



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in Council Chamber
- Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on
THURSDAY 21 MARCH 2024 AT 7.30 PM

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 13 March 2024

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: Democratic.services@wokingham.gov.uk

The meeting can also be watched live using the following link:
<https://youtube.com/live/1NhMLIGGqQE?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.

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

To: The Members of Wokingham Borough Council

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
120.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.	
121.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22 February 2024.	13 - 34
122.		DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of discloseable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and any non-registrable interests relevant to any matters to be considered at the meeting.	
123.		MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS To receive any announcements by the Mayor.	
124.		PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions. A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice. The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of the 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 www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions	
124.1	Emmbrook	Adrian Betteridge has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways the following question: Question: The new footbridge over the railway in Wokingham Town will shortly be open and a big improvement over the preceding structure for the able bodied. It's unacceptable that Network Rail refused to make the bridge accessible for all, but Wokingham Borough Council did indicate that it would be willing to address this. Can you give an indication as to when and how	

this will happen?

124.2 None Specific Erin Gallagher has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure the following question:

Question:

Currently our hard-working waste collection teams collect multiple bin bags into a single container bin then go to the truck, considering wheelie bins completely remove this operational process and makes things more inefficient how will this save money?

124.3 Bulmershe and Whitegates; Maiden Erlegh Guy Grandison has asked the Executive Member for Environment, Sport and Leisure the following question:

Question:

There are several estates in Earley that are not suitable for wheelie bins. Has any provision been made for residents who cannot physically store these eyesores anywhere?

125.

PETITIONS

To receive any petitions which Members or members of the public wish to present.

126. None Specific **AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY 2024 - 2028** 35 - 48

127. None Specific **YOUNG PEOPLE'S HOUSING STRATEGY 2024-2028: TO PROVIDE SAFE, SECURE, AND AFFORDABLE ACCOMMODATION FOR OUR CARE LEAVERS, 16/17 YEAR OLDS AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS AND UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM-SEEKING CHILDREN** 49 - 88

128. None Specific **STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY 2024-2029** 89 - 246

129. None Specific **CONSTITUTION UPDATE** 247 - 304

130. None Specific **AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24** 305 - 316

131. None Specific **STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24** 317 - 326

132. None Specific **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORTS 2023-24** 327 - 352

133. None Specific **OUTSIDE BODIES ANNUAL REPORTS 2023-24** 353 - 392

134.

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.

134.1 Charvil

Sam Akhtar has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways the following question:

Question:

The car park adjacent to Charvil Piggott Primary School has been closed since 20th of November due to a sink hole. As a result of the car park being closed, families are having to park on the road outside. With no crossing outside the school, this is very dangerous. I am aware Charvil Parish Council and WBC have agreed to jointly fund the repairs. Can you please provide a timeline for the repair of the sink hole and re-opening of the car park as well as confirming what is being put in place to ensure pupils can cross the road safely in the meantime?

134.2 None Specific

Michael Firmager has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways the following question:

Question:

Following all the recent rain which has left the Borough's roads in a worse state than before with the existing potholes and those recently filled deteriorating rapidly and new ones forming.

Wokingham Borough Council has received a current baseline of £4,321,000 for road maintenance from the Government for this municipal year, plus £418,000 and £589,200 in additional funding. Funding for road maintenance from the Government has increased by 30% compared to the previous municipal year.

Please can the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways advise how this will be spent?

134.3 None Specific

Stephen Newton has asked the Executive Member for Finance the following question:

Question:

Last September the Guardian reported that 'Woking borough council had announced a sweeping package of cuts to local services, after the local authority in effect declared itself bankrupt in June, revealing a [£1.2bn deficit racked up from a risky investment spree](#) overseen by its former Conservative administration'.

In Wokingham, the Liberal Democrats ran a successful campaign to stop the excessive borrowing and speculative investment by our Conservative Administration. Who knows where we might be now if that campaign had failed?

As part of its prudent financial management, Wokingham lends money to other local authorities.

The council lent £10 million to Woking at 4.75% interest, a return of over £356,000 to be repaid on 8th March 2024.

The Council Tax baseline report that was considered by this Council in January, showed that there are approximately 74,000 households within our Borough. So, the loan interest equates to a windfall gain of just under £5 per household.

Did the loan and the interest come back as promised and can you please include in your answer how the additional £356,000 will be used to help our residents?

134.4 Maiden Erlegh

Andrew Mickleburgh has asked the Executive Member for Equalities, Inclusion and Fighting Poverty the following question:

Question:

It is widely acknowledged that the Household Support Fund (HSF) has been a vital lifeline for many of our vulnerable residents during the ongoing cost of living crisis. The HSF was set to end on the 31st March. Following robust lobbying from charities and Councils, the Chancellor announced in the March 6th Spring Budget that the HSF will now continue to September. However, concerns have been raised that extending the HSF for only 6 months, rather than a full year, has continued the uncertainty about the future of this fund, as there was in the months leading up to the Budget. What is WBC doing to mitigate the impacts that the extension of the still needed HSF by only 6 months, rather than a full 12 months, is likely to have on our Borough's residents?

- 134.5 None Specific Caroline Smith has asked the Executive Member for Children's Services the following question:
- Question:**
In the last school year, I understand the school secondary placements went very well with most pupils getting their first choice. This is great achievement with challenges such as under funding, extra homes being built in Wokingham, above the required amount and high numbers of mid-term incomers etc. Please can I have an update on exactly how many pupils have attained their first choice at Secondary School this year?
- 134.6 None Specific Mike Smith has asked the Executive Member for Active Travel, Transport and Highways the following the question:
- Question:**
I have seen on the television and read in local and national social media that potholes are affecting the roads across the whole of the country, not just here in Wokingham. Therefore, it appears that the government has underfunded local councils.
- For me to understand this more fully, in Wokingham Borough, what funding has been allocated to road resurfacing type schemes in the past five years and what has been allocated for 2024/25 please?
- 134.7 None Specific Laura Blumenthal has asked the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services the following question:
- Question:**
This Council's Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) action plan contains little to no measurements to let us know if the actions are reducing VAWG in our Borough, which is its ultimate aim.
- In Autumn 2022, I asked Councillor Sarah Kerr at Executive if it would contain measurements and she said yes, there would be SMART objectives (with the M standing for measurable). In July 2023, the Corporate and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel saw that this wasn't the case and councillors cross-party said the plan needs to contain measurements. In January 2024, half a year later, the

scrutiny committee saw that the plan still contained no measurements. At the end of February 2024, we were emailed the plan with a small number of the actions containing measurements but with the majority none at all. Why do we have a VAWG action plan with a complete inability to indicate if its reducing VAWG in our Borough at all?

135. 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.

136. 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.

137. 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.

138. 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.

138.1 Shinfield North

MOTION 515 SUBMITTED BY PAULINE JORGENSEN:

'This Council believes children should be able to walk or cycle to school safely. This is good for the health and independence of children, reduces the need for unnecessary car journeys and alleviates congestion. It is vital that the Council provides the appropriate infrastructure to enable this.

A crossing is needed on A327 Shinfield Road to access Crosfields School and for the benefit of residents and workers. Shinfield Road is very busy at rush hour and it is not realistic that anyone, particularly children, would choose to walk/cycle to work or school when they have to cross such a busy road without a formal crossing, as they cannot do so safely. A week long December 2023 pedestrian survey undertaken by parents and residents shows that the requirement for 50 crossings per hour in the peak hours has been met and indeed exceeded already. A crossing would encourage many more pupils to walk to school, particularly those in the new Senior School.

Those that try and cross face extreme difficulty crossing the road, particularly in the dusk/dark. A 7 year old boy was recently knocked down and injured on his way to Crosfields School, by a cyclist overtaking a bus. Paramedics struggled to treat him due to the volume of cars on the road. Minor collisions and near misses are a regular occurrence. At peak times, gaps in the traffic to enable someone to cross are few and far between. Pedestrians have to weave across unrelenting traffic or wait for a motorist to stop. It is only a matter of time before a more serious accident occurs.

This is the ONLY school in the Borough on an A road without a crossing. Crosfields School has offered to make a contribution towards a crossing. This Council will deliver a crossing without further delay to make access to this school safe.'

Chief Finance Officer Comment:

'Implementing a new crossing is likely to cost between £100k to £200k depending on location, road type, design and specification. The exact cost of delivering this scheme in this location would need to be evaluated. If no external funding is available the Council would need to borrow to undertake these works, creating a revenue pressure of potentially £7.5k to £15k p.a.'

The Chief Finance Officer comments are purely an

assessment of the financial Implications associated with the Motion as written and are not an opinion on the policy direction or intention contained within them.

139. None Specific

MOTION 516 SUBMITTED BY LAURA BLUMENTHAL:

‘This Council acknowledges that it is under financial pressure and should explore more options to maximise commercial opportunities.

Therefore, this Council will look into the viability of offering businesses and organisations the option of advertising on the sides of bin lorries which operate in Wokingham borough. Other Councils have successfully done similar, and it could be a helpful income stream.

This could also spark other ideas on how to maximise Council assets for income generation to help its financial situation.’

Chief Finance Officer Comment:

‘The Council are exploring opportunities to generate income through a range of advertising. As those opportunities are further assured they will be built into future financial plans.’

The Chief Finance Officer comments are purely an assessment of the Financial Implications associated with the Motion as written and are not an opinion on the policy direction or intention contained within them.

139.1 None Specific

MOTION 517 SUBMITTED BY PRUE BRAY:

‘Wokingham Borough Council deplores the low level of funding made available to us by the government, which takes no account of the cost of delivering services to our residents. We thank the more than 1000 residents who wrote to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in support of our campaign for fair funding for Wokingham Borough and we support continued lobbying for a fair settlement from government, to be led by the Leader of the Council.’

Chief Finance Officer Comment:

‘There are no direct financial implications for the Council in supporting this Motion.’

The Chief Finance Officer comments are purely an assessment of the Financial Implications associated

with the Motion as written and are not an opinion on the policy direction or intention contained within them.

139.2 None Specific

MOTION 518 SUBMITTED BY GRAHAM HOWE:

‘This Council supports residents with cost of living pressures and recognises that the affordability of school uniform is a concern.

Therefore, Wokingham Borough Council will contact every school in the borough encouraging uniform design changes to be kept to a minimum and made infrequently. The Council will also encourage schools to allow more options of non-school branded uniform items.

This activity will complement the Council’s work in this area and support the objectives in its Anti Poverty Strategy.’

Chief Finance Officer Comment:

‘There are no direct financial implications for the Council in supporting this Motion.’

The Chief Finance Officer comments are purely an assessment of the Financial Implications associated with the Motion as written and are not an opinion on the policy direction or intention contained within them.

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