



# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in Council Chamber  
- Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on  
**THURSDAY 20 JULY 2023 AT 7.30 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Parsonage', with a long, sweeping tail.

Susan Parsonage  
Chief Executive  
Published on 12 July 2023

**Note:** Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting or participate in the meeting virtually, in accordance with the Council's Constitution. If you wish to participate either in person or virtually via Microsoft Teams, please contact Democratic Services.

The meeting can also be watched live using the following link:  
<https://youtube.com/live/yWMHgw3rxEQ?feature=share>

This meeting will be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website. Please note that other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting. The use of these images or recordings is not under the Council's control.

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

To: The Members of Wokingham Borough Council

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
15.		<b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence.	
16.		<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 May 2023.	15 - 30
17.		<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest.	
18.		<b>MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b> To receive any announcements by the Mayor.	
19.		<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any public questions.  A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice.  The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of the Council.  Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Council or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to <a href="http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions">www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions</a>	
19.1	Barkham	Christina Haigh has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways the following question:  <b>Question:</b> Since 31st March, I have twice emailed Messrs Easton, Corrigan, Searle, Chancellor, and Milburn with my question, but have had no response from anyone. My question pertains to Biggs Lane, and the road safety of children crossing that road to reach Farley Hill Primary School since it relocated.  The temporary crossing that we had been using - actually better located than the new one, i.e. closer to the school and further from the Princess Marina Drive	

roundabout – is now gone. Its removal has led to traffic in both directions speeding up between the permanent crossing and the Langley Common Road roundabout. Parents are asking me if the former temporary crossing could be transformed into a zebra crossing, what also other traffic calming will be put into place to slow traffic on Biggs Lane?

What plans are there to address this? Biggs Lane is now a very busy road and would benefit from additional road markings and traffic calming e.g. speed bumps. The people in our area would doubtless be grateful if the dangerous "road narrowing" implemented throughout Arborfield, could be avoided. They are an accident waiting to happen and we want to keep the school community safe.

19.2 None Specific

Paul Stevens has asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services the following question:

**Question**

Earlier this month, the government clarified laws made in 2015, that taxpayers should not be charged for disposing of household waste at civic amenity sites – scrapping backdoor “tip taxes”. It has also repeatedly stated that councils should not be charging for such DIY household waste disposal.

Under the proposals, household DIYers would not be charged to get rid of waste including plasterboards, bricks and bath units. Despite this promise from the UK Government, Re3, which runs the recycling centres at Longshot Lane in Bracknell and Smallmead Road in Reading, is sticking to the charges, at least for now. As a resident living in a rural part of Wokingham I can report that fly tipping has got progressively worse since the pandemic and shows no sign of reducing. Charging for waste disposal makes no sense if it encourages fly tipping which then has to be cleared by the Council. It creates an unsightly environment which is potentially hazardous and encourages others to add to it.

Can the Executive member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services confirm that Re3 will be dropping their charges for householder disposal of DIY waste as soon as the new legislation is in place?

19.3 None Specific

Jim Frewin has asked the Executive Member for Planning and the Local Plan the following question:

**Question:**

Over the past few years successive administrations have informed residents that they are in conversation/negotiation with Government Housing Ministers with regards to Wokingham housing numbers. I realise that the revolving door situation with multiple Ministers has made these conversations difficult. My question to the Executive Member for Planning will you please provide a detailed update on these conversations/negotiations including latest schedule, actions taken and actions planned?

19.4 Norreys

Emma Webster has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways the following question:

**Question:**

On 17th June in the early hours of the morning a motorist travelling down Rectory Road went into the railings at the junction of Rectory Road and Wiltshire Road causing significant damage to the railings, which had just been repaired after the previous incident occurring at the same junction a few months prior.

This is now the third incident in the last six months and seventh in the last few years. When a question was asked previously at Full Council the response given was "the absence of information about individual collisions means that it is not possible to identify factors that may have contributed to the recent spate of incidents."

Unfortunately, but unsurprisingly, the motorist in this latest incident neither remained at the site of the accident, nor reported they were responsible for the damage. So, can I please ask, what measures are the Council going to take to ensure safety at this junction so that all road users go round the bend rather than through the railings?

19.5 None Specific

Tony Johnson has asked the Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing the following question:

**Question:**

Back in January this year, Full Council voted unanimously to change the constitution - to reform it in line with the 21st century needs, needs of the staff, the elected representatives and the residents.

Please would the new leader bring us up to date on

the progress of the changes to the Constitution and any plans this administration has to consult before the changes are brought before this Council for consideration?

- 20.** **PETITIONS**  
To receive any petitions which Members or members of the public wish to present.
- 21.** None Specific **UPDATE OF LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE** **31 - 54**  
To receive a report on the updated Local Code of Corporate Governance.
- RECOMMENDATION**
- To approve the Local Code of Corporate Governance as recommended by the Audit Committee at its meeting of 7 June 2023.
- 22.** Twyford **TWYFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN** **55 - 74**  
To receive a report on the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan.
- RECOMMENDATION**
- That Council:
- 1) Make (adopt) the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan so that it forms part of the statutory Development Plan, pursuant to Section 38A(4) of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; and
  - 2) Publishes a Decision Statement pursuant to Regulation 19 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) (“the Regulations”) in order to give effect to the above recommendation.
  - 3) Delegates to the Director of Place & Growth, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan, and in agreement with the Qualifying Body, to make any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual corrections to the plan and supporting documents.
- 23.** **OUTCOME OF CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT**  
Following a complaint against Councillor Halsall, an independent investigation was conducted into the

allegations which centred on a March 2022 letter signed by Councillor Halsall and distributed to residents in Norreys ward. The investigators' report concluded that there had been a breach of three clauses of Wokingham Borough Council's Code of Conduct (paragraphs 9.2.5, 9.2.8.5 and 9.2.8.7 (b) (ii)).

Councillor Halsall has been asked to make a written apology to the complainant which he has done and will also receive training on aspects of the Code. In accordance with Rule 9.1.14.3 of the Borough Council's Constitution, the decision notice was published on the Council's website on 30 June 2023. A copy of the decision notice has been sent to the complainant, the Subject Member, and the Independent Person. The Constitution also requires that the matter is reported to the next meeting of the Council.

In relation to this complaint, there will be no discussion on the item and there is no further action required.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Council notes that Councillor John Halsall was found to be in breach of the Member Code of Conduct.

**24.**        None Specific        **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH WELLBEING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23**        **75 - 94**

To receive a report from the Chair of the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board on the work undertaken by the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board 2022-23.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the report from the Chair of the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board be noted.

**25.**        **MEMBER QUESTION TIME**  
To answer any member questions.

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

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

25.1        Finchampstead South        Rebecca Margetts has asked the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan the following question:

**Question:**

In Liberal Democrat local election literature Councillor Pittock stated that Sainsbury's will run the supermarket and negotiations for the pub are underway in the new Arborfield Green village Centre.

In a recent social media post Cllr Pittock has stated that a legal agreement is in place with Sainsburys (a lease will follow) and discussions are being held with a publican.

The residents of Finchampstead South are delighted to hear this and have waited so long for this progress. Can you advise me of the latest updates.

25.2 Finchampstead North

Charles Margetts has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways the following question:

**Question:**

Can you tell me if the tender to for the redevelopment of California Crossroads has been awarded by Wokingham Borough Council to a contractor and when the work is expected to start and finish?

25.3 Wokingham Without

Pauline Helliar-Symons has asked the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan the following question:

**Question:**

My residents would like you to make a commitment not to allow 835 additional houses in the north east corner of Wokingham Without, in the green gap between Wokingham and Bracknell. Will you make this commitment not to put this site in the new Local Plan?

25.4 Wokingham Without

David Davies has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure the following question:

**Question:**

I was delighted that this year the Council chose to promote biodiversity through Plantlife's "No Mow May" initiative, encouraging residents to let their lawns grow for a critical month in the year to help local wildlife, particularly our pollinators.

I was therefore surprised and disappointed that Wokingham Borough Council chose to start cutting the grass in my ward in the middle of May and as a



result am aware of some residents that have gone ahead and cut their own grass in frustration at this do as I say approach. Can the Executive Member confirm why this has happened and commit that this will not happen in future years?

25.5 None Specific Phil Cunnington has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport & Highways the following question:

**Question:**

Could the Executive Member explain how someone would park in a town centre car in the evening if they wanted to leave their car overnight until 8AM the next morning, without incurring a fine?

25.6 None Specific Gary Cowan has asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:

**Question:**

Could the responsible Executive Member for Children's Services update the Council on the latest plans to deliver SEND facilities within Wokingham Borough?

25.7 Bulmershe and Whitegates; Coronation; Loddon; South Lake

Keith Baker has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport & Highways and the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan the following question:

**Question:**

I have a copy of the original agreement between WBC, Taylor Wimpy and Woodley Properties signed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2012. It is quite interesting reading particular the section 7 which is all about Highways. As is normal for a large development such as this (Sandford Farm, Woodley) the agreement includes developer contributions to Bus Service Enhancements which is £629,225, Travel Plan Purpose £122,326.40 and Infrastructure or other Transport Improvements £1,297,248.60. A grand total of over £2 million which should have been spent in Woodley mitigating against the impact of this large development.

It also includes a clause which says that after 10 years any unused money can be used anywhere at Wokingham Borough Council's discretion. Well, the 10 years are now up so I would like to know how this large sum of money has been spent. So, can you please provide a full breakdown of all the projects that this money was spent on?

25.8 Shinfield North Andrew Gray has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways the following question:

**Question:**

Residents in my ward feel unsafe using the junction between the B3270 and Whitley Wood Lane due to the number of accidents and near misses over the last year. What is the council doing to make this junction safer?

25.9 None Specific Peter Harper has asked the Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services the following question:

**Question:**

With the two solar farms at Barkham unlikely to go ahead due to the lack of capacity in the local electricity transmission network, what contingency plan is there to save the 14,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e that form a critical part of the net zero strategy?

25.10 None Specific Andy Croy has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Sport, and Leisure the following question:

**Question:**

Last week there was a Council press release announcing that fewer bins will be emptied at some indeterminate point in the future.

This week we see that bins are being covered with black plastic bags.

When was the Executive Member planning on informing residents and Members about the timings of which bins will be affected by the decision to not empty them?

25.11 None Specific Laura Blumenthal has asked the Executive Member for Equalities, Inclusion and Fighting Poverty, the following question:

**Question:**

Residents have been asking me about the £250k hardship fund in Lib Dem leaflets. Please can you share how residents in crisis can apply for payments from this hardship fund?

25.12 None Specific Mike Smith has asked the Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Housing the following question:

**Question:**

The Building Safety Act 2022 that is a direct result of the Grenfell disaster, places a large number of responsibilities onto the Building Owner which cannot be off-laid by contract to others. How is Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) planning to comply with these newly defined responsibilities related to buildings that WBC own?

25.13 Abdul Loyes has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure the following question

**Question:**

How has the Council assessed which bins it will remove and which need less emptying in parks and on walking routes?

**26. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND WARD MATTERS**

An opportunity for Members to ask questions in relation to the latest circulated volume of Minutes of Meetings and Ward Matters. 20 minutes is permitted for this item.

**27. STATEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

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

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

**28. STATEMENT FROM COUNCIL OWNED COMPANIES**

To receive any statements from Directors of Council Owned Companies.

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

**29. MOTIONS**

To consider any motions.

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

29.1 None Specific

**Motion 501 submitted by Charles Margetts**

‘This Council calls on the Mayor of London to abandon the proposal to end the one day travel card which would be more expensive to our residents and could discourage train travel. This Council notes that the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways has written to the Mayor expressing the Council’s opposition to his plans. This Council asks all political group leaders to sign a joint letter to the Mayor of London reiterating opposition to his proposals, to show cross-party support for the Council’s position.’

**Statement from the Chief Finance Officer:**

There are no direct financial implications in supporting this motion.

29.2 None Specific

**Motion 502 submitted by Caroline Smith**

‘Wokingham Borough is a place renowned for being welcoming and friendly and for the strength of its communities. It is a place where every resident and place matters, and this should be a part of its vision and mission.

We recognise the potential contribution of asylum seekers and refugees to our Borough, and believe that a comprehensive, co-ordinated and forward-looking approach that promotes community cohesion is the best way to ensure the welfare of people moving into the Borough.

This Council:

- a. Agrees to make Wokingham Borough a recognised ‘Borough of Sanctuary’, welcoming those fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries, no matter their country of origin or how they arrived in our Borough;
- b. Becomes a supporter of City of Sanctuary UK by signing their organisational pledge and making a voluntary donation of the suggested amount for an

- organisation of our size of £250;
- c. Will amend its vision and mission to recognise that status;
  - d. Recognises the positive contribution asylum seekers and refugees make to the social, cultural and community life of Wokingham Borough.
  - e. Is committed to taking practical steps to welcome and include refugees and asylum seekers in our activities and will actively seek ways of supporting them, looking for opportunities to do so both within our existing and future budgets and through seeking additional income such as grants;
  - f. Will support our communities and voluntary, community and faith groups in assisting asylum seekers and refugees wherever possible.'

**Statement from Chief Finance Officer:**

There are no direct financial implications in supporting this motion other than the nominal sum associated with the donation.

29.3 None Specific

**Motion 503 submitted by Pauline Jorgensen**

'The Council will monitor and publish a report to Full Council on a quarterly basis detailing progress on business cases for all projects with costs over £1m. This report will set out the objectives and deliverables for all active projects that have been approved and are being delivered or due to be delivered, so that the public can see clearly what the full cost, capital, and revenue, of any change and what benefits have been delivered. Commercially sensitive details which cannot be reasonably placed in the public domain, as decided by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council, will be made available for councillors in a Part 2 addition to the report, with the option to discuss these details with the public and press excluded, if necessary. The first report will be brought to the next Full Council meeting after this one, on Thursday 21st September 2023.'

**Statement from the Chief Finance Officer:**

There are no direct financial implications in supporting this motion.

29.4 None Specific

**Motion 504 submitted by Pauline Helliard-Symons**

'While recognising concerns about clean air and congestion, there has to be a balance with supporting the local economy, therefore this Council is

committed not to introduce ULEZ charges in any part of the Borough of Wokingham.'

**Statement from the Chief Finance Officer:**

There are no direct financial implications in supporting this motion.

29.5

**Motion 505 submitted by Norman Jorgensen**

The Council has announced that it will seek to make £600,000 of savings by removing some litter bins, reducing the number of times it sprays weeds, cleans areas around bottle banks, empties litter bins, and sweeps roads. This is despite Full Council having approved a budget in February 2023 which the Executive put forward to pay for services for 2023/24. The announcement has been made with no consultation with Members outside the administration, nor Borough residents.

This Council instructs the Executive to:

1. Provide a report to September Full Council outlining a breakdown of the savings expected, the areas where services or bins will be reduced, and the estimated cost of achieving those savings, including the cost of removal of bins
2. Hold a consultation with residents to seek public views on this service reduction
3. Produce a report for presentation to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee outlining the results of the consultation and resulting decision, including the costs of each individual change and impact assessments
4. Take a report to the Executive following the presentation to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Proceed no further with the announced savings until 1-4 to have been completed.

**Statement from the Chief Finance Officer:**

The direct financial implications associated with delaying these service efficiencies are approximately £5k per week.

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF  
THE COUNCIL  
HELD ON THURSDAY, 18 MAY 2023 FROM 7.30 PM TO 9.30 PM**

**Members Present**

Councillors: Beth Rowland (Mayor), Adrian Mather (Deputy Mayor), Keith Baker, Rachel Bishop-Firth, Laura Blumenthal, Prue Bray, Rachel Burgess, Anne Chadwick, Stephen Conway, David Cornish, Andy Croy, Phil Cunnington, David Davies, Peter Dennis, Lindsay Ferris, Michael Firmager, Paul Fishwick, John Halsall, David Hare, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Graham Howe, Clive Jones, Norman Jorgensen, Pauline Jorgensen, Sarah Kerr, Abdul Loyes, Morag Malvern, Charles Margetts, Rebecca Margetts, Andrew Mickleburgh, Stuart Munro, Alistair Neal, Jackie Rance, Ian Shenton, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Caroline Smith, Mike Smith, Wayne Smith and Shahid Younis

**Members In Attendance Virtually**

Councillors: Sam Akhtar

**1. Election of Mayor**

Caroline Smith the current Mayor, welcomed recently elected Members. The Mayor thanked all those who had invited her to their events over her time in Office. She highlighted some of the events that she had attended including for the Queen's Jubilee.

Caroline Smith thanked Caroline Kelly, the Mayor's Assistant, the Deputy Mayor Beth Rowland, and her consort, for their support over the year.

The Mayor called for nominations for the office of Mayor for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

It was proposed by Clive Jones and seconded by Stephen Conway that Beth Rowland be elected as Mayor for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

It was noted that the Mayor's chosen charity would be the Woodley Foodbank.

**RESOLVED:** That Beth Rowland be elected as Mayor for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

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

Beth Rowland addressed the meeting as follows –

Thank you very much Members, for putting your faith in me as your Mayor for the year. I will carry out this position to the best of my ability. Before we go back to the agenda, I would like to embarrass Caroline Smith just once more. She has been a great example to us all on how to behave as Mayor, and I hope that I am as good as she is. I would like to thank her with a plant that she can put outside, and which I hope will bring memories to her of the year she spent as the First Citizen in

Wokingham.

## **2. Appointment of Deputy Mayor**

The Mayor called for nominations for the office of Deputy Mayor for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

It was proposed by Clive Jones and seconded by Stephen Conway that Adrian Mather be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

It was:

**RESOLVED:** That Adrian Mather be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Adrian Mather made the statutory acceptance of office pursuant to Section 83 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Adrian Mather thanked the Council for appointing him to the office of Deputy Mayor.

At this point in the meeting, the Reverend Jackie Case led the meeting in prayers.

## **3. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Gary Cowan, Peter Harper, Chris Johnson, Bill Soane and Alison Swaddle.

Sam Akhtar attended the meeting virtually.

## **4. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 March 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

## **5. Declarations of Interest**

Stephen Newton declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 13 Appointments to Outside Bodies, on the grounds that he was nominated to represent the Council on the Berkshire Pension Fund, and his wife was a member of the scheme.

## **6. Returning Officer's Report on May 2023 Elections**

The Council considered a report from the Returning Officer, which gave details of the results of the local elections held on 4 May 2023.

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

It was proposed by Stephen Conway and seconded by Imogen Shepherd-Dubey that the report of the Returning Officer be noted.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

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

## **7. Mayor's or Head of Paid Service Announcements**

The Mayor informed Members that she had no announcements to make.

## **8. Statement by Councillor Clive Jones**

Thank you very much Madam Mayor. Tonight, I come to the end of my time as Leader of Wokingham Borough Council. The first Liberal Democrat Council Leader in Wokingham for twenty years. It has been an honour and it has been a privilege to be the Leader of the Council, and to work with so many excellent officers, Executive Members, and fellow Councillors. I am proud that the partnership that we created last May, between Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independent Councillors, gave the Borough Council much needed financial stability and financial competence. I thank the 28 councillors who formed the partnership last year. We wanted to change the culture of the Council. We wanted a concentration on partnerships within the Council, and also with outside bodies and agencies, including town and parish councils. I think we have made a very good start on this journey.

Madam Mayor, I would like to take a few moments to thank a few of my colleagues. I am delighted to welcome four new Liberal Democrat councillors; Stephen Newton, Jordan Montgomery, Jane Ainslie and Catherine Glover. Well done all of you.

Now to my two fellow Ward councillors, David Hare and Andrew Mickleburgh, who are also very close friends. David has worked really well as our Adult Social Care lead, and Andrew has been a really good Chair of the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Thank you to both of you.

When I introduced my Executive last year, I said that there was no one better than Councillor Sarah Kerr to be the Executive Member for Climate Emergency and Residents Services. I was right of course. I usually am. Sarah has done a great job handling so many roles. Thank you very much Sarah.

Lindsay Ferris, my predecessor as Lib Dem Leader, has worked tirelessly on the Local Plan Update. Not an easy task when you have so many Secretary of States to deal with. I think so far it has been four, but thank you very much Lindsay.

Prue Bray, in my opinion, she has been the best Executive Member for Children's Services that this Council has ever had. She thoroughly understands this brief, and has with officers, worked through some very, very difficult issues. We should be proud that 96% of Year 7 children were able to be given a school of their choice recently, and the work that she and officers have done to secure Safety Valve funding has been quite exceptional. Another mess that we had to clear up after the previous administration. So, thanks Prue, a job really well done.

Paul Fishwick, he has been of the busiest Executive Members. Clearly much more on top of his brief than his predecessor, including Active Travel in his job title shows that the Lib Dems are committed to encouraging residents to walk and cycle more, which is good for their health and good for the environment. Sadly, others do not always get this, but thank you very much Paul.

Ian Shenton, he has been particularly busy with the Environment, Sport and Leisure portfolio. He has updated our Waste Strategy, which will now help us to save the

Council £1million a year. £1million that can be spent on statutory services such as Children's Services, social care, and potholes. The new Strategy will also improve recycling rates, two very important outcomes, which sadly others just do not get. Well done Ian you have done a great job. Thank you.

For years the Conservatives claimed that the Liberal Democrats would bankrupt the Council. Well, we have not, and we will not. It is just as well that we took over the finances last year, so that we could repair the damage left by the Conservatives. Under Imogen Shepherd-Dubey's stewardship, we have balanced the budget without the need to raid the General Reserves, and have done this, despite inflation raging at 10%, and energy costs more than doubling, and us finding holes in the budget left by the Conservatives. Thankfully residents no longer believe that the Conservatives are good with money. That myth has been well and truly blown, both nationally and locally. Well done, Imogen, thank you.

I could not have had a more supportive deputy than Stephen Conway, who has been responsible for Housing and also partnerships. The work that he has done to improve relationships with town and parish councils and outside bodies has been exceptional, and sadly much was needed to be done after 20 years of the Conservatives in Wokingham. I know that he is as delighted as I am, and Lindsay is, that we are delivering a new library. Thank you, Stephen, thank you very much for your support.

Tackling poverty. Inclusion and equalities could not be under a better person than Rachel Bishop-Firth. I am so pleased that I created this portfolio last year. I am delighted that we have created a £250,000 Hardship Fund to help with the cost of living crisis, but it still saddens me that there are some that oppose this. I am so pleased that we have funded free school meals during school holidays, so that children who have them during term time can have them during the school holidays. No child should be going hungry in 2023. These two policies are ones that I am personally very proud of. They set us apart from the Opposition and show the compassionate side of Liberal Democrat policies. Thank you, Rachel, thank you for everything that you have done.

I will not thank individual officers, but I will say that I have enjoyed working with them at all levels in all of the Directorates. I have appreciated the openness of our discussions. We have not always agreed but we have respected each other's positions and found solutions to issues that need to be addressed. It is really good to get such a positive peer review from the Local Government Association, which noted improvements in relationships between officers and Leaders of the Administration. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to be Leader of the Council, and I look forward to the next chapter in my political journey when I intend to concentrate on the campaign to hopefully become the first Liberal Democrat MP for Wokingham at the next General Election. The new Liberal Democrat Leader is my friend and colleague Stephen Conway. Later he will become the Leader of the Council. I know that I leave the Council leadership in extremely strong hands. Stephen and the Liberal Democrat Executive and Councillors will continue with our financially sound management of the Council and compassionate policies which will support the most vulnerable in our community, as well as providing council services that we all rely on, in a cost effective and efficient manner. Thank you to everybody

who has helped me, officers, councillors, it has all been very much appreciated. Thank you.

## **9. Election of Leader of Council**

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

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

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

Stephen Conway addressed the meeting as follows –

### **Stephen Conway, Leader of the Council:**

Thank you, Madam Mayor for introducing me as the new Leader. I am immensely grateful to Council for entrusting me with the responsibilities of the post to which I've just been elected. It's an enormous privilege to lead this Council, and I will do so to the best of my ability and seek to justify your support.

We have had many distinguished leaders of Council – none more so than my immediate predecessor, Clive Jones. I had the pleasure of serving as Clive's deputy last year and I know better than anyone that he is going to be a hard act to follow. Thank you, Clive, for your clear-sighted, calm, and courageous leadership over the last twelve months; I will strive to build on your many successes.

Clive led an impressive and effective Executive, and I am not proposing to make any changes to its composition. Clive will remain on the Executive as our lead on business and economic development. I am delighted to say that my colleague Prue Bray has consented to be my deputy; her experience and good judgement, respected across the Council, will be invaluable. The list of Executive Members and their areas of responsibility has been tabled in a paper before you. I am not going to read out names that you can read yourself.

This year will no doubt be challenging for the Council, as was the last. Inflation has not gone away; demand for our services grows, interest rates remain high, and the government has given us totally inadequate core funding. But we have at least three significant advantages to help us rise to the challenges ahead. The first of those advantages is our external partnerships. Over the past year, the Lib Dem administration devoted time and effort to improving the Council's relationships with its community partners – especially the voluntary and charitable sector, town and parish councils, business, the university, schools, and health providers. We are forging much more effective relationships with these bodies than in the past and that will help our community to weather whatever storms may hit us. This administration will continue to work to nurture and deepen these relationships, in the firm belief that we can achieve more together than we can on our own.

A second big advantage we possess is that this Council has impressive and dedicated officers, who want to make a difference and are committed to the public service. I hope all Councillors will appreciate the enormous contribution our officers make – without them we could do literally nothing.

Our third advantage is that there is a great range of experience and talent in this Council Chamber, amongst elected Councillors of all parties and of none. I would like, this is my personal ambition, to call on the expertise of all Councillors to help us tackle the challenges that lie ahead. I want all Councillors to be able to make a meaningful contribution through active participation in council committees or working parties. I also want to facilitate the work of all Councillors as ward representatives. You have all been elected as particular representatives of your wards. I want to help you in that role. If you have a particular ward matter on which you would like assistance, I will always listen and try to find a way forward when that's possible.

This administration's priorities will be financial stability; targeting what resources we can at helping those most in need; securing school places for the Borough's young people; providing support for local businesses; and playing our part in addressing the climate emergency. I hope that these priorities are shared across the Chamber. On many matters that we seek to address, there is more consensus than electioneering rhetoric and party-political point-scoring in Council meetings might suggest. There will, of course, be areas of disagreement. But let us not manufacture contention where none exists. Let us work together whenever possible. That is what our residents expect of their councillors. There is a yearning amongst the public for a more adult form of politics; let's show that we can provide it.

In the spirit of working with others beyond the Lib Dem group, I have offered the chairs of the Audit Committee and the Climate Emergency Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Labour Group. I have offered the Conservative group the vice-chairs of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Licensing and Appeals Committee, and the Standards Committee. The leader of the Labour group has agreed – thank you, Rachel. Subject to the Committees voting on those people being Chairs and Vice Chairs. The leader of the Conservative group has accepted the vice-chair of Standards, which is encouraging, but has declined the offer of Conservative vice-chairs for Health Overview and Scrutiny and Licensing Appeals, which strikes me as a missed opportunity. I hope Pauline will reconsider; there is still time before the first meetings of the committees. I appreciate that adjusting to opposition is never easy after a period in power, and I can imagine that it must be more difficult after twenty years of being in charge. But, believe me, constructive opposition can add value to what the Council does. Ultimately, it's more satisfying for opposition members than merely railing from the side-lines.

For my part, Madam Mayor, I will listen to the views of others, and will respect their right to take a different line. I will approach this coming year in the same way as I approached my own election in Twyford – with a positive appeal to peoples' hopes rather than a negative appeal to their fears. Fellow Councillors, we are at our best when we are positive. Whatever our differences about means, I believe that we share a common view of the ends we are seeking. All of us, surely, want to see a more prosperous, a more vibrant, and a greener Wokingham. All of us, I hope, want

a compassionate and caring Wokingham. And all of us, I hope again, want to ensure that everyone in our community is treated with respect and is given the opportunity to live a happy and fulfilled life, whatever their background or characteristics. If we do indeed share these objectives, let's work together to deliver the even better Borough that we all want to see.

**Pauline Jorgensen, Leader of the Opposition:**

Since our last Full Council, we have lost familiar faces and gained some new ones. I would like to thank all former councillors of all parties for their service to the Borough and their time and commitment. All ward councillors work hard for their residents and give up their evenings to attend meetings like this, often combining their role with careers and families. I would also like to welcome the new Councillors. I hope you enjoy your time on the Council. I would also personally like to thank my Shadow Executive for all their work on behalf of residents. Also finally, to thank all the residents who voted. Local elections matter. They effect vital services we all rely on, and at a time when democracy around the world is looking more fragile, it is important that we do not take hard won freedoms for granted, but instead exercise our rights. If you did not vote, then your voice could not be heard.

I would like to congratulate Adrian and Beth for becoming Mayor and Deputy, and also, I would like to congratulate Councillor Conway on becoming Leader of the Group and Leader of the Council. He is a dedicated local councillor who has served our Borough for 22 years since 1994, with a short break. In my previous dealings with him I have always found him to be fair, decent, and honest. He has spoken of wanting a better future for our Borough. I share that commitment and where we agree the Conservative Group will support and work with colleagues from other parties, and I look forward to doing so.

Wokingham Borough voters have again delivered a Council with No Overall Control. No one party has a majority. We will continue to offer a robust opposition where we disagree, as residents expect us to. I said that local elections matter, and what goes on in this Chamber matters. Debates should be heard, and the voices of residents should be heard. Last year, too often this was not the case. Twice the previous Lib/Lab administration tried to introduce constitutional change which if it had been passed would have meant that councillors kept questions would not have been heard. Petitions brought by thousands of residents have been ridiculed, consultations, and even a resolution of Council was ignored, and debates quashed. At the same time last year there was shown a worrying lack of transparency and a growing trend of being selective with the facts. Despite being repeatedly asked since last summer, the Administration is yet to publish the business case for the parking charges. Councillor Jones went to great pains to tell residents that bins would be collected weekly under their new policy, even though he knows full well that household waste and non-food recycling, which is what most people class as bins, will not be taken away every week. At the election, despite asking for residents' votes, the Liberal Democrats did not produce any manifesto or leaflets which give any indication of what they are going to do over the next year. Asking for a blank cheque? Possibly.

As a historian, Councillor Conway will know that all too well, in exchange for taxation, people expect something in return, but the record of the Liberal Democrats and the

Labour coalition partners, is that residents pay more and get less. Council tax is up, fees are up, parking charges are set to double. In exchange bins will be collected less, fewer potholes will be fixed, there will be no action on the solar farm, and our residents have been let down with no progress on achieving sustainable housing numbers, and no movement on producing a new Local Plan to protect against speculative development, something we all want to do. We will wait to see if whether the new national policy of allowing developers free rein to build on the Green Belt is adopted by our Liberal Democrat friends. At least residents can take comfort that more money is being found to promote all of the wonderful things it is doing for them, as spending on the Council's PR is up.

The Conservatives believe in putting residents at the heart of Council policies, strong finances, action on planning, working with communities, and ensuring that people are free to choose, not forced to meet the ideological whims of politicians. We will continue to put forward a positive plan for making Wokingham Borough an even better place for residents, local businesses, and future generations.

## **10. Public Question Time**

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

### **10.1 Heather Howath asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways the following question:**

#### **Question**

We have been waiting for 19 month for the Winnersh Park and Ride to resume the 500 bus to Reading. A lot of money has been spent and what for may I ask?

I travel on this bus service regularly to Reading and the bus was very popular. It was the most convenient way to Reading without taking my car.

In Hurst there is a bus service which travels to Reading. However, this is an hourly service in the week and Saturday its 2 hourly. Not a direct route.

The Mere oak Park and Ride is too far away from Hurst to make it viable to use.

While the Winnersh Park and Ride was temporarily out of action, you provided a bus from the TVP. Not ideal but was temporary so ok. That stopped as you said due to lack of demand. This service was never going to be popular from our area as Winnersh one was.

What a White Elephant and waste of money the car park is unless the 500 Park and Ride Bus continues to run.

Please reinstate our number 500 Park and Ride Bus.

#### **Answer:**

Thank you, Heather, for the question.

Before starting the project to increase parking capacity at Winnersh Triangle a



business case was undertaken and independently assessed during 2017. External funding was awarded at that time on the basis that there was sufficient demand for the additional spaces and therefore the investment in the car park would prove a greater benefit to the Borough compared to the cost.

Before the Covid pandemic the 500 service was a commercial service run by Reading Buses. Post pandemic travel patterns have changed and there has been a significant decline in Park & Ride usage nationally, and although there is a recovery it has been slow. Therefore, it would be a commercial decision by Reading Buses if they wish to operate a commercial park and ride service. The Liberal Democrats inherited this project when we became the Administration last May, and it was financially sensible to complete it. The ground floor of the park and ride is now open, ahead of schedule, and this allows access for Blue Badge users and allows rail users to park closer to the station.

It can also be used for those wishing to travel into central Reading who can use the train from Winnersh Triangle or the nearby frequent Lion 4/X4 bus that operates along the A329 Reading Road.

**Supplementary Question:**

But the bus is a long way away from the car park isn't it and what is the top half of the car park going to be used for?

**Supplementary Answer:**

It is a shortish walk from the car park to the A329 Reading Road. The top part of the car park is currently closed off until demand in the lower part increases, and then we will open the top half.

**10.2 Anthony Johnson asked the Executive Member for Environment, Sport & Leisure the following question:**

**Question**

During the election campaign, residents of Shinfield North expressed opposition; concerns; lack of knowledge; or support for the proposed changes to the waste collection system.

Some who opposed the changes were scornful as to the decision making process; or whether or not it would ever save any money. Others caring for babies or for adults who have to use disposable nappies - plus their neighbours - asked whether it was going to be hygienic or just stink everyone's houses out especially during a hot summer?

Concerns about the proposed changes ranged from "where are we going to put things for two weeks" or "more hard plastic - how green is that" while others talked about the negative visual impact or the practicality. As one resident put it "how's my 84 year old neighbour going to get the bin up and down all those steps?"

Support came from those who were fed up with having to clean up after the bin men had been and gone, or with their blue bags being chewed apart by foxes and cats.

Paraphrasing one question, it was tantamount to "how did WBC ever come to make such a daft decision and was it based on the biased consultation where you couldn't express the answer you wanted to" ?

But what was patently clear was that residents' views were significantly divided.

So, on behalf of all who expressed a view, what messages should all Councillors, or candidates, communicate to residents in response to their concerns?

**Answer**

It is regrettable that so much confusing and false information about the changes to our waste collection was deliberately circulated as a political ploy during the election campaign. Our proposal is simple: food waste will be collected every week, accompanied by recycling one week and general waste the next. The report that lays out what is going to happen and why can be seen on the Council website at item 100 on the agenda for the March Executive meeting. The relevant URL for that will be provided in the published version of this answer:

<https://wokingham.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g4261/Public%20reports%20pack%2021st-Mar-2023%2019.00%20Executive.pdf?T=10>

Our decision is robust, informed by public consultation, the input of industry experts and by the experience of the 85% of councils that already use the method we are proposing. Indeed, we will draw on their experience to take into account residents' concerns about things like the suitability of a property for a bin, the size of bin, assisted collections, and medical and large family needs. We understand that change can be difficult, but we will be adopting the mitigations proven by many others.

Finally, to answer your question directly, the messages that councillors should be communicating to the residents are:

- We cannot afford to continue with the current expensive system.
- Secondly, we need to improve our recycling rates to meet environmental targets.
- Thirdly, we must take note of impending legislative changes that will result in direct government intervention to achieve their declared and desired consistency, which will make changes to waste collection inevitable.

**Supplementary Question:**

Some of those opposed to the changes challenged where the money for the wheelie bins and another complete extra set of green bags for recycling, was coming from. They alleged that the facts and figures were not made clear in February's Budget papers, and also that when the Executive recommendation in March, was voted down by Full Council two days later, as provided for by WBC's Constitution in multiple places, that Full Council being reduced to that of an advisory role the following day, was not engaging stakeholder effectively, constitutionally or democratically. So please could you provide a clear, accurate and complete description that will amply demonstrate that these allegations are not factually correct?

**Supplementary Answer:**

I believe we have provided that in the paper that I referred to, at March Executive.

**10.3 Graham Clifford asked the Executive Member for Planning & Local Plan the following question:**

**Question**

Hatchwood Mill has 433 houses, with approximately 1,300 residents. It was granted planning permission in 2016, by an Extraordinary Planning Committee with 53 planning conditions, thereafter, included within a binding Section 106 agreement.

7 years later, with construction over, we continue to have serious issues including.

- An unsafe central road through the estate not built to the approved plans.
- An unsafe ditch which we cannot find on any planning application.
- A flood risk to neighbouring houses due to changes that weren't communicated in advance.
- Unsafe Mown Amenity Grass areas, not cleared of construction rubble making them dangerous to play on.
- Five streetlights still not connected.
- SUDS drainage clogged with algae, bullrushes and willow.
- Thousands of dead and missing trees and plants.
- A play park that's still not built.

Developers are planning to leave site and handover to a management company, leaving residents with the ongoing maintenance responsibility.

I'd like to ask the Executive Member for Planning what action does WBC intend to take to assure the residents of Winnersh, that Developers will be held responsible for their undertakings, and that matters will be delivered in the way that WBC, as the Local Planning Authority, first agreed back in 2016?

**Answer**

Thank you for your question and I'm sorry that matters remain to be resolved on this site but let me assure you that our officers are continuing to work to resolve those issues that we have control over.

Matters on this site have a long and complex history and I'm very aware that some residents have not been happy with the developer during and post the construction phase for not fulfilling all of their planning and legal obligations in a timely manner.

My understanding is that many of the staff at the developers with responsibility for this site have moved on and I know it has not always been straightforward for our officers to maintain dialogue. We will be working on putting new relationships in place, we are continuing to work through the various issues that you have raised-pursuing solutions with the developer.

Various teams, including Planning, Highways, Drainage, Legal and Green Infrastructure Services within the Council have been involved in dealing with these matters. They are ongoing and will continue to be pursued until resolution.

However, it is not for us to comment on any of the private contractual relationships between the residents, developer and management company in relation to the current and future maintenance of hard and soft landscaping, estate roads and the Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP), etc, however the planning permission enables the principal of future maintenance of public space etc. being undertaken by a management company and we would hope that would have been made clear to any residents purchasing properties on the site, by those conveyancing solicitors acting on behalf of purchasers, when buying properties on site.

Having spoken to officers, I'm also happy to arrange for any further meetings between residents, officers and the developer, with a view to getting those issues resolved as soon as possible. If you would like me to do so, I would do. Also, if you would like me to visit the site personally to see the issues that you have raised, I am very happy to do so.

**Supplementary Question:**

Will you commit to bringing officers to site from Planning, Enforcement, Drainage, Development Management and Highways as quickly as possible so that they can all see first hand the state that the development is in currently, and then work with us to get it sorted as quickly as possible?

**Supplementary Answer:**

Simple answer yes.

**10.4 Stephen Browning has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport & Highways the following question. Due to his inability to attend the meeting the following written answer was provided:**

**Question**

From the East side of Loddon Park Estate are two new bridges over the Old River branch of the Loddon onto an 'Island' between the Old and New branches.

There is a gravel pathway across the 'Island' up to the old Haul Bridge across the New River branch. The latter connects to Footpath 30 which runs from Sandford Lane below its Loddon Bridges up to Park Lane in Hurst.

The deck plates of the Haul Bridge are indeed rusted but the structure otherwise appears intact and is very strong, having been designed to carry HGVs. It was finally shut off at the start of the Pandemic. Can you please consider its repair and reopen for Pedestrian and Cycle traffic, to provide a safer route than Sandford Lane.

The repair could be affected by first treating the existing Deck plates to stop any further degradation. Then welding new cross beams on top of those deck plates and a new set of deck plates on the top of those bars to just support Pedestrian and Cycle Traffic. Much cheaper than trying to renovate the existing deck.

It should be possible to overcome Footpath 30 adjacent Landowner objections.

**Answer**

We agree that this would be a very good link for pedestrians, but unfortunately the Council does not have the ability to repair and reopen the bridge. The bridge is not owned by the Council but instead is owned by the landowners of each side of the banks of the Loddon; the agreement of each landowner is required to allow the Council to re-open the path.

This bridge is the original 'bailey' bridge built around the 1960's to facilitate gravel extraction on the site. The Council commissioned a safety inspection of the bridge in July 2021 to determine whether it was safe for use. The current condition of the bridge is such that it cannot be safely opened in its present state, and we have needed to close the bridge to prevent people trying to access across it and putting themselves in danger.

We have explored options for the repair or replacement of the bridge, and the reopening of the path link to the eastern side with the landowners but unfortunately permission for public access across the bridge was refused by the landowner on the eastern side. The landowners have also made it clear that they intend to remove the bridge.

#### **11. Petitions**

There were no petitions received.

#### **12. Member Question Time**

There were no Member questions received.

#### **13. Political Balance of the Council and Allocation and Appointment to seats on Committees and Boards**

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

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

It was noted that reference made to the Wokingham Borough Partnership, within the report, should read 'Liberal Democrat Group.'

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

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

#### **RESOLVED** That:

- 1) that it be noted that the representation of the political groups on the Council, as advised to the Chief Executive, is 26 Liberal Democrat Group Members, 22 Conservative Group Members and 5 Labour Group members. There is one Independent Member who is not part of a political group, and therefore cannot be included in the calculations when determining political balance;

- 2) the appointment and composition of Committees and Boards as set out in Para 2.1. be approved;
- 3) the allocation of seats on Committees and Boards on the basis that, of the 95 seats (as set out in Para 3.4), 47 be allocated to the Liberal Democrat Group, 39 be allocated to the Conservative Group and 9 to the Labour Group, be approved;
- 4) the proposals submitted by the respective Group Leaders and that those Members be appointed to the Committees and Boards as set out in Appendix 1 of the Minutes be approved;
- 5) that it be agreed that the principles of proportionality be applied when Members are appointed to Sub Committees, Panels or Working Groups and approves the proposals submitted by the respective Group Leaders, of Members to be appointed to Sub Committees, Panels or Working Groups as set out in Appendix 2 of the Minutes;
- 6) it be noted that the Constitution states that the Chair of the Standards Committee will be appointed at Annual Council and agreed that as with all other committees the Chair will be appointed at the first meeting of the Standards Committee;
- 7) the appointment of the Independent Persons to assist the work of the Standards Committee and the co-opted Parish/Town Council Representatives as set out in Appendix 1; 3 Agenda Item 12, be noted;
- 8) the elected Member representatives on the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board, as set out in Appendix 1, as nominated by the Leader of Council in accordance with Section 194 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012, be noted.

## **Appendices 1 and 2 - Appointment to Committees and Board, Panels, Working Groups and Forums**

### **14. Appointments to Outside Bodies**

Members were asked to refer to a list of nominations to various Outside Bodies, as circulated at the meeting as Appendix 3. Where more nominations had been received than places, individual votes were taken.

Upon being put to the vote, it was:

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

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

### **15. Standards Committee Annual report**

Council considered the annual report from the Standards Committee 2022-23.

It was proposed by Morag Malvern and seconded by Imogen Shepherd-DuBey that the Annual Report from the Standards Committee 2022-23, be noted.

**RESOLVED:** That the Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2022-23 be noted.

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<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Update of Local Code of Corporate Governance</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Council on 20 July 2023
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers

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

Assurance to residents and other stakeholders on the Council's governance arrangements.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

To approve the Local Code of Corporate Governance as recommended by the Audit Committee at its meeting of 7 June 2023.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The Local Code of Corporate Governance ("The Local Code") forms part of the Council's Constitution (appendix to Section 9) and was last updated by Council at its meeting on 19 November 2020.

The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and that risks are appropriately managed. The Council's governance framework is based on the seven principles of good governance as set out by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority of Chief Executives (SOLACE) in their joint publication: *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government – Framework (2016)*. These principles are: -

- a. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law;
- b. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
- c. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits;
- d. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes;
- e. Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;
- f. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management, and
- g. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

The Local Code describes how the Council meets the requirements of each principle.

It is good practice to review the Local Code regularly and reaffirm Council's commitment to the highest standards of governance. At its meeting of 7 June 2023, the Audit Committee undertook a review of the Local Code scrutinising the assessment that had

concluded generally good levels of compliance against the principles as well as some minor improvements in clarifying roles and responsibilities.

## Background

1. Good governance provides a framework to enable an authority to deliver outcomes for its residents and stakeholders, underpinned by appropriate controls and the management of risk. The overall aim is to ensure that resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities, with sound and inclusive decision-making and clear accountability for the use of resources.
2. In order to achieve effective corporate governance, the Council has adopted a local code of corporate governance which reflects guidance contained in the CIPFA / SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government.
3. The Local Code, which is set out in the Council's constitution, is built around seven underlying principles of good governance, and demonstrates how the Council's internal processes and governance framework support the delivery of those principles.
4. There is a strong link between governance and financial management, with a focus on sustainability, as the Council needs to recognise its responsibilities not just to its existing stakeholders but to understand the impact of current decisions and actions on future generations.

## Analysis of Issues

5. There have been several high-profile governance failings in the sector, and it is more important than ever to demonstrate to the Council's stakeholders that it takes governance seriously. The Local Code sets out the Council's governance framework and enables all stakeholders to assess how the Council is delivering effective governance.
6. The Local Code demonstrates how the Council embeds the core principles of good governance.
  - a. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law;
  - b. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
  - c. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits;
  - d. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes;
  - e. Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;
  - f. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management, and
  - g. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.
7. Officers have reviewed the Local Code together with Audit Committee to ensure that it reflects best practice and continues to reflect the highest standards of

governance. The main change in this update is to set out the key roles and responsibilities in the Council’s governance arrangements and to introduce the concept of assurance mechanisms. An assurance mechanism is the means by which stakeholders can assess whether the supporting principle has been met. For example, the Standards Committee Annual Report provides information on the ethical behaviour of Councillors.

8. In reviewing the Local Code, officers have updated the section ‘how the Council demonstrates the principles’ to reflect changes since the last update.

## **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)	£0	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	Yes	Revenue

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

<b>Cross-Council Implications</b>
All Members and Officers are part of the overall systems of governance in the Council.

<b>Public Sector Equality Duty</b>
There are no specific equality implications of this report, other than acknowledgement of the importance of equality matters and how they are addressed as part of the local code of governance, which in turn is reviewed via the Annual Governance Statement.

<b>Climate Emergency – <i>This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030</i></b>
While there are no specific climate emergency implications contained within this report, the delivery of sustainable outcomes lies at the core of the Council’s vision and the Annual Governance Statement has a key role in ensuring that key priorities and outcomes are delivered, by reviewing the framework for decision-making and resource allocation.

<b>Reasons for considering the report in Part 2</b>
Not applicable

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 Local Code of Corporate Governance

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**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Wokingham Borough Council**

# **Local Code of Corporate Governance**

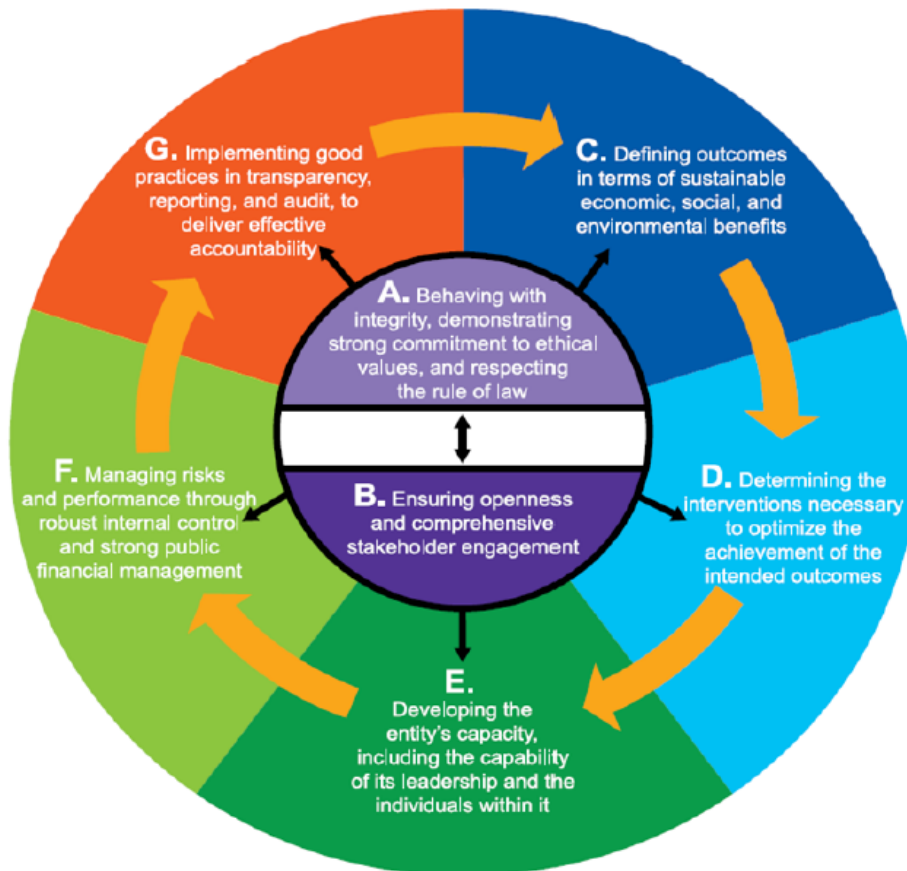
July 2023

## 1. Delivering Good Governance

- 1.1 Good governance is everyone's responsibility. The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive have a special leadership role as custodians of the Council's governance arrangements.
- 1.2 Each year an Annual Governance Statement is published with the Statement of Accounts (as required by the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015). This follows a review on the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control and governance.
- 1.3 Good governance at Wokingham Borough Council is delivered and guided by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority of Chief Executives (SOLACE): *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government – Framework (2016)* and the *International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector* (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy / International Federation of Accountants, 2014).
- 1.4 The 'International Framework' defines governance as follows: "*Governance comprises the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved*".  
It also states that:  
*"To deliver good governance in the public sector, both governing bodies and individuals working for public sector entities must try to achieve their entity's objectives while acting in the public interest at all times.  
Acting in the public interest implies primary consideration of the benefits for society, which should result in positive outcomes for service users and other stakeholders"*.
- 1.5 The Foreword to the 'Framework' sets out that "*Good governance requires a qualitative approach, not a mindless quantitative one. It requires integrity, objectivity, transparency, and accountability, built on a foundation of intellectual honesty. These principles are already embedded throughout this Framework, but it should be read with these fundamentals firmly in mind*".
- 1.6 The diagram below shows how the various principles of good governance in the public sector relate to each other.



## Achieving the Intended Outcomes While Acting in the Public Interest at all Times



### 2. The Principles of Good Governance

- 2.1 The Framework requires governance processes and structures to focus on the attainment of sustainable outcomes for the economy, society and the environment.
- 2.2 Principles A and B are overarching principles and spread through all other principles C to G and ensure that the Council achieves its intended outcomes while acting in the public interest at all times. This requires:
- A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.**
  - B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.**
- 2.3 In addition to the overarching requirements for acting in the public interest in principles A and B, achieving good governance in the public sector also requires effective arrangements for:
- C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.**
  - D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.**
  - E. Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.**

***F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.***

***G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.***

### **3. Governance Responsibilities**

- 3.1 The Chief Executive and the Leader will be responsible for championing and role modelling good governance, in the spirit of this Code.
- 3.2 The Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer will undertake their statutory duties in accordance with the principles of good governance, supporting and challenging the Chief Executive and Leader where necessary.
- 3.3 Directors will promote the principles of good governance within their Directorates, seek specialist support where the principles are not upheld and complete an annual review of governance.
- 3.4 Chief Internal Auditor will report annually to the Audit Committee on audit activities during the year, with particular emphasis on the systems of internal control and the arrangements for corporate governance, providing some of the assurance required in the Annual Governance Statement
- 3.5 Assistant Directors will promote the principles of good governance, seek support where the principles are not upheld and complete an annual review of governance via a Management Assurance Statement.
- 3.6 All staff will undertake their duties in accordance with the principles of good governance above, the Nolan Principles of standards in public life: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty & Leadership and their professional codes of practice.

### **4 Monitoring and Review**

- 4.1 The Council will monitor its governance arrangements for their effectiveness in practice and will review them on a continuing basis to ensure that they are up to date. The process of review to produce the Annual Governance Statement will assess in more detail how the Council has performed in its adherence to the adopted principles of governance detailed in this code.
- 4.2 On an annual basis, the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council will publish an Annual Governance Statement which will:
  - Assess how the Council has complied with this Code of Corporate Governance;
  - Provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements;
  - Provide details of how continual improvement in the systems of governance will be achieved.

## **5. Certification**

We hereby endorse our commitment to this Code of Corporate Governance and will ensure that the Council continues to review, evaluate and develop the Council's Governance arrangements to ensure continuous improvement of the Council's systems.

Leader of the Council – Stephen Conway

Chief Executive – Susan Parsonage

**How the Council ensures good governance:**

***Principle A - Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.***

<b>Supporting Principles</b>	<b>To embed the behaviour and actions that demonstrate good governance, the council is committed to:</b>	<b>This is demonstrated by:</b>
<b><i>Behaving with integrity.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Ensure that members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation.</li> <li>□ Ensure that members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These will build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (The Nolan Principles).</li> <li>□ Lead by example and using the above standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions.</li> <li>□ Demonstrate, communicate, and embed the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes, which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Standards Committee Annual Report Annual Governance Statement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ The Council's values</li> <li>□ The Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan</li> <li>□ The Constitution</li> <li>□ Standards Committee</li> <li>□ Member and Officer Codes of Conduct</li> <li>□ Member Declarations of Interests, Register of Interests and details of Gifts and Hospitality are published on the Council's website</li> <li>□ Officer declarations of interest</li> <li>□ Officer job descriptions and Appraisals</li> <li>□ Member and Officer induction and training</li> <li>□ Whistleblowing and counter-fraud arrangements</li> </ul>
<b><i>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Seek to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance.</li> <li>□ Underpin personal behaviour with ethical values and ensure they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation.</li> <li>□ Develop and maintain robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values.</li> <li>□ Ensure that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with ethical standards expected by the organisation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Standards Committee Annual Report Personnel Board Annual Governance Statement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ The Council's values</li> <li>□ The Constitution</li> <li>□ Standards Committee</li> <li>□ Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committees</li> <li>□ Regulatory and other Committees</li> <li>□ Codes of Conduct</li> <li>□ Member and Officer induction and training</li> <li>□ Member Declarations of Interests, Register of Interests and details of Gifts and Hospitality are published on the Council's website</li> <li>□ Officer declarations of interest</li> </ul>

		<input type="checkbox"/> Equality Policy / Equality Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Procurement and Contract rules, and procedures
<b>Respecting the rule of law.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations. <input type="checkbox"/> Create the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders, and members, are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements. <input type="checkbox"/> Strive to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities, and other Stakeholders. <input type="checkbox"/> Deal with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively.  <b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Standards Committee Annual Report Audit Committee Annual Report Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Letter	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal and finance senior officers review reports going for Member decision making. <input type="checkbox"/> Project Sponsors have responsibility to secure legal and finance advice for projects <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate complaints, compliments, and monitoring procedures. <input type="checkbox"/> Ombudsman process <input type="checkbox"/> Companies – Compliance with Companies Act and Directors duties <input type="checkbox"/> Head of Paid Service post / advice <input type="checkbox"/> S151 officer post / advice <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring Officer post / advice <input type="checkbox"/> The Constitution <input type="checkbox"/> Roles, responsibilities, and competencies <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Whistleblowing Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Data Protection Policy

**Principle B - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.**

<b>Supporting Principles</b>	<b>To embed the behaviour and actions that demonstrate good governance, the council is committed to:</b>	<b>This is demonstrated by:</b>
<b>Openness.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensure an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness. <input type="checkbox"/> Make decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to Stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensure that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear. <input type="checkbox"/> Use formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective	<input type="checkbox"/> The Council's values <input type="checkbox"/> The Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan <input type="checkbox"/> WBC website <input type="checkbox"/> Committee meetings documentation, standard report templates and minutes

	<p>interventions / courses of action.</p> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b>  Publication Scheme  Public Meetings  Senior Information Risk Owner Report  Annual Governance Statement</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Call-in periods for Executive decisions <input type="checkbox"/> Overview & Scrutiny <input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Publication Scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Engage Consultation Platform and e-Petitions <input type="checkbox"/> Transparency webpages <input type="checkbox"/> Freedom of Information processes <input type="checkbox"/> HR Policies and procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Equality Framework and Equality Impact Assessments
<p><b><i>Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users.</i></b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Establish a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve communities, individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that communication methods are effective, and that members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage, collect and evaluate the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs. <input type="checkbox"/> Implement effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how views have been taken into account. <input type="checkbox"/> Balance feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity <input type="checkbox"/> Take account of the impact of decisions on future generations of taxpayers and service users.  <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b>  Annual Governance Statement</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Engage Consultation Platform and e-Petitions <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate complaints, compliments, and monitoring procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Excellence Strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Public attendance at meetings and web stream <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Budget consultation <input type="checkbox"/> Wokingham Borough News
<p><b><i>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders.</i></b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Effectively engage with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that partnerships are based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- trust;</li> <li>- a shared commitment to change;</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> The Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan <input type="checkbox"/> Local Enterprise Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Strategic Needs Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Joint Health and Wellbeing Board <input type="checkbox"/> Community Safety Partnership

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners; and,</li> <li>- that the added value of partnership working is explicit.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Annual Governance Statement Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Berkshire West Children’s Safeguarding partnership</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Wokingham Integrated Partnership</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Children and Young People Partnership</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Business, Skills and Enterprise Partnership</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Place Based Partnership</li> </ul>
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**Principle C - Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits**

<b>Supporting Principles</b>	<b>To embed the behaviour and actions that demonstrate good governance, the council is committed to:</b>	<b>This is demonstrated by:</b>
<b>Defining outcomes.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have a clear vision, which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation’s purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provide the basis for the organisation’s overall strategy, planning and other decisions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Specify the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Deliver defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify and manage risks to the achievement of outcomes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Manage service users’ expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Community Vision Council Annual Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Directorate and Service Plans</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Medium Term Financial Plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Capital Strategy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Statement of Accounts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Risk Register and project risk assessments</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider and balance the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies and plans when taking decisions about service provision.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation’s intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Determine the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure fair and equal access to services.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Council Annual Report Equality Annual Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Standard templates for Business Cases and Executive papers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> MTFP, Capital and Investment Strategies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Directorate and Service Plans</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Adults social care strategies and policies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Children’s social care strategies and policies.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Climate Emergency Action Plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Development and Planning Policies – Local Plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Housing Strategy</li> </ul>



		<input type="checkbox"/> Equality Framework and Equality Impact Assessments
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**Principle D - Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.**

<b>Supporting Principles</b>	<b>To embed the behaviour and actions that demonstrate good governance, the council is committed to:</b>	<b>This is demonstrated by:</b>
<b>Determining interventions.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and associated risks. Therefore, ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets and bearing in mind future impacts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Annual Governance Statement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Standard templates for Business Cases and Executive papers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engage Consultation Platform and e-Petitions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Corporate complaints, compliments and monitoring procedures.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Annual Budget consultation</li> </ul>
<b>Planning interventions.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish and implement robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engage with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider and monitor risks facing each partner when working collaboratively, including shared risks.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering goods and services can be adapted to changing circumstances.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare budgets in accordance with objectives, strategies and the medium-term financial plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inform medium- and long-term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report Chief Financial Officer Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Directorate and Service Plans</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> MTFP, Capital and Investment Strategies.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engage Consultation Platform and e-Petitions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Performance Indicators</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Corporate and service risk registers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Project management policies and guidance</li> </ul>

<p><i>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Ensure that the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints.</li> <li>□ Ensure that the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term.</li> <li>□ Ensure that the medium term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage.</li> <li>□ Ensure that the achievement of ‘social value’ through service planning and commissioning (The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 states that this is “the additional benefit to the community.... over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes”).</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b>  Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report  Chief Financial Officer Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ MTFP, Capital and Investment Strategies</li> <li>□ Capital and revenue monitoring and reporting to officers and Members</li> <li>□ Annual budget consultation</li> <li>□ Engage Consultation Platform and e-Petitions</li> <li>□ Procurement Strategy includes social value</li> </ul>
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**Principle E - Developing the Council's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it**

<b>Supporting Principles</b>	<b>To embed the behaviour and actions that demonstrate good governance, the council is committed to:</b>	<b>This is demonstrated by:</b>
<p><b>Developing the entity's capacity.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Review operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness.</li> <li>□ Improve resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how resources are allocated so that defined outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently.</li> <li>□ Recognise the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved</li> <li>□ Develop and maintain an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b>                      Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report                      Chief Financial Officer Report                      Personnel Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ The Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan</li> <li>□ Asset Management Plan</li> <li>□ Benchmarking within Directorate and Service plans</li> <li>□ Local Enterprise Partnership Arrangements</li> <li>□ Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</li> <li>□ Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>□ Community Safety Partnership</li> <li>□ Berkshire West Children's Safeguarding partnership</li> <li>□ Wokingham Integrated Partnership</li> <li>□ Children and Young People Partnership</li> <li>□ Business, Skills and Enterprise Partnership</li> <li>□ Place Based Partnership</li> </ul>
<p><b>Developing the entity's leadership and the capability of individuals within the entity.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Develop protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained.</li> <li>□ Publish a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body.</li> <li>□ Ensure that the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Member / officer protocol</li> <li>□ Constitution including delegated powers</li> <li>□ Training plans for officers and Members</li> <li>□ Standard induction and training for both officers and Members</li> <li>□ Mandatory e-learning modules</li> <li>□ Intranet guidance, policies and procedures</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Develop the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged;</li> <li>- Ensuring members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis;</li> <li>- Ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external.</li> </ul> </li> <li>□ Ensure that there are structures in place to encourage public participation.</li> <li>□ Take steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections.</li> <li>□ Hold staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs.</li> <li>□ Ensure that arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Personnel Board Annual Governance Statement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Corporate recruitment processes with job profiles and competencies</li> <li>□ Appraisals and 121s</li> <li>□ Staff surveys</li> <li>□ Apprenticeship scheme</li> <li>□ Peer Reviews – council and service specific</li> <li>□ Companies – Companies Act, Articles of Association, Directors duties</li> <li>□ Health and Wellbeing policies, guidance, and events</li> </ul>
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**Principle F - Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.**

<b>Supporting Principles</b>	<b>To embed the behaviour and actions that demonstrate good governance, the council is committed to:</b>	<b>This is demonstrated by:</b>
<p><b>Managing risk.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making.</li> <li>□ Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively.</li> <li>□ Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Audit Committee Annual Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Risk Management Policy and Guidance</li> <li>□ Risk Maturity Assessment</li> <li>□ Corporate Risk Register</li> <li>□ Directorate and Service risk Registers</li> <li>□ Standard templates for Executive decision making</li> </ul>

	Annual Governance Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Audit Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Overview & Scrutiny panels <input type="checkbox"/> Audit & Investigation
<b>Managing performance.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review <input type="checkbox"/> Make decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation’s financial, social and environmental position and outlook. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which provides constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing the organisation’s performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements).  <b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Performance reporting framework to officers and Members <input type="checkbox"/> Standard templates for Executive decision making <input type="checkbox"/> Overview & Scrutiny panels and quarterly performance reporting to them <input type="checkbox"/> Directorate and Service plans <input type="checkbox"/> MTFP <input type="checkbox"/> Capital and revenue budget Monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Statement of Accounts <input type="checkbox"/> Project monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Internal and External Audit reports <input type="checkbox"/> Peer reviews / inspections
<b>Robust internal control.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Align the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving objectives. <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate and monitor risk management and internal control on a regular basis. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure an audit committee which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment; and,</li> <li>- That its recommendations are listened to and acted upon.</li> </ul> <b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Audit Committee Annual Report Internal Audit Annual Opinion External Audit Annual Audit Letter Chief Financial Officer Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Internal Audit & Investigation annual plan <input type="checkbox"/> External Audit <input type="checkbox"/> Audit Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Whistleblowing Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Anti-Money Laundering Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Procedure Rules, Regulations and Contract Standing Orders <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Audit Executive annual report <input type="checkbox"/> Audit Committee Effectiveness Review <input type="checkbox"/> Risk Management Strategy and

		Policy
<b>Strong public financial management.</b>	<p>☐ Ensure that financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance.</p> <p>☐ Ensure that well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls.</p> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Chief Financial Officer Report External Audit Annual Audit Letter</p>	<p>☐ MTFP</p> <p>☐ Financial Regulations / Contract Standing Orders</p> <p>☐ Capital and revenue reporting to officers and Members</p> <p>☐ Standard templates for Executive decision making</p> <p>☐ Annual budget process</p> <p>☐ Assessment against Cipfa Financial Management Code</p>
<b>Managing data</b>	<p>☐ Ensure that effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data.</p> <p>☐ Ensure that effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies.</p> <p>☐ Review and audit regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring.</p> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b> Senior Information Risk Owner Report Annual Governance Statement</p>	<p>☐ Information Security and Acceptable Use of ICT Policy</p> <p>☐ Data Protection / GDPR Guidelines</p> <p>☐ Privacy Notices</p> <p>☐ Mandatory GDPR e-learning</p> <p>☐ Data sharing agreements with Partners</p> <p>☐ E-mail security classification</p> <p>☐ Freedom of Information policy</p> <p>☐ Records Retention guidance</p> <p>☐ Internal Audit</p> <p>☐ Caldicott Guardian</p> <p>☐ Data &amp; Information Governance Board</p>

**Principle G - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.**

<b>Supporting Principles</b>	<b>To embed the behaviour and actions that demonstrate good governance, the council is committed to:</b>	<b>This is demonstrated by:</b>
<p><b>Implementing good practices in transparency.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Write and communicate reports for the public and other stakeholders in a fair, balanced and understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Strike a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b>            Transparency Data            Public Meetings            Senior Information Risk Owner Report            Annual Governance Statement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Standard templates for public reports</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Committee Agendas, papers and minutes published</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Publication Scheme</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Only using Part 2 reporting for the purposes intended</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Website streaming of meetings and public questions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transparency Data published</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Annual Governance Statement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Companies – Companies House reporting and submissions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementing good practices in reporting.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Report at least annually on performance, value for money and stewardship of resources to stakeholders in a timely and understandable way.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that members and senior management own the results reported.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in this framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment, including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (the Annual Governance Statement).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that this Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other, similar organisations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b>            Audit Committee Annual Report            Chief Finance Officer Annual Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Statement of Accounts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Annual Governance Statement and improvement plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Annual External Audit report and Letter</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assurance and effective accountability.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place, providing assurance with regard to governance arrangements and that recommendations are acted upon.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> External Audit reporting to Audit Committee</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Internal Audit reporting to Audit Committee</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Welcome peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gain assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the Annual Governance Statement.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met.</li> </ul> <p><b>Assurance Mechanism</b>  Audit Committee Annual Report  External Assurance Providers Ofsted/Care Quality Commission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Peer reviews / inspections published results and monitoring of outcomes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Overview &amp; Scrutiny panels</li> </ul>
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<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Twyford Neighbourhood Plan</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Council on Thursday, 20 July 2023
<b>WARD</b>	Twyford; Hurst
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Director of Place and Growth - Giorgio Framaliccio
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan - Lindsay Ferris

## **PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)**

The approval of Council is sought to agree to the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan being 'made' (adopted) in accordance with the clear wishes of residents expressed through the referendum result. This step is required by the regulations following a successful referendum result where more than 50% of those who voted, support the plan.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

- 1) Make (adopt) the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan so that it forms part of the statutory Development Plan, pursuant to Section 38A(4) of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; and
- 2) Publishes a Decision Statement pursuant to Regulation 19 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) ("the Regulations") in order to give effect to the above recommendation.
- 3) Delegates to the Director of Place & Growth, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan, and in agreement with the Qualifying Body, to make any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual corrections to the plan and supporting documents.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Qualifying Body, which in this case is Twyford Parish Council ("the Parish Council"), has produced the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan ("the Plan") to help shape how development is managed in its area. The Plan, which is available on the council's website, contains a number of policies on issues including housing; climate change mitigation, the natural, built and historic environment; community facilities; retail centres and active travel and highways. The Plan does not allocate new land for development.

The Plan is supported by two key pieces of technical evidence, a Housing Needs Assessment and a Design Guidelines and Codes report. The Housing Needs Assessment provides local evidence to support the policies regarding future development of housing in Twyford Parish. The Design Guidelines and Codes report identifies the key features of Twyford Parish and sets some guiding principles to ensure any future development proposals respond to and contribute to the local character and distinctiveness of the area.

A referendum on the Plan was held on 6 July 2023. Of those who voted, 88.5% voted yes to the question of whether they wished for the plan to be used to help determine planning applications within the parish of Twyford.

Under Regulations governing neighbourhood plans, the Council is required to 'make' (adopt) the Plan and bring it into legal force if more than half of those voting have voted in favour of making the Plan at referendum. This is required to be done within 8 weeks of the referendum.

In accordance with the Executive decision of 20 April 2023, a resolution of Council is needed to formally 'make' (adopt) the Plan. Once made, the Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for the borough and thereby carry significant weight in the determination of planning applications and appeals in or affecting Twyford parish.

Upon the making (adoption) of the Plan, the Parish Council will benefit from receipt of 25% of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy arising from the development that takes place in its area. This is a significant uplift on the 15% available to parish councils where there is no neighbourhood plan in place.

## **BACKGROUND**

### Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood Planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011 and is a means for local communities to take the lead on preparing local planning policy, to sit alongside the Council's planning policies, helping to shape how new development is managed in their area. Communities prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans (often referred to as Neighbourhood Plans) to set out specific planning policies which help shape and guide development in their area.

The key stages in producing a neighbourhood plan are as follows:

- 1) Designating a neighbourhood area
- 2) Preparing a draft neighbourhood plan
- 3) Pre-submission publicity & consultation
- 4) Submission of a neighbourhood plan to the local planning authority
- 5) Submission draft plan consultation
- 6) Independent examination
- 7) Referendum
- 8) Bringing the neighbourhood plan into force

The Parish Council took the decision to produce a neighbourhood plan in 2018. Since then, stages 1-7 have been completed. This report seeks approval from Council to bring the neighbourhood plan into force (Stage 8).

### Twyford Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

In accordance with paragraph 14(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Council made arrangements to hold a referendum on the making of the Plan on Thursday 6 July 2023. The referendum was held on a version of the Plan that incorporated the agreed modifications set out in the schedule of the Decision Statement.

A person was entitled to vote in The Twyford Neighbourhood Plan referendum if, on the 6 July 2023:

- a) he or she was entitled to vote in a local government election in the referendum area; and
- b) his or her qualifying address for the election was in the referendum area.

The referendum area was the designated Twyford Neighbourhood Area, as recommended in the Examination report.

### Referendum results

The following question was asked to those entitled to vote in the referendum:

"Do you want Wokingham Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Twyford parish to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

At the referendum a total of 1,496 ballots were cast. Of these:

- The number of votes in favour of a 'yes' was 1,324

- The number of votes in favour of a 'no' was 169
- 3 ballots were rejected
- The turnout was 29% percent of the registered electors

88.5% of those who voted, therefore voted in favour of the Plan. A copy of the Declaration of the Result of Poll is set out in Enclosure 2 of this report.

### Next steps

Where more than half of those voting in the referendum do so in favour of using the Plan, the Council must 'make' (adopt) the Plan through a resolution of Council. Based on the outcome of the referendum, it is therefore recommended to Council that the plan be formally made.

As part of this process, the Regulations also require the Council to publish a statement setting out the decision, the reasons for making that decision, and details of where and when the decision statement may be inspected. This Decision Statement is appended to this report in Enclosure 1. The Decision Statement also confirms that the Council does not consider that the making of the Plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights.

Once the Plan has been brought into legal force, the Regulations also require the Council to publish the Plan and details of where it may be inspected. This must be made publicly available and advertised so that it is brought to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the Twyford neighbourhood area.

Copies of the Plan and supporting documents will be made available on the Council's website and at the Council's offices at Shute End. Further details regarding how the Plan can be inspected is set out in Enclosure 1.

## **BUSINESS CASE**

### Need for the decision

As a result of the referendum outcome, the Council has a legal obligation to 'make' (adopt) the Plan. This needs to be acted upon by 1 September 2023<sup>1</sup>. The recommendation of this report facilitates the Council in carrying out its legal duties.

### Alternative options

There are no alternative options to be considered given the Regulatory requirements and the result of the referendum.

The Council can only choose to not make the Plan where it believes the Plan would breach, or otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights. No such breach or incompatibility exists.

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<sup>1</sup> Being the last day of the period of 8 weeks beginning with the day immediately following that on which the applicable referendum was held in accordance with section 18A of the Neighbourhood Plan (General) Regulations (as amended)

## Risks

As with all development plan documents, there exists the opportunity for third parties to seek to legally challenge the decision to make (adopt) the Plan. This is considered to be low risk, given the positive engagement and consideration of the views of respondents that has taken place over a number of years in producing the Plan. No parties have raised issues to suggest they would have grounds to challenge the Plan.

## Expected outcome

If Council agrees to make (adopt) the Plan, it will become part of the development plan and can be used to help determine planning applications in the area of Twyford parish.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION**

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (2023/24)	Estimated less than £20,000	Yes	Not applicable
Next Financial Year (2024/25)	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable
Following Financial Year (2024/25)	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable

### **Other Financial Information**

Upon arranging a referendum for the Plan, the Council was eligible to apply and subsequently claim grant funding from government up to £20,000 to cover the full costs of the referendum.

Once a neighbourhood plan is made (adopted), the parish council will benefit from receipt of 25% of the revenues from the Community Infrastructure Levy arising from development that takes place in their area. This reflects a 10% increase on the 15% available to parish councils where there is no neighbourhood plan in place.

The 10% gain in future CIL funds for the parish is a 10% loss of future CIL funds for the council. The exact amount is currently unknown but is thought to be minimal. CIL spend is generally undertaken in conjunction with the Parish meaning the financial impact on the authority is forecast to be small.

### **Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation**

The recommendation of this report is guided by the outcome of a referendum held on 6 July 2023.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

An Equalities Assessment Form is set out in Enclosure 3 to this report. In addition, it should be noted that the Independent Examiner was satisfied that the consultation and publicity undertaken meets the regulatory requirements.

**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 Plan includes planning policies which provide additional detail to complement policies in the Core Strategy (2010) and Managing Development Delivery (MDD) (2014) local plans. Specific policies include maximising opportunities for walking and cycling, protecting and enhancing green infrastructure assets and sustainable design and construction.

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

Not applicable

**List of Background Papers**

[National Planning Policy Framework](#)  
[Planning Practice Guidance: Neighbourhood Planning](#)  
[Twyford Neighbourhood Plan: Referendum Version](#)

Enclosure 1: Decision Statement  
Enclosure 2: Declaration of Result of Poll  
Enclosure 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

A copy of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan Referendum Version is available on the [council's website](#).

**Contact** Ben Davis

**Telephone** Tel: 07824545226

**Service** Delivery and Infrastructure

**Email** [ben.davis@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:ben.davis@wokingham.gov.uk)



# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Twyford Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statement**

This statement has been prepared to meet Section 38A(9) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and Regulation 19(a) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

**Wokingham Borough Council**

**Twyford Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2038**

# DECISION STATEMENT BRINGING THE TWYFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN INTO LEGAL FORCE

This document is the Decision Statement required to be prepared under Section 38A(9) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) (“the 2004 Act”) and Regulation 19(a) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) (“the Regulations”)<sup>1</sup>. It sets out Wokingham Borough Council’s (“the Council”) considerations and formal decision to make the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan (“the Plan”) following a successful local referendum held on 6 July 2023.

## 1 Summary

- 1.1 In accordance with the above regulations, and following a successful local referendum held on 6 July 2023, the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan came into legal force as part of the statutory development plan for Wokingham Borough with immediate effect.
- 1.2 On 20 July 2023, the Council decided to formally ‘make’ (adopt) the Plan under Section 38A(4) of the 2004 Act. The Twyford Neighbourhood Plan therefore forms part of the statutory development plan for Wokingham Borough.

## 2 Decision

- 2.1 Following an independent Examination and a successful referendum result where more than 50% of those who voted, voted in favour of the Plan, Wokingham Borough Council decided at the Council meeting on 20 July 2023 to:
  1. Make (adopt) the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan so that it forms part of the statutory development plan, pursuant to Section 38A(4) of the 2004 Act.
  2. Publish a Decision Statement pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Regulations.
  3. Delegate to the Director of Place & Growth, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan, and in agreement with the Qualifying Body, to make any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual corrections to the plan and supporting documents.

## 3 Background

- 3.1 On 6 August 2018, the Council designated the Twyford Neighbourhood Area for the purpose of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. The plan area covers the parish of Twyford and lies solely within Wokingham Borough. Twyford Parish Council (the qualifying body) submitted the draft Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents to the Council in August 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/637/regulation/19/made>  
July 2023



- 3.2 Following submission of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan to the Council, the Plan and supporting documents were publicised and representations invited from the public and stakeholders. The consultation ran for six weeks from 12 October to 23 November 2022. The Council, with the consent of the qualifying body, appointed an independent examiner, Mr Andrew Ashcroft, to review whether the Plan met the basic conditions required by legislation and whether it should proceed to referendum.
- 3.3 The Examination Report was received on 21 March 2023 and concluded that, subject to the modifications proposed, the Plan meets the basic conditions. The examiner also recommended that the referendum area was based on the neighbourhood area that was designated by the Council on 6 August 2018.
- 3.4 The Council determined on 20 April 2023 that the Plan, as modified by the Examiner's recommended modifications, should proceed to referendum.
- 3.5 A referendum on the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan was held on Thursday 6 July 2023, where 88.5% of those who voted were in favour of the Plan being used to help to decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area. The Plan came into legal force as part of the statutory development plan with immediate effect.
- 3.6 On 20 July 2023, the Council resolved that the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan (incorporating modifications), be formally 'made' (adopted) so that it forms part of the statutory Development Plan for Wokingham Borough. It will sit alongside the other adopted local plans that together form the development plan.

## **4 Reasons for the Decision**

- 4.1 Section 38A(4)(a) of the 2004 Act requires the Council to 'make' (adopt) the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting in the referendum voted in favour of the Plan being used to help to decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area.
- 4.2 Section 38A(6) of the 2004 Act states that the local planning authority is not subject to the duty if it considers that the making of the Plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 (as amended)).
- 4.3 The Council determined on 20 April 2023 that the Plan, as modified by the Examiner's recommendations, meets the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, is compatible with EU obligations and the Convention rights and complies with relevant provisions made by or under Section 38A and B of the 2004 Act.
- 4.4 The Council is satisfied that the preparation of the Plan had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European ECHR and that it complies with the Human Rights Act. The Council is satisfied that there has been full and adequate opportunity for all

interested parties to take part in the preparation of the Plan and to make their comments known. The Examiner also concluded in his report that the Plan is compatible with the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 (as amended) and EU obligations.

- 4.5 The Council issued a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Determination Statement in August 2022, which confirmed that an SEA and an Appropriate Assessment were not required on the Plan. The Determination Statement has been subject to consultation with the relevant environmental bodies, who confirmed the decision. The Council's Decision Statement issued in May 2023 under Regulation 18(2) confirmed that the modifications accepted by the Council, both separately and combined, produce no likely significant environmental effects and are unlikely to have any significant effects on European Designated Sites.
- 4.6 The Council is therefore satisfied that the making of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan, incorporating the modifications recommended by the examiner and accepted by the Council, would not breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligations or any of the Convention rights.
- 4.7 As the plan was successful at the referendum and the Council is satisfied that it would not breach and be otherwise incompatible with EU obligations or Human Rights legislation, the Council is required to make the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan so that it forms part of the Council's development plan.
- 4.8 As such, the Council decided at the meeting on 20 July 2023 to accept the following recommendations in the report:
- 1) *Make (adopt) the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan so that it forms part of the statutory Development Plan pursuant to Section 38A(4) of The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004; and*
  - 2) *Publishes a Decision Statement pursuant to Regulation 19 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) ("the Regulations") in order to give effect to the above recommendation.*
  - 3) *Delegates to the Director of Place & Growth, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Local Plan, and in agreement with the Qualifying Body, to make any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual corrections to the plan and supporting documents.*

## 5 Other Information

5.1 In accordance with Regulation 20 of the Regulations, this decision statement will be made available to view and access on the Council website at:

[www.wokingham.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning)

5.2 In accordance with Regulation 20 of the Regulations, hard copies of the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents are available for inspection at:

- Wokingham Borough Council Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1WP between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM (Monday to Friday).
- Twyford Library, Polehampton Close, Twyford, RG10 9RP (during normal opening hours)
- the Council's website: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-information/neighbourhood-planning/>.

3.2 Further information can be obtained from the Growth and Delivery Team by email to:

[PolicyandPlans@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:PolicyandPlans@wokingham.gov.uk)

Giorgio Framaliccio – Director of Place & Growth

20 July 2023

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# DECLARATION OF RESULT OF POLL

Wokingham Borough Council

## Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan for Twyford

I, Andrew Moulton, being the Counting Officer for Wokingham Borough Council at the above referendum held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023, do hereby give notice that the result of the votes cast is as follows:

Question		
<b>“Do you want Wokingham Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Twyford Parish to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”</b>		
	Votes Recorded	Percentage
Number cast in favour of a <b>YES</b>	1324	88.5%
Number cast in favour of a <b>NO</b>	169	11.3%

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows:	Number of ballot papers
(a) Want of an official mark	0
(b) Voting for more answers than required	0
(c) Writing or mark by which the voter could be identified	1
(d) Being unmarked or wholly void for uncertainty	2
Total Rejected	3

Electorate: **5208**

Ballot Papers Issued: **1496**

Turnout: **29%**

And I do hereby declare that more than half of those voting have voted:

**YES** – in response to the question: “Do you want Wokingham Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Twyford Parish to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

Dated: 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Andrew Moulton  
Counting Officer

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### **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form: Initial impact assessment**

If an officer is undertaking a project, policy change or service change, then an initial impact assessment must be completed and attached alongside the Project initiation document.

#### **EqIA Titular information:**

Date:	23 June 2023
Service:	Place and Growth (Delivery & Infrastructure)
Project, policy or service EQIA relates to:	Twyford Neighbourhood Plan
Completed by:	Ben Davis (Growth and Delivery Team, Senior Planning Policy Officer)
Has the EQIA been discussed at services team meeting:	Yes
Signed off by:	<b>Trevor Saunders</b> <b>Assistant Director Planning</b>
Sign off date:	03/07/23

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#### **1. Policy, Project or service information:**

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

<b>What is the purpose of the project, policy change or service change, its expected outcomes and how does it relate to your services corporate plan:</b>
<p>Twyford Parish Council has produced a Neighbourhood Plan to help shape how development is managed in their area. The Plan contains policies on housing, the natural, built and historic environment, community facilities and transport. The Plan does not include any site allocations.</p> <p>This report seeks approval to 'make' (bring into legal force) the Plan. This is required by the Regulations governing the production of neighbourhood plans.</p> <p>A referendum was undertaken on 6 July 2023, through which 88.5% of voters were in favour of Wokingham Borough Council using the plan as a starting point for determining planning applications. The Council has a legal duty to make a plan following a successful referendum, being where</p>

more than 50% have voted in favour of it. Therefore, the recommendation of the report to make the plan is a decision required by the Regulations governing the neighbourhood plan process. There are no alternative options.

Once made (adopted), the Plan will form part of the statutory development plan alongside the Council's local plans and other made neighbourhood plans. The Plan will thereby carry significant weight in the determination of planning applications and appeals in or affecting Twyford Parish.

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

The consultation framework for the preparation of the Plan has been undertaken in accordance with the Regulations governing the neighbourhood plan process and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. This involved sending emails/letters to a number of individuals, organisations, councillors and internal officers. Advertising and further information took place on the Council's website and publicised through social media. Publicity was also undertaken by the Parish Council.

Stakeholders including the Assistant Director of Planning and Director of Place & Growth have been engaged through the Corporate Leadership Team. Specialists from Growth & Delivery have also engaged with members of the Twyford Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group and Twyford Parish Council and provided policy advice and technical support throughout the Plan's preparation.

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

The Plan has been produced by Twyford Parish Council (the qualifying body) with the input of their community and other stakeholders. Advice and support has been provided by Council officers during the Plan's preparation. The purpose of neighbourhood planning is to enable local communities to help shape how development is managed in their area. The main beneficiaries are residents and local businesses within Twyford Parish.

The Independent Examiner was also satisfied that consultation and publicity undertaken on the Plan had met the regulatory requirements.

The Plan, once made, will be used by Wokingham Borough Council alongside local plans to help determine the suitability of planning applications within the area, and to help defend any appeals against the refusal to grant planning permission.



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

The purpose of a neighbourhood plan is to enable communities to help shape how development is managed in their area.

**2. Protected characteristics:**

There are 9 protected characteristics as defined by the legislation:

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

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

**3. Initial Impact review:**

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

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

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

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

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Race:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Gender:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Disabilities:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Age:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Sexual orientation:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Religion/belief:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Gender re-assignment:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.
Pregnancy and Maternity:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.

Protected characteristics	Impact score	Please detail what impact will be felt by the protected group:
Marriage and civil partnership:	None	Based on the scope of this project, no negative or positive outcomes have been identified. All stakeholders were consulted in the preparation of the plan. Arrangements for the referendum ensured fair access for the stakeholders who were engaged.

Based on your findings from your initial impact assessment, you must complete a full impact assessment for any groups you have identified as having a low or high negative impact. If No impact, or a positive impact has been identified, you do not need to complete a full assessment. However, you must report on this initial assessment and it must receive formal approval from the Assistant Director responsible for the project, policy or service change.

Initial impact assessment approved by....

**Trevor Saunders**

**Assistant Director, Planning**

Date:....03/07/2023

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# Agenda Item 24.

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board Annual Report 2022-23</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Council on 20 July 2023
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Ingrid Slade, Director Public Health

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

This is the annual report of the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board and covers the municipal year 2022/23. The format of the report has been developed to enable the reader to gain an insight into work undertaken around the Strategy into Action.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council note the 2022/23 annual report of the Chair of the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board as agreed by the Board at its meeting of 15 June 2023.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The report highlights the work of the Action/partnership groups, and partners in implementing the Wokingham Strategy into Action, to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for residents.

## Background to Annual report of Audit Committee

A report of the activities of the Board for 2022/23 has been prepared and is included within Appendix 1.

The report outlines progress made against the Wokingham Strategy into Action.

### 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)	£0	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	Yes	Revenue

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

None.

#### Cross-Council Implications

None.

#### Public Sector Equality Duty

This is an information report – an equalities assessment is not required.

***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***

There are no direct implications impacting on the Council's carbon neutral objective.

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

Not applicable.

#### List of Background Papers

None.

<b>Contact</b> Karen Buckley	<b>Service</b> Public Health
<b>Telephone No</b>	<b>Email</b> karen.buckley@wokingham.gov.uk

# HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/23



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## Purpose

- To provide the Wokingham HWB with a summary of the progress made against local HWB priorities in 22/23, and provisional objectives for 23/24.

## What's included?

- A summary of delivery against HWB priorities, and by individual action/partnership group.
- Action group updates are presented in a '*We said...we did...*' format and based against objectives set at the start of 22/23. Each summary also includes *draft* objectives for 23/24.

## To note:

- There is a huge amount of work underway via the action/partnership groups and it is not possible to summarise all activity and achievements in an easily digestible format. More extensive reports for each individual group are available, if required.
- Some action groups/partnerships have a broader remit than the SIA priorities assigned to them. In particular, the Wokingham Integrated Partnership, The Community Safety Partnership and the Children and Young People Partnership. Note that the updates provided for these groups focus solely on the work in relation to specific HWB priorities.
- Some of the 23/24 objectives are subject to change as not all the action groups have finalised 23/24 work plans, and/or are anticipating updated national policy that will need to be considered.



## Wokingham health and wellbeing priorities

Guided by the overarching principles of the Berkshire West Health & Wellbeing Strategy, the Wokingham Strategy into Action determines the priorities for focus within the Borough to improve resident health and wellbeing.

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

Wokingham strategy into action health and wellbeing priorities:

1. Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people
2. Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives
3. Help children and families in early years
4. Good mental health and wellbeing for all children and young people
5. Good mental health and wellbeing for all adults
6. Creating physically active communities

The strategy in action priorities have been mapped to relevant action/partnership groups, who in turn are tasked with developing action plans setting out the interventions required to improve health and wellbeing across the borough. Each action/partnership group is responsible for delivery of their action plan and for reporting progress to the HWB Steering Group, who provide operational oversight of strategy delivery on behalf of the Wellbeing Board.

Following this introduction is an update from each of the action groups setting out what has been delivered against each of the health and wellbeing priorities assigned to them.

## Place Based Development with NHS partners

Work continues to further strengthen our partnership arrangements between the Local Authority and NHS organisations across Berkshire West. This will help us to continue to deliver against the ambitions of our joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, including those improvements that we can deliver locally and those opportunities that are best realised by working across boundaries in Berkshire West. Our Berkshire-West wide work in 23/24 will have a strong focus on improving access to care, improving and integrating services that keep us well at home, and reducing health inequalities within the borough.

### Health and wellbeing in Wokingham

Wokingham is considered one of the best places to live in the UK with high employment, excellent schools and a thriving economy. According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation, it is one of the least deprived areas in the UK and many of its residents live in good health with life expectancy well above the national average.

That said, inequalities in health and wellbeing outcomes will exist in any area and Wokingham is no exception. Its status as one of the least deprived areas in the UK presents a challenge in itself. Statistics, even those focused in on smaller geographical pockets of the Borough, will mask hidden inequalities.

This presents a key challenge: to identify the most vulnerable members of our population and to provide them with appropriate support and services.

#### The Wokingham Population

2020 mid-year population estimates indicate that over 170,000 people live in Wokingham. There is a high proportion of older, working-age people aged 40 to 55 and also a high proportion of children aged 5 to 14 within the total population of Wokingham.

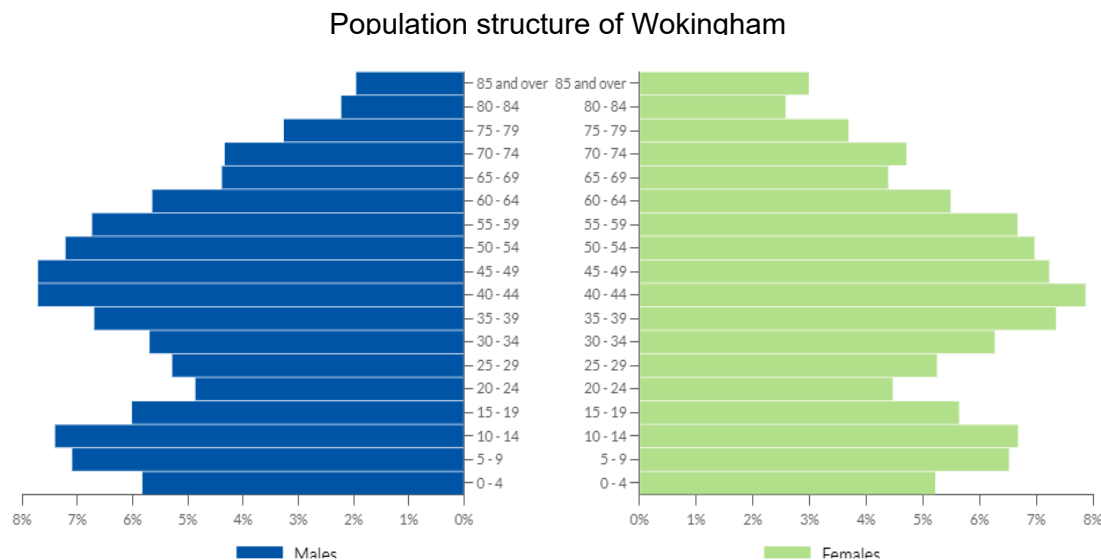
Although the proportion of the population aged 65 plus in Wokingham is no greater than the England average, the fact that there is a large population currently aged 40 to 55 indicates that an increasingly ageing population over the next 10 plus years is likely and the rate of increase may be higher than that seen in other areas.

#### Life expectancy

Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are key summary measures of the health of a population. Life expectancy at birth is the average number of years a person in a given area, at a given time, would be expected to live. Healthy life expectancy shows the years a person would be expected to live in good health (rather than with a disability or in poor health).

The number of years a person living in Wokingham would be expected to live is higher than the average for the South East Region and England.

Males living in Wokingham would be expected to live approximately 70 years in good health, and for a further 12 years in poor health. Females in Wokingham can be expected to live 71 years in good health and, on average, a further 15 years in poor health. Just as life expectancy is a key summary measure of the



Source: Office for National Statistics

health of a population, the difference in life expectancy between those living in more or less deprived areas is a key summary measure of health inequalities. This inequality gap is larger for males than females.

### *Individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes*

As well as a focus on tackling the wider determinants to health, supporting people facing higher risk to live healthy lives is a priority for Wokingham.

Engagement with the public as part of the development of the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the local Wokingham Wellbeing Strategy (strategy into Action) identified the following groups as being at high risk of bad health outcomes:

- Those living with dementia
- People with learning disabilities
- Unpaid carers
- People who have experienced domestic abuse

### *People living with dementia*

GP Practices keep a register of all of their patients who have a diagnosis of dementia. However, we know that there is a gap between the number of people diagnosed and recorded on registers compared to what we would expect the population prevalence of dementia to be. This is important because timely diagnosis enables people living with dementia, their carers and healthcare staff to plan accordingly and work together to improve health and care outcomes.

In Wokingham, there are 1,088 people aged 65 and over currently diagnosed with dementia. Estimates based on the characteristics of the population indicate that the true figure is closer to 1,857 (NHS Digital).

### *People living with a learning disability*

There are 484 adults aged 18 to 64 with learning disabilities who are known to Wokingham Borough Council's Adult Social Services. Two key indicators are included in the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework that are intended to improve outcomes for adults with learning disabilities.

Living in settled accommodation improves a person's safety and reduces the risk of social exclusion. Maintaining settled accommodation and providing social care in this environment promotes personalisation and quality of life, prevents the need to readmit people into hospital or more costly residential care and ensures a positive experience of social care.

Work is generally good for physical and mental health and wellbeing and people with learning disabilities should be supported to be in employment. There is a need to reduce the gap between those with a learning disability in employment and the overall employment rate.

### *Unpaid carers*

It is difficult to know the number of unpaid carers living in Wokingham. A lot of people do not see themselves as carers, and view what they do as a normal part of life. Until the results of the 2021 Census are available, the latest estimates of the number of people considering themselves as providing care come from the 2011 Census. These figures do not capture the number of young carers who provide care for family members.

## *People who have experienced domestic abuse*

Tackling domestic abuse as a public health issue is vital for ensuring that some of the most vulnerable people in our society receive the support, understanding and treatment they deserve. The more we can focus in on interventions that are effective, the more we can treat survivors and prevent future abuse. Wokingham's Domestic Abuse Strategy for 2021-24 can be [accessed here](#).

During 2020/21, Thames Valley Police responded to 2,047 calls relating to domestic abuse (1,476 women and 568 men) in Wokingham. However, we are aware that many people don't feel able to report incidents to the police for a wide variety of reasons, and the true number of Wokingham residents who will have experienced domestic in the past year is likely to be much higher, based on Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) research findings. 136 Wokingham victims of domestic abuse were identified as being at high risk of serious harm of homicide, with 165 children living in these households.

## **Additional priority areas for the wellbeing strategy**

### *Adult mental health*

Mental health problems in adults represent the largest single cause of disability in the UK. Adults could be affected by mental health issues at any time. It impacts all aspects of our lives, and both influences and is influenced by physical health. Adult mental illnesses also have a ripple effect on their family, unpaid carers and wider society. According to the Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey, in 2019/20, an estimated 17.9 million working days were lost due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety in Great Britain.

Much like inequalities in physical health, mental illness is also closely linked to broader social inequalities which are complex and interrelated, such as unemployment, discrimination and social exclusion. Therefore, tackling mental health inequalities also requires addressing these broader social inequalities and this remains a key priority for Wokingham.

### *Families and children in early years*

Prevention and early actions are key to positive health outcomes. Setting the foundations for health and wellbeing for families and children in early years is crucial to ensure the best start in life for every child. The first 1,001 days – from pregnancy to the first two years of a child's life – are critical ages for development. This sensitive window sets the foundations for virtually every aspect of human development – physical, intellectual and emotional.

Inequities in child health and development start early; they exist at pregnancy, birth and during the early years. Not all children and families have the support they need for their children to be physically healthy, emotionally secure and ready to learn. Reasons for this are often social, including income and poor housing quality, and these factors can often accumulate over the life course, having long term consequences on not only health, but also social outcomes such as educational attainment and employment. This is why it is so important to ensure we support families to provide as best a start as possible for their children,

helping to break the cycle of reproducing health and social inequalities in the next generations and so building the foundations for a more equal society in the future.

For more in-depth population and wellbeing analysis please see the [Wokingham Borough Observatory](#).

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

Local focus on: *People with learning disabilities, unpaid carers, youth offenders, substance misuse, domestic abuse*

Lead action group/s:

- *Carers strategy action group (for carers)*
- *Learning disabilities partnership (for LD)*
- *Community safety partnership (for domestic violence, substance misuse, youth offenders)*

<b>Carers</b>		
<b>We said we would...</b>	<b>We did...</b>	<b>Our focus for 23/24</b>
<p>Build on the work of the group to incorporate the adult social care reforms</p> <p>Improve identification of hidden carers</p> <p>Work with schools and other stakeholders to improve support to young carers</p> <p>Develop links between carers support programme and wider VCS prevention offering</p>	<p><b>Carers Week 2022:</b> variety of events to promote the profile and raise awareness of carers across the borough including carers lunch, solicitors talk, and carers pampering sessions.</p> <p><b>Integration with wider VCS:</b> the Carers Support and Guidance service has been accessible at the Wokingham Charity Hub at least once a week, alongside other VCS partners.</p> <p><b>Young Carers:</b> 48% of borough schools (both primary and secondary) now working regularly with Young Carers service.</p> <p><b>Revised Carers Support and Guidance service:</b> new specification, increased funding and scope (all carers, including young carers) in place from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 with new provider – Wokingham Carers Partnership (three local VCS organisations: Age UK Berkshire, Promise Inclusion and Berkshire Youth).</p> <p><b>Co-production:</b> consulted with carers to identify priorities and revised specification for the new service, and Carer input to guide the evaluation process for the re-tender.</p> <p><b>Learning disability carers:</b> Working with Promise Inclusion, the group has fed into the Learning Disability Partnership Board strategy implementation work, including via a specific LD carers workstream. LD carers have also been incorporated into the new Carers Support &amp; Guidance service.</p>	<p>Develop and expand support and guidance service to meet carer led priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information in the right format and at the right time</li> <li>• Help to stay emotionally and physically capable of continuing with their caring role</li> <li>• In-person support and guidance when they need it</li> </ul> <p>Develop the Carers Respite Pathway so all Carers have the opportunity for a break</p> <p>Improve access to statutory carers assessments through pilot project to deliver via third party</p> <p>Improve identification of hidden carers, and those from seldom heard groups</p> <p>Work with schools and other stakeholders to improve support to young carers</p> <p>Further develop links between work with carers and wider VCS prevention offering</p>

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

Local focus on: *People with learning disabilities, Unpaid carers, Youth offenders, Substance misuse, Domestic abuse*

Lead action group/s:

- *Carers strategy action group (for carers)*
- *Learning disabilities partnership (for LD)*
- *Community safety partnership (for domestic violence, substance misuse, youth offenders)*

<b>Learning Disabilities</b>		
<b>We said we would...</b>	<b>We did...</b>	<b>Our Focus for 23/24</b>
<p>Create a dedicated Learning Disability Service providing focused social work support and access to social care and voluntary services</p> <p>Develop a LD Commissioning and Market Development Plan that fosters greater choice and control within the market</p> <p>Increase the number of people with a Learning Disability who are in employment</p> <p>Create an enhanced and sustainable offer of support for carers, so they get the support they need to help them continue caring</p> <p>Work with our partners in health to integrate services and improve outcomes for residents with a learning disability</p> <p>Embed the Approaching Adulthood Team to support young people with a learning disability to transition into adulthood</p>	<p>The accommodation project has delivered homes and flats at Ryeish Green, Loddon Bridge Road and Hatch farm. The refurbishment at Loddon Court has commenced and due to finish in June 2023.</p> <p>A new Autism Manager was appointed by the Council's commissioning Team who will lead on the publication and implementation of the Autism Strategy.</p> <p>Optalis remain second nationally in terms of success in getting people with a Learning Disability into employment.</p> <p>Community Lives run by Optalis offers activities for younger people via their Out and About service and bespoke activities for the older cohort of individuals, recognising change of need and reducing isolation.</p> <p>The Transition Team has changed their name to "Preparing for Adulthood" 100% of young people referred to Transitions are receiving an assessment by their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.</p> <p>Preparing for Adulthood Team (PfA) are supporting both the PfA and post 16 steering groups.</p> <p>Extensive range of user/community engagement events facilitated by CLASP and the LDPB throughout the year to identify and review issues important to residents with a LD – for example, cost of living and money management, healthy eating, community safety, travel, access to primary care.</p>	<p>Create a dedicated Learning Disability Service providing focused social work support and access to social care and voluntary services</p> <p>To develop a LD Commissioning and Market Development Plan that fosters greater choice and control within the market</p> <p>Ensure the new Council website is easy to use and promotes the offer of support for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers</p> <p>To increase the number of people with a Learning Disability who are in employment</p> <p>Publication and implementation of revised Autism Strategy</p> <p>To create an enhanced and sustainable offer of support for carers, so they get the support they need to help them continue caring</p> <p>To work with our partners in health to integrate services and improve outcomes for residents with a learning disability</p> <p>To embed the Approaching Adulthood Team to support young people with a learning disability to transition into adulthood</p> <p>The preparing for adulthood Team is working with Optalis to develop more bespoke services for young people aged 18-25 years old</p> <p>CLASP are contacting all primary health care settings to raise awareness of their video on how LD people want to be treated by health care professionals</p> <p>Plan more specialist accommodation for people with learning disabilities</p>

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

Local focus on: *People with learning disabilities, Unpaid carers, Youth offenders, Substance misuse, Domestic abuse*

Lead action group/s:

- *Carers strategy action group (for carers)*
- *Learning disabilities partnership (for LD)*
- *Community safety partnership (for domestic violence, substance misuse, youth offenders)*

<b>Domestic Abuse</b>		
<b>We said we would...</b>	<b>We did...</b>	<b>Our Focus for 23/24</b>
<p>Increase awareness of domestic abuse</p> <p>Increase support options for those affected by domestic abuse</p> <p>Hold perpetrators of domestic abuse to account and encourage self-referrals to long term behaviour change interventions</p> <p>Increase joint working with criminal and civil justice organisations to increase longer term safety for victim-survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Drive change together through a coordinated and effective multi agency domestic abuse response</p> <p>Deliver Domestic Abuse Act 2021 duty to support victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation</p>	<p><i>Coordinated communications strategy:</i> Developed a multi-agency communications strategy to increase awareness of domestic abuse, specifically targeting victim-survivors.</p> <p><i>Mapping of service provision and addressing gaps in services:</i> Created a domestic abuse specific directory of services to enable organisations and individuals to identify the most appropriate service for their needs.</p> <p><i>Perpetrator interventions:</i> Promoted domestic abuse perpetrator programmes to encourage multi-agency referrals alongside gathering case studies to promote benefits of scheme for self-referrals.</p> <p>Contributed to Thames Valley wide funding bids and steering groups to enable additional funding and services to be introduced, addressing specific perpetrator needs (eg stalking perpetrators).</p> <p><i>Best evidence:</i> Worked with the criminal and civil justice agencies to gain an increased understanding of individual agency roles and remits.</p> <p><i>Multi-agency training offer:</i> Delivered 43 training events, attended by 1133 delegates from a wide range of statutory and voluntary organisations to increase understanding of domestic abuse, including targeted sessions to support practitioners respond to the needs of those with protected characteristics as well as to respond to emerging needs.</p> <p><i>Respond to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory duties:</i> Increased support available to those living in safe accommodation within the Wokingham refuge, as well as those where ‘target hardening’ measures have been put in place in their own homes. Commissioned new nationally relevant research to understand the needs of male and LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse in safe accommodation.</p>	<p>Achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation</p> <p>Increase the take up by schools of a relationship education offer from specialist domestic abuse organisations</p> <p>Re-launch and increase take up of Safe Places scheme to provide safe spaces for vulnerable individuals, including those experiencing domestic abuse, stalking and harassment and hate/mate crime</p> <p>Work with businesses to increase the number of organisations with effective domestic abuse workplace policies in place</p> <p>Continually strive to increase awareness of domestic abuse and support options for those who face additional barriers to help</p> <p>Deliver workshops in schools to raise awareness to children at different ages (namely 11 and 15 according to PHSE)</p> <p>Deliver Level Up Programme for children of fourteen and above who are exhibiting problematic behaviours. This is a healthy relationship programme and tackles child to parent abuse</p> <p>Increase capacity for our Seeking Safety Group including an online course</p> <p>Improve support for sexual abuse through the Independent Sexual Abuse Advisors</p> <p>Build an improved support network for our global majority clients through specific drop-in sessions alongside Project Salama</p>



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

Local focus on: *People with learning disabilities, Unpaid carers, Youth offenders, Substance misuse, Domestic abuse*

Lead action group/s:

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<b>Substance misuse</b>		
<b>We said we would...</b>	<b>We did...</b>	<b>Our Focus for 23/24</b>
<p>68</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a local Combatting Drugs Partnership (CDP) and work with key groups on the delivery on Harm to Hope ambition</li> <li>• Undertake a local substance misuse needs assessment</li> <li>• Establish a Wokingham Community Alcohol Partnership to highlight the risks of underage drinking and improve the health and wellbeing of local young people</li> </ul>	<p>The Combatting Drugs Partnership (CDP) for Berkshire West was created and Senior Responsible Officer appointed.</p> <p>Strategic Needs Assessment undertaken, position statement and action plan finalised.</p> <p>Implemented Long-acting buprenorphine prescribing to assist with stabilisation for opiate clients.</p> <p>Developed a comprehensive educational awareness offer for parents, students, and teachers of all schools across Wokingham Borough. Delivered by Cranstoun.</p> <p>Delivered outreach sessions within Salvation Army to promote harm reduction messages to reduce risk to individuals and the community.</p> <p><b>Wokingham Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP)</b></p> <p>6 months of Free Online Retailer Training dates booked in and distributed to all relevant services to offer to retailers/direct people.</p> <p>Alcohol awareness Sessions delivered with Cranstoun to 220 students across 5 schools.</p> <p>All Off-licenses in Wokingham Town Centre visited, provided with CAP 'Challenge 25' training and advice to licensees to include Proxy purchase advise.</p> <p>Two community events held to raise awareness of Proxy Purchasing laws.</p> <p>Two proxy purchase events held to raise awareness with retailers.</p>	<p>Deliver on the Combatting Drugs Partnership/Harm to Hope strategy core priorities, specific focus on -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing successful completions to be within top quartile of performance for all substance cohorts</li> <li>• Working with partnership agencies to improve access to and multi-agency pathways for clients with co-occurring mental health and substance misuse conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shared monthly MDT meetings with Crisis Team implemented</li> <li>○ Referral pathway implemented with Mind and MHICS</li> <li>○ Memorandum of understanding created with Talking Therapies</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Improving links for clients who receive DRR/ATR orders from court to enable rapid access into treatment</li> </ul>

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

Local focus on: *People with learning disabilities, Unpaid carers, Youth offenders, Substance misuse, Domestic abuse*

Lead action group/s:

- *Carers strategy action group (for carers)*
- *Learning disabilities partnership (for LD)*
- *Community safety partnership (for domestic violence, substance misuse, youth offenders)*

<b>Youth offenders</b>		
<b><i>What said we would...</i></b>	<b><i>We did...</i></b>	<b><i>Our Focus for 23/24</i></b>
<p><i>Implement the Exclusion Prevention Programme:</i> an early intervention programme aimed at reducing school exclusions linked to offending behaviours</p> <p><i>Implement the Disproportionality Action Plan:</i> This plan has three strands with actions aimed at reducing the over-representation of BAME children in the criminal justice system</p> <p><i>Review the Return Home Interview protocol:</i> Procedures and practices will be reviewed and amended in partnership with key stakeholders</p> <p> Continue to support the <i>development of Contextual Safeguarding approaches</i>, including sustaining low levels of Serious Youth Violence</p> <p><i>Establish a QA Framework:</i> Developing a written framework to underpin quality assurance mechanisms</p> <p><i>Strengthening Restorative Practice:</i> Developing victim focused practice, both in terms of victim safety and increasing the number of victims supported</p> <p><i>Developing the Participation Strategy:</i> To identify a consistent and structured approach to obtaining child and family feedback</p> <p><i>Improving the recording and collection of Education and Health data,</i> to provide a more accurate understanding of the cohort</p>	<p>The Prevention Pathway was expanded with the launch of the Exclusion Prevention Programme and a prevention programme for children subject to pre-charge bail.</p> <p>A comprehensive induction pack has been developed that will support case workers with developing trauma informed, trusted relationships, with special focus on understanding the lived experiences of children from ethnic minority groups or children with other diversity needs.</p> <p>Robust programmes have been developed with the support of voluntary and third sector partners. The programmes provide a solid exit strategy to ensure ongoing individualised support for our most vulnerable children.</p> <p>The number of knife awareness sessions have increased. These have been delivered to school children, reaching out to 1000+ children from Wokingham secondary schools.</p> <p>The Prevention and Youth Justice Service (PYJS) contributed to the Serious Violence Strategy and has been a key partner in the development of the Harm from Outside the Home policy and the Exploitation and Missing Risk Assessment Conference (EMRAC) review.</p> <p>Participation has been developed to ensure we effectively capture the voice of children and parents and use that feedback to inform service delivery. This includes new exit interview forms, redesigning our office space and the development of new templates.</p>	<p><b><i>Note: Draft as final 23/24 plan to be published July 23</i></b></p> <p>Recruit a Youth Justice Worker (12-month contract) funded by the CSP. The worker will focus on schools and the Exclusion Prevention Programme. If a child engages with the Exclusion Prevention Programme, they will be less likely to continue to engage in offending behaviour, thus reducing the number of fixed-term or permanent exclusions from school. The programme should also reduce the number of First Time Entrants into the Criminal Justice System, which is one of the statutory aims of the PYJS</p> <p>Develop the Exclusion Prevention work by establishing robust communication channels with schools that will support an increase in the number of children referred to PYJS</p> <p>Continue to expand the prevention pathway, underpinned by the MoJ Turnaround programme funding</p> <p>Expand the delivery of preventative work in schools, beyond knife awareness, to include other types of behaviour of concern</p>

Local focus on: *Reducing waiting times, prevention and early recovery, covid recovery*

Lead action group/s:

- Children and young people partnership board

We said we would...	We did...	Our focus for 23/24
<p>Undertake an analysis of current workstreams under this priority</p> <p>Create a mechanism to take forward the actions that were not already being addressed</p> <p>Align trajectory, objectives and actions with key health partners</p>	<p>Established Emotional Wellbeing Steering Group to support the implementation and monitor progress against the actions identified for this priority. Identified objectives and actions -</p> <p><b>To ensure that children who are in care receive quicker access to mental health support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning and mobilisation of children in care CAMHS service</li> <li>• 3 month review of CIC CAMHS Service</li> </ul> <p><b>Provide a single point of access for children and young people, their families and professionals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilisation and Implementation of the Emotional Wellbeing Hub</li> <li>• Undertake a review of the Emotional Wellbeing Hub (1 year anniversary of launch)</li> </ul> <p><b>To embed a second Mental Health Support Team in Wokingham</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health Support Teams – second wave of funding in Wokingham</li> <li>• Provide regular project updates on the progress of the implementation and the mobilisation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> MHST</li> </ul> <p><b>Increasing local sufficiency for our children and young people with complex needs (BOB project)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing local sufficiency for our children and young people with complex needs</li> <li>• To work with partners to provide relevant datasets and evidence to support the business case to commission children’s homes across the Thames Valley footprint</li> </ul> <p><b>Review of CAMHS, reduce waiting times for Core/Specialist CAMHS &amp; across all services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of CAMHS, Improve waiting times and access to support, with a particular focus on ASD/ADHD assessments</li> <li>• Continue to develop the workforce through the CAMHS Workforce Academy and local integrated workforce planning, providing updates to the board</li> </ul>	<p>Emotional Wellbeing Steering Group to review the current SIA action plan for this priority and revise as appropriate to align with agreed objectives and ongoing workstreams on a BOB ICB and Berkshire West footprint; to ensure actions have measurable outcomes and realistic timescales</p> <p>Highlight reporting mechanisms will also be developed for all above actions</p> <p>Progressing and monitoring the objectives and overarching actions agreed</p>

Local focus on: *SEND and inclusion, early intervention and prevention, safeguarding*

Lead action group/s:

- *Children and young people partnership*

What said we would...	We did...	Our focus for 23/24
<p>Undertake an analysis of current workstreams under this priority.</p> <p>Create a mechanism to take forward the actions that were not already being addressed.</p> <p>Review and revise the current SIA action plan.</p>	<p>Developed the Early Years/Best Start Subgroup to take forward relevant parts of the Strategy into action plan. Subgroup reviewed and updated the action plan in December 2022.</p> <p><b>SEND and Inclusion</b></p> <p>Outreach and support for schools and SENCOs to embed Ordinarily Available and worked with all EY settings to support engagement from all.</p> <p>Increased portage capacity (early learning support service for pre-school children who have complex developmental needs and their families) to support home visits.</p> <p>Parent Carer Forum hosting SENDIASS training and created a SEND and Local Offer guide for families.</p> <p><b>Early Intervention and Prevention</b></p> <p>Established school readiness working group to review current tools available to support transitioning into school.</p> <p>Family Hub project scoping discussions held.</p> <p>Quarterly meetings with BHFT to review Health Visiting data verses KPIs and internal scrutiny meetings held prior.</p> <p>Post Natal group pilot completed in North PCN. New venues secured for face to face Post Natal group and Well Baby Clinics. Sessions well attended, with positive feedback.</p> <p>Review of breast feeding programme completed, recommissioned for 3 years.</p> <p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>LADO guides circulated, and attends the Education Lead’s Group and Early Years Designated Safeguarding Leads meetings, in which bitesize training will be delivered.</p> <p>Annual Safeguarding audit has been carried out by all EY providers. Report and analysis in progress which will include recommendations.</p>	<p><b>SEND and Inclusion</b></p> <p>Delivery of agreed Safety Valve workstreams - Implement an Early Years strategy, ensuring need is identified at the earliest opportunity, with the appropriate levels of support put in place and focusing on early years to primary transitions into school for children with SEND</p> <p>Roll out of Dingley’s Promise training (200 spaces) on transitions into school</p> <p><b>Early Intervention and Prevention</b></p> <p>Analyse and identify trends in queries received by teams/organisations for under-fives to review effectiveness of information available to families and professionals</p> <p>Analyse reasons for non-attendance to Health Visiting appointments and improve uptake</p> <p>Undertaking analysis on year 1 children who have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) and tracking back to see what, if any, support was accessed prior to the family seeking assessment for the EHCP</p> <p>Working closely with the BHFT Health Visiting Lead to assess the impact of the pilot project to explore whether merging 2-year-old and 2.5-year-old health checks would improve uptake and promote early identification of health issues</p> <p>Develop the Family Hub model using the existing Integrated Early Help footprint, Children’s Centres and the Youth Centre in the first instance</p> <p><b>Safeguarding</b></p> <p>Analyse output of annual safeguarding audit for all Early Years settings and implement recommendations</p> <p>Analysis of Ofsted outcomes to determine how many times safeguarding is recorded as an issue in any Early Years provider</p> <p>Development of a S175/157 audit tool which covers all stages (early years and school)</p>

Local focus on: *Dementia, social isolation and loneliness*

Lead action group/s:

- *Dementia strategy group*
- *Social isolation and loneliness action group*

Dementia Strategy Group		
<b><i>We said we would...</i></b>	<b><i>We did...</i></b>	<b><i>Our focus for 23/24</i></b>
<p>Finalise the structure of the Dementia Steering group and Dementia Action Alliance groups</p> <p>Oversee the commissioning and mobilisation of improved support for individuals living with dementia, and their carers</p> <p>Create a Wokingham Dementia Partnership (WDP) and foster a dementia friendly Wokingham movement</p> <p>Assess the immediate gaps in support for those with or affected by dementia created by Covid-19 pandemic</p> <p>Create a partnership between the WDP and Wokingham Dementia Action Alliance to ascertain wider views on local priorities and promote a dementia friendly community</p> <p>Work in partnership with people and their carers from ethnic minority communities to offer support, raise awareness of existing services and groups, and customised prevention relevant to that community</p>	<p><b>Strategic Group</b></p> <p>Group established and met quarterly. Initial focus to understand “where we are” - baseline incidence, prevalence, risk factors and interventions that can improve outcomes. The work programme is directed by the pathway – diagnosing well, living well, dying well (end of life support). During 2022/3 the diagnostic pathway has been explored.</p> <p><b>Dementia Partnership (expert group)</b></p> <p>This group is comprised primarily of the partners that successfully bid for the grass roots / community services, including training, education and activities. 22/23 work programme focused on the mapping of services and access, training for professionals, training for carers, cognitive support for users, services to improve social connection and peer support, advice and information for residents.</p> <p><b>Dementia friendly Wokingham</b></p> <p>Open group expanded to 68 stakeholders. Remit to promote dementia friendly society. The group has met quarterly and has contributed to raising awareness of dementia and is a source of grassroots knowledge of the issues facing residents.</p>	<p><i>The priorities for this year will be formally agreed at the next Strategic Group meeting. The three draft high-level priorities build on the work during 2022/3. Specific actions are summarised by group:</i></p> <p><b>Strategic Group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand representation and understanding of the “offer” to those living with dementia in Wokingham</li> </ul> <p><b>Partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the “Reach” and awareness of services, training and activities across the Borough and enhance partnerships and joint working with other community groups</li> </ul> <p><b>Dementia Friendly Wokingham</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness of all aspects of dementia (prevention, diagnosis, training and support) to enable inclusiveness for those living with dementia, by developing a dementia friendly society</li> </ul>

Local focus on: *Dementia, social isolation and loneliness*

Lead action group/s:

- *Dementia strategy group*
- *Social isolation and loneliness action group*

<b>Social isolation and loneliness</b>		
<b>We said we would...</b>	<b>We did...</b>	<b>Our focus for 23/24</b>
<p>Connect vulnerable residents with quality-assured services and activities</p> <p>94 Help people to build better social relationships to improve health</p> <p>Tackle the risk factors for social isolation and loneliness</p>	<p><b>Connect vulnerable residents with quality-assured services and activities</b></p> <p>492 referrals to Community Navigators &amp; Social Prescribing with 93% accepted (for 3 of 5 WBC PCNs) <b>(Involve)</b></p> <p>191 group activities delivered with over 2,000 registrations, sessions encourage new friendships and provide opportunities to join small Friendship Groups <b>(Friendship Alliance/Link Visiting)</b></p> <p>135 new residents supported by Link Visiting, taking the total to 535 <b>(The Link Visiting Scheme)</b></p> <p><b>Help people to build better social relationships to improve health</b></p> <p>425 Assessments and Reviews undertaken by the Community Navigators &amp; Social Prescribers (for 3 of 5 WBC PCNs) <b>(Involve)</b></p> <p>2,138 participant registration for Active Ageing, 3,743 Moving with Confidence visits and 125 residents participated in the MH and Wellbeing programme <b>(Sports &amp; Leisure)</b></p> <p>70 Friendship Champions now active in the community <b>(Friendship Alliance/The Link)</b></p> <p>9 Friendship Alliance events held with nearly 260 recorded participants <b>(The Friendship Alliance)</b></p> <p>37 residents benefited from 'Link Online' which provides coaching to those with no experience of digital devices, including support to access GP online appointments <b>(Link Visiting)</b></p> <p>Nearly doubled the number of Friendship Tables established across the Borough from 27 last year to 50 <b>(Friendship Alliance)</b></p> <p><b>Tackle the risk factors for social isolation and loneliness</b></p> <p>Focus groups conducted with local men to help understand their experience of mental health services to inform local campaigns <b>(Wokingham Integration Team and MIND in Berkshire)</b></p> <p>Three Tasks &amp; Finish scoping sessions convened to look at three high-risk groups/settings <b>(Involve/Public Health and SiL members)</b></p> <p>Review of local support groups available for the LBTQIA+ community and analysis of data/evidence of health and wellbeing outcomes in progress <b>(Public Health)</b></p> <p>Adult Social care and VCS review of local transport provision undertaken to help inform how best to support residents accessing VCS and WBC commissioned services <b>(WBC &amp; Wokingham Volunteer Centre)</b></p>	<p><b>Connecting vulnerable residents with quality services / Helping people to build better social relationships and improve health:</b></p> <p>Identify the key tools/systems/platforms that are used to promote services that directly address loneliness and identify ways to measure usage/impact</p> <p>Agree key services and activities and measures of impact/outcome including for non-SiL members</p> <p><b>Tackling the factors for social isolation and loneliness</b></p> <p>Review the Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategy and identify the actions that SiL members can support with and bring into local action plan</p> <p>Review the outcome of the MIND in Berkshire Focus Group and identify any opportunities to support next step</p> <p>Identify and agree 2-3 key local measures of risk factors which contribute to SiL for 2023/24</p> <p>Improve understanding of the experiences of the LGBTQIA+ residents in relation to SiL, support services and mental health service</p>

Local focus on: *Children, young people and families, covid recovery, minority groups*

Lead action group/s:

- *Physically active communities*

We said we would...	We did...	Our focus for 23/24
<p>Facilitating physical activity to improve health outcomes irrespective of whether individuals achieve weight loss</p> <p>Promoting physical activity among target groups to reduce the risk of long-term conditions such as coronary heart disease and stroke</p> <p>Encouraging people to be physically active as a means to reduce premature mortality</p>	<p><b>GP referral scheme</b> - 99 members participated, 100% completed the course. 15 classes/week on offer and the main referred conditions were obesity, diabetes, arthritis, hypertension and anxiety/depression.</p> <p><b>SHINE</b> programme expanded to include over 55s and to 45 classes, over 600 members participated on the scheme.</p> <p>Formulation of a <b>Sports Club Forum</b> – the aims of this is to understand what sport and activity is operating in the community, receive data from the clubs and to help with any access barriers.</p> <p>Delivered <b>Sport in Mind</b> Sessions at Wokingham Leisure centre for adults and children. The scheme has been a success in terms of attendance and impact and more sessions are being organised.</p> <p><b>Get Berkshire Active (GBA)</b> continued to offer free training for health professionals to enhance skills and confidence in having conversations with patients about promoting physical activity.</p> <p>In February, <b>Brest Feeding Network</b> (BFN) Wokingham supported Loddon Valley Leisure Centre in joining the BfN Breastfeeding Friendly Scheme.</p> <p><b>Countryside and Parks</b> supported safe activity offers focusing on ‘regular participation’ - turning activity into a habit and ‘Education’ – educating children via schools and re-educating the community via other resources about healthy lifestyles, how, why, opportunities within the borough. The glow walk run by first days Charity had over 700 people walking around the lake being active doing a 2.7km walk.</p> <p><b>Active travel</b></p> <p>Worked with the air quality schools project (10 schools across WBC) to help them progress their active travel plans and reducing the number of pupils coming to school by car.</p> <p>1894 children attended <b>Bikeability</b> courses in 2022-2023. 15% increase on 21/22.</p> <p>During the <b>Love to Ride</b> campaign 2571 participants took part in 22-23 with an increase of over 900 including 532 new riders. 113 Businesses are actively participating, a rise of 41 on the previous year.</p> <p>Pupils from 14 primary schools took part in <b>Active Movements Active Journey</b> campaign, which aims to reduce the amount of time spent in cars. Delivered in partnership with My Journey, Air Quality team. Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 59% less use of car</li> <li>• 29.7% would now prefer to use bike/scooter/walk to school</li> </ul>	<p>The physically active communities group core objectives are similar to 22/23, with one additional objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitating physical activity to improve health outcomes irrespective of whether individuals achieve weight loss.</li> <li>• Promoting physical activity among target groups to reduce the risk of long-term conditions such as coronary heart disease and stroke.</li> <li>• Encouraging people to be physically active as a way to improve mental health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Understand the barrier to physical activity and in particular focus on sessions and activities targeted to people from a low socioeconomic background and children and adults with disabilities.</li> </ul>

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