walking and Cycling Implementation Plan (LCWIP) the Council can ensure direct and convenient points of access to the bus network for people who walk and cycle, so allowing walking and cycling to form parts of longer active journeys utilising the bus network.

1.4.4 Decarbonisation and air quality:

Decarbonisation and Air Quality	
Challenges	Opportunities
9) The bus fleet is mostly clean, all with EURO6 apart from biomethane EURO5, which is arguably cleaner. There are practical operational challenges with using Ebuses associated with a limited range, charging points, long order times and high capital prices. Initially there is most potential for P & R services where they can recharge and smaller buses.	10) Supporting operators to migrate to electric vehicles there is an opportunity to improve outcomes of the Air Quality Action Plan. However, this cost also needs to be assessed against the carbon saving from removing cars from the road
10) Lack of Electric bus charging locations, either on the journey or at the depots.	11) Increased bus usage is an important component of the Borough Air Quality Action Plan and Climate Change Emergency Plan.
11) Walking for short trips and cycling for longer ones are being encouraged and more attractive, as the cycle network expands. Ebikes in particular offer an excellent way to travel bus distances.	12) Expanding the success of the My Journey programme to target areas other areas of the Borough to replicate the successes since pre-pandemic

1.4.5 Future growth and sustainability communities:

Challenges	Opportunities
12) High levels of car ownership and lack of regular bus services especially in the lower density areas, means that buses are not attractive to car drivers.	13) Connecting to new demand from the Strategic Development Locations at the south of M4, Arborfield, South Wokingham and North Wokingham.
13) New housing areas are not always able to provide frequent and reliable bus services. This in is part due to some areas being of relative low density with high car ownership and 2 parking spaces per dwelling.	14) Potential to improve accessibility to lower density and rural areas.
14) Population growth is expected to be greatest amongst the over 85 age group, as residents live longer and are active for longer. With more residents becoming eligible for concessionary bus travel this presents increasing financial pressures for the Council through increased concessionary fare payments	15) With more residents becoming eligible for concessionary travel passenger trips will increase. The concessionary reimbursement system requires improvement.
	16) Hospital shuttle Park and Ride bus has the potential to be developed into a local bus service.
	17) Continued house building and new home occupations has the potential to change behaviours and increase bus travel.

1.5 Overview of Local Bus Network

1.5.1 Bus operators providing local bus services within Wokingham Borough are:

- **Reading Buses** (part of Reading Transport, an arm's length company owned by Reading Borough Council) operate 79.13% of the total mileage of local bus services within the borough. Reading Buses operate mainly commercial and some financially supported local bus services. Reading Buses operate services on all key corridors as well as in the urban areas of Earley and Woodley.
 - **Thames Valley Buses** (part of Reading Transport) only operate local bus services which are financially supported by Wokingham Borough Council. Most local bus services operated by Thames Valley Buses are in and around the Town of Wokingham, with the one exception of the interurban service between Wokingham Town, Winnersh, Twyford, Charvil, Sonning, Woodley and Reading.
 - **Arriva, The Shires** provides one interurban local bus service on the A4/A321 corridor between High Wycombe via Henley and Twyford to Reading. The Arriva service is commercially operated and represents 6.58% of the total operated mileage in the borough.
- 53
- **Horseman Coaches** operate three registered school bus routes and three 'weekly shopper' local bus services. Each of the 'weekly shopper' local bus services offer one return trip on one day each week from rural villages. All routes operated by Horseman Coaches receive financial support from Wokingham Borough Council.
 - **Stagecoach South** operate one commercial school bus routes into Hampshire.

1.5.2 A summary of the services operated by each local bus operator within the borough are provided in Table EP1-1.

Table EP 1-1 – Local Bus Operators and Local Bus Services

Local bus operator	Registered address	Local bus routes operated
Reading Transport Limited (trading as Reading Buses)	Great Knollys Street, Reading, RG1 7H	Leopard route: 3 Lion routes: 4/X4 Orange routes: 13, 14 Little Oranges routes: 19A/19B/19C Claret routes: 21, 21A Park and Ride routes: 300, 500, 600, 81
Thames Valley Buses Limited	Unit 3, Maple Centre, Downmill Road, Bracknell, RG12 1QS	121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 125A, 125B, 127, 128, 129, 151, 151A
Horseman Coaches	2, Acre Road, Reading, RG2 0SU	145, 153, 154 202, 244, W983
Stagecoach (South) Limited	Bus Station, Basin Road, Chichester, PO19 8DG Depot address: Halimote Road, Aldershot, GU11 1NJ	406
Arriva the Shires Limited	4 Westmoreland Avenue, Thurmaston, Leicester, LE4 8PH Depot address: Cressex Business Park, High Wycombe, HP12 3RH	850
Stewarts Coaches Limited	Headley Park Eight, Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4SA	Thames Valley Park shuttle (not registered as a local bus route)

54

- 1.5.3 Across the network 1.9 million vehicle kilometres were operated in 2019, accommodating 2.8 million passenger journeys. This is less than a quarter of the average for England and half the average journey per head of population for the South East region. Of the 2.8 million passenger journeys 21.8% were made using a concessionary pass. This is lower than the national average.
- 1.5.4 In recent years and up until the first quarter of 2020, Wokingham Borough saw a steady increase in bus service demand and supply, with an approximate 23% increase in journeys per head of population between 2010 and 2020. In contrast journeys per head of population have fallen in England in the same period.

1.6 Bus Passenger's Priorities for Improvement

- 1.6.1 Passenger and resident priorities for bus travel have been identified from a combination of customer surveys and high-level engagement. Transport Focus Surveys for Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses measured bus passengers' satisfaction with local bus service in 2019. 94% of passengers were either fairly or very satisfied with Thames Valley Buses services. The only two categories which scored below 80% satisfaction were value for money (62%) and information provided inside the bus (67%), which is in line with national trends. General satisfaction on Reading Buses services is consistently above 90%, the areas where satisfaction has been less than 80%, but still above the national average, were:
- Value for Money amongst all passenger groups (particularly amongst the 16-34 age group).
 - Punctuality of the bus.
 - The length of time waiting for the bus.
 - The information provided inside the bus.
 - The amount of personal space you had around you.

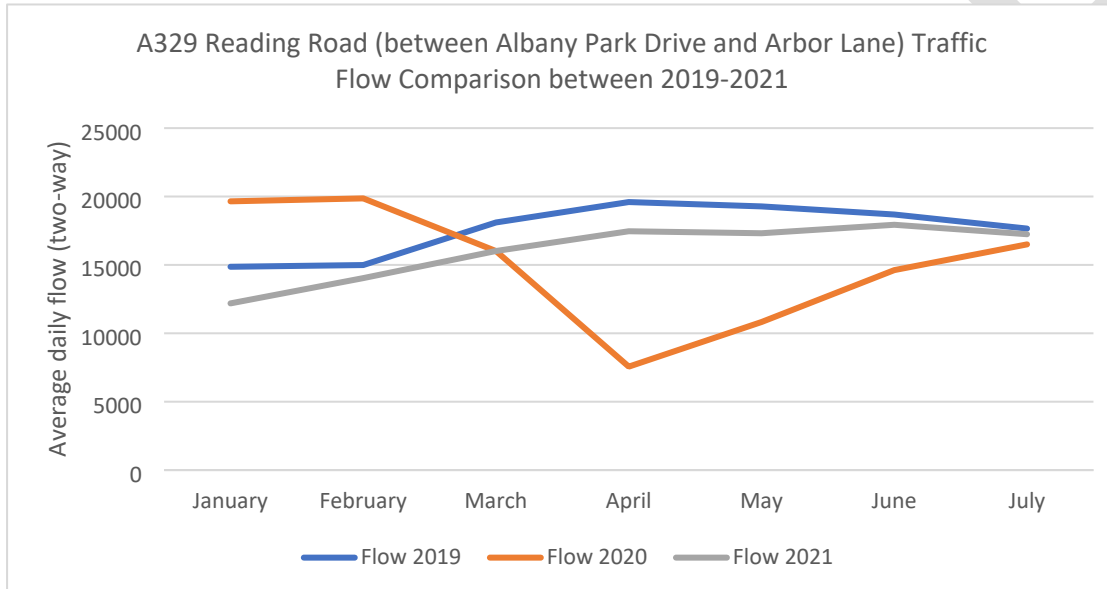
- 1.6.2 The National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey asks a randomly selected sample of Wokingham Borough residents their satisfaction levels with local bus services. The NHT survey extends to both bus users and non-bus users in the borough. In Wokingham Borough 61% of residents reported being satisfied with local bus services compared with 60% nationally. The highest satisfaction levels were related to bus stop infrastructure, bus fares, personal safety and the overall quality of the bus services when compared to residents in other local authority areas. Where satisfaction levels fell below that of residents elsewhere in England were in relation to bus frequency, information on bus services, the responsiveness of transport and community transport provision.

- 1.6.2 Engagement with Town and Parish Council's indicated that priorities for local Town and Parish Councils varied across the borough. Overall Town and Parish Councils reported that they were most satisfied with safety on board the bus and the quality of the vehicles provided. Overall Town and Parish Councils reported they were least satisfied with no bus services being provided in some areas, the cost of travel and buses not going where they are perceived to be needed. The main priorities for improvement were identified to be more direct services, more buses throughout the day and lower fares. All Town and Parish Council who responded to the survey were prepared to support the borough council with the promotion and publicity of local bus services.
- 1.6.3 More specifically targeted priorities which were identified by Town and Parish Councils included inequitable fares in some areas compared to others due to fare zone boundaries, better information being needed at bus stops especially for more complex bus services, and that bus services all tend to go to Reading but not always by the most direct route. More rural parishes identified priorities for better bus stop infrastructure and information, better links with stations and better bus service coverage in general. Electric buses for urban areas were also noted as a future ambition to help to tackle climate change.
- 1.6.4 Engagement with wider stakeholders revealed a high proportion of carers use local bus services, a quarter of whom travel at least once a week. Priorities for improvement for carers who do not use the bus were buses going where needed, at the right time and having quicker journey times. For carers who do use the bus, priorities for improvements were drivers having a better understanding of disabilities, more direct services, better information, and better waiting facilities. The Department for Work and Pensions indicated that bus services in Wokingham Borough provided good access to Reading and Bracknell job centres. Any improvements to bus services were recommended to focus on the timings of services for employment outside of non-standard office hours such as that of the hospitality industry.

1.7 Congestion and Journey Speeds

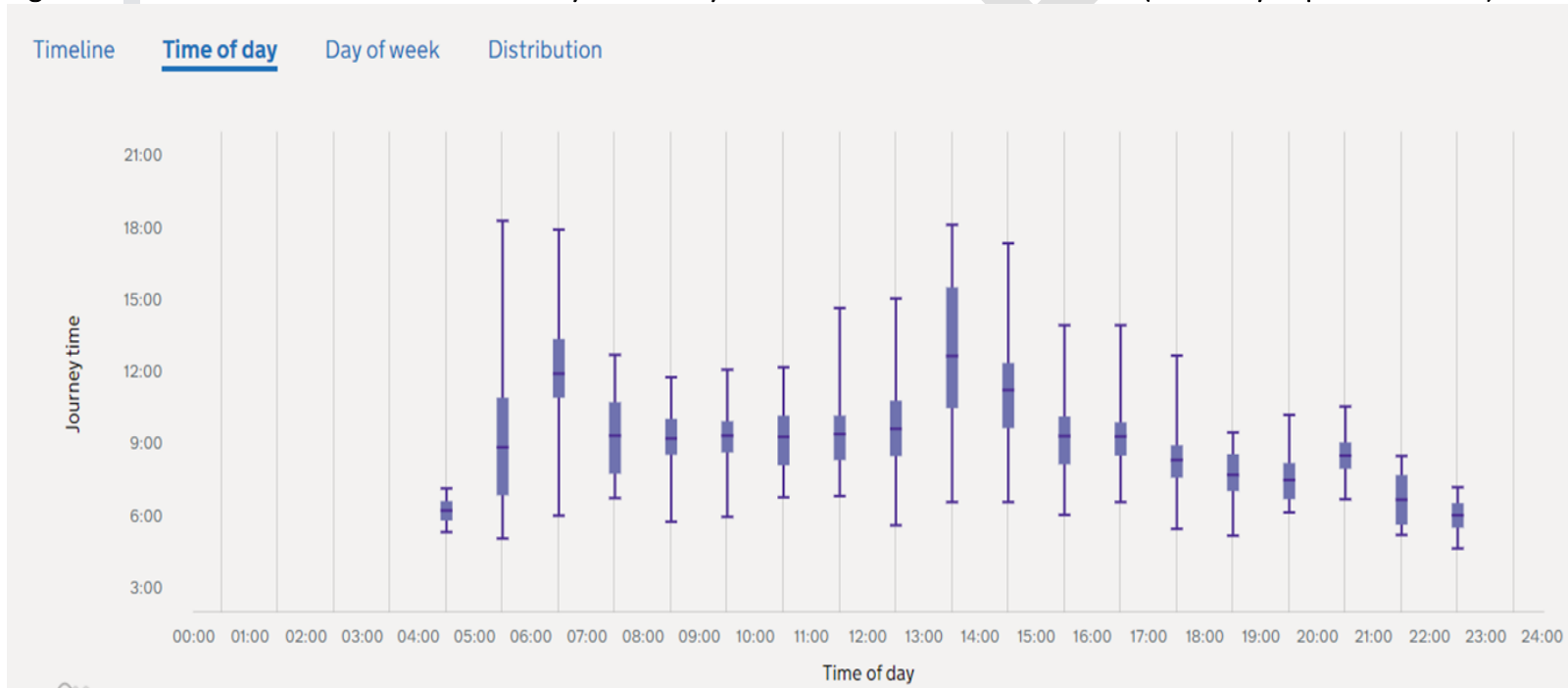
1.7.1 Increasing traffic levels and junction capacity can have a detrimental effect on bus journey speeds and the reliability of services. Average daily flows (two-way) on key corridors in the borough have nearly returned to pre-covid levels. The A329 traffic flows were just under 18,000 vehicles in summer 2019, returning to similar level by summer 2021. On the A4 corridor average daily traffic flows were slightly higher at close to 20,000 vehicles in summer 2019, returning to just under 18,000 vehicles by summer 2021. In all cases traffic flows dropped significantly during the pandemic, in some cases by as much as 39% as shown on Figure EP1-3. Traffic flows in 2022 have largely returned to pre pandemic levels.

Figure EP1-3 – Key Corridor Traffic Flows: A329 Reading Road



- 1.7.2 The variation in timetabled journey times can provide a good indication of where bus services may face daily challenges from slow traffic speeds or high passenger boardings. Where bus journey times are extended due to slow traffic speeds bus priority measures may be an effective way of providing quicker bus journey times.
- 1.7.3 The evidence indicates that there would be some benefit to investigating further where the delays are occurring on the key corridors and the benefits different types of bus priority measures could potentially bring.

Figure EP1-4 – Variation in Scheduled Journey Time Daily Profile on the A329 Northbound (Weekday September 2022)



1.8 Reliability and Punctuality

- 1.8.1 The reliability of bus services in Wokingham Borough by the two main operators Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses is already quite high at 99.47% and 99.37% respectively.
- 1.8.2 On average the punctuality of bus services in Wokingham Borough was 72.5% in 2019 rising to an average of 91.3% during the pandemic. The 18.8% difference in bus service punctuality demonstrates the challenge local bus services face from the daily variations in traffic conditions and from the potential effects of congestion.
- 1.8.3 Bus punctuality levels vary greatly by service. The longest routes tend to experience the highest risk of poor reliability, whilst the shorter town link routes have a much lower risk of poor reliability.

1.9 Roadworks

- 1.9.1 Roadworks and the coordination of roadworks can have a significant effect on reliability of local bus services. Feedback from local bus operators indicates that the council is not always doing well in keeping them informed of when and where roadworks take place in the Borough. For corridor and cross-boundary services a coordinated approach with neighbouring Councils to ensure these longer services are not subject to several sets of delays would further improve bus reliability during roadworks.

1.10 Enhanced Partnership Plan Outcomes

- 1.10.1 Wokingham Borough Council's Enhanced Partnership Plan aims to achieve the following outcomes / objectives to improve local bus services:
- Objective 1: Grow passenger numbers to pre-pandemic levels and to continue that growth.
 - Objective 2: Return bus services to pre-pandemic levels, improve levels of service and extend to new areas of travel demand.
 - Objective 3: Improve bus journey times, reliability and punctuality along key transport corridors.
 - Objective 4: Make fares affordable and simple.
 - Objective 5: Deliver a greener bus network by reducing carbon emissions and provide residents with attractive green travel alternatives.
 - Objective 6: Improve bus integration with rail passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and car drivers.

- Objective 7: Improve passenger engagement and satisfaction of bus services.
- Objective 8: Improve accessibility to transport services and the local bus network for communities in more rural and low-density areas.
- Objective 9: Ensure bus travel is a safe means of transport.

1.10.2 Interventions and proposals that will be jointly delivered by Wokingham Borough Council and local bus operators to achieve the outcomes are listed below by each objective. There are 17 proposals identified and the detailed actions for these are set out in the BSIP2.

- **More frequent and reliable services.** This corresponds into the delivery of the first three Council objectives which are:

Objective 1: Grow passenger numbers to pre-pandemic levels and to continue that growth.

Objective 2: Return bus services to pre-pandemic levels, improve levels of service and extend to new areas of travel demand.

Objective 3: Improve bus journey times, reliability and punctuality along key transport corridors.

The proposals aim to improve service frequencies and introducing more bus priority along the five bus corridors based on three proposals:

- Proposal 1: Review and increase service frequency on key corridors.
- Proposal 2: Review and improve service frequency to urban areas of Earley, Woodley, Wokingham Town and new development areas.
- Proposal 3: Increase bus priority measures on key corridors. Identify bus priority that includes additional bus lanes, bus gates and traffic signal priority along the key corridors.

It will also be important to work with Reading Borough Council as most corridors extend into Reading Borough. The key partners for this are Bus operators, Reading BC, Bracknell BC, the Hospital and Town & Parish Councils.

- **Make fares affordable and simple.** Lower fares will attract more passengers. Fares currently in the area are considered to be reasonable and given the inflationary pressures in the industry, and there have been some recent increases. Subject to funding, there are a series of proposals that aim to reduce and simplify fares. In terms of having consistent fares and fares structures a dominant operator is helpful. Some of the proposals are relying on the Reading BC BSIP which is applying subsidies to the Greater Reading area. These include parts of Wokingham Borough that cover the University, Woodley, Earley, Mere oak and Sonning. The proposals are as follows:

- Proposal 4: Keep fares at an affordable level and reduce where possible.
- Proposal 5: Simplify fares.
- Proposal 6: Integrate ticketing between operators and other sustainable modes.

The key partners to deliver these fare proposals are the bus operators, Reading BC, Bracknell BC and DfT.

- **Deliver a greener bus network by reducing carbon emissions and provide residents with attractive greener travel alternatives.** A clean and green bus fleet is essential for the network. Much of the funding for this is done via the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas Scheme (ZEBRA) which includes grants for the rolling stock and charging infrastructure. The proposal is:
 - Proposal 7: Invest in improved bus vehicles and transition buses to zero carbon. The key partners are the Department for Transport, bus operators and Reading BC.

- **Improve bus integration with rail passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and car drivers.** Greater integration of buses with all other modes of transport is an important aspect of delivering a seamless public transport network. The Borough has done much work in recent years on the Park and Ride sites and includes the new one at Coppid Beech. Demand for them has reduced following the pandemic due to government messaging about safety, and the flexibility that car users have to park in central areas, but it is returning slowly with new and more flexible ways of using the sites and bus services are being identified to help support the running costs. The borough is also looking to develop a differential car parking charging system which should improve the attractiveness of Park & Ride sites. The multi-operator Reading All-Bus ticket enables easier and more cost-effective travel on local buses in the borough, with wider zones a potential future enhancement. Better ticketing also includes making it easier to travel by bus and rail through the expansion of joint ticketing schemes and reviewing the park and ride ticketing offer to encourage greater use of park and ride services in the borough. The proposals split by mode are as follows:
 - Proposal 8: Integrate with walking and cycling networks.
 - Proposal 9: Integrate with the rail network.
 - Proposal 10: Continue to develop the Park & Ride sites so they become effective transport interchanges.

The key partners for these proposals are the bus operators, Reading BC, rail operators, regional organisations, and Town & Parish Councils.

- **Improve passenger engagement and satisfaction of bus services.** There are several groups and organisations in the Borough that are consulted on regarding any proposed changes to bus services. These include community groups in Earley and Woodley and a number of parish councils, but there is no overarching representation of bus users. There are a series of proposals including a charter and a user group should help to involve the public to a greater extent in services. The proposals are as follows:
 - Proposal 11: Develop a Passenger Charter.
 - Proposal 12: Develop a user group

- Proposal 13: Improve passenger information.

The key partners for these proposals are the bus operators, community groups, Town & Parish Councils, Reading BC, Bracknell BC and West Berks Council.

- **Improve accessibility to transport services and the local bus network for communities in more rural and low-density areas.** Bus services in rural areas are generally infrequent and lack accessibility for many residents because bus service economics rely on being a method of mass transit. In the north and the east of the Borough this is a particular problem. There are similar rural and low-density areas in nearby authorities such as Windsor & Maidenhead, West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest. The Council has discussed with neighbouring authorities the potential for a joint Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) operation, subject to suitable funding being made available. By sharing resources such as control centre, software and reservations process it maybe more cost-effective. The proposals are as follows:

- Proposal 14: Improve service quality and accessibility in low density areas.
- Proposal 15: Invest in accessible and inclusive bus services.

The key partners are the bus operators, community groups, Town & Parish Councils and Reading BC.

- **Ensure bus travel is a safe means of transport.** Wokingham’s bus network has low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, but perception is important, and the Council wants the bus network to feel welcoming and safe. The proposals are:

- Proposal 16: Protect the personal safety of bus passengers.
- Proposal 17: Minimise highway accidents involving buses.

Key partners are the bus operators, Reading BC and Thames Valley Police.

62

1.10.3 In addition to the policy interventions within the Enhanced Partnership Plan, wider Council policies and plans, as detailed in Section 1.3 will help support the implementation and success of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and scheme.

1.10.4 The first EP Scheme to be introduced will cover the whole of Wokingham Borough and all local bus services which operate within the borough, unless formally excluded in accordance with the exclusion mechanism detail in Section 2.3 of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme. The interventions will be delivered along key corridors, in urban areas and across rural areas as appropriate.

1.10.5 The key corridors are defined as:

- **A329 Corridor** – Bracknell – Wokingham – Winnersh – Reading
- **A329m Corridor** – Winnersh Triangle - Reading
- **A33 Corridor** – Spencers Wood – Three Mile Cross and Reading
- **A4 / A321 Corridor** – Henley / Wokingham – Twyford – Sonning – Reading
- **A327 Corridor** – Wokingham – Finchampstead – Arborfield/Spencers Wood – Shinfield – Reading

1.10.6 The urban areas are defined as:

- **Earley / Lower Earley / Maiden Erlegh Area**
- **Woodley and North Earley**
- **Wokingham Town and the surrounding areas** – including the communities of Emmbrook, Woosehill, the Norreys Estate, Easthampstead, Finchampstead and Barkham.

1.10.7 The rural and low-density areas are defined as:

- **North Parishes** – including Wargrave, Remenham, Sonning and Charvil
- **Eastern Parishes** – Hurst and Ruscombe
- **Southern Parishes** – including Spencers Wood, Swallowfield, Riseley and Finchampstead Village

1.11 Funding Arrangements

1.11.1 To deliver the 17 proposals set out above, the cost is estimated to be in excess of £17m. The above improvements cannot be delivered without appropriate funding from central government, which is not currently available. It is because the patronage gained from the measures would not be derived over a reasonable enough period for purely commercial payback, and some of the environmental gains do not derive a commercial payback for bus operators. Significant DfT funding has been allocated to Reading Borough even with much of Wokingham is in the Reading Journey to Work Area. However, we remain optimistic that further funding will be made available in the future. In the meantime, we will consider the limited funding the Council has available and work with partners to bid for any appropriate funding that maybe available.

- 1.11.2 Wokingham Borough Council provided £870,010 (year 2021/2022) of financial support towards local bus services. £111,000 of this funding is provided by Central Government through the Bus Service Support Grant, the remainder is Council funding. Inflationary pressures, the impact of changing travel patterns and a slow recovery in concessionary passengers has increased the cost of local bus services whilst passenger revenues have fallen. Due to the importance placed on maintaining local bus services, the Council's Executive Committee has agreed to £350,000 of budget growth from 2023/2024, in addition to the release of £450,000 per year of S106 funding for the three financial years up until 2026/2027.
- 1.11.3 Other funding which the Council provides towards the operation of local transport services or because of revenue forgone includes:
- £884,250* per annum for concessionary fare reimbursement ,(*based on annual budget)
 - £103,000 per annum for community and volunteer transport services
- 1.11.4 £14.9 million has been committed for the construction and expansion of park and ride sites in the borough. Approximately £9.5 million of the funding has been secured from the Local Enterprise Partnership.
- 1.11.5 The Council has also secured a further £1.6 million from developers for the provision of bus infrastructure in and around new developments.

64

1.12 Governance Arrangements

- 1.12.1 The Enhanced Partnership has been made following engagement with local bus, community transport operators, voluntary transport operators, rail operators, neighbouring authorities and Towns and Parish Councils. Consultation has been carried out with local bus operators, neighbouring authorities, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Chief of Police and the Traffic Commissioner.
- 1.12.2 Section 5 of EP Scheme 1 sets out the governance arrangements for the Enhanced Partnership.
- 1.12.3 If variations to the EP Scheme are required, this will be undertaken in accordance with Section 5.7.

1.13 Monitoring and Consultation

- 1.13.1 Local bus operators will be consulted regularly on the progress of the EP Plan and EP Scheme(s). The EP Forum will allow key stakeholders to review the progress of the Enhanced Partnership. Community led working groups maybe set up within the community and provide feedback to Transport Officers on how well the EP Plan and EP Scheme(s) are working.

DRAFT

PART 2 – ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME 1

1 EP Scheme Content

1.1.1 This document fulfils the statutory requirements set out by the Bus Services Act 2017 for an Enhanced Partnership (EP) Scheme. In accordance with statutory requirements in section 138G(1) of the Transport Act 2000, the EP Scheme document sets out:

Section 2 - Scope of the EP Scheme and commencement date

Section 3 - Obligations on the Local Authorities

Section 4 - Obligations on Bus Operators

Section 5 – Governance Arrangements

Section 6 – Dispute and Resolution Arrangements

1.1.2 The EP Scheme can only be put in place if an associated EP Plan has been made. Therefore, this document should be considered alongside Wokingham Borough Council’s Enhanced Partnership Plan.

1.1.3 The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by Wokingham Borough Council which is the Local Planning and Highway Authority and those bus operators that provide local bus services in the EP Scheme area. It sets out obligations and requirements on both Wokingham Borough Council and local bus operators to achieve the intended improvements, with the aim of delivering the objectives of Wokingham Borough Council’s EP Plan.

1.1.4 The 8 objectives of the EP Plan are:

1. Grow passenger numbers to pre-pandemic levels and to continue that growth.
2. Return bus services to pre-pandemic levels, improve levels of service and extend to new areas of travel demand.
3. Improve bus journey times, reliability and punctuality along key transport corridors.
4. Make fares affordable and simpler.
5. Deliver a greener bus network by reducing carbon emissions and provide residents with attractive greener travel alternatives.
6. Improve bus integration with rail passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and car drivers.
7. Improve passenger engagement and satisfaction of bus services.
8. Improve accessibility to transport services and the local bus network for communities in more rural and low-density areas.
9. Ensure bus travel is a safe means of transport.

2 Scope of the EP Scheme and Commencement Date

2.1 Scope of the EP Scheme

2.1.1 The Enhanced Partnership Plan and Enhanced Partnership Scheme 1 cover the full extent of Wokingham Borough.

2.1.2 The EP Scheme will support the improvement of all qualifying local bus services operating within Wokingham Borough (Section 2.3). The EP Scheme does not include registered long distance coach service, school time only services, community transport services operated under Section 19 or Section 22 licences or voluntary transport services.

2.1.3 The EP Scheme will support the delivery of the EP Plan objectives across the following corridors, urban areas, and rural / low-density areas:

a) EP Scheme Corridors:

- i. **A329 Corridor** – (Bracknell – Wokingham – Winnersh – Reading)
- ii. **A33 Corridor** – (Spencers Wood – Three Mile Cross and Reading)
- iii. **A4 / A321 Corridor** – (Henley / Wokingham – Twyford – Sonning – Reading)
- iv. **A327 Corridor** – Wokingham – Finchampstead – Arborfield/Spencers Wood – Shinfield – Wokingham

b) EP Scheme Urban areas:

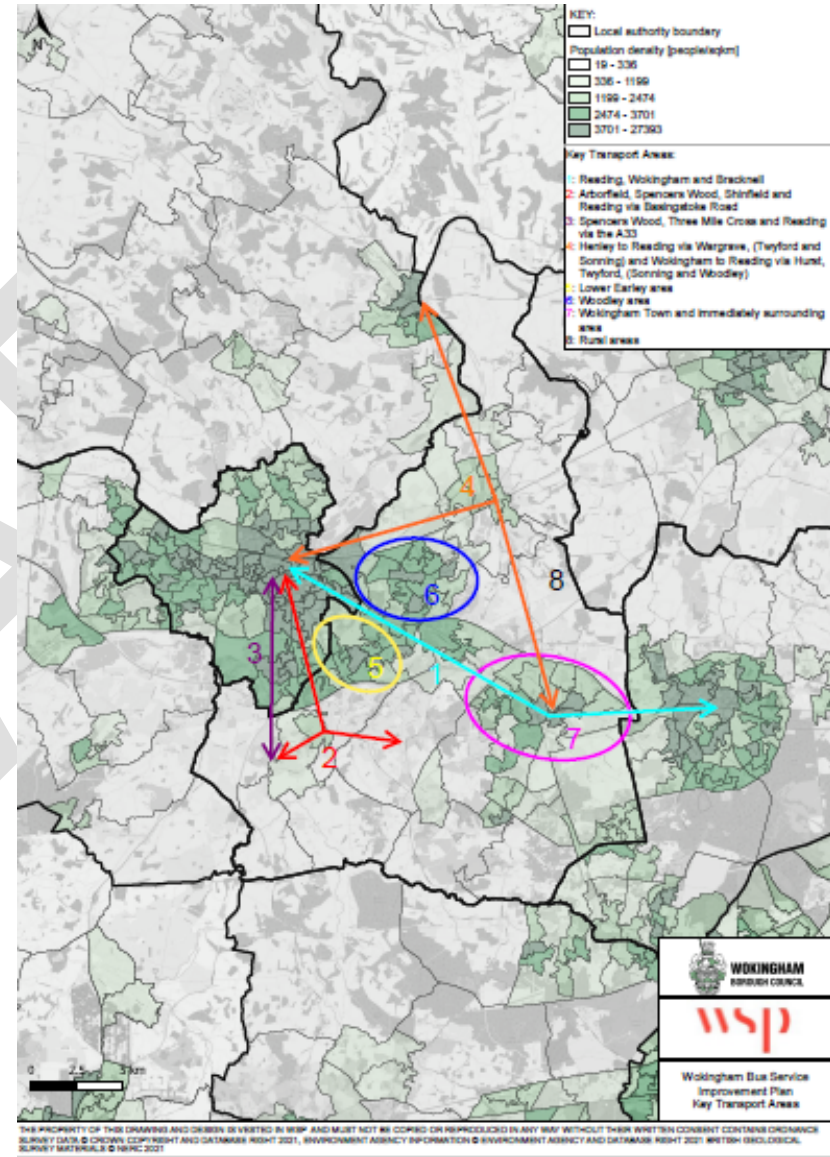
- i. **Earley / Lower Earley / Maiden Erlegh Area**
- ii. **Woodley and North Earley**
- iii. **Wokingham Town and the surrounding areas** – including the communities of Emmbrook, Woosehill, the Norreys Estate, Easthampstead, Finchampstead and Barkham.

c) EP Scheme Rural and Low-Density areas:

- i. **North Parishes** – including Wargrave, Remenham, Sonning and Charvil
- ii. **Eastern Parishes** – Hurst and Ruscombe
- iii. **Southern Parishes** – including Spencers Wood, Swallowfield, Riseley and Finchampstead Village.

2.1.4 Taken together the key corridors, urban areas, and rural / low-density areas cover the full extent of Wokingham Borough, as shown in Figure ES1.1.

Figure ES1.1 – Enhanced Partnership Scheme Area



2.2 Commencement Date

2.2.1 The EP Plan and EP Scheme are made on 1st October 2023. The EP Plan will have no end date but will be reviewed every five years from the commencement date. The EP Scheme will start 70 days after it has been made, unless stated otherwise, with subsequent milestone dates by which certain facilities and measures (Section 3) and bus service operator obligations will be introduced (Section 4). The EP Scheme will have no specific end date but will be reviewed by Wokingham Borough Council annually on or by 1st October each year (see Section 5).

2.3 Exempted Services

2.3.1 Registered Local Bus Services with one or more stopping places within the EP Scheme area are classed as 'qualifying local bus services', except those with locally agreed exemptions, as set out below:

- i. Services run under section 89 to 91 of the Transport Act 1985 where the service operates at school times only and the intended purpose is to solely serve an educational establishment.
- ii. Registered local services that are excursions or tours.
- iii. Services operated under Section 22 of the Transport Act 1985 (community bus services).
- iv. Services operated under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985 (not for profit services).
- v. Services that have 10% or less of their overall distance registered as local bus services.
- vi. Services operated by vehicles that by law do not permit standing.

2.3.2 Any amendments to Section 2.3 will be made under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 by using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.

3 Obligations on the Authorities

3.1 Summary of obligations on authorities

3.1.1 The following table summarises the specific interventions that Wokingham Borough Council will deliver as part of the EP Scheme.

Table ES1.1 – Summary of Existing Facilities and Measures

Facilities ¹	ES Section
Existing Bus Priority Facilities	3.2
Existing Bus Stops	3.3
Existing Bus Shelters	3.4
Existing Real Time Passenger Information Screens	3.5
Existing Park and Ride Sites	3.6
My Journey Website	3.7
Measures ²	ES Section
Local Authority Mechanisms and Procedures	3.13
Managing roadworks in the EP Scheme area	3.14
Marketing and Promotion of Local Bus Services in the EP Scheme area	3.15
Procurement of Contracted Services to the Benefit of the Passenger	3.16
Consultation on Appropriate Traffic Management Measures	3.17
External Funding Bids	3.18
Planning Consultation	3.19

3.1.2 Wokingham Borough Council will make provisions to allow the variation of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme so that Wokingham Borough can provide the Facilities and Measures summarised in Table ES1.2, subject to funding and feasibility:

¹ Provided under s.138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000

² Provided under s.138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000

Table ES1.2 – Summary of New Facilities and Measures, Subject to Variation

Facilities³	ES Section
New Bus Priority Facilities	3.8
New Bus Stops in Development Areas	3.9
New Bus Stops outside Development Areas	3.10
New Real Time Passenger Information Screens	3.11
New Park and Ride Sites	3.12
Measures⁴	ES Section
Bus Lane and Junction Enforcement	3.20
Integration with other sustainable travel modes	3.21
Feasibility Studies	3.22
Bus Stop Audit	3.23
Branding	3.24
Passenger Charter	3.25
Pilot New Technology	3.26
Demand Responsive Transport	3.27

71

³ Provided under s.138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000

⁴ Provided under s.138D(2) of the Transport Act 2000

3.2 Existing Bus Priority Facilities

- 3.2.1 Wokingham Borough Council will provide and maintain the list of existing bus priority facilities described in Table A1 of Annex A.
- 3.2.2 Bus priority facilities may be removed from or amended in Annex A using bespoke variation under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, as detailed in Section 5.

3.3 Existing Bus Stops

- 3.3.1 Wokingham Borough Council will provide bus stops at the locations registered on the National bus stop database ([NaPTAN - DfT](#)), with the exception of those stops which are designated as “hail and ride”. Bus stops are in three categories: Bronze with a post and flag only, Silver with and shelter added and Gold with Real Time Information (RTI) added.
- 3.3.2 Existing bus stops maybe improved in accordance with the standards set out in Wokingham Borough Council’s Bus Stop Policy (July 2013) or any subsequent revision.

72

3.4 Existing Bus Shelters

- 3.4.1 Bus shelters are provided in certain locations across the EP scheme area. Bus shelters are maintained in accordance with the adopted Bus Stop Policy (July 2013) or any subsequent revision.

3.4.2

3.5 Existing Real Time Passenger Information Screens

- 3.5.1 Wokingham Borough Council will provide real time information screens at the locations listed in Table B1 of Annex B.
- 3.5.2 Existing real time information screens will form part of an on-going maintenance contract.

3.5.3 Where real time information screens are subject to damage beyond the scope of the maintenance contract, Wokingham Borough Council will replace the screens subject to available funding.

3.5.4 Annex B may be varied or replaced using the bespoke variation under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000.

3.6 Existing Park and Ride Sites & Operational Review

3.6.1 Park and Ride sites are provided at Winnersh Triangle, Mere oak and Thames Valley Park. When the sites are operational, the maintenance and operation of these sites will be undertaken in accordance with the appropriate site-specific management agreement.

3.6.2 Any amendments to the operation and maintenance of Park and Ride sites, will be made using a bespoke variation under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, by a revised copy of the management agreement, or an equivalent document, being disrupted to all local operators who serve the park and ride site at that time. If no objections are received within 14 calendar days, clauses 3.9.1 and 3.9.2, maybe varied or replaced. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator, if this is not possible the amendment will then be subject to the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation mechanism in Section 5.

3.7 My Journey Website

3.7.1 Wokingham Borough Council will continue to provide information on local bus services and school bus services on the My Journey.

3.7.2 Wokingham Borough Council will review the website annually throughout the EP Scheme. Timetable, route, and fare information will be updated ahead of each new academic year in September or on receipt of any notification provided by an operator to Wokingham Borough Council via www.myjourneywokingham.com.

3.7.3 Any Operator may object to the posting of information on the My Journey website by e-mailing myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk. Should any objections be received, the information will be removed within 5 working days at the discretion of Wokingham Borough Council. Any Operator may raise any further objections by activating the dispute mechanism in Section 5.

3.7.4 Section 3.7 may be varied using a bespoke variation under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000.

3.8 New Bus Priority Facilities

3.8.1 New bus priority facilities can be added to the list at Annex A using a bespoke variation under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 as detailed in Section 13.11.2.

3.8.2 All operators running local bus services along any part of the corridor that would be subject to the new bus priority can object to the proposals. Those proposals will only go ahead if no objections are received within the specified objection period. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator, if this is not possible the amendment will then be subject to the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation mechanism in Section 5.

74

3.9 New Bus Stops in Development Areas

3.9.1 Wokingham Borough Council will install or upgrade, or oversee the installation or upgrading of, any new bus stops in areas of new development, in accordance with any agreed planning obligations.

3.9.2 Bus stops in new development areas will be added to the NaPTAN database under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 as detailed in Section 3.15.3.

3.9.3 All operators running local bus services which would be affected by the introduction of new bus stops can object to the proposals within the terms of any associated planning permission. Proposal will only go ahead in accordance with an appropriate planning permission.

3.10 New Bus Stops Outside Development Areas

- 3.10.1 Wokingham Borough Council may install bus stop infrastructure across the EP Scheme area. Any new bus stops outside development areas will be added to the NaPTAN database under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 as detailed in Section 3.15.3.
- 3.10.2 All operators running local bus services which would be affected by the introduction of new bus stops will be provided with a copy of any proposal to introduce new stops outside of developments areas. Those proposals will only go ahead if no objections are received within the proposal's specified objection period. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator, if this is not possible the amendment will then be subject to the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation mechanism in Section 5.

3.11 New Real Time Passenger Information Screens

- 3.11.1 Wokingham Borough Council may install additional real-time passenger information screens across the EP Scheme area. The initial list of locations is included in Annex B.
- 3.11.2 Any additional real-time information screens will be reflected in a revised copy of Annex C which will be issued under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme Bespoke Variation arrangements. All operators running local bus services which would be affected by the introduction of new Real Time Passenger Information screens will be provide with a copy of any proposal to introduce new screen on the network. Those proposals will only go ahead if no objections are received within the proposals specified objection period. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator, if this is not possible the amendment will then be subject to the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation mechanism in Section 5.

3.12 New Park and Ride Sites

- 3.12.1 Wokingham Borough Council may bring into operation new Park and Ride sites at an appropriate time. Wokingham Borough Council may bring into operation new Park and Ride sites within the borough as it sees fit.

3.12.2 Prior to bringing any new park and ride site into operation appropriate documentation will be distributed to all operators who have a registered local bus service which runs into or out of the new Park and Ride. Clauses 3.6.1 and 3.6.2 will be replaced under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements. All operators who have a registered a local bus service which will run into or out of the new Park and Ride site can object to the proposals. Those proposals will only go ahead if no objections are received within the specified objection period. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator, if this is not possible the amendment will then be subject to the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation mechanism in Section 5.

3.13 Local Authority Reporting Mechanisms and Procedures

3.13.1 Annex C lists the service areas and contact email addresses in the borough that can be contacted as required. Should the email addresses or any other aspects of the reporting procedures included in Annex C change, Wokingham Borough Council will inform Operators at least 5 working days in advance of the change and Annex C will be updated.

3.14 Managing roadworks in the EP Scheme area

3.14.1 From 1st October 2023 Wokingham Borough Council will work collaboratively with all bus operators to minimise disruption to local bus services from both planned and emergency roadworks. This will include liaison with bus operators to ensure that the co-ordination of works across the network to minimises disruption in the EP Scheme area.

3.14.2 Wokingham Borough Council will ensure, as far as practical:

- a) All road and street works are published on one.Network.
- b) Planned and unplanned road and street works are published on Wokingham Borough Council's Traffic and Travel Facebook and Twitter social media platform.
- c) All local bus operators receive a formal notification of planned temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRs) 21 days before works commence.
- d) All local bus operators receive notification of disruptive emergency works as soon as feasibly possible.
- e) All local bus operators receive a bespoke list of major and disruptive works at least once a month.

f) All works are planned in coordination with neighbouring local authorities.

3.14.3 Any amendments to Section 3.14 will be made under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000. Any Operator may object to the amendment of Section 3.14 by e-mailing myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator. If this is not possible the amendment will then be subject to the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation mechanism in Section 5.

3.15 Marketing and Promotion of Local Bus Services in the EP Scheme area

3.15.1 Wokingham Borough Council will actively promote bus travel in the EP Scheme area. Promotion will include social media promotion, information on the My Journey website and the production of a network map across the whole EP scheme area. A network map will be refreshed at least once a year, which will usually be ahead of the new academic year each September.

3.15.2 Any amendments to Section 3.15 will be made under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 by using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.

3.16 Procurement of Contracted Services to the Benefit of the Passenger

3.16.1 Where appropriate Wokingham Borough Council will tender for local bus services to meet local need which is unmet by commercial services.

3.16.2 Any services procured after the making of the EP Scheme, which are not subject to Section 2.3 (Exempted Services), must comply with the scheme requirements.

3.17 Consult on Appropriate Traffic Management Measures

3.17.1 Where appropriate Wokingham Borough Council will consult on appropriate traffic management measures which will benefit bus travel.

- 3.17.2 Wokingham Borough Council will work with Operators to identify appropriate traffic management measures for consultation and where these are agreed upon, they will be implemented under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, subject to the approval of an appropriate Traffic Regulation Order. Operators may object to proposals for traffic management measures through the Traffic Regulation Order process.
- 3.17.3 Any amendments to Section 3.17 will be made under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 by using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.

3.18 External Funding Bids

- 3.18.1 Wokingham Borough Council will, in partnership with Operators, submit bids to all relevant Government competition funding sources to seek external contributions towards Enhanced Partnership ambitions in the EP scheme area. Wokingham Borough Council will work with Operators to identify and pursue other funding sources where appropriate.

3.19 Planning Consultation

- 3.19.1 Wokingham Borough Council will ensure Operators are informed of significant planning applications for developments where public transport will be a consideration (for example large residential and commercial sites). The Borough Council will consult all Bus Operators running existing bus services at the time of consultation who are likely to be impacted by the development.
- 3.19.2 Wokingham Borough Council will secure appropriate planning contributions through S106 agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or other appropriate means to ensure appropriate local bus service provision and appropriate bus infrastructure can be provided.

3.19.3 For proposed residential developments Wokingham Borough Council will request a My Journey contribution to support the promotion and marketing of all bus services. For proposed developments of a qualifying size, as set out in government planning guidance, and where a My Journey contribution has not been secured, Wokingham Borough Council will request a travel plan in line with Wokingham Borough Council's Travel Plan Guidance.

3.20 Bus Lane and Junction Enforcement

3.20.1 Wokingham Borough Council may apply to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal Service, or any subsequent organisation which assumes these powers, for permission to set-up bus lane and junction enforcement along with a suitable appeals process. Where these permissions are granted Section 3.20 may be varied or amended using a bespoke variation under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 to reflect the granted permission. All Operators of qualifying local bus services will be notified within 28 days of receiving any such permissions.

3.20.2 Operators may object to any application of bus lane and junction enforcement through the statutory Traffic Regulation Order process associated with any bus lane or junction in which the granted permission is applied.

3.21 Integration with other Sustainable Travel Modes

3.21.1 Wokingham Borough Council will use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to undertake appropriate feasibility, design, and project delivery work to improve the connectivity of local bus services with other sustainable modes of travel, namely local train stations, the wider cycle network, local footpaths and park and ride sites.

3.21.2 Any feasibility, design, and project delivery work to improve the connectivity of local bus services with other sustainable modes of travel, will be implemented under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using either the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5, notification to Operators who will be affected by the proposal or the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018, as appropriate to the scale and nature of the works.

3.22 Feasibility Studies

- 3.22.1 Wokingham Borough Council will use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to undertake appropriate feasibility studies to improve the efficiency and attractiveness of bus travel in the EP Scheme area. Wokingham Borough Council will, in partnership with Operators bid for appropriate funding for feasibility studies relating to bus priority measures, long-term local bus network improvements, park and ride network improvements, park and ride capacity studies and demand responsive transport studies. Any feasibility studies, for which funding is secured, will be implemented, and report on under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.

3.23 Bus Stop Audit

- 3.23.1 Wokingham Borough Council will use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to carry out an on-site audit of all bus stops in Wokingham Borough and develop a prioritised list of bus stop infrastructure improvements which brings bus stop standards in line with Wokingham Borough Council's adopted bus stop policy. Any programme for improving bus stop infrastructure will be implemented under the relevant clauses.

3.24 Branding

- 3.24.1 Wokingham Borough Council will use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to review the branding of travel in Wokingham Borough and make greater use of a Park and Ride branding. The detailed specification of any branding projects will be adopted under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.

3.25 Passenger Charter

- 3.25.1 Wokingham Borough Council with bus operators are to produce a bus passenger charter to give passengers more confidence with the service that is provided.. The passenger charter is being developed alongside the EP.

3.26 Pilot New Technology

- 3.26.1 Wokingham Borough Council will use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to pilot new technology, which may include zero emission buses, to enhance the attractiveness and efficiency of the bus network. The detailed specification of any pilot projects will be adopted under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation mechanism in Section 5.

3.27 Demand Responsive Transport

- 3.27.1 Wokingham Borough Council will consider the implementation of demand responsive transport to improve accessibility and flexibility of transport networks in rural areas, subject to funding being available. The detailed specification of any pilot projects will be adopted under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation mechanism in Section 5 or through the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018, as appropriate to the scale and nature of the provision.

4 Obligations on Local Bus Operators ⁵

4.1 Vehicle standards

4.1.1 Vehicles used on qualifying local bus services will be required to meet specific standards depending on when the route was introduced.

4.1.2 For vehicles operating on qualifying routes which were in place prior to the EP Scheme being made, the minimum specification, including Euro classification, should be the equivalent or better, to that was in place on the route on 31st October 2022. Details of the minimum specification for vehicles on each route are included in Annex D.

4.1.3 The following minimum vehicle specification shall apply to all new local bus service registrations commencing after 29th July 2025 and additionally to all vehicles used on qualifying bus services within the EP Scheme area where the date of first registration falls after 29th July 2025:

- a) All vehicles must be Euro VI or better.
- b) CCTV installed for safety and security. This should provide images inside the vehicle for safety and security and facing forwards from the vehicle.
- c) Automatic Vehicle Location equipment installed that will feed into the Wokingham Borough Council's real time information system.

4.1.4 For all new local bus service registrations with at least 2 buses an hour, commencing after 29th July 2025, the following minimum specification will apply in addition to that in Section 4.1.3:

- a) Option to pay for tickets through cashless payment.

4.1.5 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following successful agreed funding bids, to enhance vehicle standards in the EP Scheme area. These criteria will be varied in future under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.

⁵ Under s.138C of the Transport Act 2000

- 4.1.6 Where the Council engages with the operator in joint branding and or marketing of a route, the livery should where reasonably possible continue or be varied in future under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.
- 4.1.7 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following successful agreed funding bids, to implement tap-on, tap-off technology in the EP Scheme area. Any tap-on, tap-off technology will be adopted under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.
- 4.1.8 Any amendments to Section 4.1 will be made under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.

4.2 **Timetable changes**

- 4.2.1 Operators will be requested, where possible, to limit the number of timetable changes on all routes operating within the EP Scheme area. The most significant timetable changes should be made for the start of each new academic year in September.

4.3 **Ticketing**

- 4.3.1 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to review ticket acceptance for travel in the EP Scheme area, particularly for those aged 18 and under and in offering group tickets. Any new ticket acceptance schemes will be made under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 by the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.

4.4 Fares

- 4.4.1 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following agreed and successful funding bids, to provide a suitable and attractive young person's fare offer in the EP Scheme area. Any new young person's fare offer will be adopted under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 by the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.
- 4.4.2 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following agreed and successful funding bids, to provide a group travel offer in the EP Scheme area. Any new group fares offer will be adopted under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 by the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.
- 4.4.3 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following agreed and successful funding bids, to implement multi-operator capping schemes in the EP Scheme area. Any new multi-operator capping schemes will be adopted under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 by using the Enhanced Partnership bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.

4.5 Potential Service Enhancements

- 4.5.1 Enhancements and new services will be required to improve bus services in the EP Scheme area but delivery of these are currently constrained by additional funding. It is hoped that enhancements and/or amendments to frequency and timing of service can be introduced.

4.6 Passenger Charter

- 4.6.1 Local bus operators with Wokingham Council are to produce a bus passenger charter to give passengers more of a voice and say in the future of bus services in Wokingham. This aims to ensure that passengers are more involved in bus service planning and improvements. The passenger charter is being developed alongside the EP.

5 Governance Arrangements

5.1 EP Forum

The Enhanced Partnership Forum will be used to oversee and direct the work of the Scheme. It is set up with the aims of:

- Providing the opportunity for representatives of key stakeholders to discuss issues relating to the local bus network.
- Having the ability to influence consultations, engagement with new stakeholders and make recommendations and decisions.
- Discussing future content and arrangements for the variation and revocation of the EP Plan and EP Scheme.

5.1.1 Membership of the Wokingham Borough Council Enhanced Partnership Forum will comprise of, including voting rights:

- 1) All bus operators who run qualifying bus services (1 vote per operator that exceed 20% of bus mileage and **2 votes** for an operator that runs more than 50% of the bus mileage. Operators which function as more than one company but are part of the same financial entity will be treated as a single operator). A bus Operator and any of its Group Companies that operate less than 20% of the aggregate miles operated by all Bus Operators in respect of Qualifying Bus Services within the Scheme Area, **1 vote** in total to represent all of those Operators interests.
- 2) Wokingham Borough Council Executive Member for Active Travel Transport & Highways (chair, **1 vote** and casting vote).
- 3) Wokingham Borough Council Officers (Highways and Transport) (1 vote each up to **2 votes**).
- 4) Neighbouring Local Authority Officers (no votes).
- 5) Representatives of Town or Parish Councils, (up to 3 attendees) (no votes).
- 6) A representative from Reading University (no votes).
- 7) A representative from Royal Berkshire Hospital (no votes).
- 8) Representatives of Community Transport Operators in the EP area (no votes).
- 9) Representative of the passenger focus group (no votes).

5.1.2 The operation of the Forum will include these rules:

- 1) Meetings will be arranged by Wokingham Borough Council and take place once every six months.
- 2) An agenda will be circulated by Wokingham Borough Council in advance of the meeting. Minutes will be taken of each meeting and circulated after the meeting for approval by all attendees.

- 3) Decisions will be subject to voting on a simple majority basis. Voting rights are set out in paragraph 5.1.1. above. In the event of a tie the chair will hold the casting vote.
- 4) Wokingham Borough Council's Executive Member for Highways and Transport or a representative nominated by the Executive Member for Highways and Transport will Chair each meeting.
- 5) All members of the EP Forum will be subject to appropriate confidentially agreements on information disclosed and discussed within the forum.
- 6) Any information for disclosure must be agreed by the appropriate forum members and Wokingham Borough Council prior to its disclosure.
- 7) Listed members of the EP Forum do not have to attend each meeting for the meeting to take place. Any member not attending the meeting will forfeit their ability to input into the meeting. EP Forum members may nominate a representative to attend on their behalf. Any representative must be a member of the organisation in which they represent.
- 8) In addition to the above members, external organisations may be invited to join in an advisory capacity. Prior to any external organisation joining the Forum, the invitation, including the length of time the invitation is permitted for, must be approved prior to the Forum meeting, at least three members must approve the invitation to allow the external organisation to attend.
- 9) Any new members of the EP Forum are subject to bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5 and appropriate confidentially agreements.
- 10) Proposals may be put forward for consideration at the EP Forum by any community group, Town or Parish Council. This should be submitted by emailing the proposals to MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk. Wokingham Borough Council Officers will consider and decide if the proposal is appropriate for consideration at the Forum.
- 11) Any member of the EP Forum may request an interim meeting of the EP Forum by notifying Wokingham Borough Council using the following email address MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk and explaining what the issue is and its urgency. Wokingham Borough Council will notify all agreed members of the Forum of the request. An Interim Forum meeting may go ahead if majority support is gained for calling the meeting by members of the forum as listed in Section 5.2.2.
- 12) After EP Forum approval the proposal will move to the local authority approval process, which may include any further statutory approval required. In the event of a local authority approval or statutory approval not being given, the proposal may be reworked and returned to the EP Forum so that it can be reconsidered by Forum members.

5.1.3 Variations to the terms and membership of the Enhanced Partnership Forum maybe made under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5.

5.2 Local Authority Approval Process

- 5.2.1 Where proposals are of the nature that Wokingham Borough Council's Constitution requires an Individual Executive Member Decision (IEMD) or a formal Executive Decision, this process will need to take place after the proposal has been approved by the EP Forum. Where a decision does not require an IEMD sign off or an Executive Decision, Wokingham Borough Council may still request sufficient time to allow appropriate consultation prior to the proposal being adopted as a variation to the EP Scheme. All decisions made by the EP Forum are subject to any relevant approvals which are required by Wokingham Borough Council's Constitution or any legislation, regulation, or statutory guidance.

5.3 Review of EP Scheme

- 5.3.1 Once the EP Scheme is made, it will be reviewed by the EP Forum every six months following publication of data on progress towards targets, as required by the Local Bus Service Improvement Plan. Wokingham Borough Council will initiate each review.
- 5.3.2 The EP Forum or EP Board can also decide to review specific elements of the scheme on an ad-hoc basis. EP Forum members, as relevant, should contact Wokingham Borough Council using the following email address MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk explaining what the issue is and its urgency. Wokingham Borough Council will then decide whether to table at the next scheduled meeting or arrangement for all or the necessary members of the appropriate board to gather more quickly using the mechanism outline in Section 5.2.3(10).

5.4 Bespoke Arrangements for Varying or Revoking the Enhanced Partnership Scheme

- 5.4.1 Under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations where this section is quoted will be subject to the bespoke voting mechanism also as set out in this section.
- 5.4.2 Changes to or new flexibility provisions may be added to any part of the EP Scheme Under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, where Section 5.5.1 does not apply (Revocation of an EP Scheme), using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5 or the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018 if Wokingham Borough Council consider this to be more appropriate.

Proposer of a variation

- 1) Consideration will be given to potential EP Scheme variations highlighted either by a local authority, one of the organisations represented on the EP Forum, or by an operator of local bus services. The proposer of a variation should demonstrate how this might contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the BSIP, EP Plan and current local transport policies. Such requests should be in writing and submitted to MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk. Wokingham Borough Council will forward all requests onto all EP Forum members within 10 working days and place the item on the agenda for the next EP Forum meeting.
- 2) Variation to the “Proposer of a Variation” mechanism may be amended or replaced using a bespoke variation under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000.
 - a. Decision-making process and bespoke objection mechanism at EP Forum
- 3) On receipt of a request for a variation under this section, Wokingham Borough Council will place the item on the agenda for the EP Forum, giving at least 14 days’ notice in advance of the meeting, so that the EP Forum members can consider the proposed variation. If the proposed variation is agreed by a majority of representatives present and approved by any subsequent approval process, Wokingham Borough Council will make the EP Scheme variation within seven working days and publish the revised EP Scheme on the My Journey website.

5.5 **Revocation of an EP Scheme**

- 5.5.1 If Wokingham Borough Council or another member of the EP Forum believes it is necessary to revoke the EP Scheme, the EP Forum will be reconvened. If the decision is taken to revoke the EP Scheme it will follow the legislative procedures for revocation or use bespoke arrangements as set in Section 5.
- 5.5.2 If at any point in the future, any area covered by this EP Scheme is included in a bus franchising scheme, the relevant requirements set out in this EP Scheme document will cease to apply to areas covered by the franchising scheme, in line with the arrangements set out in the franchising scheme.⁶

⁶ Section 123H(6)-(8) of the Transport Act 2000

5.6 Confidentiality and data sharing

- 5.6.1 Members of the EP Forum must respect the confidentiality of any data or other information that is shown to them in confidence as part of their membership of the EP Forum.
- 5.6.2 If appropriate the Wokingham EP Forum will consider issuing individual Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) to all EP Forum members to support confidentiality.

5.7 Force Majeure

- 5.7.1 If any party is prevented, hindered, or delayed in or from performing any of its obligations under this Enhanced Partnership Agreement by a Force Majeure Event (**Affected Party**), then, so long as that Force Majeure Event continues, the Affected Party shall not be in breach of this agreement or otherwise liable for any such failure or delay in the performance of such obligations under the agreement.
- 5.7.2 The corresponding obligations of the other parties will be suspended to the same extent as those of the Affected Party.
- 5.7.3 The Affected Party shall:
- i. As soon as reasonably practicable after the start of the Force Majeure Event, but not later than three (3) Working Days from its start, Wokingham Borough Council in writing of the Force Majeure Event, the date on which it started, its likely potential duration, and the effect of the Force Majeure Event on its ability to perform any of its obligations under this Agreement; and
 - ii. use all reasonable endeavours to mitigate the effect of the Force Majeure Event.
- 5.7.4 As soon as practicable following such notification, Wokingham Borough Council will arrange an Enhanced Partnership Forum meeting to agree all reasonable endeavours and appropriate terms to mitigate the effects of the Force Majeure Event and facilitate the continued performance of the agreement in the public interest given any constraints by legislation, regulations or otherwise.

5.7.5 The Affected Party shall notify Wokingham Borough Council as soon as practicable after the Force Majeure Event ceases or no longer causes the Affected Party to be unable to comply with its obligations under this Agreement. Following, such notification, this Agreement shall continue to be performed on the terms existing immediately prior to the occurrence of the Force Majeure Event, unless amended, varied or otherwise prior to the Force Majeure Event ceasing. On receipt of such notification, Wokingham Borough Council will contract all EP Forum members and all other affected stakeholders to confirm that the Force Majeure Event has ceased.

6 Section 6 Dispute Resolution

6.1.1 If a dispute arises in connection with this Agreement, the parties shall follow the procedure set out in this Section 6.

6.1.2 Any party shall give to the other written notice of the Dispute, setting out its nature and full particulars (Dispute Notice), together with relevant supporting documents. On Service of the Dispute Notice, Wokingham Borough Council shall attempt in good faith to resolve the Dispute.

6.1.3 If Wokingham Borough Council and the affected parties are unable for any reason to resolve the Dispute within twenty (20) working days of the Service of the Dispute Notice, Wokingham Borough Council will seek the advice of the Department for Transport.

6.1.4 Nothing in this Dispute resolution produce shall prevent the Parties from seeking from any court of competent jurisdiction an interim order restraining the other Party from doing any act or compelling the other Party to do any act.

6.1.5 If the dispute cannot be resolved by the Parties pursuant to Clause 6.1.3 the Parties shall refer it to mediation pursuant to the Centre for effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR) Model Mediation Procedure unless:

- i. Wokingham Borough Council considers that the dispute is not suitable for resolution by mediation; or
- ii. One or more of the Parties does not agree to mediation.

6.2 Dispute Mediation and Consequential Provisions

- 6.2.1 The procedure for mediation and consequential provision relating to mediation are as follows:
- 6.2.2 A neutral adviser or mediator ("the Mediator") shall be chosen by agreement between the Parties or, if they are unable to agree upon a Mediator within 10 Working Days after a request by one Party to the other or if the Mediator agreed upon is unable or unwilling to act, either Party shall within 10 Working Days from the date of the proposal to appoint a Mediator or within 10 Working Days of notice to either Party that he is unable or unwilling to act, apply to appoint a Mediator.
- 6.2.3 The Parties shall within 10 Working Days of the appointment of the Mediator meet with Mediator to agree a programme for the exchange of all relevant information and the structure to be adopted for negotiations to be held. If considered appropriate, the Parties may at any stage seek assistance from a Mediator, to provide guidance on a suitable procedure.
- 6.2.4 Unless otherwise agreed, all negotiations connected with the dispute and any settlement agreement relating to it shall be conducted in confidence and without prejudice to the rights of the Parties in any future proceedings.
- 6.2.5 If the Parties reach agreement on the resolution of the dispute, the agreement shall be reduced to writing and shall be binding on the Parties once it is signed by their duly Authorised Representatives.
- 6.2.6 Failing agreement, either of the Parties may invite the Mediator to provide a non-binding but informative opinion in writing. Such an opinion shall be provided on a without prejudice basis and shall not be used in evidence in any proceedings relating to the Agreement without the prior written consent of both Parties; and
- 6.2.7 If the Parties fail to reach agreement in the structured negotiations within sixty (60) Working Days of the Mediator being appointed, or such longer period as may be agreed by the Parties, then any Dispute or difference between them may be referred to the courts or Traffic Commissioner as appropriate.

Table A1: Bus Priority Facilities

Intervention Number	Type of Bus Facility	Bus Link Description	Hours of Operation	Category of Vehicle Permitted	Responsibility for Maintaining
A1	Bus Lane	A3290	24 hours, 7 days a week		Wokingham Borough Council
A2	Bus Lane	A33 from the junction of Mere oak Lane towards M4 Junction 11 up to Wokingham Borough Council's Borough boundary	24 hours, 7 days a week		Wokingham Borough Council
A3	Bus Lane	Old Shinfield Road from its junction with Shinfield Road to the Black Boy Roundabout (northbound)	24 hours, 7 days a week		Wokingham Borough Council
A4	Bus Link	Sustainable Link from junction with Hyde End Lane to a point 80m southwest of Martyns Crescent, Shinfield. (northeast and southwest bound)	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus Services, Coaches, Minibuses over 9 seats, bicycles and pedestrians	Developer until such time as the link is adopted
A5	Bus Gate	Milton Road from car park access to junction with Rectory Road (southbound)	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council
A6	Bus Gate	A4 London Road service road to A4 London Road (northbound)	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council
A7	Bus Gate	Broad Hinton 9.4m south of Hubbard Close	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council
A8	Bus Gate	Basingstoke Road, signalised junction with A33/Mere oak Lane (northwest bound)	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council
A9	Bus Gate	Mere oak Lane, signalised junction with A33	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council
A10	Priority Traffic Signals	A3290 onto with Suttonseeds Roundabout	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council

Table B1: Real Time Passenger Information

Reference Number	Bus Stop Name	NaPTAN	Responsibility for Maintaining
B1	Loddon Bridge, The George	35075120001	Wokingham Borough Council
B2	Loddon Bridge, The George	35075120002	Wokingham Borough Council
B3	Drome Path	35075160002	Wokingham Borough Council
B4	Winnersh Post Office	35075220002	Wokingham Borough Council
B5	Winnersh Crossroads	35075240001	Wokingham Borough Council
B6	Mays Lane	35075020001	Wokingham Borough Council
B7	Mays Lane	35075020002	Wokingham Borough Council
B8	Earley Station	35075060001	Wokingham Borough Council
B9	Earley Station	35075060001	Wokingham Borough Council
B10	Meadow Road	35075060002	Wokingham Borough Council
B11	Emmbrook - Rifle Volunteer	35075100002	Wokingham Borough Council
B12	Emmbrook - Rifle Volunteer	35075320001	Wokingham Borough Council
B13	Wokingham Hospital	35075320002	Wokingham Borough Council
B14	Wokingham Hospital	35076100001	Wokingham Borough Council
B15	Ratepayers Hall	35076120002	Wokingham Borough Council
B16	Ratepayers Hall	35076340001	Wokingham Borough Council
B17	Shinfield - School Green	35076340002	Wokingham Borough Council
B18	Arborfield Cross - The Bull	35077120001	Wokingham Borough Council
B19	Arborfield Cross - The Bull	35077220001	Wokingham Borough Council
B20	Garrison - Langley Common Rd	35077220002	Wokingham Borough Council

Reference Number	Bus Stop Name	NaPTAN	Responsibility for Maintaining
B21	Barkham Ride - St James Road	35077280002	Wokingham Borough Council
B22	Barkham Ride - St James Road	35077520001	Wokingham Borough Council
B23	Doles Farm	35077640001	Wokingham Borough Council
B24	Shinfield Park	35084560001	Wokingham Borough Council
B25	London Road / The Drive	35090100003	Wokingham Borough Council
B26	Wokingham - Broad Street	35075400001	Wokingham Borough Council
B27	Wokingham - Broad Street	35075400002	Wokingham Borough Council
B28	Wokingham - Broad Street	35075400003	Wokingham Borough Council
B29	University of Reading Whiteknights House	39027900002	Wokingham Borough Council
B30	Meadow Road	35075100001	Wokingham Borough Council
B31	Holt Lane	35075360001	Wokingham Borough Council
B32	Wokingham Station Stop 1	35059890001	Wokingham Borough Council
B33	Wokingham Station Stop 2	35059890002	Wokingham Borough Council
B34	Bulmershe Court, Woodlands Avenue	35085080001	Wokingham Borough Council
B35	Bulmershe Court, Woodlands Avenue	35085080002	Wokingham Borough Council

Table C1: Contact Details

Service Area	Contact E-mail
Public Transport (inc. Concessionary Travel)	MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk
Community Transport	CTU.Group@wokingham.gov.uk
Traffic Management	Traffic.Management@wokingham.gov.uk
Traffic Enforcement	Parking.Services@wokingham.gov.uk
Road Works	Streetworks@wokingham.gov.uk
Vegetation	Treemanagement@wokingham.gov.uk
Gritting	Highway.Assets@wokingham.gov.uk
Marketing and Promotion	MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk

Table D1: Routes and Vehicles – Specification as of 31st October 2021

Route	Euro Rating	CCTV	AVL	Cashless
(3) Reading – Shinfield – Arborfield - Wokingham	Euro 5*	Yes	Yes	Yes
(4) Reading – Wokingham – Bracknell via A329	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes
(13/14) Reading – Cemetery Junction – Woodley	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes
(19a/c) Reading – Woodley – Earley – Reading	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes
(21/21a) Reading – University of Reading – Lower Earley	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes
(121) Norreys Estate – Wokingham – Tesco	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes
(122) Woosehill – Emmbrook – Wokingham	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes
(125) Wokingham – Finchampstead – Crowthorne	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes
(129) Reading – Sonning – Twyford – Maidenhead	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes
(128) Reading – Woodley – Sonning – Twyford – Winnersh – Wokingham	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes
(145) Reading – Three Mile Cross – Riseley – Finchampstead – Wokingham	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	No
(151) Wokingham – Bean Oak – Bracknell	Euro 5	Yes	Yes	No
(153) Upper Wargrave – Reading	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	No
(154) Stratfield Saye – Beech Hill – Loddon Court Farm – Reading	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	No
(300) Thame Valley Park P & R - Hospital - MereOak P & R	Euro 5	Yes	Yes	Yes
(500) Winnersh Triangle P&R – Reading	Euro 5*	Yes	Yes	Yes
(850) Henley – Twyford – Reading	Euro 5	Yes	Yes	No
* Use Compressed Natural Gas, which almost to Euro 6 standard				

Definitions

AVL – Automatic Vehicle Location. Equipment in buses that allows the location to be tracked which is especially useful for Real Time Information (RTI).

BSIP – Local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). This was first published by Wokingham Borough Council on 29th October 2021 and latest BSIP is BSIP2 dated January 2023.

Bus Franchising Area – area in which a statutory franchising scheme operates, as prescribed in the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Bus Services Act 2017 (section 123). Bus services in the area are controlled and specified by the transport authority, with bus operators providing services under one or more contracts.

Bus Gate – short stretch of road carriageway that is restricted to use by buses and (where specified) taxis and other authorised vehicles as indicated on appropriate signage on the approach.

Bus Lane – signposted lane, designated for use by registered local bus services and (where specified) taxis and other authorised vehicles, at the times also indicated by signage.

Bus Lane Enforcement – action taken to ensure that bus lanes and bus gates are used only by authorised vehicles. This is often carried out by using cameras to record unauthorised use, with the issue of civil penalties to offenders under section 144 of the Transport Act 2000.

Bus Link – is a road or street, designated for use by registered local bus services and (where specified) other authorised modes of transport such as pedestrians and cyclists.

Bus Priority Signals – traffic signals which provide a benefit to buses at junctions through controlled signalling, for example by extending green times or hurry calling green times.

Bus Stand – bus stop clearway as defined in accordance with paragraph 1(a) of Part 1 to Schedule 19 of The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 but which will permit a local bus to stand within the clearway for as long as maybe necessary up to a maximum period of 10 minutes.

CCTV – closed circuit television system, whereby static or mobile cameras are used to record offences or for surveillance and safety and security purposes.

CVRAS – Clean Vehicle Retrofit Accreditation Scheme (CVRAS) and is a certification scheme for manufacturers of retrofit emissions reduction technology that will enable Clean Air Zone (CAZ) compliance of legacy fleet vehicles to address the air pollution emissions from buses.

DRT – Demand Responsive Transport, whereby the transport service is not tied to a fixed route or the stopping at local bus stops. The service is a shared service which aims to operate as and when required within a defined area, during a set timeframe.

Designated Feeder Service – bus service specifically designed by the operator and accepted by Wokingham Borough Council as one that connects with another service allowing passengers to interchange at designated bus stops or bus stands

Enforcement Camera – roadside camera that records and produces suitable evidence of unauthorised use of bus lanes or bus gates for the Local Highway Authority to issue civil penalties under section 144 of the Transport Act 2000.

EP Scheme Area – area to which this EP Scheme document applies.

Euro VI equivalent standards – Euro VI diesel bus or a bus with CVRAS approved technologies retrofitted to a diesel bus to reduce NOx and PM emissions and achieve Euro VI equivalent standards

Facilities – physical assets that are provided at specific locations along particular routes (or parts of routes) within the EP scheme area or new and improved bus priority measures. This is deemed for such purposes of section 138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000.

Measures – improvements with the aim of:

- Increasing the use of local bus service serving the routes to which the measures relate or ending or reducing a decline in their use; or
- Improving the quality of local bus service.

Local Authorities – prescribed under section 23 of the Local Government Act 2003.

Local Highway Authorities – Local Authority with responsibility for the maintenance of highway infrastructure in its local authority area. In the case of this EP Scheme, this means [list authorities].

Local Transport Authority (LTA) – collectively [name of authority(ies)].

Multi-Operator Capping – common fares and ticketing product, applied across multiple bus operators, which will cap a user’s travel cost according to the lowest price available for the journey or journeys made.

Multi-Operator Ticketing – common fares and ticketing product applied and accepted by multiple operators.

Network Stability Protocol – specified dates through the year, agreed between Wokingham Borough Council and bus operators, on which local bus service changes take place.

Operator – local bus operator, operating registered local bus services.

Real Time Information – using technology to track the location of buses in real time. Information is transmitted to bus stops or devices to indicate to passengers the predicted arrival time at a particular point.

Registered Local Bus Service – as set out in Section 2 of the Transport Act 1985.

Street Works Permit – permit issued by Local Highway Authorities to any organisation that wishes to undertake street works, with the aim of managing works on the public highway. Local authorities have powers to operate permit schemes under Part 3 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and The Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

TRO – Traffic Regulation Order, made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 or any other enactment regulating the use of roads or other places.

Wokingham Borough Council Enhanced Partnership Plan – document made pursuant to section 138A of the Transport Act 2000 and which is required to be in place for an EP Scheme to be made.

Zero Emission Vehicle – vehicle that emits no pollutants at its tailpipe.

END OF DOCUMENT

This page is intentionally left blank

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE FORWARD PROGRAMME

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

Executive Forward Programme - June 2023 to April 2024

Updated 27 June 2023

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of Documents to be submitted to the Decision Maker for consideration and Background Documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Responsible Lead Member	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why / Explanation for any deferment of item
EXECUTIVE MEETING – 29 JUNE 2023						
WBC 1380	Procurement strategy for the purchase and distribution of wheeled bins in the borough Purpose: To determine the procurement strategy for wheeled bins in the borough	Executive		Director, Place and Growth - Giorgio Framalico/ Richard Bisset	Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure - Ian Shenton	N/A
WBC 1352	Capital Monitoring - Outturn 2022/23 Purpose: To inform Members of the capital programme outturn for 2022/2023, seek approval for the relevant budget carry forwards and demonstrate effective and safe use of our resources to deliver service improvements and service continuity through capital investments.	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A
WBC 1379	St Crispin's Leisure Centre Consultation	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive -	Executive Member for Environment,	N/A

	Purpose: Approval for public consultation on the future of St Crispin's Leisure Centre.			Graham Ebers/ Susan Bentley	Sport and Leisure - Ian Shenton	
102 WBC 1338	Toutley East Development - Update on Delivery and Residential Delivery Model Purpose: The Toutley East Development comprises the delivery of a new dementia care home, housing development and supporting infrastructure. This report provides an update on the Toutley East Development from that previously given to the Executive in July 2022, including changes in the financial assumptions resultant from changes in the market. In addition, recommendations are made with respect to the residential delivery model.	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ David Smith	Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing - Stephen Conway	Contains some exempt information.
WBC 1376	Local Sufficiency for Children in Care Purpose: To consider a business case to open a children's home in Wokingham to improve local sufficiency	Executive		Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson/ Hayley Rees	Executive Member for Business and Economic Development - Clive Jones	Contains commercially sensitive information about a property purchase.
WBC 1377	Two New Special Educational Needs School Purpose: The purpose of this report is to update the Executive on the locations for the provision of the two new Special Education Needs schools within the Borough and agree the proposed terms of the lease of the site to the Department for Education.	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Katie Meakin	Executive Member for Business and Economic Development - Clive Jones, Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing - Stephen Conway	N/A

WBC 1378	Corporate Building Cleaning Services Purpose: Provision of cleaning services at WBC (Wokingham Borough Council) sites and schools (maintained schools and academies) across the borough.	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Joanne Jennings		Contains some exempt financial information.
103 WBC 1371	Term Maintenance Contracts For Reactive & Planned Mechanical Works Purpose: To seek approval to retender for the provision of Mechanical reactive and planned maintenance contract which forms a part of a wider reactive 'Traded Service' offered to WBC corporate sites and external schools.	Executive	Procurement Strategy Appraisal Paper	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Chris Morland, Paul Simmons	Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing - Stephen Conway	Procurement strategy contains exempt information.
WBC 1372	Corporate Sponsorship Policy Purpose: To seek approval for adoption of a new corporate sponsorship policy	Executive	Executive report and relevant appendices	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Lyndsey Kauder	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A
WBC 1344	Finchampstead Neighbourhood Plan Purpose: Approval of Executive is sought to accept the changes recommended by the Examiner and to progress the plan to a referendum.	Executive	Examination Report Draft Decision Statement A copy of the 'Finchampstead Neighbourhood Development Plan Referendum Version' is available on request	Director, Place and Growth - Giorgio Framalicco/ Ben Davis, James McCabe, Ian Church	Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan - Lindsay Ferris	N/A
WBC 1351	Revenue Monitoring 2022-23 - Outturn Purpose: To report the revenue outturn position of the Council for	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Stu Taylor	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A

	2022/23 financial year highlighting the effective management of the Council's finances to ensure value for money for council tax payers, housing tenants and schools.					
WBC 1337	Customer Experience Strategy Purpose: To present a new Customer Experience Strategy, following resident, community and partner engagement.	Executive	A draft copy of a new Customer Experience Strategy.	Director, Communities, Insight and Change -/ Jackie Whitney	Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services - Sarah Kerr	N/A
WBC 1354	Wokingham Borough Council Tree Strategy Purpose: To seek Executive approval to adopt the Wokingham Borough Council Tree Strategy.	Executive		Director, Place and Growth - Giorgio Framalico/ Debbie Laffin	Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure - Ian Shenton	N/A
EXECUTIVE MEETING – 27 JULY 2023						
WBC 1382	Bohunt Wokingham School Sixth Form: Update and Budget Purpose: To update and review progress with the Bohunt Wokingham School.	Executive	Report	Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson/ Piers Brunning	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Children's Services - Prue Bray	N/A
WBC 1383	Local Development Scheme 2023 Purpose: The purpose of this report is to consider the adoption of a Local Development Scheme (LDS), the document which sets out the work programme for the local plans that are intended to be prepared over the next three years and when there are opportunities for engagement.	Executive	Recommended LDS.	Director, Place and Growth - Giorgio Framalico/ Ian Bellinger, Ian Church	Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan - Lindsay Ferris	N/A Not applicable.
WBC 1356	Delivery of Wellington Road Affordable Housing Scheme	Executive	Main Executive report and appendices	Director, Place and Growth - Giorgio	Deputy Leader of the Council and	N/A

	Purpose: To get Executive approval for the proposed delivery and funding of the affordable housing scheme at Wellington Road, Wokingham			Framalico/ Frances Haywood	Executive Member for Children's Services - Prue Bray	
WBC 1357	Capital Monitoring 2023/24 - Q1 Purpose: To consider the Capital Monitoring position at the end of Quarter 1.	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A
WBC 1359	Shareholders Report 2022/23 - Outturn Purpose: To consider the Annual Shareholders' Report	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A
WBC 1358	Revenue Monitoring 2023-24 Q1 Purpose: To consider the revenue budget position at the end of Quarter 1	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Stu Taylor	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A
105	EXECUTIVE MEETING – 28 SEPTEMBER 2023					
WBC 1375	Autism and Neurodiversity Strategy 23-26 Purpose: To seek executive decision on the all-age Autism and Neurodiversity Strategy 23-26	Executive		Director, Adult Social Care and Health - Matt Pope, Director, Children's Services - Helen Watson/ Wesley Hedger, Sophie Kendall, Ming Zhang	Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services - David Hare, Prue Bray	N/A
WBC 1373	Barkham Solar Farm - Business Case Update Purpose: To up-date Executive on the financial business case of the solar farm	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ David Smith	Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services - Sarah Kerr	N/A
WBC 1384	Enhanced Partnership Purpose:	Executive	Enhanced Partnership Agreement	Director, Place and Growth - Giorgio	Executive Member for Active Travel,	N/A

	To approve the Enhanced Partnership Agreement for local bus services			Framallicco/ Rebecca Brooks	Transport and Highways - Paul Fishwick	
EXECUTIVE MEETING – 26 OCTOBER 2023						
WBC 1374	Promotion of Wokingham Borough Council Assets Purpose: Promotion of WBC assets in Local Plan Update	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Katie Meakin	Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing - Stephen Conway	N/A
WBC 1360	Revenue Monitoring 2023-24 Q2 Purpose: To consider the revenue budget position at the end of Quarter 2	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Stu Taylor	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A
106 WBC 1361	Capital Monitoring 2023/24 - Q2 Purpose: To consider the Capital Monitoring position at the end of Quarter 2.	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A
EXECUTIVE MEETING – 25 JANUARY 2024						
WBC 1362	Revenue Monitoring 2023-24 Q3 Purpose: To consider the revenue budget position at the end of Quarter 3.	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Stu Taylor	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A
WBC 1363	Capital Monitoring 2023/24 - Q3 Purpose: To consider the Capital Monitoring position at the end of Quarter 1.	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A
WBC 1364	Chief Finance Officer's Report 2024/25 Purpose: Provide strategic oversight for the 2024-25 budget setting	Executive		Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	N/A
WBC 1365	Shareholders Update - January	Executive		Deputy Chief	Executive Member	N/A

	2024 Purpose: To consider various items related to the business of the Council owned companies, including their trading position			Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	for Finance - Imogen Shepherd- DuBey	
EXECUTIVE MEETING – 22 FEBRUARY 2024						
WBC 1366	Housing Revenue Account Budget 2024/25 Purpose: The revenue and capital budgets for 2024/25 are set and tenants rent levels are set for 2024/25 to ensure sound finances and value for money in providing housing services for council tenants.	Executive	Housing Revenue Account Budget 2024/25	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd- DuBey	N/A
197 WBC 1367	Treasury Management Strategy 2024-2027 Purpose: Note the treasury management procedures, limits, and objectives for 2024/25. Effective and safe use of our resources to deliver service improvements and service continuity through the management of the council's cash flow and investments while funding the capital programme.	Executive	Treasury Management Strategy 2024-2027	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd- DuBey	N/A
WBC 1368	Capital Programme and Strategy 2024-2027 Purpose: The capital programme and strategy 2024 – 2027 sets out the capital investment for the benefit of the community and how this is funded.	Executive	Capital Programme and Strategy 2024-2027	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson	Executive Member for Finance - Imogen Shepherd- DuBey	N/A
WBC 1369	Medium Term Financial Plan 2024-2027 Including Revenue	Executive	Medium Term Financial Plan 2024-2027	Deputy Chief Executive -	Executive Member for Finance -	N/A

	<p>Budget Submission 2024/25 Purpose: To provide the Executive with the key revenue budget extract for 2024/25 of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MFTP) 2024-2027 for submission to Council.</p>		<p>Including Revenue Budget Submission 2024/25</p>	<p>Graham Ebers/ Mark Thompson</p>	<p>Imogen Shepherd-DuBey</p>	
--	---	--	--	---	------------------------------	--

Members of the Executive:-

Stephen Conway	Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing
Prue Bray	Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Children’s Services
Rachel Bishop-Firth	Equalities, Inclusion and Fighting Poverty
Paul Fishwick	Active Travel, Transport and Highways
Lindsay Ferris	Planning and Local Plan
David Hare	Health & Wellbeing and Adult Services
Clive Jones	Business and Economic Development
Sarah Kerr	Climate Emergency and Resident Services
Ian Shenton	Environment, Sport and Leisure
Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	Finance

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

This page is intentionally left blank

**WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL
INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISIONS FORWARD PROGRAMME**

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

Individual Executive Member Forward Plan - July 2023 Update 1

Updated 10 July 2023

Ref No.	Subject for Decision	Decision to be taken by	List of documents to be submitted to the Decision maker for consideration and Background documents	Contact Details (Director/ Author)	Statement as to whether the item is likely to be considered in private and if so the reasons why/ Explanation for any deferment of item
IMD 2023/17	Wokingham Response to ESO Connections Reform Consultation Purpose: To agree a response to the ESO Connections Reform Consultation on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council Date 19 Jul 2023 Meeting Room and Time LGF3 at 11:30am	Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services - Sarah Kerr	Paper and draft consultation response	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ David Smith	N/A
IMD 2023/16	Appointment of Member to the Highwood Management Conference Purpose: To confirm the appointment of a Member to the Highwood Management Conference Date 20 Jul 2023 Meeting Room and Time LGF4 at 11am	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Children's Services - Prue Bray	IEMD report	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers/ Callum Wernham	N/A

<p>IMD 2023/14</p>	<p>Moving Traffic Orders for MTE sites Purpose: To report the results of the statutory consultation for the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) relating to MTOs. The TRO seeks to rationalise the traffic orders for 9 moving traffic restrictions including vehicle movement prohibitions, weight restrictions and No entry restrictions across the borough to closely align them with the restrictions which are currently on site as per the notice advertised. Date 27 Jul 2023 Meeting Room and Time FF12 at 1pm</p>	<p>Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways - Paul Fishwick</p>	<p>IEMD Report</p>	<p>Director, Place and Growth - Giorgio Framallicco/ Matt Gould</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>IMD 2023/15</p> <p>112</p>	<p>Local Validation List - 2 Year Review Purpose: The Councils adopted Local Validation List (LVL) must be reviewed and updated every 2 years, the current LVL has been subject to both internal and external consultation and all relevant amendments incorporated. Date 30 Aug 2023 Meeting Room and Time LGF9 at 9.30am</p>	<p>Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan - Lindsay Ferris</p>	<p>Draft copy of the revised LVL.</p>	<p>Director, Place and Growth - Giorgio Framallicco/ Ian Jordan</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Members of the Executive:

Clive Jones	Business and Economic Development
Stephen Conway	Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing.
Rachel Bishop-Firth	Equalities, Inclusion and Fighting Poverty
Paul Fishwick	Active Travel, Transport and Fighting Poverty
Prue Bray	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Children's Services
Lindsay Ferris	Planning and Local Plan
David Hare	Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services
Sarah Kerr	Climate Emergency and Resident Services
Ian Shenton	Environment, Sport and Leisure
Imogen Shepherd-DuBey	Finance

Note:

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

TITLE	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes 2023/24
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 18 July 2023
WARD	None Specific
DIRECTOR	Graham Ebers, Deputy Chief Executive

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Effective Overview and Scrutiny helps to improve services, holds decision makers to account and engages with local communities. In so doing it helps to demonstrate that the Council and other public service providers are open and transparent and are delivering high quality, value for money services.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is requested to:

- 1) consider the Committee's Work Programme for 2023/24 – Annex A;
- 2) consider the proposed allocation of Scrutiny items suggested by residents and Town & Parish Councils – Annex B;
- 3) note that additional items can be included in the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes during the year;

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Effective work programming is a Member-led process aimed at shortlisting and prioritising issues of community concern together with issues arising out of the Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan and major policy or service changes.

The Committee is requested to comment of its work programme and the work programmes for the four Overview & Scrutiny Committees – Annex A.

The Committee is also reminded that residents and Town/Parish Councils submitted suggestions for inclusion in the 2023/24 work programmes. These suggestions are set out at Annex B together with proposals for consideration by relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees or specific services.

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 focussed 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	NA	NA
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	0	NA	NA
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	0	NA	NA

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

Cross-Council Implications

Effective Overview and Scrutiny helps to drive service improvement, policy development and the achievement of value for money for the Borough's residents.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Due regard has been given to Council's Public Sector Equality Duty. The issues scrutinised during 2023/24 will raise the profile of Overview and Scrutiny for residents across the Borough, including residents with protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010. The aim is to achieve better/fairer outcomes and increased value for money for residents.

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

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has acted as a "critical friend" to the Council's Climate Emergency activities through the work of the Climate Emergency Task & Finish Group. In 2022 the Committee established a new Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a specific focus on scrutinising the delivery of the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

List of Background Papers

None

Contact Neil Carr	Service Resources and Assets
Telephone No 0118 974 6000	Email neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk
Date 8 July 2023	Version No. 1.0

DRAFT WORK PROGRAMMES 2023-24

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

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

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2023-24 WORK PROGRAMME

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
11 September 2023	Wokingham Borough Community Vision	To scrutinise the emerging Community Vision and Council Plan	Committee Request	Jackie Whitney
	Q1 Performance Report	To scrutinise corporate performance for Q1 of the 2023/24 Municipal Year	Regular Update	Will Roper
	Adoption of Estate Infrastructure	To consider progress since the Task & Finish Group report in 2020.	Committee Request	Chris Easton/ Andy Glencross
	Consultation Protocol	To scrutinise the updated Consultation Protocol	Committee Request	Dave Allen
	Executive Forward Programme	To consider the Executive and IEMD Forward Programmes and identify any issues for Scrutiny	Regular Update	Neil Carr
	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programmes	To consider the work programmes for the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees	Work Programme	Neil Carr
	Action Tracker	To consider the regular Action Tracker report	Regular Update	Neil Carr

118

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
4 October 2023	Refugees and Asylum Seekers	To consider the Council's support for refugees and asylum seekers	Committee Request	George Framalicco
	Continuous Improvement Programme	To consider progress on the Continuous Improvement Programme – including more effective business plans	Committee Request	Sally Watkins
	Traveller Encampments	To consider issues relating to the management of unauthorised traveller encampments in the Borough	Regular Update	George Framalicco
	Executive Forward Programme	To consider the Executive and IEMD Forward Programmes and identify any issues for Scrutiny	Regular Update	Neil Carr
	O&S Work Programmes 23/24	To consider the work programmes for the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees	Work Programme	Neil Carr
	Action Tracker	To consider the regular Action Tracker report	Regular Update	Neil Carr

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
15 November 2023	Q2 2023/24 Performance Management	To consider the Q2 Performance Monitoring report	Regular item	Will Roper
	Progress against Council Motions	To consider progress against Council Motions agreed since November 2022	Committee Request	Neil Carr
	Scrutiny Improvement Plan	To consider progress against the Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan	Committee Request	Neil Carr
	Executive Forward Programme	To consider the Executive and IEMD Forward Programmes and identify any issues for Scrutiny	Regular Update	Neil Carr
	O&S Work Programmes 23/24	To consider the work programmes for the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees	Work Programme	Neil Carr
	Action Tracker	To consider the regular Action Tracker report	Regular Update	Neil Carr

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
16 January 2023	Leader & CEX	To consider an update on challenges/opportunities from the Leader and Chief Executive	Committee Request	Susan Parsonage
	Thames Water	Follow-up discussions following attendance at June 2023 meeting	Committee request	Neil Carr
	Air Quality	To scrutinise progress against the Council's Air Quality improvement targets	Committee Request	Narinder Brar
	O&S Work Programmes 2024/25	To start discussions on the work programmes for 2024/25	Committee Request	Neil Carr
	Executive Forward Programme	To consider the Executive and IEMD Forward Programmes and identify any issues for Scrutiny	Regular Update	Neil Carr
	O&S Work Programmes 23/24	To consider the work programmes for the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees	Work Programme	Neil Carr
	Action Tracker	To consider the regular Action Tracker report	Regular Update	Neil Carr

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
6 February 2023	Q3 Performance Monitoring Report	To consider the Q3 performance monitoring report	Committee request	Neil Carr
	Economic Development Strategy	To consider progress against the Council's Economic Development Strategy	Committee Request	Neil Carr
	Tackling Poverty Strategy	To scrutinise progress against the Council's Tackling Poverty Strategy	Committee Request	Neil Carr
	Executive Forward Programme	To consider the Executive and IEMD Forward Programmes and identify any issues for Scrutiny	Regular Update	Neil Carr
	O&S Work Programmes 23/24	To consider the work programmes for the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees	Work Programme	Neil Carr
	Action Tracker	To consider the regular Action Tracker report	Regular Update	Neil Carr

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
March 2023	O&S Work Programmes	To confirm the O&S Work Programmes for 2024/25	Annual item	Neil Carr
	Executive Forward Programme	To consider the Executive and IEMD Forward Programmes and identify any issues for Scrutiny	Regular Update	Neil Carr
	O&S Work Programmes 23/24	To consider the work programmes for the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees	Work Programme	Neil Carr
	Action Tracker	To consider the regular Action Tracker report	Regular Update	Neil Carr

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2023/24 WORK PROGRAMME

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
6 September 2023	Social Worker Recruitment and Retention Update	To monitor the development and progress of the strategy.	Information item	Children's Services / Adam Davis
	Safety Valve Update	To monitor the development and progress of the programme.	Standing item	Children's Services/ Ming Zhang
	Impact of the Cost of Living crisis	To consider the work being undertaken to support children and young people in the borough in relation to the current cost of living crisis.	Information item	Children's Services/ Helen Watson
	Holiday, Activities & Food programme	To consider the impact of the cost of living crisis on holiday, activities and food programme	Information item	Children's Services / Helen Watson
	KPI's	To consider the key performance indicators	Standing item	Children's Services / Helen Watson
	Post Ofsted Action Plan	To review the Action Plan in response to the ILACS Ofsted inspection	Information item	Children's Services / Helen Watson
	Schools Update	To monitor schools' performance.	Standing item	Children's Services / Ming
	Executive Member Update	To receive an update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	Standing item	Prue Bray

124

	Cost of Living Crisis update	To receive a brief verbal update and decide how to continue to monitor this situation.	Information item	Children's Services / Helen Watson
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To consider the work being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session	Standing item	Children's Services/ Ming Zhang
	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward plan of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker
DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
1 November 2023	Safety Valve Update	To monitor the development and progress of the programme.	Standing item	Children's Services/ Ming Zhang
	Executive Member Update	To receive an update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	Standing item	Prue Bray
	Schools Update	To monitor schools' performance.	Standing item	Children's Services / Ming
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To consider the work being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session	Standing item	Children's Services/ Ming Zhang
	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward plan of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker
DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
8 January 2024	Executive Member Update	To receive an update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	Standing item	Prue Bray

	Schools Update	To monitor schools' performance.	Standing item	Children's Services / Ming
	Safety Valve Update	To monitor the development and progress of the programme.	Standing item	Children's Services/ Ming Zhang
	To Review the Post Ofsted Improvement Plan	To monitor the progress of the improvement plan.	Challenge item	Children's Services / Helen Watson
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To consider the work being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session	Standing item	Children's Services/ Ming Zhang
	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward plan of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker
DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
20 March 2024	Safety Valve Update	To monitor the development and progress of the programme.	Standing item	Children's Services/ Ming Zhang
	Schools Update	To monitor schools' performance.	Standing item	Children's Services / Ming
	Executive Member Update	To receive an update from the Executive Member for Children's Services.	Standing item	Prue Bray
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To consider the work being undertaken to support schools causing concern in a part 2 session	Standing item	Children's Services/ Ming Zhang
	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward plan of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services/ Luciane Bowker

CLIMATE EMERGENCY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
11 July 2023	Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP)	To consider the final draft of the Climate Emergency Action Plan prior to submission to full Council in September 2023	Committee Request	Sabrina Chiaretti
	Work Programme	To consider the Committee's Work Programme for 2023/24 – to be informed by the CEAP Update	Standing Item	Neil Carr
	Action Tracker	To consider the regular Action Tracker report	Standing Item	Neil Carr

127

COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
4 Sep 2023	Local Transport Plan 4	To receive details of the LTP4.	Work programme	Chris Easton
	Highways Maintenance	To consider how highways maintenance issues were prioritised, how KPIs were set and managed, and overall service performance.	Work programme	Chris Easton
	Civil Parking Enforcement	To consider the performance of civil parking enforcement within the Borough/	Work Programme	Chris Easton
	Arts and Culture Strategy	To receive a progress report on the implementation of the Arts and Culture Strategy.	Work Programme	Rhian Hayes
	Work Programme	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2023-24	Standing Item	Democratic Services

128

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
2 October 2023 2023	Medium Term Financial Plan	To receive the strategic overview of the draft MTFP, and details of earmarked reserves held by WBC	Work programme	Graham Ebers
	Local Plan Update	To receive an update on the development of the Local Plan Update	Work Programme	Ian Bellinger
	Action Tracker	To consider the Committee's action tracker	Standing Item	Callum Wernham
	Work Programme	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2023-24	Standing Item	Democratic Services

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
30 October 2023	Medium Term Financial Plan	To receive details of proposed bids within the draft MTFP	Work programme	Graham Ebers
	Action Tracker	To consider the Committee's action tracker	Standing Item	Callum Wernham
	Work Programme	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2023-24	Standing Item	Democratic Services

130

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
14 November 2023	Medium Term Financial Plan	To receive details of proposed bids within the draft MTFP	Work programme	Graham Ebers
	Action Tracker	To consider the Committee's action tracker	Standing Item	Callum Wernham
	Work Programme	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2023-24	Standing Item	Democratic Services

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
28 November 2023	Medium Term Financial Plan	To receive details of proposed and updated bids within the draft MTFP	Work programme	Graham Ebers
	Action Tracker	To consider the Committee's action tracker	Standing Item	Callum Wernham
	Work Programme	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2023-24	Standing Item	Democratic Services

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
19 December 2023	Medium Term Financial Plan	To receive details of proposed and updated bids within the draft MTFP	Work programme	Graham Ebers
	Action Tracker	To consider the Committee's action tracker	Standing Item	Callum Wernham
	Work Programme	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2023-24	Standing Item	Democratic Services

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
22 January 2024	Enforcement and Safety Service	To scrutinise the delivery of the Council's enforcement and safety service	Work programme	Narinder Brar
	Planning Service	To scrutinise the delivery of the Council's Planning, Strategic Planning and Planning Enforcement services	Committee request	Trevor Saunders
	Action Tracker	To consider the Committee's action tracker	Standing Item	Callum Wernham
	Work Programme	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2023-24	Standing Item	Democratic Services

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	CONTACT OFFICER
4 March 2024	Police and Fire Services	To receive an update on the work of the Police and Fire Services	Work programme	Graham Ebers
	Flood Risk Management	To receive the annual update on the Council's delivery of the flood risk management strategy	Work Programme	Boniface Ngu
	Combatting Drugs Partnership	To receive a report on the work of the Combatting Drugs Partnership Delivery Group	Committee Request	Narinder Brar
	Action Tracker	To consider the Committee's action tracker	Standing Item	Callum Wernham
	Work Programme	To consider the work programme for the Committee for 2023-24	Standing Item	Democratic Services

Task & Finish Groups – Active Travel Task and Finish Group

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD PROGRAMME

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
19 September 2023	Update on dental services	Update on progress made since update in January 2023	Challenge item	ICB
	Healthwatch update – Wokingham Medical Centre Enter and View report	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough
	ASC KPIs	Challenge item	Challenge item	Matt Pope

134

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
6 November 2023	Healthwatch update	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough
	ASC KPIs	Challenge item	Challenge item	Matt Pope

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
31 January 2024	Healthwatch update	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
	ASC KPIs	Challenge item	Challenge item	Matt Pope

DATE OF MEETING	ITEMS	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
19 March 2024	Healthwatch update	Challenge item	Challenge item	Healthwatch Wokingham Borough
	ASC KPIs	Challenge item	Challenge item	Matt Pope

135

Currently unscheduled topics:

- Autism Strategy
- South Central Ambulance Service
- Westcall
- Update on outcome of autumn Covid booster plan
- Maternal mental health
- GP access and communicating different ways of working with the public
- Self care
- Coroner's court
- Adult Services Workforce Strategy
- Specialist Accommodation project

This page is intentionally left blank

Annex B

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Requests 2023/24

No	Request	Comment/Action
1	Lack of safe active travel routes for both cycling and walking. We live less than 1/2 mile from primary school, the sports centre and Wokingham town centre but have no safe walking or cycling routes to any of them.	LCWIP has been considered by the Communit & Corporate O&S Committee. Active Travel Task & Finish Group has been set up
2	The Finchampstead Road is very unsafe for cycling and for pedestrians who need to get across it. No safe crossing near Molly Millars or near the town centre and the crossing near Evendons only works about 50% of the time, it has been reported lots of times but still we have to run the gauntlet trying to cross safely with our children because the lights won't turn red for cars.	Refer to Higways and Transport
3	Lack of a secondary school strategy. I've been asking for literally years for a long term secondary school strategy that goes beyond 2020. We need to apply for secondary school by the end October this year but WBC haven't shared where all the school places will be, so it will be a lottery for my child with SEN need. Lack of communication from the SEND Dept. My son was turned down for an EHCP but I don't know why, I've not been given a reason and all of my emails asking why, go unanswered. WBC do not respond to emails.	Refer to Children's Services O&S Committee and SEND team
4	<p>Provision of shopping, sport and community facilities within the major housing developments in the area for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shinfield new supermarket not built planning permission just approved 4 years after house building started; • Shinfield village centre not started despite 4000 house being completed; • Arborfield new commercial centre not started; • Shinfield new cricket pitch not open; • Arborfield new sports pavilion not started; • Shinfield sports centre not built. 	Refer to Community and Corporate O&S Committee
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP performance - to highlight good and poor performance; • Access to NHS dentistry - to highlight gaps and put pressure on the NHS to improve this. 	Refer to Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

6	<p>Road maintainance and pedestrian safety issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do highways sign off road resurfacing as complete and satisfactory when they are in just as bad, if not worse, a state as before resurfacing? I'm talking in particular about the ironworks being below the road surface making them as bad as the potholes that were there previously. I'm talking in particular about Wokingham Road from the 3 Tuns to the George and Wilderness Road from the 3 Tuns to Pepper Lane. • Traffic lights by the George, Wokingham Road junction with Loddon Bridge Road, do not filter traffic as planned. When coming down the Wokingham Road from Reading the left turn filter onto Loddon Bridge Road stays red even though the turning onto Loddon Bridge Road is clear. • Pedestrian zebra crossings are not illuminated making it difficult to see pedestrians at night especially if they are wearing dark clothing. • Many white lines need repainting as there are many that are worn out. 	Refer to Community & Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee and to Highways and Transport
7	<p>An initial investigation into placing a 3G facility at Laurel Park in Lower Earley was cancelled prior to any proper investigation or evaluation being undertaken, the decision was purely based on the feedback from a small number of misinformed residents local to Laurel Park.</p> <p>A second plan was then instigated to install a facility at Maiden Erlegh School, the council's public consultation showed overwhelming support for this idea, but yet again due to a small number of complainants the project has been stopped.</p> <p>Earley and Lower Earley has in the region of 33,000 residents, nearly a quarter of the total residents in Wokingham Borough, and yet we are the only part of the borough with no modern 3G facility.</p> <p>Laurel Park FC teams are currently having to train on sand based MUGAs, tennis courts and facilities that are on the other side of Wokingham because there is just not enough space locally. This will limit any hope of the club expanding to support more children, to enable mixed ability sessions, to introduce adult men's and women's teams or much needed senior walking football. We currently have close to 500 kids training every week but have a waiting list in excess of 100 children that we just can't support due to the lack of facilities. Ideally we'd love to extend our junior section from the existing 33 teams to 45+ in the next 3 years but that cannot happen without new facilities, and in fact it's more likely that we will have to decline in numbers.</p> <p>Increasingly it seems decisions related to sport in the Borough are being made by people who are only listening to one side of the issue. At no point has any councillor taken the time to come and speak to the LPFC committee to understand what the real</p>	Refer to Sports & Leisure team

	<p>requirement is and the level of support that a new facility actually has. We know that the WBC Executive members were contacted directly by a large number of supporters of the project and each of them were brushed off and ignored.</p> <p>I'm hopeful that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can review how the decisions relating to the 3G pitch are being made and understand why councillors and the Executive Committee are not taking into account the views and requirements of the majority of the population of the Borough.</p>	
8	<p>To many residents it is irresponsible to grant planning permission for any sizeable new housing development of 50 or more dwellings without first ensuring that local services can cope with the additional demand that new residents will place on them.</p> <p>Planning officers seem too willing to kick the infrastructure can down the road when determining such applications. Their standard response - that NHS services are not within the remit of the planning department - is not only glib but also potentially very dangerous, especially when local GP and dental surgeries and local hospitals are already overloaded before any new development is built.</p> <p>Our society risks falling into terminal decline if we make healthcare, education and road safety less attainable and I suggest that planning officers and their committees should never exercise their power to increase population without first coordinating any necessary guaranteed infrastructure upgrades with the responsible bodies. Otherwise they may be condemning residents to unnecessary illness, accidents and possibly a premature death as well as a sub-standard education.</p> <p>Any person of sound mind would agree with my suggestion so it is a mystery that a properly coordinated approach to housing development planning has not been put in place.</p>	See 3 above – Refer to Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee
9	<p>'Unofficial' pedestrian access through a hedgerow was available to able bodied and disabled persons at this location until just before Christmas when a 50cm wooden rail was installed to prevent vehicles from parking on the verge. Access remains available to abled bodied people, however disabled people face discrimination as there is no gap for pedestrians. I am no longer able to push my daughter in a wheelchair through the hedgerow at this location. Mothers with buggies need to lift their buggies. This is arguably contrary to the Discrimination Act of 2010 and therefore against the law.</p> <p>When reported to the WBC Inclusion Team, the response was not what I had expected. I had expected a response of 'Yes, we agree the lack of pedestrian access where once there was discriminates against less-able-bodied people'.</p>	Refer to Place & Growth

	<p>Aside from acting when disabled people are being discriminated against (abled bodied people can simply step over the rail), WBC should be promoting non-car journeys by maintaining easy access without having to 'go round the houses'. This is an ideal opportunity which would cost nothing; ensure compliance with the law and create value for disabled and young parents with buggies.</p>	
10	<p>Please could you scrutinise the fact that the road on the Wokingham side of the Easthampstead Road railway crossing floods frequently, sometimes making it unusable for pedestrians. It has happened for years. The crossing is regularly closed causing disruption for pedestrians, yet the poor drainage issue is ignored.</p>	Refer to Highways and Transport
11	<p>Winnersh Parish Council would like to submit the following items for consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and condition of roads and pavements within the Borough. • Delivery of agreed infrastructure by developers on new estates, i.e. community centres. 	See 4 and 6 above
12	<p>Wokingham Without Parish Council suggest the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway maintenance – specifically in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Potholes – hazardous to both cyclists and cars ○ Road sign cleaning and repair ○ Roadside ditches and drainage maintenance ○ Roadside litter removal 	See 6 above
13	<p>Please accept the following from Arborfield and Newland Parish Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parish owned street lighting – move to WBC ownership • Waste collections • Litter • Delivery of services and facilities in Arborfield Garrison strategic development location. 	Refer to Place and Growth

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee – Action Tracker 2023/24

O&S Management Committee – 18 January 2023		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Minutes of Previous Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed
Leader and Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite Leader and Chief Executive to OSMC every six months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2023
Q2 Performance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate follow up information to relevant O&S Committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
O&S Work Programmes 2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process for developing work programmes agreed - implement • Work Programmes to be confirmed at the March 2023 meeting • Borough's MPs be invited to submit items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed • Completed • Completed
Exec/IEDM Forward Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add the Tackling Poverty Strategy to the OSMC work programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed
Committee Work Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate report of the Estate Infrastructure T&FG to Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed

O&S Management Committee – 22 February 2023		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Minutes of Previous Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed
Changes to Waste Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit summary of discussion to Executive together with additional info 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed
Customer Excellence Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Customer Experience Strategy to next meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed
O&S Annual Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed for submission to March Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed

O&S Management Committee – 15 March 2023		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Minutes of Previous Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed
Q3 Corporate Performance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further information to be circulated to Members • Children’s Care Home Sufficiency report to CS O&S • Update on Greenredeem scheme to Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed • Completed • Ongoing
Equality Plan Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments to be fed back to inform Equality Action Plan • Update on the new Equality Forum to Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed • Ongoing
Customer Experience Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member comments to inform development of the Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
Biodiversity Net Gain Pilot Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations to the Executive: • officers ensure that there is clear communication with residents and community groups about the aims of the BNG pilot project in Ashenbury Park and the expected outcomes; • design work on the pilot project proceed, but no physical works take place on site until the public consultation has been completed, evaluated and reported - consultation to include an option with no changes to Ashenbury Park; • officers explore potential mitigations relating to the financial risks and outcomes relating to the project; • the Executive notes Scrutiny Members’ concerns about the potential negative impact on communities if BNG projects are not linked to the areas which are taking new housing development; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Executive receive a map showing the proposed pilot project site within Ashenbury Park (included with this paper); officers provide a briefing for all Members on the introduction of BNG into the planning process and the specific pilot BNG project in Ashenbury Park. 	
Overview & Scrutiny Work Programmes 2023/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Work Programmes agreed Refer Work Programmes to individual O&S Committees 	• Completed

O&S Management Committee – 12 June 2023		
Agenda Item	Action	Update
Minutes of Previous Meeting	• Agreed	• Completed
Thames Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter from Chair to Thames Water summarising issues discussed Members to attend site visits at STWs Notify Town/Parish Councils about opportunities for Thames Water briefings Arrange discussion with Members on sinkholes in Borough Thames Water – WBC discussions on cost of living measures, smart meters, adoption of infrastructure and water efficient homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing
Q4 Corporate Performance Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review layout and content of pie charts in report Director and Executive Member review targets in leisure centre KPI Further report on performance of leisure centres Officers consider inclusion of assets values in KPI on investment portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing • Ongoing
O&S Work Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocate resident/Town/Parish suggestions to O&S Committees All reports/presentations to be submitted in advance of O&S meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed • Completed

This page is intentionally left blank