

Notice of Meeting

Executive

Thursday, 13 February, 2014 at 5.00pm

**in the Council Chamber, Council Offices,
Market Street, Newbury**

Date of despatch of Agenda: Wednesday, 5 February 2014

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Stephen Chard / Linda Pye on (01635) 519462 / 519052

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Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at www.westberks.gov.uk



Agenda - Executive to be held on Thursday, 13 February 2014 (continued)

To:	Councillors Pamela Bale, Dominic Boeck, Hilary Cole, Roger Croft, Marcus Franks, Alan Law, Gordon Lundie, Joe Mooney, Irene Neill and Graham Pask
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Agenda

Part I

Pages

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).
- 2. Minutes** 1 - 2
To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 January 2014.
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
To remind Members of the need to record the existence and nature of any Personal, Disclosable Pecuniary or other interests in items on the agenda, in accordance with the Members' [Code of Conduct](#).
- 4. Public Questions**
Members of the Executive to answer questions submitted by members of the public in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution. *(Note: There were no questions submitted relating to items not included on this Agenda.)*
- 5. Petitions**
(Councillors or members of the public may present any petition which they have received. These will normally be referred to the appropriate Committee without discussion).

We have been notified that the following petition will be presented to the Executive:

- Save Pangbourne Library

Items as timetabled in the Forward Plan

Pages

-
- 6. Financial Performance Report - Quarter Three 2013/14 (EX2670)** 3 - 30
(CSP: 6 & 8)
Purpose: To inform Members of the latest financial performance of the Council.
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West Berkshire
C O U N C I L

Agenda - Executive to be held on Thursday, 13 February 2014 (continued)

7. **West Berkshire Council Strategy: Refresh 2014/15 (C2744)** 31 - 54
(CSP: 1-9)
Purpose: To present the refreshed Council Strategy.
-
8. **Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2014/15 (C2747)** 55 - 62
(CSP6)
Purpose: In compliance with the Local Government Act 2003, this report summarises the Council's borrowing limits as set out by CIPFA's Prudential Code, and recommends the Annual Investment and Borrowing Strategy for 2014/15.
-
9. **Capital Strategy and Programme 2014/15 to 2018/19 (C2746)** 63 - 122
(CSP: 1-7)
Purpose: To outline the five year Capital Strategy for 2014 to 2019, including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement and the Asset Management Plan, and to set out the funding framework for Council's five year Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2018/19.
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10. **Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS): 2014-17 (C2748)** 123 - 142
(CSP: 6 & 8)
Purpose: To inform Members of the medium term financial planning and strategy for the organisation.
-
11. **Revenue Budget 2014/15 (C2749)** 143 - 264
(CSP: 6 & 8)
Purpose: To consider and recommend to Council the 2014-15 Revenue Budget.
-
12. **Response to the Scrutiny Review into the Adult Social Care Eligibility Criteria (EX2786)** 265 - 296
(CSP: 1, 5, 7 & 8)
Purpose: To respond to the recommendations of the investigation into the operation of the Adult Social Care Eligibility Criteria.
-
13. **Local Enterprise Partnership - Strategic Economic Plan and response to the Airports Commission Interim Report (EX2757)** 297 - 354
(CSP2)
Purpose:
(i) To inform the Executive of the Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan and seek any comments on the current consultation draft.
(ii) To outline the conclusions of the Airports Commission Interim Report and to establish West Berkshire's position in response to the Interim Report.
-



14. Update on Apprentices (EX2753)

355 - 370

(CSP: 2 & 5)

Purpose: To seek approval for:

1. A change to the pay rates for apprentices with effect from 1st April 2014.
 2. Two apprenticeship posts to be created; one to be funded by Public Health and a budget to be identified by the Head of Finance.
 3. To provide information for the Executive on the employment of apprentices at the Council to date.
 4. To set a target of appointing a minimum of 15 apprentices each year.
-

15. Members' Questions

Members of the Executive to answer questions submitted by Councillors in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution.

(a) Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport (Operations) Emergency Planning and Newbury Visions submitted by Councillor Keith Woodhams

"Can the Executive Member for Highways & Transport tell me what action is being taken to stop the partial and repeated flooding on the roads listed below, where I have witnessed pedestrians and cyclists trying to avoid being soaked or splashed by passing vehicles?"

- *East corner of pedestrian crossing - Post Office to Kennet Centre entrance.*
 - *South corner of bend in road - Entrance to Bear Lane from Sainsbury's roundabout.*
 - *A4 London Road outside Dreams Bedding.*
 - *A4 London Road northside, east of Skylings.*
 - *A4 London Road southside approaching B&Q roundabout.*
 - *A4 London Road southside, opposite Dorneywood Way.*
 - *A4 Bath Road northside, opposite Southdown Road.*
 - *A4 London Road north side, opposite Tesco's.*
 - *Hambridge Road east side of road, after junction with A4 London Road.*
 - *Hambridge Road west side of road, just north of the new roundabout.*
 - *Underpasses in Newbury town centre in vicinity of Sainsbury's roundabout is frequently flooded too."*
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(b) Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport (Operations) Emergency Planning and Newbury Visions submitted by Councillor Keith Woodhams

"What advice would the Executive Member for Highways & Transport give to school children and adults crossing the north side of the Thatcham Garden Centre Roundabout, when faced with traffic moving in a 40 mph speed limit and where vehicle crashes have led to road signs being demolished by vehicles at or near the crossing points?"



Agenda - Executive to be held on Thursday, 13 February 2014 (continued)

- (c) **Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport (Policy), Culture, Customer Services and Countryside submitted by Councillor Alan Macro**
“Could the Executive Member for Planning please tell me by which date the Council is likely to have identified additional sites for travellers and gypsies?”
-
- (d) **Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Highways, Transport (Operations) Emergency Planning and Newbury Visions submitted by Councillor Roger Hunneman**
“Can the Executive Member for Highways tell me when the Newbury On Street Car Parking Charging Scheme will now be implemented together with the improvements to traffic management, parking offers and road safety measures promised from this new cash flow?”
-

Andy Day
Head of Strategic Support

West Berkshire Council Strategy Priorities and Principles

Council Strategy Priorities:

- CSP1** – Caring for and protecting the vulnerable
- CSP2** – Promoting a vibrant district
- CSP3** – Improving education
- CSP4** – Protecting the environment

Council Strategy Principles:

- CSP5** – Putting people first
- CSP6** – Living within our means
- CSP7** – Empowering people and communities
- CSP8** – Transforming our services to remain affordable and effective
- CSP9** – Doing what’s important well

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Moira Fraser on telephone (01635) 519045.



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EXECUTIVE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
THURSDAY, 16 JANUARY 2014

Councillors Present: Pamela Bale, Dominic Boeck, Hilary Cole, Roger Croft, Gordon Lundie, Irene Neill and Graham Pask

Also Present: John Ashworth (Corporate Director - Environment), Nick Carter (Chief Executive), David Holling (Head of Legal Services), Andy Walker (Head of Finance), Rachael Wardell (Corporate Director - Communities), Jackie Ward (Waste Contract Manager), Councillor David Allen, Stephen Chard (Policy Officer), Councillor Roger Hunneman (Deputy Liberal Democrat Group Leader), Councillor Royce Longton, Councillor Gwen Mason, Robin Steel (Group Executive (Cons)) and Councillor Keith Woodhams

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Marcus Franks, Councillor Alan Law and Councillor Joe Mooney

PART I

61. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2013 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Leader.

Councillor Roger Hunneman gave thanks for the information he had been provided with in relation to expenditure within the Communities Directorate, as requested at the last meeting.

62. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

63. Public Questions

There were no public questions submitted.

64. Petitions

There were no petitions presented to the Executive.

65. Members' Questions

There were no Member questions submitted.

66. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the under-mentioned item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as contained in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the [Local Government \(Access to Information\)\(Variation\) Order 2006](#). [Rule 4.2 of the Constitution](#) also refers.

67. Efficiency Savings in Waste (EX2784)

(Paragraph 3 – Information relating to financial/business affairs of particular person)

The Executive considered an exempt report (Agenda Item 8) concerning the savings which had been identified in the Integrated Waste Management Contract.

RESOLVED that the recommendations in the exempt report be agreed.

EXECUTIVE - 16 JANUARY 2014 - MINUTES

Reason for the decision: as set out in the exempt report.

Other options considered: as set out in the exempt report.

(The meeting commenced at 5.00pm and closed at 5.18pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

Title of Report:	Financial Performance Report - Quarter Three 2013-14
Report to be considered by:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	13 February 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	EX2670

Purpose of Report: To inform Members of the latest financial performance of the Council.

Recommended Action: For Members to note this report.

Reason for decision to be taken: To ensure that Members are fully aware of the latest financial position for the Council

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: Papers held in Accountancy

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy principles:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSP6 - Living within our means
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CSP8 - Transforming our services to remain affordable and effective

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Alan Law - Tel (01491) 873614
E-mail Address:	alaw@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	30 January 2014

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Andy Walker
Job Title:	Head of Finance (s151 officer)
Tel. No.:	01635 519433
E-mail Address:	awalker@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy:	n/a
Financial:	If the forecast position occurs at the end of the financial year there will be a corresponding impact on the Council's General Reserves of an increase of £183k. The financial implications of the report have been detailed throughout the summary report and directorate appendices.
Personnel:	n/a
Legal/Procurement:	n/a
Property:	n/a
Risk Management:	n/a
Equalities Impact Assessment:	n/a

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Report is to note only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is the third quarterly report to Members of the Executive as part of the financial reporting cycle for the 2013-14 financial year.
- 1.2 The forecast revenue under spend for the 2013-14 financial year is £183k. This is a movement of £444k from Quarter Two, when we were reporting an over spend of £261k.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 For Members to note this report.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 EIA completed; no impact on vulnerable groups.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Quarter Three financial position is showing a forecast under spend of £183k for the year end. Though the Council remains in a challenging financial environment, and is faced with making savings in excess of £5m, it has taken steps to maintain financial discipline and ensure that savings are deliverable.

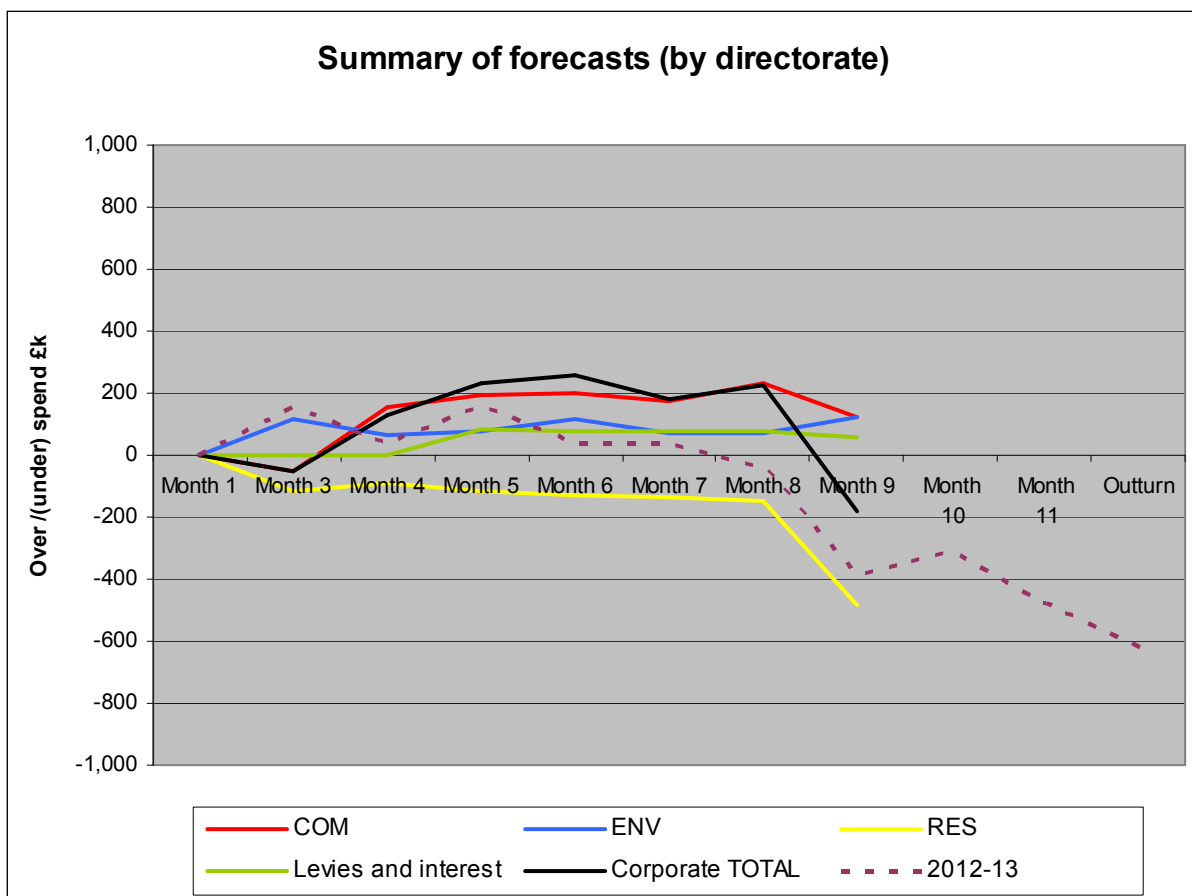
Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The forecast outturn position as at Quarter Three of the 2013-14 financial year is an under spend of £183k, a movement of £444k from Quarter Two, where we were reporting an over spend of £261k.

2. Summary Revenue Position

- 2.1 Overall, the Council is showing a relatively low forecast under spend.
- 2.2 In Communities, Children's Services are forecasting an over spend of £230k as a result of the level of Looked After Children and supported children. In order to address the increased projected over spend, expenditure across Children's non placement budgets and all Communities Services' budgets is being re-profiled.
- 2.3 Education Services is forecasting an under spend of £51k at year end, an increase of £21k. This has been achieved through reductions in costs associated with Disabled Children's Placements.
- 2.4 In Environment, Highways and Transport are forecasting a pressure of £290k. This is mainly due to an increased forecast in the Emergencies budget as a result of the recent storms and flooding.
- 2.5 Culture and Environmental Protection are forecasting an under spend of £204k, an increase of £31k from Quarter Two, mainly due to Public Health being able to fund some of their services in the areas of Environmental Health and Trading Standards which are delivering Public Health outcomes in the current year.
- 2.6 The other Council services are all forecasting close to a breakeven position for the end of the financial year with the exception of Strategic Support where the forecast under spend position of £136k has increased by some £66k from the previous period. This has been mainly due to Public Health being able to fund the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator along with contributions towards Shopmobility and Relate which are delivering Public Health outcomes in the current year.
- 2.7 There is a further under spend of £258k in Quarter Three due to the release of the Drug and Alcohol Action Team budget after all service commitments have been funded. This budget was historically within Strategic Support but is now managed by Public Health.
- 2.8 Levies and Interest is currently forecasting a £56k over spend mainly due to a lower return on temporary investments than originally expected.



3. Summary Capital Position

3.1 85% of the 2013/14 capital programme is committed as at the end of December. Forecast capital spend in the year is currently £30.3 million against a budget of £31.1 million with £0.8 million now expected to be re-profiled into 2014/15.

3.2 Communities

Schemes in Adult Social care for care home refurbishment and to improve the efficiency of service provision are progressing as planned. In Care Commissioning Housing and Safeguarding a lower than expected take up of Home Repair Assistance grants is expected to result in an under spend of approximately £30,000.

In Education Services, good progress is being made with schemes currently underway to deliver additional primary school places. A significant proportion of the programme has already been re-profiled to 2014/15 and later years to take account of the latest pupil number forecasts, more accurate estimates of schemes to provide additional school places and assumptions about external funding. However further unavoidable delays to projects including the relocation of the Reintegration Service and expansion of Purley Infants and Francis Baily primary schools are expected to result in a further under spend of approximately 5% of the revised programme.

3.3 Environment

In Culture and Environmental Protection, the Northcroft Leisure Centre Scheme has been completed on budget. The Museum Project remains on programme and on budget. Good progress is also being made with the majority of Highways schemes, including the £1.4m re-profiled from future years to address problems on the network caused by the severe winter weather. However £100,000 S106 for the A340 rail bridge at Aldermaston Wharf is still expected to be re-profiled because of difficulties with the land owner.

In Planning and Countryside, the majority of work on public rights of way projects has been completed, but there have been delays to some projects because of the extreme weather conditions. This will result in some expenditure being deferred to 2014/15. The forecast outturn is lower than the amount currently spent and committed as not all commitments are expected to be fully paid by year end.

3.4 Resources

The Council's investment in the Market Street regeneration project, managed by the Chief Executive, is now largely complete while the London Road project is now at the stage of selecting a joint venture partner. In ICT the contract for Superfast Broadband has now been let, but the revised project programme now shows that the Council's budget of £205,000 for implementation of the first stage of the project in 2012/13 will not now be required to be paid until 2014/15.

Appendices

Appendix 1a, 1b – Summary Revenue and Capital positions

Appendix 2a, b, c – Directorate commentaries

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment – Stage 1

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: n/a

Officers Consulted: Corporate Board

Trade Union: n/a

2013/4 Budget Monitoring
Period 09

Appendix 1

Replied

	Past Performance				Forecasted Performance							Net	Net
					Expenditure			Income		Net	Net		
	Cum. Budget to 31/Dec/2013 £	Cum Exp/Inc to 31/Dec/2013 £	Actual Variance to date £	Outstanding Commitment for the year £	Annual Expenditure Budget for 2013/14 £	Forecast Expenditure £	Expenditure Variance £	Annual Income Budget for 2013/14 £	Forecast Income £	Income Variance £	Net Variance £		
EDUCATION (DSG FUNDED)	18,663,377	15,219,612	-3,443,764	217,362	97,811,000	7,639,596	-90,171,404	-98,531,890	-8,360,486	90,171,404	0	-720,890	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES	203,611	215,966	12,354	67,116	276,980	275,580	-1,400	0	0	0	-1,400	276,980	
ADULT SOCIAL CARE	26,048,169	23,137,498	-2,910,671	681,678	46,312,300	46,366,244	53,944	-7,941,110	-7,995,054	-53,944	0	38,371,190	
CARE COMMISSIONING, HOUSING & SAFEGUARDING	4,380,415	3,470,912	-909,502	179,597	7,128,130	7,240,590	112,460	-940,360	-1,109,138	-168,778	-56,318	6,187,770	
CHILDRENS SERVICES	9,017,758	9,648,641	630,883	1,636,117	14,184,450	14,558,227	373,777	-1,205,730	-1,349,374	-143,644	230,133	12,978,720	
EDUCATION	8,226,715	7,473,546	-753,170	2,239,764	16,109,010	16,112,706	3,696	-4,009,750	-4,064,726	-54,976	-51,280	12,099,260	
ASC CHANGE PROGRAMME	374,135	366,032	-8,103	74,155	500,850	500,850	0	0	0	0	0	500,850	
COMMUNITIES	66,914,180	59,532,207	-7,381,973	5,095,789	182,322,720	92,693,793	-89,628,927	-112,628,840	-22,878,778	89,750,062	121,135	69,693,880	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR - ENVIRONMENT	121,475	123,077	1,603	0	163,170	163,170	0	0	0	0	0	163,170	
CULTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	13,333,454	15,184,530	1,851,075	434,176	27,889,910	27,557,033	-332,877	-5,782,220	-5,653,370	128,850	-204,027	22,107,690	
HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT	5,026,776	4,952,173	-74,603	1,511,491	12,299,920	12,567,380	267,460	-4,601,860	-4,579,520	22,340	289,800	7,698,060	
PLANNING & COUNTRYSIDE	2,961,939	2,961,117	-822	514,330	6,419,770	6,340,270	-79,500	-2,228,710	-2,112,140	116,570	37,070	4,191,060	
ENVIRONMENT	21,443,644	23,220,897	1,777,254	2,459,997	46,772,770	46,627,853	-144,917	-12,612,790	-12,345,030	267,760	122,843	34,159,980	
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	383,214	374,903	-8,311	106	520,100	492,100	-28,000	0	0	0	0	-28,000	
HR	869,173	874,723	5,550	72,194	1,500,550	1,458,950	-41,600	-305,780	-308,100	-2,320	-43,920	1,194,770	
ICT & CORPORATE SUPPORT	1,970,012	2,228,721	258,709	119,342	3,649,970	3,726,143	76,173	-832,470	-903,350	-70,880	5,293	2,817,500	
LEGAL	659,406	621,533	-37,874	5,355	1,178,000	1,207,030	29,030	-246,560	-234,560	12,000	41,030	931,440	
STRATEGIC SUPPORT	2,447,341	2,475,990	28,650	25,035	4,411,310	4,324,581	-86,729	-903,380	-1,210,880	-307,500	-394,229	3,507,930	
CUSTOMER SERVICES	-1,173,849	3,365,024	4,538,873	79,254	40,945,380	41,121,943	176,563	-39,138,330	-39,290,260	-151,930	24,633	1,807,050	
PUBLIC HEALTH	-308,268	-1,269,286	-961,018	48,476	4,552,870	4,472,870	-80,000	-4,552,870	-4,552,870	0	-80,000	0	
FINANCE	1,326,704	1,349,824	23,120	77,629	3,853,580	3,816,860	-36,720	-1,812,900	-1,784,207	28,693	-8,027	2,040,680	
RESOURCES	6,173,733	10,021,433	3,847,699	427,390	60,611,760	60,620,477	8,717	-47,792,290	-48,284,227	-491,937	-483,220	12,819,490	
CAPITAL FINANCING & MANAGEMENT	-255,096	3,350,220	3,605,316	0	7,443,560	7,462,560	19,000	-478,570	-441,570	37,000	56,000	6,964,990	
MOVEMENT THROUGH RESERVES	-1,366,550	-2,361,411	-994,861	0	-1,303,300	-1,303,300	0	0	0	0	0	-1,303,300	
LEVIES AND INTEREST	-1,621,646	988,809	2,610,455	0	6,140,260	6,159,260	19,000	-478,570	-441,570	37,000	56,000	5,661,690	
GRAND TOTAL	92,909,911	93,763,346	853,435	7,983,176	295,847,510	206,101,383	-89,746,127	-173,512,490	-83,949,605	89,562,885	-183,242	122,335,020	

* Note:
Strategic Support underspend -136,729
DAAT underspend -257,500
-394,229
DAAT is now managed by Public Health although the budget for this year sits with SSU

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West Berkshire Capital Programme: 2013/14 Budget Monitoring

Summary by Service

Period End Date:

31/12/13

Service Area	Budget for 2013/14	Expenditure 2013/14 to date	Committed (order placed, not yet paid)	Budget Remaining to be Committed 2013/14	%age of Budget committed
<u>Resource Directorate</u>					
Chief Exec	91,150	40,991	24	50,135	55.00%
Finance	233,910	53,286	2,854	177,770	24.0%
ICT	970,240	648,564	161,431	160,245	83.5%
Strategic Support	106,750	64,275	0	42,475	60.2%
<u>Total for Resource Directorate</u>	1,402,050	807,116	164,309	430,625	69.3%
<u>Communities Directorate</u>					
Adult Social Care	673,490	519,318	83,097	71,075	89.4%
Care Commissioning, Housing & Safeguarding	2,213,310	889,611	36,828	1,286,871	41.9%
Childrens Services	91,180	45,083	29,409	16,688	81.7%
Education Services	11,200,613	8,218,656	2,203,647	778,311	93.1%
<u>Total for Communities Directorate</u>	14,178,593	9,672,668	2,352,980	2,152,945	84.8%
<u>Environment Directorate</u>					
Culture & Environmental Protection	3,617,630	1,612,263	1,135,810	869,558	76.0%
Highways & Transport	11,349,280	8,109,096	2,004,613	1,235,571	89.1%
Planning & Countryside	565,760	436,988	97,670	31,102	94.5%
<u>Total for Environment Directorate</u>	15,532,670	10,158,347	3,238,092	2,136,231	86.2%
Council Totals	31,113,313	20,638,131	5,755,381	4,719,801	84.8%

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COMMUNITIES DIRECTORATE POSITION AS AT QUARTER THREE**Revenue:**

	Quarter Two Forecast £000	Quarter Three Forecast £000
DSG	0	0
CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES	10	-1
ADULT SOCIAL CARE	0	0
CARE COMMISSIONING, HOUSING AND SAFEGUARDING	-102	-56
CHILDRENS SERVICES	324	230
EDUCATION	-30	-51
ADULT SOCIAL CARE CHANGE PROGRAMME	0	0
Total	202	122

Corporate Director's summary:**Overview**

The forecast position at quarter three is an over spend of £122k. This is an £80k reduction on the forecast at quarter two. This is predominately due to the over spend on Children's Services reducing by £94k. The number of Looked After Children (LAC) and total number of supported children (including non LAC) has increased during the financial year resulting in a placement pressure of £840k. In order to address the increasing pressure created by unprecedented numbers of children being admitted into the care system, spend on non commissioning budgets (predominately Youth Services, Youth Offending Teams and Connexions Service) has been deliberately reduced. Care Commissioning, Housing & Safeguarding have reduced the forecast underspend by £46k as a result of increasing investment in the Access for All Team. Education Services have increased the forecast underspend by £21k through reductions in costs associated with Disabled Children's Placements. Adult Social Care has remained constant at a forecast on line position.

The Directorate is forecasting a year end over spend as a result of the level of children currently in Looked After Placements. The current LAC total is 165 versus an average of approximately 130 children during the period of the last five years. In order to address the increased projected over spend, expenditure across Children's non placement budgets and all Communities Services' budgets is being re-profiled. The current forecast outturn is therefore net of these projected savings.

Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care is forecasting that the Service will come in on budget at year end.

There are forecast pressures in both Mental Health and Physical Disability budgets due to the high cost of a small number of new clients. These over spends are currently primarily being offset by savings being achieved on Learning Disability budgets and Provider Services but certain costs may also need to be covered from the ASC Risk Fund where the identified risk has materialised to ensure the service achieves financial balance at year outturn.

Care Commissioning, Housing and Safeguarding

Care Commissioning, Housing and Safeguarding is forecasting a £56k under spend at year end.

There is in total a £149,318 under spend in this service driven mainly by a reduction in the level of Supporting People Learning Disability demand.

The under spend against the supporting people budget has been used to offset a total pressure of £47,000 arising from a loss of income on rents from vacant plots on the Gypsy Traveller site and MVF. A further £40k has been transferred to Adult Social Care to cover pressures within the Access for All Team. The risks to the Council from not having a robust Safeguarding service were highlighted in the Review of Adults and Children's Safeguarding paper presented to Management Board on 17.10.13. In order to address some of the key risks, budget has been transferred from Community Care, Housing and Safeguarding deliberately reducing the under spend in order to invest in the Access for All Team which is located within the Adult Social Care service. The under spend position net of the aforementioned pressures and budget transfers is £56k.

Children's Services

Children's Services is forecasting a £230k over spend at year end.

Within the overall service overspend of £230K, the placement budget of approximately £4m (see figure 1 below), is forecasting an over spend position of £850K. The placements overspend is being partially offset through reducing spend in the non placement Children's Services budgets, the current underspend across non placement cost centres is £540K. The areas where spend has been reduced is Youth Services, Youth Offending Team, Connexions, Short Breaks for Disabled Children and the overarching management cost centre. These under spend are the result of reduced activity within these areas leading to supplies and services savings. It is important to note that £455k of savings will be removed from the Children's Services non placement budgets in financial year 14-15, potentially compounding current pressures within the service as a whole.

Figure 1 Current Children's Placement Levels

Placements	Budget	Current Number of Children	Quarter Three Forecast
Residential care	1,870,360	8	-137,509
In House Fostering	1,193,361	80	270,915
Kinship Carers	178,760	17	88,844
Independent Fostering	588,150	29	457,825
Special Guardianship	161,970	31	172,049
Adoption & Allowances	110,690	19	4,869
Residence Orders	253,580	36	-16,398
Totals	4,356,871	220	838,594

The placement budgets are demand led, the fostering services have incurred higher demand over and beyond that anticipated for the financial year. 220 children are currently placed through WBC, of this 220, 146 are deemed LAC (Looked After Children).

The service is also incurring increased pressure on the Referral & Assessment and Locality Team budgets through increasing agency costs (forecast £800k), as a result of covering sickness, vacancies and increasing workloads as a result of more children accessing the care system. This increase has led to a net pressure of £216k.

Education

Education Services is forecasting an under spend of £51k at year end.

The Disabled Children's Budgets have been subject to significant savings and are under pressure as a result of the complexity of child needs which is fuelling increased packages, Disability placements in total are forecasting an over spend position of £50k. The Children with Disability Support Team is also forecasting a £60k pressure due to agency costs associated with covering sickness absence. Other areas of pressure within the service are:

- Children's Centres and Early Years provision which have been subject to significant savings in prior years which are forecasting a year end overspend of approximately £43k.
- The increasing number of LAC is creating a pressure on the Children in Public Care budget (£15k).

These pressures are being offset by under spends within the service.

The main areas of under spend within the service are:

- Home to School Transport (HTST) is forecasting an under spend of £49k. HTST is demand led service, currently there is a significant under spend on non SEN HTST of £69k, there is a £20k pressure on SEN HTST.
- Contractual savings on Health Related Therapies (£55k) and Flexible Partnership Arrangements (£37k).
- Increasing income for Education Welfare Officers from trading services with Academies, (£54k).

MVF

The Directorate is forecasting that MVF will be achieved across all services.

Pressures on the 2013-14 budget

Placements (Children's)

There is a total Placements budget of £4 million meeting the needs of approx 170 - 200 children who are looked after in any twelve month period. Of this, £1.15 million is allocated to residential placements, but we would normally expect any overspends on this line to be offset by under-spends elsewhere in the overall Placements budget. Between the financial years 2010-12 we ended the year with 125 Looked After Children, this rose to 144 at the end of the 2012/13 financial year. At the end of 2011/12 West Berks had 33.75 children per 10,000 population looked after, the South East rate was 58.3 per 10,000. Currently 146 children are in the Council's care (figure 1), with eight children in high cost residential placements.

£650k of additional budget was invested into the Children's placement budgets as part of the budget build process for financial year 2013-14. The investment was against Residential Care and Independent Fostering Services. Currently Residential Care is showing an under spend of £137k, Independent Fostering Services continue to forecast a £271k over spend position due to higher than anticipated numbers of children being placed.

Management action to address the emerging pressures

The Directorate has put a number of actions in place to control spend, and these will have an impact over time.

This includes:

- Gate keeping process for all new placements agreed at HoS level
- Scrutiny of all budgets to reduce/suspend expenditure where it can be safely managed
- Holding some posts vacant where safe and appropriate to do so
- Programme of activity aimed to reduce reliance on agency staffing

Children's Services

Tight controls are maintained on children entering the care system, but overall numbers cannot be fully controlled and we are not always able to meet the needs through WBC placements. This year has seen average costs per child increasing due to complexity of need requiring external residential and fostering placements. With regard to Children's Services, precise forecasts are difficult to make in respect of looked after numbers and types of placements required and the consequent pressure on placement budgets.

A summary of the main risks identified for Children's Services are as follows:

		Most Likely £	Worst Case £
1	Looked After Children's Placements increasing	400,000	1,000,000
2	Increasing Agency Usage	300,000	600,000
3	Young person placed on remand (average cost of a single placement is £200k)	0	200,000
	Total	700,000	1,800,000

Adult Social Care

The ASC Efficiency Programme Board has a programme of actions in place to manage spend within budget.

An overview is taken of budgets and expenditure across the Directorate as a whole, and spend curtailed in as many areas as possible in order to identify ways of offsetting over spends on those budgets which are under particular pressure.

Risks identified

ASC maintains a Risk Register to identify potential budget pressures. This is reviewed regularly by the Head of ASC and the Finance Manager: Communities. The key risks include:

NHS Continuing Healthcare

Work to implement the Action plan following the South Central Health Authority independent review into the implementation of the CHC Framework in Berkshire continues with joint (WBC and NHS) staff training now underway. Unfortunately we are yet to see any improvements on the ground and we remain bottom of the table for receiving CHC funding from the West of Berkshire CCGs. A Berkshire group of CHC and LA senior managers continues to monitor this activity on a monthly basis.

Ordinary Residence

There are always risks surrounding ordinary residence with claims made by other local authorities that WBC should be funding a person's care package. WBC has no means to identify when further claims will be made but is ensuring that it has chased up all WB residents living in supported living in other areas and made OR claims where appropriate. The Berkshire LA s are also discussing a protocol to prevent OR claims on one another.

Learning Disability – unknown clients presenting

Whilst young people with learning disabilities living in our area are carefully monitored, there are on occasion, clients that present with significant needs for whom we have no prior knowledge.

Learning Disability clients at risk

There are currently 26 clients at risk of their circumstances changing due to family carers becoming frail or unstable family home situations. If the risk materialises, there would be significant pressure on the Service.

It should be noted that the overall forecast position holds a large risk in that it is based on the ability to hold demand at a static level. This has proved to be difficult in the past. New management controls are in place but the service is always vulnerable to sudden spikes in demand or new, very high cost clients appearing.

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CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 QUARTER THREE – COMMUNITIES

1. Summary of Overall Position for the Communities Directorate

Service	2013/14 original capital programme £000	2013/14 revised capital programme £000	Amount Spent/ Committed to 31-12-13 £000	Forecast Spend in Year £000	Forecast Under/ Over Spend in Year £000
Adult Social Care	86	674	602	674	0
Care Commissioning, Housing and Safeguarding	1,941	2,213	926	2,196	-17
Childrens Services	20	91	74	80	-11
Education Services	15,609	11,201	10,422	10,677	-524
Total	17,656	14,179	12,026	13,627	-552

- 1.1 The Communities programme is 85% committed at the end of Quarter Three.
- 1.2 Schemes in Adult Social care for care home refurbishment and to improve the efficiency of service provision are progressing as planned.
- 1.3 In Care Commissioning Housing and Safeguarding a lower than expected take up of Home Repair Assistance grants is expected to result in an under spend of approximately £30,000.
- 1.4 In Education Services, good progress is being made with schemes currently underway to deliver additional primary school places. A significant proportion of the programme has already been re-profiled to 2014/15 and later years to take account of the latest pupil number forecasts, more accurate estimates of schemes to provide additional school places and assumptions about external funding. However further unavoidable delays to projects including the relocation of the Reintegration Service and expansion of Purley Infants and Francis Baily primary schools are expected to result in a further under spend of approximately 5% of the revised programme.

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ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE POSITION AS AT QUARTER THREE:**Revenue:**

	Quarter Two forecast £000	Quarter Three forecast £000
CORPORATE DIRECTOR	0	0
HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT	201	290
PLANNING & COUNTRYSIDE	86	37
CULTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	-173	-204
Total	114	123

Corporate Director's summary:**Overview**

- 1.1 The forecast revenue over spend for the Environment Directorate is £122,843 against the budget of £34 million net.
- 1.2 No variance is expected in the Corporate Director's budget.
- 1.3 Highways and Transport are forecasting an over spend of £289,800
- 1.4 Planning and Countryside is forecasting an over spend of £37,070.
- 1.5 Culture and Environmental Protection is forecasting an under spend of £204,027.
- 1.6 The total Directorate over spend is an increase in the forecast at Quarter Three of £9k

In Highways and Transport the increase from Quarter Three is predominantly due to an increased expenditure on highways emergencies following the recent flooding. Pressures in Planning have been reduced as a result of some advertising and consultancy savings. Whilst the under spend in Culture and Environmental Protection has increased due to some funding from Public Health.

Pressures on the 2013-14 Budget

- 1.6 In Highways and Transport there is a pressure of £290k. This is mainly due to an increased forecast in the Emergencies budget as a result of the recent storms and flooding.
- 1.7 There are pressures in Planning and Countryside mainly as a result of the fluctuations in the Development Control income forecast due to changes in demand and Government legislation.
- 1.8 In the Culture and Environmental Protection Service there are pressures in Adventure Dolphin from anticipated reduction in income from Children's Services together with a payment from Kennet School which has not yet been agreed. These are being managed within the Service which is reporting an overall under spend of £204k.

Management action taken to address emerging pressures

- 1.9 Expenditure at Adventure Dolphin is under review in order to minimise the income shortfall. The payment by Kennet School is being pursued.

Risks identified

- 1.10 Potential risks include:
 - Pressure on income from car parks due to delays in implementation of new schemes and reductions in demand.
 - Pressure on income from Development and Building Control due to changes in demand and Government legislation.
 - Further severe weather conditions will result in an increased expenditure in the Highways budget.

CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 QUARTER THREE – ENVIRONMENT

1. Summary of Overall Position for the Environment Directorate

Service	2013/14 original capital programme £000	2013/14 revised capital programme £000	Amount Spent/ Committed to 31-12-13 £000	Forecast Spend in Year £000	Forecast Under/ Over Spend in Year £000
Culture and Environmental Protection	2,571	3,618	2,748	3,618	0
Highways and Transport	8,533	11,349	10,114	11,249	-100
Planning and Countryside	125	566	535	489	-77
Total	11,229	15,533	13,396	15,356	-177

- 1.1 The Environment Programme is 86% committed at the end of Quarter Three.
- 1.2 In Culture and Environmental Protection, the Northcroft Leisure Centre Scheme has been completed on budget. The Museum Project remains on programme and on budget.
- 1.3 Good progress is being made with the majority of Highways schemes, including the £1.4m reprofiled from future years to address problems on the network caused by the severe winter weather. However £100,000 S106 for the A340 rail bridge at Aldermaston Wharf is still expected to be reprofiled because of difficulties with the land owner.
- 1.4 In Planning and Countryside, the majority of work on public rights of way projects has been completed, but there have been delays to some projects because of the extreme weather conditions. This will result in some expenditure being deferred to 2014/15. The forecast outturn is lower than the amount currently spent and committed as not all commitments are expected to be fully paid by year end.

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RESOURCES DIRECTORATE POSITION AS AT QUARTER THREE

Revenue:

	Quarter Two Forecast £000	Quarter Three Forecast £000
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	-20	-28
HUMAN RESOURCES	-44	-44
ICT	-3	5
LEGAL SERVICES	43	41
STRATEGIC SUPPORT	-70	-136
DAAT (PH managed but currently reported as SS)	0	-258
CUSTOMER SERVICES	45	25
FINANCE	-1	-8
PUBLIC HEALTH	-80	-80
Total	-130	-483

Overview:

The Directorate is forecasting to be £483k under spent at outturn compared with £130k under spend at Quarter Two. This increase is mainly due to four areas as follows:

- Release of under spend from the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) budget after all service commitments have been funded.
- Public Health has funded a post and various service level agreements in Strategic Support.
- New improved forecast for court cost recovery in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates.
- Increased income forecast from land charges.

Pressures on the 2013-14 budget

The main pressure arising is as a result of a reduction of the Housing Benefit Admin Grant which was not known until after budget setting. A new pressure has arisen in Legal due to two high profile prosecutions which are anticipated to start this year.

Management action taken to address emerging pressures

Savings are being identified across the Directorate to manage emerging pressures including the following new savings in quarter three:

- Reduced expenditure in the Chief Exec's contingency budget enabling a saving to be released.
- A new forecast for the recovery of court costs which has resulted in an additional recovery of £28k
- Funding from Public Health for a post and various service level agreements in Strategic Support.

Since taking over the Public Health function in 2013 the Council has sought to minimise any duplication of services that may be undertaken currently within the Council that also would be undertaken as part of the Public Health function. In order that these services can be maintained and provided efficiently, the funding of these services will be provided from the Public Health budget where they meet the criteria of contributing to the Public Health Outcomes Framework. This funding of existing Council activities from the Public Health budget is referred to as re-badging. Some of this funding has been provided this year as detailed above and some will form part of the Council's strategic plans for 14-15.

Risks identified

None

CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2013/14 QUARTER 3 – RESOURCES**1. Summary of Overall Position for the Resources Directorate**

Service	2013/14 Original capital programme £000	2013/14 Revised capital programme £000	Amount Spent/ Committed to 31-12-13 £000	Forecast Spend in Year £000	Forecast (Under) / Over Spend in Year £000
Chief Executive	45	92	41	92	0
Finance	80	233	56	233	0
ICT	680	970	810	921	-49
Strategic Support	61	107	64	107	0
Total	866	1,402	971	1,353	-49

- 1.1 The resources capital programme is 69% committed as at the end of quarter 3.
- 1.2 The Council's investment in the Market Street regeneration project, managed by the Chief Executive, is now largely complete while the London Road project is now at the stage of selecting a joint venture partner.
- 1.3 In Finance, the members' bids panel has allocated £137,000 to new schemes and £30,000 remains unclaimed from previous years' schemes.
- 1.4 In ICT the contract for Superfast Broadband has now been let, but the revised project programme now shows that the Council's budget of £205,000 for implementation of the first stage of the project in 2012/13 will not now be required to be paid until 2014/15.
- 1.5 The Strategic Support capital budget for shop mobility and CCTV is already fully committed. Funding for Parish Planning and Vibrant villages is also expected to be fully spent by year end

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APPENDIX 3

Equality Impact Assessment – Stage One

Name of item being assessed:	Quarter Three Financial performance report
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	1.0
Owner of item being assessed:	Melanie Ellis
Name of assessor:	Andy Walker/M Ellis
Date of assessment:	16.01.2014

1. What are the main aims of the item?

2. Note which groups may be affected by the item, consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this.

Further comments relating to the item:

3. Result (please tick by clicking on relevant box)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	High Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Low Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Relevance - This does not need to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment

For items requiring a Stage 2 equality impact assessment, begin the planning of this now, referring to the equality impact assessment guidance and Stage 2 template.

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	
Stage Two not required:	

Name: M Ellis

Date: 16.01.2014

Agenda Item 7.

Title of Report:	West Berkshire Council Strategy: Refresh 2014/15
Report to be considered by:	Council
Date of Meeting:	4 March 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	C2744

Purpose of Report: To present the refreshed Council Strategy.

Recommended Action: To recommend approval of the updated Council Strategy (noting the strategic objectives which form the basis for service delivery planning) to full Council.

Reason for decision to be taken: The Council Strategy provides the framework around which the Council will shape its resources and efforts over the next few years, supporting quality of life for people in West Berkshire whilst continuing to live within our means.

Other options considered: n/a

Key background documentation: None

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priorities:

- CSP1 – Caring for and protecting the vulnerable**
- CSP2 – Promoting a vibrant district**
- CSP3 – Improving education**
- CSP4 – Protecting the environment**

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Strategy principles:

- CSP5 - Putting people first**
- CSP6 - Living within our means**
- CSP7 - Empowering people and communities**
- CSP8 - Transforming our services to remain affordable and effective**
- CSP9 - Doing what's important well**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy priorities and principles by setting the overarching strategic focus for the Council for the medium term.

Portfolio Member Details

Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Roger Croft
E-mail Address:	rcroft@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	14 th January 2014

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Jason Teal
Job Title:	Research, Consultation and Performance Manager
Tel. No.:	01635 519102
E-mail Address:	jteal@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

- Policy:** The strategy sets the broad framework around which the Council is able to prioritise its resources. The strategy is central to the operation and planning of the Council and as such will impact on many Council policies.
- Financial:** In setting the broad framework around which the Council is able to prioritise its resources the MTFS is drafted to reflect the priorities and objectives set out in the strategy.
- Personnel:** n/a
- Legal/Procurement:** n/a
- Property:** n/a
- Risk Management:** Risk assessments will be carried out on appropriate elements of the plan.
- Equalities Impact Assessment:** Equality impact assessments will be carried out on key policies and activities arising from this strategy.

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>

Is this item relevant to equality?	Yes	No
Please see Appendix A	x	

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council Strategy sets out our priorities and a realistic set of objectives that we will deliver for the people of West Berkshire, whilst living within our means.
- 1.2 It provides the framework for future decision making: prioritising those areas seen as most critical or important and setting out our overarching approach to dealing with the reduction in our resource, whilst keeping the impact on local communities to a minimum.
- 1.3 The strategy lists a set of strategic objectives which set out more specifically what we are seeking to achieve.
- 1.4 These strategic objectives form the basis for our decision making and more detailed business, service delivery and financial planning, through which our strategic objectives and outcomes are delivered.
- 1.5 This refresh represents a relatively 'light touch' update to the strategy adopted by the Council last March – largely around any amendments to the objectives used as the basis for strategic and service delivery planning.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 All substantive comments have been reviewed by officers and members and the draft strategy amended accordingly. The Council Strategy is now submitted for recommendation for approval.

Appendices

Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix B – West Berkshire Council Strategy 2014

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: N/a

Officers Consulted: Strategic Review Board, Heads of Service, Portfolio Holders, Directorate and Service SMTs and Corporate Board

Trade Union: N/a

Equality Impact Assessment – Stage One

Name of item being assessed:	West Berkshire Council Strategy: refresh
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	
Owner of item being assessed:	Jason Teal
Name of assessor:	Jason Teal
Date of assessment:	20 th Dec 2013

1. What are the main aims of the item?
The Council Strategy sets out the purpose, ambition and strategic direction of West Berkshire Council. It focuses on 4 key priorities areas, underpinned by a set of principles, outlining how we are approaching and responding to changes in the policy, financial and legislative landscape. Each of these contains a set of strategic objectives which sets out more specifically what we are seeking to achieve. These will form the basis of our Council Delivery Plan and service delivery plans.

2. Note which groups may be affected by the item, consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this.

Further comments relating to the item:
<p>The Council Strategy contains a number of strategic objectives across the priorities and principles that the Council will be seeking to achieve over the next 4 years. The strategy does not go into the detail of how these objectives will be achieved: they are embedded into individual service delivery and cross-cutting plans, within which more particular issues of design and provision will be addressed.</p> <p>Equality impact assessments will be carried out on key policies and activities arising from this Council Strategy and the impact of these different strands of work and resources will be considered individually as they come to light, for example, as part of the service planning and delivery process, budget setting and service or delivery design and tailoring.</p>

3. Result (please tick by clicking on relevant box)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	High Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Low Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Relevance - This does not need to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment

For items requiring a Stage 2 equality impact assessment, begin the planning of this now, referring to the equality impact assessment guidance and Stage 2 template.

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	
Stage Two not required:	

Name: Jason Teal

Date: 20th Dec 2013

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Council Strategy

- **caring for and protecting the vulnerable**
- **promoting a vibrant district**
- **improving education**
- **protecting the environment**

2014-18



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ONE district

One council

154,000 people

105,000 cars

750 miles of road

65,000 homes

12,500 streetlights

730 miles of countryside paths

74% of an Area of Outstanding
Natural Beauty

ONE year

£121m net budget

25,000 children at school

4,300 older people and disabled
adults helped to live at home

3,500 families accessing
Children's Centres

3,000 planning applications

39,000 tonnes waste recycled

2 million bus passengers

ONE day

2,650 children transported to
school

400 people looked after in
residential and nursing care

130 looked after children

900 enquiries through the
Contact Centre

2,500 books borrowed from
libraries

WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: 2014-18

Our overarching vision:

Keeping West Berkshire a great place in which to live, learn, work and do business



The purpose of the Council:

1. Helping you to help yourself
2. Helping you when you cannot help yourself
3. Helping you to help one another
4. Promoting and acting in the interests of the communities, people and businesses of the district.

Our priorities in delivering public services:

- Caring for and protecting the vulnerable
- Promoting a vibrant district
 - Improving education
- Protecting the environment

The principles we work to:

- Putting people first
- Living within our means
- Empowering people and communities
- Doing what's important well

FOREWORD

Our vision is to keep West Berkshire a great place in which to live, learn, work and do business.

To achieve this, we want the vulnerable in our communities to be cared for and supported. We want to promote a vibrant district and our economy to prosper. We want our young people to fulfil their potential. We want people to be able to enjoy our towns, villages, green spaces and countryside.

We want these things because people living in West Berkshire want them.

West Berkshire has a long track record of self-reliance and enterprise mixed with a strong sense of community. Through helping you to help yourself and helping you to help one another, we want to enable local people and communities to take more control and to feel that they can make a real difference to their own quality of life in the place where they live.

By helping you when you cannot help yourself we need to help and support the most vulnerable people and families and work with our partners to make sure our children, the elderly and disadvantaged get the help, care and protection they need.

By promoting and acting in the interests of West Berkshire we want to support local enterprise in the creation of more high quality jobs and help local people to benefit from opportunities and share in the wealth created. This also means keeping West Berkshire special, and to help people get the most out of our natural environment and the advantages and opportunities this creates.

It is no surprise that we should return to these core purposes when seeking to make the very best use of our limited public resources during these difficult financial times. In this period of austerity we need to get the most out of every penny we spend. We need to focus on things that are most important, to stop doing things that are less effective or that we simply can't afford, and to drive down the costs of bureaucracy as far as we can.

We recognise that our ambitions can only be achieved by working together in partnership with local communities, other public service providers, businesses, voluntary and community organisations, town and parish councils.

This strategy defines our ambition and agenda for change into the future. It focuses on our 4 key priority areas - underpinned by a set of principles which will guide how we are responding to changes in the policy, financial and legislative landscape.

There is no doubt that the past few years have been difficult financially. Major challenges remain however over the next few years and we are continuing to face some tough financial choices. But by working together and backing each other, we can make sure West Berkshire remains a great place in which to live, learn, work and do business in.

We know the next few years will mean a great deal of upheaval and uncertainty for a great many people. Whilst we cannot avoid that, we make a commitment to be fair and open about what we are doing. We believe that a more flexible, responsive council will deliver better outcomes and value for people and provide a fulfilling place for staff to work.

We are a strong and committed organisation. Built upon the dedication and professionalism of our staff and partners, we feel we are well placed to deal with the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Gordon Lundie
Leader

Nick Carter
Chief Executive

March 2014

UNDERSTANDING WEST BERKSHIRE

The best place to start in outlining the work of the Council and where we need to be is to consider our place – the West Berkshire that we live, learn, work and do business in – and to understand some of the socio-economic and demographic pressures we are set to face, alongside issues that matter to local people.

West Berkshire is a great place to be.

The area is made up largely of rolling, chalk Downlands, with the Kennet valley forming our southern border with Hampshire. We are a substantially rural area, with three quarters of the district lying within the [North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty](#).

Around two thirds of people live in the Kennet valley: Newbury, Thatcham, Hungerford, Theale, and in the suburban areas to the west of Reading borough. It is within this area where some of our key businesses – Walker Snacks, X-trac, Harrods distribution, ADP business systems, Quantel, Bayer, AWE and Vodafone - are located. However, covering an area of over half of Berkshire, we also have one of the most dispersed populations in the South East.

Not surprisingly, West Berkshire is a desirable place to live. Our population has grown by 6% over the last decade and projections suggest growth of a further 10% over the next.

In line with the rest of the country, we are an increasingly ageing population. The number of over 65s has grown by around 23% since 2001 (a faster rate than that seen across the South East more generally) and is projected to increase by a further 34% over the next decade (compared to 26% regionally). This will mean 8,000 more older people living in the district by 2021.

Although this could bring many benefits including higher levels of volunteering and a wealth of experience to the jobs market, it will inevitably increase pressure on health and social care services. For example, over the next decade it is estimated that the number of older people suffering from dementia will have risen by 30%.

As a result of this, the proportion of people who are working will fall. This could result in less money for services and gaps in the jobs market, with businesses and public services lacking the required workforce and skills. We must ensure that we champion the opportunities and aspirations for young people and support our

partners to provide further education, work experience, training and apprenticeship opportunities.

Over the course of 2013 we have seen an encouraging fall in the number of people claiming unemployment benefit (JSA) across the district with the rate standing at 1% (Dec 2013) - a level not seen since 2008. Similarly, the rate of young people claiming unemployment benefit has been falling over the last 12 months. It now stands at just under 2% (compared to 3% across the South East) – again, a level not seen since 2008. This equates to around one in five of all those claiming unemployment benefit overall and, as participants in the [Thames Valley Berkshire City Deal](#), we will be working to ensure access to employment and skills opportunities for young people within the area.

Over the last few years, businesses have been lost - most visibly on the High Street, but also small and medium sized enterprises. However, the area has a strong economic base and there is continued investment in the area: most obvious is the opening of the Parkway development, but the overall growth in new businesses in West Berkshire is higher than across the South East more generally.

The housing market appears to have turned the corner with completions rising after a period of decline. Demand for housing remains high in the area and in the medium term is expected to grow. Affordability is a significant issue for many people: there are around 7,500 households in receipt of housing benefit and around 1,500 people in the reasonable preference group on our housing register. Demand for housing options and advice remains high.

This is a short summary of some of the key issues relevant to West Berkshire. A more substantial overview of the social and economic fabric of the area, is provided in our District Profile, available at westberks.gov.uk/research.

VISION AND PURPOSE

Our vision is to keep West Berkshire a great place in which to live, learn, work and do business

People's changing expectations, changes in government policy, difficult economic circumstances, coupled with demographic and growth pressures mean that we are reviewing how we deliver services across the district.

The relationship between the Council, our partners and local communities is inevitably changing and the Council's role is shifting from a traditional provider of public services, to a more supportive one. This is, in part, driven by constrained resources, but also by a recognition that things can often be better delivered at a local level.

We need to constantly do things smarter and keep all our services affordable, whilst giving local people the support they need. We need to make difficult choices. We need to ensure a level of service within different areas – be it good or adequate. Vital, however, is that our priorities are done well.

Guiding this shift in emphasis, our core purpose defines what we are here for as a council:

- Helping you to help yourself
- Helping you when you cannot help yourself
- Helping you to help one another
- Promoting and acting in the interests of the people, communities and businesses of the district.

These four simple ideas run throughout our approach to delivering outcomes for the people and communities of West Berkshire.

- *Helping you to help yourself* means enabling people to get access to the information and support they need to help them get on with living their lives, in the most efficient and effective way possible, without relying on the direct provision of council services. This recognises that individuals would like to be - or could be - in greater control.

This might be as simple as providing customers with information on which they can take personal decisions - for example developing the range of services available

online; through to the more complex provision of personalised budgets and the support for people using social care services.

- *Helping you when you cannot help yourself* means supporting and protecting the vulnerable in our communities – be they children or adults. It focuses on those who need the support of public services - such as looking after children in care, or supporting people with learning, physical or sensory disabilities.
- *Helping you to help one another* means working with and supporting people and communities to achieve their own ambitions. Local people value their local area and take pride in it. Most of West Berkshire is already covered by a local community plan and volunteers and community groups across the district positively influence others' lives. We will build on this, helping communities to get their ideas off the ground and be more involved in the services and facilities provided in their area.
- *Promoting and acting in the interests of the communities, people and businesses of the district* highlights the role the Council plays in representing West Berkshire, for example in promoting inward investment to achieve sustainable business growth and create skilled jobs, developing a skilled workforce and planning and maintaining our infrastructure to meet the demands of growth and businesses.

Every service that we provide as a council, either directly, or indirectly through empowering individuals, communities and the involvement of individuals, is designed with this core purpose at its heart.

MANAGING THE CHANGING FACE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Along with the rest of local government and other public service providers, we are facing unprecedented financial challenges. As an organisation therefore we are continuing to review and amend what we do, and how we do it to ensure we continue to provide quality and cost-effective services for local people.

Finance

Lots of people ask what services they get for their council tax and if West Berkshire Council provides value for money. Over the course of 2014/15, we will provide over £121m worth of services across the district. You will probably use at least one every day – even if it is just driving to work, walking in the countryside, or simply putting your rubbish in the bin.

The graph below is useful in showing the relative amounts of money spent on different services across the Council. By far and away the largest area of spend is in the Communities directorate

(some 60% of service-related expenditure): just less than a third of expenditure is in relation to the Environment directorate (roads, bins, transport, planning) with a tenth of service expenditure in the Resources directorate. Adult Social Care is the largest area of expenditure reflecting the social safety net provided by the Council to support vulnerable individuals in our communities. The second largest area of spend is in Cultural and Environmental protection: around £15m of this relates to the collection of waste and refuse from across the district.



Update graph once 14/15 budget set

The Government's 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) allocated a tough settlement for local government, reducing the amount of grant funding by some 28% over four years.

In response to this, we have put in place a programme to remain within our budget, whilst minimising the impact on front line service delivery. This has delivered savings of around £28m although has meant removing around 1 in 6 posts across the organisation. As a result, we are continuing to live within our means, whilst maintaining delivery of key services.

The planned amount of planned capital expenditure from the Council's own resources (i.e. in addition to government grants and developers contributions) will be approximately £8.5 million per year over the next three years, as compared to £14 million per year on average over the last three years. We are continually reviewing the level of planned capital spending to ensure that it is

affordable and while continuing to support our priorities – notably the highways network and education.

Finances continue to be difficult to predict with any certainty as key, Government policy changes - around business rates, council tax benefit, planning fees, and support for academies - are proposed, consulted on, amended and implemented. Alongside these external factors, there are significant demand pressures within some services - notably within adult social care, providing the social safety net for the most vulnerable in our communities.

However, there are opportunities. Local authorities are now able to retain at least part of any extra receipts as a result of increased business growth in the area. This places greater emphasis on growing the local economy and supporting local businesses and feeds naturally into our priority of

creating and safeguarding local jobs in ensuring a vibrant district.

In ensuring that we live within our means however, significant savings still need to be made. Between 2014-15 and 2016-17 around £15.5m worth of savings need to be found – note the size of grey circle in the graph above.

You can find out more about our finances at westberks.gov.uk/councilspending.

Prioritising services

Of the £11m savings identified for the next 2 years, we can achieve just over 70% by continuing to change things we do behind the scenes that would be less noticed by service users. New technology sometimes means we can do the same for less money. We're renegotiating contracts. We're transferring management of countryside sites to the voluntary sector.

All that said, and with staffing and management already significantly reduced, cuts to front-line services are unavoidable if we are to continue to live within our means. We recognise this is difficult for some people who rely and value these services. We have been open and honest and published our proposals, asking for people's feedback so that we fully understand the impact of any proposals on those affected and can put in place steps to mitigate the impact as best we can.

The purpose of this strategy therefore is to provide the framework for these decisions: prioritising those areas seen as most critical or important. The development of the strategy was informed by the Budget Simulator exercise we undertook with local residents and as a result, sets out our overarching approach to dealing with this reduction in resource, whilst minimising the impact on local communities.

This is reflected in our [Medium Term Financial Strategy](#) which prioritises the allocation of our resources to those determined as most critical in supporting the strategic objectives within this strategy and our statutory responsibilities.

This, in turn, will determine the level of service we will realistically be able to provide in different areas, be they good or adequate.

Working better together

In recent years, our community leadership role has become increasingly pronounced. This involves working closely with all public services in the area

and working in this way we will ensure there is fair and open access to a choice of good-quality services in the local area; that individuals and neighbourhoods get more control over their future; and that the needs of people facing multiple disadvantages are met. These create new opportunities for further joint working across the different sectors.

Our partners in the public sector are also undergoing significant change, for example through reforms in the education sector through the advent of academies, but equally in the transfer of public health responsibilities to local authorities and the greater integration of health and social care between local government and the NHS.

Our strategic role in removing barriers to economic growth, managing natural resources and protecting the local environment is more critical than ever. We are key partners in the new Local Enterprise Partnership and are working hard to deliver infrastructure projects such as superfast broadband across the district.

Voluntary organisations have the potential to play a greater role in delivering services. However they are also adapting to a climate of reduced funding by finding new ways of working. Some need help to boost their infrastructure and resources and to enable them to compete for public sector contracts. We will need to support our community and voluntary partners in order to meet the challenges ahead.

West Berkshire has a strong sense of community. Levels of volunteering and people's sense of belonging are amongst the highest in the country. The vast majority of local communities have developed a parish plan outlining their priorities and vision for how their local areas should develop. As a result of these many of our local communities are well placed to take advantage of the opportunities that more devolved power, influence and resources will open up. Projects across West Berkshire have already shown how such initiatives can help communities to become stronger and more self reliant.

We will continue to work with the voluntary and community sector, and with parish and town councils, to help communities shape and take their responsibility for the provision of services important to them, without feeling overburdened.

This is a long term challenge, involving a fundamental change in the relationship between local people and service providers. Deprived communities will continue to need support to

ensure they can exploit the opportunities as fully as more affluent communities.

Prevention and early intervention in social care and health

Prevention and early intervention means finding ways of predicting and reducing demand for services before it happens, rather than simply responding to demand. This will be important for all our services, but particularly for public health, social care and services to support the most vulnerable in our communities.

The Council now leads the transformation and integration of local health and social care services to improve health and wellbeing for the people of West Berkshire.

This will be achieved through investing in prevention and early intervention, ensuring that everything we do is informed by evidence of effectiveness, delivering effective health and care services as close to people's homes as is possible.

Identifying and meeting people's needs early enough requires carefully coordinated action from all organisations and individuals who have responsibilities for health and wellbeing. We are rethinking the way we work together to support our most vulnerable families and communities. Many emerging health and care needs relate to West Berkshire's ageing population. As people live longer, so the numbers with long term chronic illness and complex health and care needs increase. The Council helps many older people to remain independent in their home. Increasing choice and control over care is an essential part of this process.

The Council will lead on tackling inequalities in health across West Berkshire, reducing social exclusion and working in partnership to promote more independence, address underlying environmental and economic determinants of health whilst endeavouring to get the best value from our resources.

A new Health and Well-Being Strategy has identified a number of key priorities that are being addressed by a small team of public health professionals who now champion health and wellbeing, working within the local authority and in partnership with local GP commissioners and the third sector, integrating health and social care, preventing ill health, protecting against threats to public health and tackling inequalities in health.

Welfare reform and housing

Welfare reform is a major priority for central Government.

The spare room subsidy, Council Tax reform and the cap on benefits have already been introduced and Universal Credit and the replacement of Disability Living Allowance by Personal Independence Payments are scheduled for introduction early in 2014. Further reforms are expected in the future. We recognise however that residents will be impacted to varying degrees and we will seek to support people in times of difficulty.

The biggest impact is likely to be seen in housing. We are committed to working with residents to help them find and sustain secure, appropriate and affordable housing and Discretionary Housing Payments will be used, where possible, to help residents manage the transition arising from changes to their circumstances.

The impact on housing demonstrates the need for a balanced housing stock within West Berkshire.

Moving forward, West Berkshire has a strong Core Strategy that dictates a substantial (30%-40%) requirement to build affordable housing as part of any new residential development. The Local Development Framework (2012) shows that 10,500 homes are needed across West Berkshire over the period 2006 to 2026. The Council's approved planning applications still show a 5 year supply of land and work at Newbury Racecourse has commenced and Sandleford, in South Newbury, has been identified as a strategic site.

The Council does not operate its own housing stock other than a restricted supply of temporary accommodation. It provides services through housing associations such as Sovereign Housing and through service providers. Strategically, it works to prevent homelessness and to increase the availability of housing of all kinds, especially affordable housing. It also is a shareholder in Green Deal Together - an accredited Green Deal Provider backed by a consortium of local authorities located in the South and East of England. This will enable home owners, landlords and businesses to improve the energy efficiency of their buildings, without any upfront cost.

WHAT YOU'VE TOLD US

We have worked hard to keep people informed and engaged in local decisions affecting them. We continue to listen to service users' and customers' feedback and to respond to this as we continually strive to improve what we do.

Given the significant changes in the funding and delivery of public services, at the outset of this strategy in 2010, we undertook a budget simulation exercise with local residents, asking the question - *how would you allocate diminishing resources across the range of different services the Council provides?*

The purpose of this was to provide the guidance and insight into what local people saw as the priorities for local government for the lifetime of this strategy.

Help set West Berkshire's budget

Changes are taking place in public services, and West Berkshire Council is asking for your help, through an online 'Budget Simulator'.

Go to www.westberks.gov.uk/budgetsimulator. Look at the services we provide for you, make your choice of where spending should be increased or reduced (it shows you the consequences of any savings you want to make) and send us the results.

Your suggestions will help West Berkshire Council set its budget in future years.

Internet access is free at all West Berkshire Council libraries.
Closing date is **17 December 2010**.

Budget Simulator

WestBerkshire

More than 800 people took the opportunity to take part giving us a clear message about the services local people most value and where we should be focussing our resources.

Child protection was considered the most important service for local residents, along with care and support for older people and adults with disabilities, children's services, community safety, support for schools and youth services.

Loosely speaking, functions dealing with people were more valued than place-based services such as roads, waste, public protection, traffic management, countryside services, libraries and leisure facilities. This stemmed from a sense amongst many of "people first and things second". As one respondent commented:

"In hard times, I think it is better to protect services for children, disabled and older people. We must try to reduce the human cost; that's why expenditure items like buildings, heritage, parks and road maintenance should take the back seat until the situation improves."

A theme emerged that people could - and necessarily should - be doing more to help themselves. For example, "if we can support local communities to take care of each other, we can reduce the need for certain facilities."

The feedback from this exercise has been used explicitly in the planning and development of this strategy and in our approach to budget setting where - for example - the overall level of funding of both adult and children's social care services are more substantively protected.

This is also reflected in the revised structure of the Council, themed around 'people', 'place' and 'resources' which has further streamlined the organisation, reducing the number of directorates from 4 to 3.

The full results of the budget simulator exercise - and all other exercises we undertake to engage with and listen to the views of residents and service users - are published online through our Consultation Finder database at westberks.gov.uk/research.

OUR PRINCIPLES WHICH GUIDE HOW WE WORK

The corporate business and service delivery plans emanating from this strategy are built on four clear principles which will help us as an organisation, to navigate through the years ahead.

This is all about how we do business: our way of thinking, leadership style, values and behaviours and approach to designing and running services so we can provide high quality, low cost, customer focused services, ensure local, open and honest decision-making and work with our partners to support West Berkshire's communities

These principles can be applied to every function and service we provide and will mean, not only that the Council is smaller, but also more flexible and responsive to local needs.

Putting people first

We are committed to improving quality of life for all. Central to this is putting people at the heart of everything we do. Reflecting local need, putting people first means looking at how our services are designed and operated from the perspective of those who use them.

We are open and transparent in the way we do business and we will continue to listen to local people in deciding how our services should be delivered in the future and that they feel able to contribute to the decisions that affect them.

We will work to minimise discrimination, harassment and victimisation and advance equality of opportunity for all members of our communities;

We are also focussing on how we communicate, recognising that people live busy lives and that we live increasingly in a digital age. We are expanding access to our services online, placing a greater emphasis on self-service and adopting the 'digital by choice' principle.

Empowering people and communities

The Council is at its most effective when it is helping communities to help themselves: helping people to live successful lives as independently as possible. We believe that if you give power to local people, you get better results and achieve better value.

We know that the army of volunteers across the district already make a huge difference to thousands of people's everyday lives in their local areas. We want to work more closely with our voluntary and community sector to make it easier for people to contribute to their communities.

We will continue to support the development of parish plans and town visions and make sure we put in place the resources to play our part in realising their aims. We will also continue to facilitate the development of Neighbourhood Development Plans – where they are wanted - to involve communities more closely in planning matters in their local area;

We recognise that some of the services we will have to scale back or stop are still important to local people, so we want to continue to make it as easy as possible for communities to take over local facilities. This will include handing over buildings to community ownership, helping communities to get their ideas off the ground and encouraging people to volunteer.

We believe that not only is this approach more sustainable in the long-run, but that it will also make them more flexible to local needs.

Living within our means

We never forget that the money we spend is yours. In straitened times it is even more important that we deliver the best possible value for money for local taxpayers.

We have already saved £28m over the last 4 years, with £15m needed between 2014-16. Continuing to 'live within our means' means that we have to make difficult decisions now, managing our budgets whilst ensuring we focus on our priorities.

We are committed to ensuring that Council Tax increases are kept to a minimum. Prudent financial management means that we must deliver on the necessary savings to continue to live within our means. We must therefore continue to drive ever greater value for money from our services: seeking

more efficient provision where services are too expensive; changing providers if they aren't cost-effective and; ceasing provision altogether if they have little or no public need or value.

We have a programme underway to review and renegotiate our contracts with external suppliers and service providers to drive down costs and are increasing and enhancing our approach to procurement and contract management and where possible, join up with other public sector organisations, to ensure that we are getting value for money.

We have been rationalising our estate, making greater use of existing buildings and sharing more of our buildings with partners wherever possible.

We have developed joint-funding arrangements with voluntary and community sector, parish councils and other community groups to fund local improvements and joined forces with other authorities (for example with Wokingham with our Trading Standards service) to provide services together at a reduced cost.

We will take maximum advantage from central government's proposals on returning business rates to local control and continue to maximise the income coming into the Council through ensuring all our fees and charges generally align with the rise in inflation.

We then regularly monitor and publish a 'scorecard' against which local people can assess our progress against the key priority outcomes set out within this strategy and the supporting Council Delivery Plan.

Doing what's important well

It is important that we 'keep our eye on the ball': remaining focussed on our priorities and those core services most valued, or important to local people and on which the most vulnerable in our communities rely. We need to manage our services, ensuring a level of service within different areas – be it good or adequate.

Our focus is on ensuring that the delivery of core services is maintained; that we make decisions that promote the long term economic and social well-being of the district, promote localism and manage outcomes for the most vulnerable.

In ensuring we do what's important well we review our achievement against our key priority measures on an annual basis alongside the refresh of this strategy.

Based on an assessment of our strengths and where we recognise we need to do better we set ourselves appropriately robust and realistic targets for these key priority outcomes and achieve them.

OUR PRIORITIES

Caring for and protecting the vulnerable

Why is this a priority?

Supporting and safeguarding the most vulnerable in our communities is one of the most important things we do. It is central to the whole purpose of the Council, providing the safety net for people when they cannot help themselves.

Children, young people and adults may need support for a whole number of reasons including learning, physical or sensory disabilities, mental ill-health or needing support as they get older. Alongside this socio economic issues are creating vulnerabilities for other groups of people who may not meet the threshold for receiving statutory services from adult social care, such as people who are in difficulty with either accessing or retaining suitable accommodation.

Where possible, we will seek to ensure people are supported to make their own decisions, maintain their independence, overcome barriers to reaching their potential and to help them improve their quality of life.

What will we do ...

Children and young people

- Continue to **implement** the Munro Programme to modernise and improve services to children, young people and their families.
- Continue **implementation** of personalised budgets for young people with disabilities.
- Continue to **focus on** recruitment of additional local carers with a particular emphasis on adopters and foster care for children with complex needs.
- **Ensuring** early help is prompt and accessible through the introduction of our new Early Help Hub.
- Turn Around Families project will continue to **offer help and support** to vulnerable families with multiple problems
- Continue to **improve** our support to children and families experiencing all chronic forms of abuse.
- **Improve** health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable children and young people

Older people and vulnerable adults

- **Review** our social care activity to ensure it is affordable, sustainable and targeted at critical risk or prevention of dependency on long term services.
- **Provide** an information and signposting service so individuals can make informed decisions about options and the cost of their care and early intervention and support to access timely assessment to prevent dependency on care services.
- **Ensure** that people have a positive experience of care and support
- **Safeguard** adults whose circumstances make them vulnerable and protect them from avoidable harm.
- **Target** services on helping adults back to independence and recovery recognising that many can return to independence after a short period of reablement and rehabilitation services.
- **Support** carers to continue caring through increased numbers of carers identified assessed and supported.
- **Improve** health and wellbeing outcomes for groups at greater risk of health inequalities
- **Target** services for housing related support to those most in need across the district.
- Continue to work to **prevent** homelessness offering the widest possible range of options, advice and interventions.

Promoting a vibrant district

Why is this a priority?

Continued economic growth is vital if West Berkshire is to remain competitive. This needs to be sustained through supporting existing businesses and encouraging inward investment.

Whilst prosperity is key to a good quality of life, so is the social wellbeing of the local population. We need to provide and maintain the physical infrastructure on which the district depends. Only in delivering on all these will we succeed in keeping West Berkshire a great place in which to live, learn, work and do business.

What we will do ...

Infrastructure

- **Focus** on carrying out essential highway maintenance.
- **Deliver** effective transport solutions across the district
- **Make best use of** existing stock and seek to improve access to private rented accommodation addressing issues of affordability and quality
- **Lead and deliver** the *Superfast Berkshire* project, as part of a national infrastructure programme, to bring superfast broadband to rural areas of West Berkshire.

Supporting Business

- **Become** more business friendly and **encourage** new investment and business retention across all sectors
- **Promote** West Berkshire as the desirable location for combining business, leisure, learning and life.
- **Work with** partners to ensure that local skills meet the needs of today's business and work environments.
- **Actively support** sustainable rejuvenation and regeneration projects in key locations.

Planning

- **Provide** a responsive planning service with a clear policy framework that balances protection of the environment, economic development and the housing needs of local residents.

Community Safety

- **Work with** our partners to keep crime levels low, reducing incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour
- **Work with** local communities to help protect them from future flooding

Healthy Lives

- **Give** every child and young person the best start in life
- **Improve** the wider determinants of health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities
- **Support** people to make informed choices and live healthier lifestyles
- **Reduce** preventable ill health and premature death whilst promoting independence and supporting older people to manage their long term conditions

Improving education

Why is this a priority?

People are any area's greatest asset. The right knowledge and skills are vital, not only in to help each and every person to fulfil their potential and improve their quality of life, but also to underpin growth and innovation in the district, vital for our future competitiveness and prosperity.

The establishment of academies and other changes in the education system will alter the role of the Council in relation to schools. We will continue to work to make sure that every young person realises their potential.

We recognise that significant improvements need to be made in relation to the attainment of pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium. We have put in place a strategy to address the gap in achievement between our more disadvantaged pupils and more generally and intend to see this closing over the next few years.

Amongst other things this means working with schools, children and their families to improve outcomes for all, and improving training opportunities for young people, especially those currently not in education, employment or training.

What we will do ...

Vulnerable pupils

- **Challenge** and **support** schools where outcomes for pupils need improvement and focus early years support on children and families who are most vulnerable.
- **Ensure** appropriate support is in place for all the most vulnerable children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, or who are looked after, or in need of safeguarding or are in receipt of Pupil Premium.

Working with schools

- **Support** schools and governors to continuously raise standards at all key stages and achieve an Ofsted inspection rating of good or better.
- **Support** schools in evaluating themselves and giving successful schools greater freedoms.
- **Develop** school buildings to meet demand and create the best possible learning environments within available resources.
- **Provide** efficient and effective services that are traded with schools, including academies.

Higher and adult education

- **Support** schools and work with other providers to ensure positive delivery of the raising of the participation age to 17 from September 2013 and 18 in 2015.
- **Influence, commission** and **provide** adult and community learning opportunities that provide for the most vulnerable, and the wider adult population.

Protecting the Environment

Why is this a priority?

Three quarters of West Berkshire is designated as an Area of Outstanding Beauty. That natural environment plays a key role in sustaining a high quality of life in West Berkshire and is the reason why many people chose to live here.

Protecting this resource and the environment more generally, both now and for future generations, are seen as key to the district's continued prosperity.

What we will do ...

Environmental and historic protection

- **Focus development** on the existing urban areas to protect our countryside and the surrounding Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- **Ensure** the protection and promotion of our natural and built environment and heritage

Cleaner and Greener

- **Maximise** the proportion of waste recycled and composted across the district.
- **Minimise** the amount of waste being sent to landfill sites.
- **Reduce** carbon emissions through efficient energy management, thereby reducing our energy consumption and bills.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

This Council Strategy sets out our priorities and a realistic set of objectives that we will deliver for the people of West Berkshire, whilst living within our means.

We cannot achieve these objectives alone and effective joint working with partners, especially parish councils, the police, health and the voluntary and community sector will ensure that we make better use of scarce resources and can also respond to very local or specialised needs.

We want to ensure that together we help communities to achieve what they aspire to. West Berkshire Council is focusing its efforts in this way through a variety of initiatives that respond to local need, and we recognise that by working in partnership the benefits to communities can be even greater.

Aligned to the wider strategic aims within the Sustainable Community Strategy, the objectives within this strategy form the basis for our more detailed strategic, service delivery and financial

planning, which will turn these ambitions into actions.

In order to be able to deliver these objectives, live within our means and meet our statutory responsibilities, we must take a very proactive approach to managing our resources effectively. Our Medium Term Financial Strategy is the key tool for proactive financial management, providing the basis of the annual budget setting process to ensure that our resources for the forthcoming year are aligned correctly to our priorities.

Together with the overarching Council Strategy, they provide the framework from which our more detailed strategic business plan and individual service plans are developed, through which our strategic objectives and outcomes are delivered.



Tracking progress and identifying opportunities for improvement are key to realising and delivering on this strategy. We will continue to monitor progress against each of the objectives in this strategy and report on a set of key accountable measures on a quarterly basis through our westberks.gov.uk/performance webpages. This will provide us with a consistent and timely picture of how well we are doing, as well as ensuring we remain accountable for the delivery of these outcomes to local people.

The delivery of our strategic objectives is supported by a range of policies and strategies, as well as individual service delivery plans. These set out in detail how our vision and objectives will be delivered and progress will be measured. These plans are principally working documents to enable managers to allocate staff and other resources, and to ensure employees are clear on how their work contributes to the Council's overarching objectives.

The reporting on this strategy will reflect progress on these key plan

Agenda Item 8.

Title of Report:	Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2014/15
Report to be considered by:	Council
Date of Meeting:	4 March 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	C2747

Purpose of Report: In compliance with The Local Government Act 2003, this report summarises the Council's borrowing limits as set out by CIPFA's Prudential Code, and recommends the Annual Investment and Borrowing Strategy for 2014/15.

Recommended Action: To recommend the strategy to Council for adoption.

Reason for decision to be taken: Formulation of Treasury Management Policy in compliance with the Local Government Act 2003 and the CIPFA's Prudential Code and Code of Practice for Treasury Management.

Other options considered: Not applicable

Key background documentation: None

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy principle:

CSP6 - Living within our means

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy principle by:

Maximising the return on the Council's investments while minimising risk and ensuring sufficient liquidity; ensuring that long term borrowing is affordable.

Portfolio Member Details

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Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	21 January 2014

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E-mail Address:	gesplin@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy:	The Treasury Management Strategy for the new financial year is in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 and CIPFA's Prudential Code and Code of Practice for Treasury Management.
Financial:	Investment Income and Debt Charges form part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
Personnel:	None
Legal/Procurement:	None
Property:	None
Risk Management:	The policy is intended to ensure that all borrowing and investment is undertaken with a view to minimising risk and exposure to financial loss.

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:			
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)			
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at www.westberks.gov.uk/eia			<input type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the framework within which the Treasury Management Team will conduct the council's investments and borrowing for the forthcoming financial year. It recommends prudential limits for investments in 2014/15 and borrowing limits for the next three years.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The report proposes an increase in the Council's maximum borrowing limits by £3 million (to £155 million) in 2014/15, by £8 million (to £163 million) in 2015/16 and by £5 million (to £168 million) in 2016/17. The increases in borrowing limits over the next three years are to allow for the planned level of borrowing to fund the proposed capital programme (also taking into account the planned level of debt repayment).
- 2.2 The report also recommends prudential limits for exposure to borrowing at fixed and variable rates of interest, and the maturity structure of borrowing and parameters for the types and minimum credit ratings for institutions with which the Council will invest its funds. No changes are proposed to the main limits and parameters for 2014/15, although the policy on credit ratings has been amended to allow reference to Moody's Investor Service credit ratings in addition to Fitch ratings.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 This item is not relevant to equality.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 These proposals form part of the Council's overall Treasury and Capital Strategy and are aligned with the requirements of the Prudential Code. The strategy sets the underlying principles by which the Council's annual investment and borrowing activity will be managed for the 2014/15 financial year.
- 4.2 A report on the actual performance of the Treasury Team in managing the Council's loans and investments for the whole of 2013/14 will be brought to Executive after the end of the financial year.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report proposes the Annual Investment and Borrowing Strategy for 2014/15, as required by the Local Government Act 2003. The strategy must be approved by full Council and made available to the public before the start of the financial year to which it relates. The strategy can be varied at any time, but any variations must be approved by the Council and made available to the public.
- 1.2 West Berkshire Council's treasury management activities consist of the management of the organisation's cash flow, banking, money market transactions, loans and investments. The main aim of the Treasury Management function is to maximise the return on the Council's investments while ensuring sufficient liquidity and minimising the risks to the Council's resources. All investment and borrowing decisions are therefore governed by the following principles (in order of priority as shown):
- (1) Security (minimising risk)
 - (2) Liquidity (availability of sufficient funds a day to day basis to support the Council's business)
 - (3) Yield (return on investment).
- 1.3 Effective treasury management supports the achievement of all the Council's service objectives. The performance of the treasury management function will, therefore, be monitored through regular reports to the Treasury Management Group of members and officers. An annual report on treasury management performance for the year as a whole will also be presented to the Executive shortly after the end of the financial year.

2. Proposed Prudential Indicators for 2014/15

- 2.1 The Local Government Act 2003 introduced the new Prudential Capital Finance System, which was applied from 1 April 2004, and replaced the requirements under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. CIPFA published the final Prudential Code in November 2003, which sets out a range of indicators that the Council must set in order to establish its borrowing limit.
- 2.2 The following prudential limits are required to be set for the forthcoming financial year and the following two financial years:
- (a) Authorised limit for total external debt - the maximum amount the Council may borrow
 - (b) Operational boundary for its total external debt - The most money the Council would normally borrow at any time during the year.
 - (c) Exposure to borrowing at variable rates of interest.
 - (d) Exposure to borrowing at fixed rates of interest.
 - (e) Maturity structure of borrowing.

(f) Levels of External Debt:

- 2.3 An annual increase in borrowing will be required to fund proposed capital expenditure which cannot be funded from grants, capital receipts or other sources of funds. The amount of the increase is determined by the amount of debt charges which the Council can afford to fund from its revenue budget.
- 2.4 The recommended limits for external debt for 2014/15 and the following two financial years are shown below in comparison with the agreed level for 2013/14.

New Recommended Limits for External Debt		
	Authorised Limit	Operational Boundary
2013/14 Approved	£152 million	£142 million
2014/15 Proposed	£155 million	£145 million
2015/16 Proposed	£163 million	£153 million
2016/17 Proposed	£168 million	£158 million

- 2.5 The operational boundaries proposed above allow for the overall level of long term debt to fund capital expenditure (which is expected to be £99.2 million at the end of March 2014), plus the level of debt embedded in the PFI contract, which currently stands at £25 million, plus approximately £15 million for temporary borrowing (for less than 364 days) for cashflow purposes during the course of the year. The authorised limit is set £10 million higher than the operational boundary to allow for any unforeseen borrowing needs.
- 2.6 The increases in the borrowing limits of £3 million in 2014/15, £8 million in 2015/16 and £5 million in 2016/17 reflect the new borrowing which is expected to be required over the next three years to fund the proposed capital programme 2014-2019 (also on this agenda). They also take account of the fact that new borrowing is offset by the repayments made against existing debts. More details of the Council's borrowing strategy are given in Section 4 (below).
- 2.7 The recommended limits for exposure to borrowing at variable and fixed rates of interest are as follows (unchanged from 2013/14):

Exposure to Variable Interest Rates	
	Upper Limit
2014/15	50%
2015/16	50%
2016/17	50%

Exposure to Fixed interest rates		
	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
2014/15	100%	50%
2015/16	100%	50%
2016/17	100%	50%

In practice, almost all Council borrowing is undertaken on fixed rates of interest. This includes all long term borrowing undertaken from the Public Works and Loans Board.

2.8 The recommended limits for the maturity structure of borrowing are as follows (unchanged from 2013/14):

	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
Under 1 Year	0%	50%
1 – 2 years	0%	50%
2 – 5 years	0%	50%
5 – 10 years	0%	50%
Over 10 years	0%	90%

3. Annual Investment Strategy for 2014/15

3.1 The purpose of the Annual Investment Strategy is to set out the policies to ensure the security and liquidity of the Council's investments. The strategy deals with the credit ratings defined for each category of specified investments, the prudential use of non specified investments, and the liquidity of investments.

3.2 Specified Investments are defined as those satisfying each of the following conditions:

- (a) Denominated in sterling.
- (b) To be repaid or redeemed within 12 months of the date on which the investment was made.
- (c) Do not involve the acquisition of share capital or loan capital in any body corporate.
- (d) Are made with the UK Government, local authorities, parish councils, community councils, or with a deposit taker which has been awarded a high credit rating by a credit rating agency and is authorised by a regulatory body (normally the Financial Services Authority - FSA).

3.3 Any investments that do not meet the criteria defined in paragraph 3.2 above are classified as 'Non-specified Investments'. It is proposed that the Council will only invest in non-specified investments, including those to be repaid or redeemed more than 12 months from the date on which the investment was made, should the need arise in relation to cash-flow and borrowing strategy decisions.

3.4 The credit ratings and limits proposed for the categories of investments intended for use by the Council in 2014/15 are as follows:

Debt Management Office (UK Govt)	Unlimited
UK Local Authorities (including Police and Fire Authorities and similar public bodies)	Not more than £5,000,000 per authority
UK Building Societies	
Ranked 1 to 11	Not more than £5,000,000 per institution
Ranked 12 to 21	Not more than £4,000,000 per institution
Ranked 22 to 25	Not more than £3,000,000 per institution

UK Banks & Other Financial Institutions rated at least F1 by Fitch or Prime 1 by Moody's	Not more than £5,000,000 per institution
UK Banks & Other Financial Institutions rated at least F2 by Fitch or Prime 2 or 3 by Moody's	Not more than £2,500,000 per institution
UK based Money Market Funds (AAA rated by Fitch or Moody's)	Not more than £5,000,000 per fund

- 3.5 The limits above represent the maximum amounts to be invested with individual organisations. The Treasury Management Group may temporarily reduce these amounts and/or shorten the time-period of investments in order to spread the exposure to loss from institutions failing.
- 3.6 No changes are proposed to the existing limits for 2014/15. However, while the Council has previously relied on the ratings given by the Fitch ratings agency, consideration is now also being given to consulting Moody's ratings, where this offers better value for money for the Council.

Liquidity of Investments:

- 3.7 The period for which funds are invested is determined by the cash flow needs of the Council. Funds are invested for as long as possible, in order to maximise the rate of return, while still ensuring that sufficient funds are available to meet the Council's outgoings. The normal maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed is 12 months.
- 3.8 If sufficient funds become available, and market conditions are favourable enough to permit secure longer term investment, funds may, from time to time be invested for longer periods which will offer a better rate of return. However in order to minimise risk and ensure liquidity, no more than 40% of the Council's funds will be held at any one time in investments longer than 12 months.

4. Borrowing Strategy

- 4.1 All the Council's long term borrowing (with the exception of the debt contained within the waste PFI contract) is at a fixed rate from the Public Works and Loans Board (PWLB). The PWLB currently offers the most competitive and secure rates of interest to local authorities. For example, the 40 year fixed annuity rate currently stands at 4.3% as at the 15th January 2013. (This includes the 0.2% "certainty" discount which is currently being offered by the PWLB to those local authorities, including West Berkshire, which have made available to HM Treasury their medium term borrowing plans).
- 4.2 At the start of the current financial year the balance of the Council's loans from the PWLB currently was £87.6 million. This sum includes £20.5 million which is still outstanding from the debt inherited from the former Berkshire County Council. These loans were taken out on a maturity basis and it is therefore necessary to make an annual provision in the revenue budget to repay these loans at the end of their term, currently approximately £500,000 per year on average. All loans taken out by West Berkshire Council since 2006, however, have been on an annuity

basis, which provides certainty over the future level of loan repayments and avoids the future liability for repayment of the principal.

- 4.3 By March 2014, the PWLB loans balance is expected to increase by £11.7 million to £99.3 million. Part of this increase is to fund £8.4 million proposed capital spending for 2013/14 which is not funded from grants, capital receipts or other external sources of capital funding. It is also expected to be necessary to borrow around £6 million in respect of previous years' capital expenditure, which has not yet been financed from borrowing. However the new borrowing will be offset by approximately £2.7 million repayments against existing loans which will have been made by the end of the financial year.
- 4.4 The forecast balance of total long term debt at the end of March 2014, including that related to the PFI contract, is approximately £124 million.
- 4.5 Based on the current proposals for capital spending from 2014 to 2019, the Council's overall level of borrowing is expected to increase at a slower rate from 2014/15 onwards than in recent years. This is because the amount of principal repaid on annuity loans increases year on year, while the level of capital expenditure funded from borrowing is planned to decrease to around £5 million per year by 2017. The overall level of debt to fund capital expenditure is therefore expected to peak at around £124 million in 2020 (or £144 million including PFI debt).

Appendices

There are no Appendices to this report.

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: N/a
Officers Consulted: Corporate Board
Trade Union: N/a

Title of Report:	Capital Strategy and Programme 2014/15 to 2018/19
Report to be considered by:	Council
Date of Meeting:	4 March 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	C2746

Purpose of Report: To outline the five year Capital Strategy for 2014 to 2019, including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) statement and the Asset Management Plan, and to set out the funding framework for Council's five year Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2018/19.

Recommended Action: To recommend the Capital Strategy and Programme for approval by full Council on the 4th March 2014

Reasons for decision to be taken:

1. To enable the Council to align resources to agreed Council priorities.
2. To clarify the processes and procedures to ensure that the Capital Programme is managed in accordance with the Council Strategy.
3. To provide a mechanism for the effective medium term planning of capital resources.
4. To ensure effective, efficient and economic use of the Council's assets and resources, and achieve best value for money.

Other options considered: N/A

Key background documentation: Capital Strategy and Programme 2013/14–2017/18
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013-14 to 2016/17
Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2013/14
Capital Strategy Group papers
The Council Strategy 2013-17

The proposals contained in this report will help achieve the following Council Strategy priorities:

- CSP1 - Caring for and protecting the vulnerable**
- CSP2 - Promoting a vibrant district**
- CSP3 - Improving education**
- CSP4 - Protecting the environment**

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Strategy principles:

- CSP5 - Putting people first**
- CSP6 - Living within our means**
- CSP7 - Empowering people and communities**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy priorities and principles by:
Ensuring that investment in the Council's assets and systems makes best use of available resources to maximise the benefit to the West Berkshire community in line with the Council Strategy 2013-17.

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Alan Law - Tel (01491) 873614
E-mail Address:	alaw@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	3 February 2014

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Gabrielle Esplin
Job Title:	Finance Manager
Tel. No.:	01635 519836
E-mail Address:	gesplin@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

- Policy:** The Capital Strategy is aligned directly to both the Council Strategy 2013-2017 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
The policy implications arising from the Prudential Framework are set out within the report.
- Financial:** The draft programme allocates £37.9 million of Council capital resources over five years. This includes £4.0 million from capital receipts from assets which are expected to be sold over the next year. The remainder will be funded from prudential borrowing. The cost of borrowing will be reflected in the Revenue Budget and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- Some proposed capital spending will be financed from external funding, including government capital grants from 2014/15 onwards which have still to be confirmed. The level of spend in future years may need to be reviewed depending on the actual level of capital receipts and government grants.
- The Strategy also includes the statement on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) required in accordance with the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.
- Personnel:** A proportion of the Council's establishment is funded directly by the Capital Programme where it can be demonstrated that staff directly support and help to deliver the capital programme.
- Legal/Procurement:** The Capital Strategy contains Prudential Indicators that are mandatory under the Capital Finance Act 2003
- Property:** The proposed Capital Programme will provide for maintenance and improvements to a number of existing Council buildings.

The level of funding available for the proposed programme is partly dependant on final decisions still to be made about the disposal of some Council buildings.

Risk Management: Strategic risks relating to the Capital Programme are set out in the Council's Strategic Risk Register. Individual programmes/projects will have their own Risk Management Plans.

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:			
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)			
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at www.westberks.gov.uk/eia			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality			<input type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the draft Capital Strategy and Programme covering the five year period 2014/15 to 2018/19. Its aim is to ensure that the Council's highest priorities for capital investment can be delivered within the financial constraints which the Council faces.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The draft Capital Strategy and Programme comprises:

- The five-year Capital Strategy including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)
- An analysis of the funding of the proposed Capital Programme 2014 to 2019, including the cost of borrowing to fund capital investment.
- The proposed five-year Capital Programme.
- The Council's Asset Management Plan for 2014/15

- 2.2 The proposed Capital Programme helps deliver the key priorities set out in the Council Strategy 2013-2017, including investment over the next five years in the following key areas:

- Protecting the Vulnerable: £8.7 million for occupational health equipment, home adaptations and supported living for older people and people with physical, sensory or learning disabilities;
- Promoting a Vibrant District: £40.4 million for maintenance and improvement of highways; £2.2 million for maintenance and improvement of parks, open spaces sporting and cultural facilities; £1 million for the provision of new affordable housing and £700,000 to facilitate the delivery of superfast broadband across the majority of West Berkshire;
- Improving Education: £51.2 million for new school places and improvement of school buildings.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 The capital strategy itself does not have any direct equalities impact, but more detailed equalities assessments will be carried out for any new schemes within the capital programme, or potential asset transfers, prior to implementation.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The proposed Capital Programme allows for total expenditure over five years of £115.2 million, of which £69.6 million is funded from government grants, £7.7 million from developers contributions and £37.9 million, or an average of £7.6 million per year, is funded by Council resources. The latter element includes an estimated £4 million capital receipts from assets which are expected to be sold over the next two years, although final decisions on the sale of some assets have still to be taken. The remainder is funded from prudential borrowing in line with the

revenue provision for capital financing assumed in the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2013-16 (also on this agenda).

- 4.2 The proposed programme is expected to be sufficient to provide for the main capital investment priorities for Education in 2014/15 and 2015/16. These include additional school places in Newbury and other parts of the district, some improvements to the condition and suitability of school buildings and provision for universal free school meals to reception and key stage 1 pupils. However, the level of government funding for school maintenance for 2015/16 onwards is not yet known and current pupil number forecast data still needs to be finalised. This may result in further pressure on Council funding.
- 4.3 Pupil number forecast data will continue to be reviewed and updated and Education managers will carry out a further review of condition and suitability needs of all schools by planning area over the coming year. This additional data will provide increasing clarity on the medium to long term pressures which will be taken into account in revising the Capital Programme for the next five year period of 2015 to 2020.

Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Capital Strategy and Programme 2014/15 to 2018/19

Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: N/a

Officers Consulted: Corporate Board

Trade Union: N/a

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Capital Strategy **2014/15 – 2018/19**

**Incorporating the Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2018/19 the
Corporate Property Asset Management Plan 2014/15**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Capital Strategy sets out the financial and policy context within which the Council can plan for long term investment in its assets. The Capital Strategy incorporates both the Asset Management Plan and the five year Capital Programme, which defines the amount of planned investment over the next five years and how this investment is to be funded. This strategy is also closely related to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), and together these documents help to deliver the overarching Council Strategy.

1.2 The aim of the Capital Strategy is to:

- Enable the Council's assets and systems to be maintained and improved to enable the effective and efficient delivery of the Council's key priorities as set out in the Council Strategy 2013 to 2017;
- To ensure that capital investment is affordable within the terms of the MTFS;
- To ensure that capital investment is prioritised to take account of Council priorities, in particular improving Education and Highways, within available resources;

Overview of the Proposed Capital Programme 2014-2019

1.3 The starting point for the new capital strategy is the previously approved level of Council funded capital spending for 2014/15 to 2017/18. This has been updated to take account of:

- £1.2 million investment in surface treatment of the A4 in 2014/15 which is proposed to be funded partly from savings in patching costs over 10 years from 2014/15 to 2023/24 and partly from capital receipts;
- Savings in the 2014/15 to 2017/18 highways capital maintenance programme to fund the £1.4 million investment in emergency repairs to highways in 2013/14 following serious deterioration of roads in the winter of 2012/13;
- The latest estimates of future school pupil numbers and the cost of providing additional primary school places to accommodate them;
- Provisional capital grant allocations for Education, which were announced on the 18th December 2013, including basic need grant allocations for 2015/16 to 2016/17 of £14.6 million in total, which reflects the Council's forecasts for future pupil number growth and which is a significantly higher grant settlement than was previously expected;
- The latest estimates of capital receipts expected to be available to fund capital expenditure over the next five years;

- The current level of interest rates for borrowing from the Public Works and Loans Board to fund capital expenditure and the latest assumptions about future rates.

Funding of the Capital Programme

- 1.4 The proposed average level of Council funded capital spend is approximately £7.6 million per year. This figure takes account of the higher than average level of capital receipts between 2013 and 2015, which the Council agreed in March 2013 to use to boost investment in ICT and to help meet the pressure on primary school pupil numbers. It also includes some funding brought forward from previous years. The underlying level affordable of Council capital investment from 2017/18 onwards is approximately £5 million per year.
- 1.5 Council capital funds come partly from capital receipts, with the remainder from prudential borrowing. The proposed level of Council funded programme is based on the assumption that the revenue budget for borrowing costs will increase by £510,000 in 2014/15, £607,000 in 2015/16 to allow for the additional investment in highways infrastructure and then by approximately £500,000 per year from 2016/17 onwards to reflect future highways savings. These figures are in line with the proposed MTFS for 2014 to 2017, also on this agenda.
- 1.6 The programme makes use of government grants and developers contributions which have already been received or allocated. It also takes into account estimates of future grants and contributions, based recent trends and other available data. The total proposed five year programme including external funding, amounts to £115.2 million or an average of £23.0 million per year.
- 1.7 However if the actual level of future government grants and developers' contributions is lower than expected, the planned level of spending in the later years of the programme will have to be reviewed. This will also be necessary if capital receipts are lower than expected e.g. if the Council decides to not to dispose of some assets which are currently earmarked for disposal, or not to sell them at their full market value.

Service Specific Issues – Education

- 1.8 The level of the provisional capital grant settlement for Basic Need for 2014/15 to 2015/16 from the Department for Education (DfE) reflects the pupil number forecast model and the schools capacity (SCAP) return submitted by Education Services. The amount allocated for this period is significantly higher than was previously expected.
- 1.9 The proposed programme is expected to be sufficient to provide for the main capital investment priorities for Education in 2014/15 and 2015/16. These include additional school places in Newbury and other parts of the district, some improvements to the condition and suitability of school buildings and provision for universal free school meals to reception and key stage 1 pupils. However, the level of government funding for school maintenance for 2015/16 onwards is not yet known and current pupil number forecast data also suggests that the number of

additional places planned to be provided in Newbury may not be sufficient in the medium to long term. These factors may result in further pressure on Council funding.

- 1.10 Pupil number forecast data will continue to be reviewed and updated and Education managers will carry out a further review of condition and suitability needs of all schools by planning area over the coming year. This additional data will provide increasing clarity on the medium to long term pressures, which will be taken into account in revising the Capital Programme for the next five year period of 2015 to 2020.

ICT

- 1.11 Additional funding has been allocated for the extension of the Superfast Broadband project across West Berkshire.
- 1.12 The ICT Programme Board will also continue to review its priorities for investment in the Council's systems, in the context of a longer term ICT strategy, and will work in conjunction with the Capital Strategy Group over the coming year to propose ways in which further investment in the most important projects can be funded from within available resources.

- 1.13 The remainder of the strategy document will be structured as follows:

Section 2: The Capital Strategy for 2014/15 to 2018/19 which explains how the proposed programme helps to deliver the Council Strategy and also explains the funding framework for the programme;

Section 3: An analysis of the funding of the proposed programme over the next five years;

Section 4: An overview of the Proposed Capital Programme 2015/15 to 2018/19.

Appendix 1: A Summary of the proposed Capital Programme 2014/15 to 2018/19

Appendix 2: The detailed Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2018/19

Appendix 3: The Council's Asset Management Plan for 2014/15.

2. CAPITAL STRATEGY

2.1 The Council's Capital Strategy is guided by the following principles:

- Resources are aligned with the priorities and principles identified in the Council Strategy for 2013-2017;
- Making best use of government capital grants (in particular for Education and Highways) to minimise the need for borrowing to fund capital investment;
- Disposing of surplus assets at market value where possible and appropriate, in order to maximise the level of capital receipts and reducing the need to borrow to fund capital expenditure;
- When borrowing is necessary to fund capital expenditure, ensuring that it is affordable, sustainable and prudent in keeping with the principles of the Prudential Code and that the revenue costs are affordable within the context of the MTFs;
- Seeking additional funding and capacity e.g. through partnership working, developers' contributions and/or the proposed new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL);
- Making best use of matched funding wherever available to enable schemes which otherwise might not be undertaken;
- Enabling "Invest to Save" bids through the provision of up front capital funding to deliver long-term efficiency savings;
- A corporate framework involving both Officers and Members to ensure value for money through the evaluation and prioritisation of capital bids and the management and monitoring of projects;
- Ensuring full integration with the planning frameworks of both this Council and our key partners; and
- Taking account of key asset issues highlighted in the Council's Property and Highways Asset Management Plans.

2.2 The links between the Capital Strategy and Programme and the key priorities in the Council Strategy are set out in the following paragraphs.

2.3 Caring for and Protecting the Vulnerable

Adult Social Care and Disabled Facilities Grants

- 2.3.1 One of the Council's key priorities is to support and enhance the quality of life and safety of vulnerable people. The Adult Social Care capital and the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) programmes support this priority by providing occupational health equipment and home adaptations for older people and individuals with a learning disability, or a physical or sensory disability. In this way vulnerable people are helped to maintain their independence, with the minimum of support from the Council.
- 2.3.2 Opportunities are also being sought to incorporate additional provision for extra care housing into the capital programme, as an alternative to residential care. This priority is being addressed by exploring the potential for further partnership working with social housing providers and the possible use of government grants, section 106 contributions, CIL and/or capital receipts to help fund future extra care housing schemes.

Children and Young People

- 2.3.3 The Children's Services programme also provides funding for home adaptations to enable foster carers better to care for vulnerable children. The Education capital programme includes improvements to educational facilities for children with special educational needs (see also section on improving Education). The quality of life of all vulnerable groups is also enhanced by improvements to open spaces and cultural facilities (see paragraphs 2.5.1 to 2.5.5).

2.4 Promoting a Vibrant District

Highways and Transport

- 2.4.1 The transport network keeps the local economy moving, supports future economic development and helps deliver a better quality of life for local people. The Highways and Transport Capital programme is driven by a number of key plans and strategies including the Council's Local Transport Plan 2011 to 2026 (LTP3). LTP3 is informed by a number of service specific plans and strategies as detailed below:

- Freight strategy
- Smarter choices strategy
- Passenger transport strategy
- Road safety strategy
- Sustainable modes of travel strategy
- Parking strategy
- Network Management Plan

- 2.4.2 The programme is also driven by the Highway Asset Management Plan which provides guidance on the delivery of value for money highway maintenance services with the aim of providing a safer highway network, improved travelling conditions for all highway users, and ensuring greater care of the local environment.
- 2.4.3 There is also a continued emphasis on partnership working, with stakeholders including the Environment Agency, Thames Water, Sovereign Housing and Network Rail to ensure our limited funds stretch as far as possible

Housing

- 2.4.4 Housing also impacts on many areas of life – health, education, community safety, social care and care for the environment. High quality social housing is key to building communities which are inclusive and where people have a sense of belonging. The Council's capital programme supports the delivery of new affordable housing, the provision and refurbishment of temporary accommodation in support of the Council's statutory housing duties and the regeneration and improvement of private sector stock.
- 2.4.5 The Council's approach to affordable housing requires consideration of new and innovative ways of working in order to maximise the funding that is available and ensure delivery of new affordable housing. This includes:
- Seeking grant from the Homes & Communities Agency through their development programme via our Registered Provider (RP) partners.
 - Seeking on-site affordable housing provision through S106 Agreements with no public subsidy on above-threshold development sites.
 - Seeking commuted sums in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision on above-threshold development sites and utilising the monies to provide affordable housing on alternative sites.
 - Encouraging RP partners to fund development from their own reserves.
 - Using the Council's own land for development (an option that may have an impact upon the Council's ability to fund its Capital Programme).
- 2.4.6 Over recent years the Council has successfully focussed on the prevention of homelessness which reduces the need for temporary housing, but the Council still maintains a small supply of temporary accommodation to meet its statutory duty in this area. In addition, the Council provides assistance to support the improvement of private sector housing. The Council's view is that it is primarily the responsibility of private sector owners to maintain their own property, but it recognises that some owners, particularly the elderly and most vulnerable, do not have the necessary resources to repair or improve their homes.

Town Centre Visions

2.4.7 The capital programme also provides funds to help pump prime town centre redevelopment schemes. These schemes have the potential to contribute to the local economy and to improve the town centre environment and the income generating potential of Council owned land.

2.5 Health and Wellbeing - Parks, Open Spaces and Sporting and Cultural Facilities

2.5.1 The health and wellbeing of residents is considerably enhanced by access to good quality parks and open spaces and by opportunities to participate in sport, physical activity, performing and visual arts, and other leisure interests. In particular it is important to provide play and social opportunities for children and young people. Where children and young people can be attracted to make positive use of their leisure time it adds to their personal development but can also have an impact on levels of anti-social behaviour within communities.

2.5.2 A significant improvement to the Council's cultural facilities will be achieved with the help of a grant of approximately £1 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund to support for the restoration of the museum buildings in Newbury. By combining this grant with the Council funding which would be required to undertake the minimum level of maintenance to the building, it will be possible to develop a modern visitor attraction that enhances the town centre. Construction started in 2013 and is planned to be completed in the summer of 2014.

2.5.3 Capital investment will also be targeted at ensuring that the existing network of libraries, leisure centres, parks, recreation grounds and rights of way are accessible, safe to use and meet the reasonable expectations of users, in order to enhance the health and wellbeing of West Berkshire residents. In particular, a programme of investment in the structural maintenance and refurbishment of Leisure Centres will continue over the next five years in order to ensure that these facilities continue to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for service users. This investment is partly funded from savings in service revenue budgets from 2013 to 2018. After that period, a view will need to be taken whether to repeat a similar exercise in order to maintain the level of capital maintenance.

2.5.4 The quality of life of West Berkshire residents is also enhanced by access to the countryside, through the maintenance of country parks, rights of way and countryside conservation projects.

2.5.5 The Council will also work in partnership with other organisations including schools, links with Parish and Town Councils and voluntary organisations to enhance the provision of cultural facilities across the district.

2.6 Improving Education

- 2.6.1 The aim of the Council is to enable all children and young people to maximise their potential while intervening positively to ensure that the most vulnerable have an equal opportunity to succeed. The Council has a number of strategic service specific plans to support this aim through capital investment. These are the Education Asset Management Plan, the Primary Strategy for Change, the Secondary Strategy and the School Places Plan. These plans drive capital investment in schools and Early Years settings, with the following key strategic outcomes:
- i. the provision of suitable and sufficient school places across the district;
 - ii. the provision of buildings and grounds that meet all legislative requirements, are in good condition, and are safe and secure;
 - iii. the creation of flexible, adaptable and stimulating learning environments designed and equipped for 21st century learning;
 - iv. the provision of high quality sustainable ICT infrastructure to support learning, teaching and management, to improve engagement and raise pupil attainment, and promote community learning outside school hours;
 - v. schools to act as facilities and learning hubs for the communities they serve, including the provision of extended services;
 - vi. the provision of learning environments that are examples of the practical application of sustainable construction, improving value for money and driving further down the carbon footprint of schools;
 - vii. supporting the outcomes of the Small Schools Review;
 - viii. the continuing improvement in the accessibility of schools; and
 - ix. inclusion of pupils with SEN into mainstream education where appropriate.
- 2.6.2 Government funding for capital investment in Education Facilities by Local Authorities remains focussed on Basic Need and Maintenance. Basic Need funding “is to be used for the needs of all taxpayer funded schools in the area. Local authorities are responsible for ensuring sufficient school places in their area, and where planning for growth in numbers, all sectors should be considered in prioritising this funding. This includes schools in the voluntary aided sector, open academies and especially proposals for new free schools where they can address basic need pressures.”
- 2.6.3 The bulk of maintenance funding is currently allocated to local authorities, in order to support local prioritisation and larger capital maintenance projects with co-ordinated and more efficient procurement. The Council is therefore responsible for maintenance and health and safety work in all schools except academies, which receive maintenance funding directly from DfE. The Academy programme has the effect of reducing the capital maintenance allocations year on year, as more of the total national funding pot is diverted to the Academy Maintenance Programme.

- 2.6.4 The medium term scope of responsibility for the maintenance and development of school buildings is still somewhat uncertain. In December 2013 the government published a progress update on the Review of Education Capital undertaken in 2011. Within that document the government finally confirmed that the concept put forward in the review of a single, flexible funding pot, with strategic planning and spend managed at a local level by local authorities, was not accepted. However, the progress update goes on to say that there are alternative ways of achieving strategic planning to explore. The Property Team will therefore have to adapt and ensure it is appropriately resourced to deal with to any changes in responsibility.
- 2.6.5 The level of Council capital funds available for Education schemes in the later part of the programme is minimal. For the duration of the 5-year programme available resources are likely to be targeted only at basic need and urgent capital maintenance, with little or no funding available for modernisation of school buildings. However, with the recent basic need capital settlement with allocations for the first three years of the programme it does seem likely at present, given the current indications of growth in pupil numbers over the next three years, that there will be sufficient resources within the programme to fully meet these objectives.

2.7 Protecting the Environment

- 2.7.1 The Council's energy management strategy is targeted at measures which will help save energy and reduce carbon emissions and work is underway to ensure that energy saving features are incorporated into building projects wherever possible. In addition it is proposed, where possible, to use revenue savings achieved in energy costs to meet the capital financing costs of additional investment in energy saving and carbon reduction schemes in future years.
- 2.7.2 Care of the environment also includes the stewardship of the public open spaces and historically important buildings and ensuring access to the countryside. Planned investment of Council resources in these areas will be limited over the period of the strategy. However, every opportunity will be taken to attract external funding and additional resources through partnership arrangements (e.g. with the Berkshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust – BBOWT), with a view to maintaining and improve these important community assets.

2.8 Putting People First

- 2.8.1 The Council has always seen better services to the public and modernisation of the Council as a key driver and e-government expenditure is critical to supporting these goals by enhancing and modernising the ICT infrastructure and tools to support -service delivery. The Capital Programme plays an important role primarily through investment in Information Communications Technology (ICT).

2.9 Capital Financing

2.9.1 The Council's capital programme is financed from the following main sources of funding:

- Government Grants
- Prudential borrowing
- Developer Contributions
- Capital Receipts

Government Grants

2.9.2 Wherever possible the Council aims to fund capital spending from grants in order to minimise the revenue impact of borrowing. The main government grants which support the proposed programme are set out in paragraphs 3.10-3.16 below.

Prudential Borrowing

2.9.3 The Prudential Framework places the emphasis on affordability. Local authorities may decide how much they can afford to borrow and the costs of this borrowing must be met from the revenue budget. In establishing its Prudential Framework the Council is required to look at the investment required to maintain its asset base fit for purpose and to prevent deterioration to the fabric of the assets it holds. This level of required investment must then be considered against the revenue impact of repaying the funds it borrows. (The basis of the affordable level of borrowing to support the programme is discussed in more detail in paragraphs 3.7-3.9 below).

Section 106 Developer Contributions

2.9.4 In November 2004 the Council adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG04/4) which enables it to obtain contributions towards capital schemes from developers through S106 agreements (also known as developers' contributions or planning obligations). The SPG was updated to a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in June 2013. The aim of the SPD is to ensure that the impact of new developments on Council infrastructure and services is met in full by the developer. The level of charge is based on the nature of the development, and its impact. S106 agreements specify the amounts which must be spent on particular Council services and in what geographical areas. In some cases a specific project is specified.

2.9.5 The Council maintains a database showing the details of the planning application, the application site, and proposals for development. The database also contains information on all S106 contributions agreed and received, and amounts allocated to and spent on specific projects and expenditure.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 2.9.6 The S106 framework has now been affected by the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations, which came into force on 6 April 2010. Further Amendment Regulations came into force in April 2011 and , April 2012, and April 2013, and further amendment regulations are due to come into force by the end of January 2014. The CIL enables local planning authorities to raise a standard levy on any new development in their area. The levy is to be used to fund improvements to the infrastructure of the Council area as a whole e.g. roads, schools, hospitals and parks.
- 2.9.7 CIL is intended to make it easier for developers to predict how much they will be asked to contribute; it should increase fairness by broadening the range of developments requiring a contribution; it allows the cumulative impact of small developments to be better addressed and enables important sub-regional infrastructure to be funded.
- 2.9.8 Local Authorities can choose whether or not to adopt CIL. However the new regulations which are about to come into effect will limit the use of S106 planning obligations with effect from April 2015 (previously April 2014), to the funding of affordable housing and the direct impact of specific developments, e.g. a new road junction for a new development.
- 2.9.9 It will therefore be necessary for West Berkshire Council to implement CIL in order to continue to receive funding from developers towards its capital programme. The Council has therefore been working on the adoption of a CIL for West Berkshire, with the current timetable allowing for adoption by 1st April 2014. A report setting out proposals for the adoption and implementation of CIL will be taken to a meeting of Full Council in March 2014. It should be noted that the level of funding from this source is likely to be lower than has been received through the S106 regime in recent years (approximately £5 million per year since 2004/05).

Capital Receipts

- 2.9.10 By maximising the capital receipts which are available to fund capital expenditure, the revenue cost of borrowing to fund the capital programme can be kept to a minimum. It is therefore important for the Asset Management group to monitor and review the use of the Council's assets, in particular land and buildings, to consider whether they continue to offer good value for money for operational purposes, or whether they should be considered for future development or for disposal.
- 2.9.11 If the decision is taken to offer an asset for sale, the Asset Management and Capital Strategy Groups will consider the potential use of the capital receipt before any recommendations are made to allocate receipts to fund any new capital schemes or the increases in costs to existing schemes.

2.10 Minimum Revenue Provision Statement

- 2.10.1 Statutory guidance on Local Authority capital spending requires the Council to set a policy for its Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for the repayment of debt to fund capital expenditure. The policy must be approved by Full Council each year. The guidance offers four options for calculation of MRP, of which West Berkshire applies Option 3, the Asset Life Method. This method is the equivalent of charging to revenue each year the full cost of interest and principle repayments on annuity loans which are taken out over the life of the asset to be funded.
- 2.10.2 This is achieved by undertaking any new prudential borrowing on an annuity basis with the length of loan linked to the life of the asset. We also make an annual provision for the future payment of the Council's outstanding maturity loans, which were all inherited from the former Berkshire County Council. This provision is equivalent to the annual repayments which would be made if these loans were refinanced on an annuity basis. The amount of revenue provision to fund the capital programme, allowed for in the MTFs, is arrived at on this basis.

3. FUNDING OF THE PROPOSED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012-2017

- 3.1 The size of the Capital Programme is determined by the amount which the Council can afford to borrow together with other sources of capital funding, including capital receipts, government grants and developers' contributions.
- 3.2 The draft Capital Programme for the five year period 2014/15 to 2018/19 is summarised in appendix 1. This shows the amounts proposed to be funded from Council funds (including prudential borrowing and capital receipts), Section 106/CIL contributions and other external funds (mainly government grants).

Estimated Capital Receipts Available to Fund the Capital Programme

- 3.3 The exact amount of capital receipts which will be available to help fund the capital programme will not be known until final decisions have been taken about the disposal of surplus assets and sale prices have been agreed. However, based on estimated value of the assets currently expected to be disposed of, we estimate that there will approximately £4 million capital receipts available to contribute towards the cost of the Council funded capital programme in the period 2014-2019.
- 3.4 It has been assumed that some or all of the proceeds of the following properties will be available to fund the overall capital programme:
- Taceham House
 - The Control Tower
 - Pound Lane Depot
 - Land adjacent to the Phoenix Centre
- 3.5 If capital receipts are used to offset the need to borrow over a long period e.g. 40 years, as for building improvements, there would be a greater total saving over the whole repayment period, than if they are used to offset borrowing over a shorter term. However using capital receipts to offset borrowing over a shorter period (e.g. five to ten years) will produce the highest level of saving in annual borrowing cost as a percentage of capital spend in the short term. In order to make capital spending plans affordable over the next five years, the strategy for financing the proposed capital programme therefore assumes that capital receipts will be used mainly to offset the need to borrow to fund assets with a useful life of five or ten years.
- 3.6 If the actual level of capital receipts is significantly lower than the amount assumed, e.g. if the Council decides to not to dispose of some assets which are currently earmarked for disposal, or not to sell them at their full market value, then the planned level of spending in the later years of the programme will have to be reviewed.

The Cost of Borrowing to Fund the Capital Programme

- 3.7 The annual increase in the revenue cost of borrowing, which would be required to fund the initially proposed five year capital programme, is shown in Table 1 (below):

Table 1 –Annual Cost of Borrowing to Fund Approved Level of Programme 2014-2019						
	2014/15 £000	2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2017/18 £000	5 year Total £000
Annual Increase in cost of borrowing	510	607	500	500	500	2,617

- 3.8 This differs from the assumptions in 2013-18 Capital Strategy, which anticipated an average annual increase in the cost of borrowing of £510,000 each year, or £2,550 over five years. This is because of the proposal to front fund approximately £1.2 million investment in highways in 2014/15 of which £270,000 is proposed to be funded by capital receipts, with the remaining £1 million to be met from savings in the Highways capital maintenance programme over 10 years.
- 3.9 These figures are based on the current level of PWLB interest rates. Rates are not now expected to increase significantly over the next two years, although rates do fluctuate slightly depending on the level of demand for government gilts. In mid January 2014, rates were slightly higher than was assumed when the 2013-2018 capital programme was approved e.g. 1.8% for annuity loans over five years and 4.3% over 40 years, as compared with 1.3% and 3.8% in January 2013. (These rates include the 0.2% “certainty” discount currently being offered to those local authorities, including West Berkshire, which have shared their medium term capital spending and borrowing plans with HM Treasury). However, in estimating future capital financing costs, it has been assumed that PWLB interest rates will increase by around 0.5% each year in 2016/17 and 2017/18 (i.e. by 1% in total).

External Funding – Government Grants

- 3.10 The externally funded element of the proposed programme set out in Appendix 1 mainly consists of government grants. The main elements of capital grant funding are for Highways, Education, Adult Social Care and Disabled Facilities Grants.

- 3.11 The Highways grant for integrated transport schemes and capital maintenance has already been confirmed for 2014/15 at £4,550,000. This figure includes the increase in the highways maintenance capital grant for 2014/15, which was announced in the 2012 Autumn Statement. The Highways maintenance capital grant for 2015/16 to 2018/19 is currently assumed to remain at the level originally allocated for 2014/15 of £3,126,000. £2,164,000 additional grant funding has also been awarded from the Department for Transport's Pinchpoint Fund in 2013/14 and 2014/15 for widening of the A4 at Calcot. The 2014/15 to 2016/17 programmes also include flood defence schemes which are expected to be funded by grant funding from the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and transport grants from the Local Transport Body.
- 3.12 Community capacity grants (to promote and improve personalisation, reform and efficiency of adult social care) have been awarded from 2012/13 to 2014/15. The Disabled Facilities Grant for 2014/15 has also been confirmed at £661,000, a small increase (in line with inflation) on its 2013/14 level.
- 3.13 For Education, provisional allocations of basic need grant for 2014/15 to 2016/17 of £7.1 million and £7.5 million respectively have now been received. These allocations are significantly higher than for the 2012 to 2014 and are more in line with the increase in demand for primary school places from September 2012 onwards. Basic need grants from 2017/19 onwards are not yet known.
- 3.14 Bids were also submitted in the spring of 2013 for Targeted Basic Need Grant (for new primary school places) and the Demographic Growth Capital Fund (DGCF - for the expansion of sixth form facilities). These bids were successful in obtaining £2.4 million additional grant for specific schemes. £645,000 of the DGCF grant was awarded to Trinity School and will be paid directly to the school, so is not included in the Council capital programme. The balance of these grants not expected to be spent by the end of March 2013 is included the new programme, mainly in 2014/15.
- 3.15 A new capital grant of £366,000 has also been awarded in 2014/15 to help meet the capital costs of the requirement for universal free school meals for reception and key stage 1 pupils.
- 3.16 The Education capital maintenance grants for 2014/15 has been confirmed at £2.3 million. Maintenance grants from 2015/16 onwards have also been estimated £2.3 million per year.

Table 2: Actual and Estimated Capital Grant Allocations 2012/13 to 2016/17					
	2012/13 £000	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000	2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000
Highways:				<i>Est.</i>	<i>Est.</i>
Integrated Transport Grant	784	784	1,103	1,103	1,103
Highways Capital Maintenance	3,420	3,918	3,447	3,126	3,126
Pinchpoint Fund	0	800	1,364	0	0
			<i>Est.</i>	<i>Est.</i>	<i>Est.</i>
DEFRA funding for flood defence	0	974	1,622	1,055	2,118
Local Transport Body	0	0	0	1,480	929
Total for Highways	4,204	6,476	7,536	6,764	7,276
Care Commissioning Housing and Safeguarding:				<i>Est.</i>	<i>Est.</i>
Disabled Facilities Grant	648	648	661	661	661
Adult Social Care:					
Community Capacity Grant	258	269	275	0	0
Education:					
Basic need	765	1,330	1,330	7,122	7,478
Universal Infant free school meals	0	0	366	0	0
Targeted Basic Need	0	121	1,935	0	0
Demographic Growth Capital Fund for Brookfields School	0	364	0	0	0
				<i>Est.</i>	<i>Est.</i>
Capital Maintenance	2,831	2,483	2,309	2,300	2,300
Total non devolved Education Grants	3,596	4,298	5,940	9,422	9,778

Section 106 Developers Contributions/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

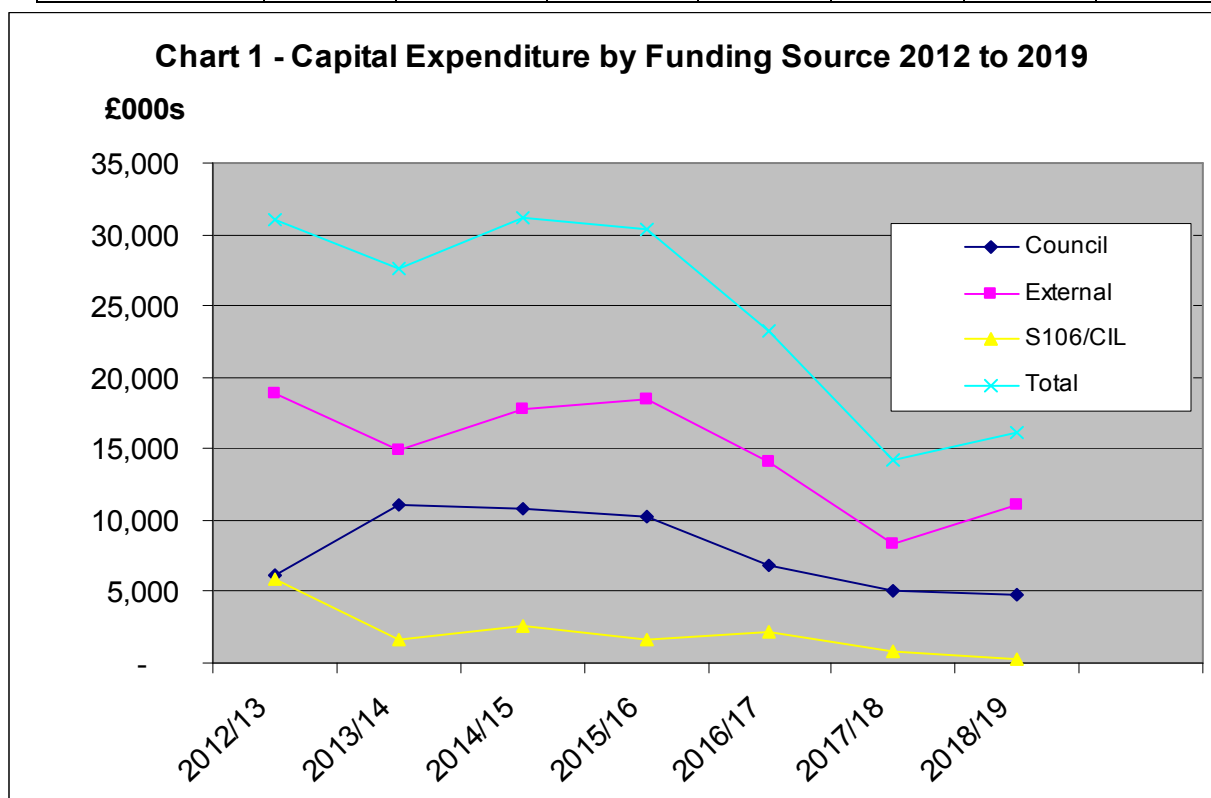
3.17 The proposed programme includes £7.6 million to be funded from section 106 developers' contributions and/or CIL for Education and Highways schemes. Most of the S106 contributions which are included in the funding for the proposed programme from 2013/14 to 2015/16 for Highways and Education have already been formally agreed with and/or received from developers.

3.18 From April 2015, the current Section 106 framework will, to a large extent, be replaced by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL - see also paragraphs 2.9.6-2.9.9 above). The likely level of income from the CIL is not yet known and it is currently thought possible that the new framework may result in lower levels of capital contributions than the current S106 regime.

Total Forecast Capital Spending 2014 to 2019

3.19 Total planned capital expenditure for the five years of the capital programme for 2014 to 2019 (as shown in Appendix 1) is £115.2 million. This figure consists of £37.9 million from Council resources, £7.7 million from S106 contributions and/or CIL and £69.6 million from other external funding sources, mainly government grants. Annual expenditure for the period of the programme is summarised in table 3 and illustrated in chart 1 (below) in comparison with forecast expenditure for 2013/14 and actual expenditure in 2012/13.

	2012/13 Actual £000	2013/14 Planned £000	2014/15 Planned £000	2015/16 Planned £000	2016/17 Planned £000	2017/18 Planned £000	2018/19 Planned £000
Borrowing	4,410	9,134	10,471	6,617	6,865	5,071	4,785
Capital Receipts	1,781	1,741	350	3,700	0	0	0
Total Council Funds	6,191	11,060	10,821	10,317	6,865	5,071	4,785
External	18,847	14,855	17,797	18,414	14,120	8,291	11,021
S106/CIL	5,943	1,703	2,616	1,655	2,227	879	277
Total	30,981	27,433	31,234	30,386	23,212	14,241	16,083



4. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13 TO 2016/17

- 4.1 The proposed capital programme for 2014/15 to 2018/19 is summarised in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 gives a more detailed breakdown of the programme. In both appendices the capital expenditure for each year is broken down into the elements which are funded from Council funding (mainly from borrowing), external funding sources (mainly government grants) and Section 106 developers' contributions.
- 4.2 The main elements of the proposed programme for each service grouping are also summarised below.

4.3 Resources

ICT

- 4.3.1 The currently proposed level of investment in Council ICT systems in the proposed programme for 2014 to 2019 is approximately £632,000 per year on average over five years, or £3,162,000 in total. This has been increased slightly from the level of the 2013 to 2018 programme (of £486,000 per year), by extending the time period over which some hardware is funded, and by making use of revenue savings as a result of capital investment wherever possible.
- 4.3.2 The ICT Programme Board has reviewed its priorities and identified a range of additional projects which are likely to be required to enable the most efficient running of the Council's systems and services for the next five years. The proposed programme provides sufficient funding for the most critical and urgent schemes and invest to save schemes, but there is still a shortfall of £1.2 million to fund all the important and strategic (priorities 3 and 2) items identified by ICT Strategy Board.
- 4.3.3 It should also be noted that the proposed ICT programme only allows for maintenance and improvement of systems which support the Council's existing services and ways of working. It does not allow for any significant transformation of Council services to achieve major service improvements or efficiency savings e.g. through the development of more web-enabled service delivery. Any future plans for transformation of Council Services will therefore need to take into account the additional cost of ICT based solutions which will be necessary to implement the changes.
- 4.3.4 The ICT Programme Board will continue to review its priorities in the context of a longer term ICT strategy and will work in conjunction with the Capital Strategy Group over the coming year to propose ways in which the most important projects can be funded from within available resources.
- 4.3.5 The programme also includes £700,000 for the Superfast Broadband project (listed under Corporate Projects in appendices 1 and 2).

Members Bids and Community Planning

4.3.6 The capital programme for the resources directorate also includes £78,000 per year on average for the members bids programme, managed with the Finance Service. The Strategic Support programme consists of £97,000 per year on average to support community oriented projects including the implementation of Parish Plans, improvements to rural services, the shopmobility scheme in Newbury and the development visions for Newbury and the east of the district.

4.4 Environment

Highways

4.4.1 The largest element of the Environment programme consists of Highways and Transport improvements. The 2014/15 Highways Capital Programme is funded at approximately £11.7 million comprising the following sources:

- Council funded capital - £2.2 million (this includes £1.2 million additional funding for lifecycle investment in the A4);
- LTP (DfT) Grant funding - £4.6 million (including £300k – 2nd year of the 2012 Autumn Statement funding);
- Defra Grant in Aid Flood Defence funding - £1.6 million (subject to successful bids);
- A4 Calcot Pinch Point funding - £1.4 million;
- S106 developer contributions - £2.0 million.

4.4.2 In line with Central Government guidance the main focus of the programme centres on maintenance of the highways infrastructure. £2.2 million of Council funding and £3.5 million of the DfT grant funding is to be spent on Maintenance. Of this approximately 85% will be spent on surface and structural reconditioning, with the remaining funds spent maintaining other key highway assets (structures, drainage, traffic signals, street lighting upgrades, signs and road markings etc).

4.4.3 A number of key Transport Improvements will be funded from S106 developer contributions and from the £1m Integrated Transport element of the DfT Grant. These include a continuation of the roll-out of Real Time Passenger Information at bus stops, on street parking and demand management improvements in Newbury along with other essential themes including network management improvements, road safety, and public transport, walking and cycling improvements.

4.4.4 2014/15 will see further progress in delivering flood alleviation measures across the District. 2013/14 will see the successful delivery of a number of key flood defence schemes including the Newbury Flood Alleviation Scheme, the Cold Ash retention pond phase 1 and property level protection to 40 residences in Oak End Way, Padworth. Building upon this success the service is looking to secure funding to deliver Tull Way and Cold Ash Phase 2 retention ponds as part of the Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan, Boxford Flood Alleviation Scheme and Lambourn Surface Water Management Plan, along with funding for a number of studies across the District.

Planning and Countryside

4.4.5 The Planning and Countryside programme consists of an average of £122,000 per year investment in the maintenance and improvement of rights of way, public conveniences and children's play areas.

Culture and Environmental Protection

4.4.6 The programme for Culture and Environmental Protection includes £200,000 to complete the restoration and redevelopment of the Newbury Museum. Over the five year period of the programme, £50,000 per year of Council funding is also planned to be invested in the ongoing maintenance of Shaw House (in line with the conditions of Heritage Lottery Funding for the building) and an average of £164,000 per year on maintenance and modernisation of Leisure Centres. The current programme does not allow for the completion of the permanent car park for Shaw House at an estimated cost of £220,000.

4.4.7 The programme also includes £234,000 for improvements to the energy efficiency and carbon footprint of Council Buildings. This is funded through revenue savings achieved through energy efficiency schemes which have been implemented in the last three years.

4.5 Communities

Education

4.5.1 Capital investment within the Education programme remains predominantly focussed on delivering suitable and sufficient places to meet primary basic need pressures, urgent capital maintenance and health and safety needs across the school estate. In the first three years of the programme this accounts for approximately 80% of the capital investment in schools.

- 4.5.2 Numbers of pupils coming into reception classes remains consistently high across West Berkshire, with further significant increases forecast for Newbury and Hungerford. This will continue to place significant pressure on the 2014/15 programme and beyond, in order for the Council to meet its statutory obligation to provide a school place for every eligible child in West Berkshire who wants one. The aim of the proposed programme is to deliver of sufficient pupil places to meet the forecast growth in demand up to academic year 2017/18. However it is expected that schools will be running at close to 100% capacity by 2017/18.
- 4.5.3 Newbury is forecast to see the most significant levels of primary basic need over the next 5 years. Work is underway to develop solutions to meet this basic need pressure and £7.7m has been allocated from the 2-year 2015/16 and 2016/17 basic need allocation to deliver an additional 420 places. The ongoing and regular review of forecast data will provide increasing clarity on any medium to long term pressures in Newbury.
- 4.5.4 Levels of urgent capital maintenance need do not appear to be reducing. The programme has been running for some time on an annual capital investment of approximately £2.3m per year. It is anticipated that this level will need to continue for the duration of the current programme. The proposed programme is based on the assumption that government grant for capital maintenance will also remain at this level.
- 4.5.5 A significant project in the programme that supports both primary basic need and improved education outcomes is the proposed capital investment in John O'Gaunt school. This project will deliver additional primary places for Hungerford and also provide capital investment in the current building stock at the school to address condition and suitability issues.
- 4.5.6 Towards the latter part of the programme there is pre-project preparation and design work to address the secondary basic need pressures, which are likely to be a significant feature of the latter stages of the current and future programmes.

Corporate Buildings

- 4.5.7 The Corporate Buildings programme consists of approximately £950,000 per year for essential maintenance of other Council buildings, including and fire safety measures, plus approximately £709,000 per year for the salary cost of staff delivering building related programmes for all services (including the Education programme). This level of investment is expected to be able to meet the Council's highest priorities for building maintenance and safety over the next seven years.,

Children's and Youth Services

- 4.5.8 The programme for Children's and Youth Services allow for £20,000 per year for adaptations to the homes of foster carers to facilitate care of looked after children.

Adult Social Care

- 4.5.9 The adult social care programme for 2014/15 includes £238,000 from Community Capacity Grant awarded by the Department of Health mainly in 2011/12 to improve the personalisation and efficiency of the service. These schemes, which include Telecare, pre-payment cards and aids and adaptations pre-payment client self-assessment and supported living are part of a three year efficiency programme started in 2012/13. A further £780,000 Community Capacity Grant is available from the 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 allocations. The Adult Social Care Efficiency Board is in the process of developing new capital projects to utilise these monies and the first of the resulting schemes are likely to commence in the second half of 2014/15.
- 4.5.10 The programme also provides £85,000 per year for occupational health equipment.

Care Commissioning, Safeguarding and Housing

- 4.5.11 Approximately £1.4 million per year is provided for home repairs and adaptations to help elderly and disabled people maintain independent living in their own homes. This is needed to fund the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) programme and includes approximately £650,000 per year from government grant with the remainder matched from Council resources.
- 4.5.12 The programme also provides for grants to help older, disabled and other vulnerable people on low incomes maintain their homes in a fit state, which are administered by an external consortium. It also includes funding to maintain the Council's temporary accommodation units fit for purpose.
- 4.5.13 In addition, in 2014/15 and 2015/16 it is proposed to invest £990,000 in a development of 73 affordable housing units by Thames Valley Housing Calcot. This scheme is to be funded from capital receipts and S106 funds for affordable housing.

4.6 Capital Salaries

- 4.6.1 The programmes for Education, Corporate Buildings and Highways include a significant element for the cost of staff required to deliver the capital programme. The Countryside and Housing Programme each also allow for the cost of one post to help manage the programme. The total estimated cost of capital funded salaries in 2014/15 is £1.4 million.

4.6.2 Staffing levels required to deliver the capital programme are reviewed annually to take account of the size of the programme. For example, following a review of the structure of the Property Services team, the cost of property capital salaries is expected to be £93,000 lower in 2014/15 than in 2013/14 to take account of the decreasing level of capital building schemes going forward. The level of capital funded salaries, particularly for Education and Highways will continue to be reviewed over the next five years, with a view to achieving further savings where possible, while maintaining an appropriate level of resource to deliver the agreed programme.

West Berkshire Capital Programme: 2014/15 to 2018/19

	2014/2015				2015/2016				2016/2017				2017/2018				2018/19				TOTAL - All Years			
	Council	External	s.106/ CIL	Total	Council	External	s.106/ CIL	Total	Council	External	s.106/ CIL	Total	Council	External	s.106/ CIL	Total	Council	External	s.106/ CIL	Total	Council	External	s.106/ CIL	Total
Chief Executive																								
ICT	698,000	-	-	698,000	624,000	-	-	624,000	570,000	-	-	570,000	815,000	-	-	815,000	455,000	-	-	455,000	3,162,000	-	-	3,162,000
Finance	80,000	-	-	80,000	80,000	-	-	80,000	80,000	-	-	80,000	80,000	-	-	80,000	70,000	-	-	70,000	390,000	-	-	390,000
Strategic Support	117,450	-	-	117,450	106,000	-	-	106,000	106,000	-	-	106,000	106,000	-	-	106,000	94,000	-	-	94,000	529,450	-	-	529,450
Total Chief Executive	895,450	-	-	895,450	810,000	-	-	810,000	756,000	-	-	756,000	1,001,000	-	-	1,001,000	619,000	-	-	619,000	4,081,450	-	-	4,081,450
Environment																								
Highways & Transport	2,207,098	7,536,000	1,964,520	11,707,618	1,040,968	6,764,000	1,078,352	8,883,320	1,031,968	7,276,500	454,668	8,763,136	1,028,968	4,159,000	270,260	5,458,228	1,197,968	4,159,000	276,910	5,633,878	6,506,970	29,894,500	4,044,710	40,446,180
Planning & Countryside	125,000	-	-	125,000	125,000	-	-	125,000	125,000	-	-	125,000	125,000	-	-	125,000	118,149	-	-	118,149	618,149	-	-	618,149
Cultural Services	570,477	122,585	-	693,062	212,712	-	-	212,712	178,853	-	-	178,853	259,405	-	-	259,405	259,405	-	-	259,405	1,480,852	122,585	-	1,603,437
Total Environment	2,902,575	7,658,585	1,964,520	12,525,680	1,378,680	6,764,000	1,078,352	9,221,032	1,335,821	7,276,500	454,668	9,066,989	1,413,373	4,159,000	270,260	5,842,633	1,575,522	4,159,000	276,910	6,011,432	8,605,971	30,017,085	4,044,710	42,667,766
Communities																								
Education	4,790,496	9,239,662	651,265	14,681,423	4,469,643	10,208,629	437,062	15,115,334	2,507,763	6,182,460	1,772,224	10,462,447	383,685	3,470,909	609,160	4,463,754	310,255	6,200,570	-	6,510,825	12,461,842	35,302,230	3,469,711	51,233,783
Corporate Buildings	1,159,000	-	-	1,159,000	1,335,650	-	-	1,335,650	1,342,878	-	-	1,342,878	1,350,038	-	-	1,350,038	1,357,341	-	-	1,357,341	6,544,907	-	-	6,544,907
Children's & Youth Services	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000	100,000	-	-	100,000
Adult Social Care	85,500	237,821	-	323,321	85,500	780,420	-	865,920	85,500	-	-	85,500	85,500	-	-	85,500	85,500	-	-	85,500	427,500	1,018,241	-	1,445,741
Commissioning, Housing & Safeguarding	792,500	661,000	-	1,453,500	1,642,500	661,000	140,000	2,443,500	792,500	661,000	-	1,453,500	792,500	661,000	-	1,453,500	792,500	661,000	-	1,453,500	4,812,500	3,305,000	140,000	8,257,500
Total Communities	6,847,496	10,138,483	651,265	17,637,244	7,553,293	11,650,049	577,062	19,780,404	4,748,641	6,843,460	1,772,224	13,364,325	2,631,723	4,131,909	609,160	7,372,792	2,565,596	6,861,570	-	9,427,166	24,346,749	39,625,471	3,609,711	67,581,931
Corporate Schemes	175,000	-	-	175,000	575,000	-	-	575,000	25,000	-	-	25,000	25,000	-	-	25,000	25,000	-	-	25,000	825,000	-	-	825,000
Total	10,820,521	17,797,068	2,615,785	31,233,374	10,316,973	18,414,049	1,655,414	30,386,436	6,865,462	14,119,960	2,226,892	23,212,314	5,071,096	8,290,909	879,420	14,241,425	4,785,118	11,020,570	276,910	16,082,598	37,859,170	69,642,556	7,654,421	115,156,147

Priority	Cost Centre	Project Title	Description of Project	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17				2017/18				2018/19				All Years			
				Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total
ICT																											
5	New	Server Windows Licensing	Upgrade Windows Server Licences to 2008 R2 (Costs are largely resource to do the work!) Then start on Server 2012 upgrades in 2017/18.	75,000			75,000	40,000			40,000	20,000			20,000	50,000			50,000			0	185,000	0	0	185,000	
5	New	BACs / Cheques System	Replacement of the existing system which goes end of life in June 2014.	12,000			12,000				0				0				0			0	12,000	0	0	12,000	
4	87110	Corp It Replacement	Re-provision of WBC ICT systems and equipment on an ongoing basis spikes to provide major rebuilds of servers etc.	360,000			360,000	360,000			360,000	360,000			360,000	360,000			360,000			360,000	1,800,000	0	0	1,800,000	
4	87277	Application Firewall replacement	Refresh of Application Firewall system which will be nearing end of life	0			0				0				0				0			0	0	0	0	0	
4	87282	PSN Accreditation Maintenance	Essential security enhancement to maintain compliance with Government Connect requirements.	10,000			10,000	10,000			10,000	10,000			10,000	10,000			10,000			10,000	50,000	0	0	50,000	
4	New	GIS Infrastructure	Funding for the maintenance and development of the Council's GIS infrastructure when the current balance sheet fund has been depleted.	40,000			40,000	40,000			40,000	40,000			40,000	40,000			40,000			40,000	200,000	0	0	200,000	
4	New	Citrix AppV & PVS Upgrade	Upgrade Citrix AppV/PVS Infrastructure				0				0				75,000				75,000			0	75,000	0	0	75,000	
4	New	Citrix Desktop Compatibility	Upgrade Citrix Desktop to Windows 7				0				0				0				0			0	0	0	0	0	
4	New	Citrix Infrastructure Upgrade - Access Gateways	Replace / Renew Netcare Access Gateways				0	0			0	75,000			75,000	0			0			40,000	115,000	0	0	115,000	
4	New	Procenter Upgrade and VOIP Integration	Hardware/software upgrade. To include remote agent working (virtual contact centre)				0				0				0				0			0	0	0	0	0	
4	New	Upgrade Backup Infrastructure	Upgrade / Replace Backup associated hardware	50,000			50,000	5,000			5,000	5,000			5,000	5,000			5,000			5,000	70,000	0	0	70,000	
4	New	VPN Firewall Replacements	Replace Juniper VPN Firewall concentrators				0	75,000			75,000	0			0				0			0	75,000	0	0	75,000	
4	New	Replacement ICT Helpdesk System	Current version out of date and unsupported. New system could improve efficiency of department	0			0	0			0	0			0				0			0	0	0	0	0	
4	New	Perimeter Firewalls	Replacement of current perimeter firewalls which will be unsupported from Q2 2016				0				0	60,000			60,000				0			0	60,000	0	0	60,000	
4	New	Corporate SAN	Existing Hitachi SAN is now end of product life. Risk of 'end of support' from 2016? Need to expand fast storage soon to accommodate new Database configuration and EV requirements	40,000			40,000				0				0	275,000			275,000			0	315,000	0	0	315,000	
Invest to save	Franking Mavhine Purchase - Invest to Save	Purchase Franking Machine instead of leasing		0			0	15,000			15,000				0				0			0	15,000	0	0	15,000	
Invest to save	Procurement of corporate MFDs	Procurement of new corporate MFDs with inbuilt card readers which will release the current revenue line item for Rental saving approx £90k p.a.		111,000			111,000	79,000			79,000				0				0			0	190,000	0	0	190,000	
				698,000	0	0	698,000	624,000	0	0	624,000	570,000	0	0	570,000	815,000	0	0	815,000	455,000	0	0	455,000	3,162,000	0	0	3,162,000
Finance																											
	87610	Member Bids		80,000			80,000	80,000			80,000	80,000			80,000	80,000			80,000			70,000	390,000	0	0	390,000	
				80,000	0	0	80,000	80,000	0	0	80,000	80,000	0	0	80,000	80,000	0	0	80,000	70,000	0	0	70,000	390,000	0	0	390,000
Strategic Support																											
	87072	Shop Mobility	Provides electric wheelchairs for use by people with mobility problems visiting Newbury town centre	6,000			6,000	6,000			6,000	6,000			6,000	6,000			6,000			6,000	30,000	0	0	30,000	
	87750	LRIE	Regeneration of London Road Industrial Estate	40,700			40,700				0				0				0			0	40,700	0	0	40,700	
	87751	Market Street	Redevelopment of Market Street (Grainger) Self Financing				0				0				0				0			0	0	0	0	0	
	87752	The Wharf	Redevelopment of Wharf Area	5,750			5,750				0				0				0			0	5,750	0	0	5,750	
	87621	Newbury Vision	To support the redevelopment of Newbury Town Centre	0			0	35,000			35,000	35,000			35,000	35,000			35,000			35,000	140,000	0	0	140,000	
	87621	East of Area vision	To support the redevelopment of the east of West Berkshire	10,000			10,000	10,000			10,000	10,000			10,000	10,000			10,000			10,000	50,000	0	0	50,000	
	New	Community Planning	Matched funding to support local community schemes	55,000			55,000	55,000			55,000	55,000			55,000	55,000			55,000			43,000	263,000	0	0	263,000	
				117,450	0	0	117,450	106,000	0	0	106,000	106,000	0	0	106,000	106,000	0	0	106,000	94,000	0	0	94,000	529,450	0	0	529,450
Highways & Transport																											
CAPITALISED MAINTENANCE																											
		Patching	Annual Programme	632,256	13,170	0	645,426	632,256	17,502	0	649,758	632,256	9,022	0	641,278	632,256	9,022	0	641,278	553,756	9,022	0	562,778	3,082,780	57,738	0	3,140,518

Priority	Cost Centre	Project Title	Description of Project	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17				2017/18				2018/19				All Years						
				Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total							
		Surface Treatment	Annual Programme	800,712	60,000		860,712	800,712	60,000		860,712	800,712	60,000		860,712	800,712	60,000		860,712	722,212	60,000		782,212	3,925,060	300,000	0	4,225,060			
		Savings to pay for post snow repairs		-348,000			-348,000	-348,000			-348,000				-348,000				-348,000				0	-1,392,000	0	0	-1,392,000			
		Lifecycle investment in A4		1,160,130			1,160,130				0				0				0				0	1,160,130	0	0	1,160,130			
		Savings to pay for lifecycle investment in A4	Annual Programme	-38,000			-38,000	-44,000	0		-44,000	-53,000	0		-53,000	-56,000	0		-56,000	-78,000				-78,000	-269,000	0	0	-269,000		
		HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENTS																												
		Highway Maintenance																												
		2014/15 Schemes	Annual Programme		2,225,590		2,225,590		0		0		0		0		0		0				0	0	2,225,590	0	0	2,225,590		
		Autumn Statement	Additional Maintenance Funding		321,000		321,000				0				0				0				0	0	321,000	0	0	321,000		
		2015/16 Schemes	Annual Programme				0		2,243,650		2,243,650		0		0		0		0				0	0	2,243,650	0	0	2,243,650		
		2016/17 Schemes	Annual Programme				0			0	0		2,201,926	0	2,201,926		0		0				0	0	2,201,926	0	0	2,201,926		
		2017/18 Schemes	Annual Programme				0			0	0				0		2,210,948	0	2,210,948				0	0	2,210,948	0	0	2,210,948		
		2018/19 Schemes	Annual Programme				0			0	0				0				2,210,948				2,210,948	0	2,210,948	0	0	2,210,948		
		Bridge Works																												
		Boundary Road Bridge Widening				280,000	280,000																	0	0	280,000	0	280,000		
		Essential Maintenance			350,000		350,000		400,000		400,000		400,000		400,000		400,000		400,000				400,000	400,000	0	1,950,000	0	1,950,000		
		Preventative Maintenance			100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000				100,000	100,000	0	500,000	0	500,000		
		Land Drainage and Flooding																												
		Land Drainage Works	Annual Programme		200,000		200,000		200,000		200,000		200,000		200,000		200,000		200,000				200,000	200,000	0	1,000,000	0	1,000,000		
		Drainage and Flood Defence 2014/15			0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0				0	0	0	0	0	0		
		Thornford Road to Ford	Drainage repairs		55,000		55,000				0				0				0				0	0	55,000	0	55,000			
		Brightwalton Halt	SW drainage replacement		75,000		75,000				0				0				0				0	0	75,000	0	75,000			
		2015/16			0		0		0		0		0		0		0		0				0	0	0	0	0			
		B4009 Aldworth	SW drainage replacement				0		55,000		55,000		55,000		55,000		55,000		55,000				55,000	55,000	0	55,000	0	55,000		
		Leckhamstead	Shop Lane SW drainage				0		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000				75,000	75,000	0	75,000	0	75,000		
		2016/17			0		0		0		0		150,000		150,000		150,000		150,000				150,000	150,000	0	150,000	0	150,000		
		2017/18			0		0		0		0		0		0		150,000		150,000				150,000	150,000	0	300,000	0	300,000		
		EA Funded Projects																												
		Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan																												
		Cold Ash Hill Retention Pond phase 1	Subject to DEFRA funding		30,000		30,000				0				0				0				0	0	30,000	0	30,000			
		Cold Ash Hill Retention Pond phase 2			680,000		680,000				0				0				0				0	0	680,000	0	680,000			
		Tull Way Retention Pond			500,000		500,000		25,000		25,000		25,000		25,000		25,000		25,000				25,000	25,000	0	525,000	0	525,000		
		Dunstan Park Flood Alleviation	Subject to DEFRA funding		25,000		25,000		800,000		800,000		800,000		800,000		800,000		800,000				800,000	800,000	0	825,000	0	825,000		
		Dunstan Green Flood Alleviation	Subject to DEFRA funding		50,000		50,000		20,000		20,000		1,650,000		1,650,000		1,650,000		1,650,000				1,650,000	1,650,000	0	1,720,000	0	1,720,000		
		Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Schemes																												
		Boxford FAS	Subject to DEFRA funding		68,000		68,000		5,000		5,000		467,500		467,500		467,500		467,500				467,500	467,500	0	540,500	0	540,500		
		Stratfield Mortimer Flood Alleviation Study	Subject to DEFRA funding		30,000		30,000				0				0				0				0	0	30,000	0	30,000			
		Woolhampton Surface Water Mngmt	Subject to DEFRA funding		40,000		40,000				0				0				0				0	0	40,000	0	40,000			
		Waller Drive Flood Alleviation Study	Subject to DEFRA funding		14,000		14,000		155,000		155,000		155,000		155,000		155,000		155,000				155,000	155,000	0	169,000	0	169,000		
		Lambourn SWMP	Subject to DEFRA funding		120,000		120,000				0				0				0				0	0	120,000	0	120,000			
		Grazeley Green	Subject to DEFRA funding		10,000		10,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000				50,000	50,000	0	60,000	0	60,000		
		Community Safety																												
		Street Lighting																												
		Replacement of high energy lanterns with energy efficient LED's	New & Replacement lighting		100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000		100,000				100,000	100,000	0	500,000	0	500,000		
		Upgrading Parking Equipment	Parking equipment		190,000		190,000				0				0				0				0	0	190,000	0	190,000			
		On Street Parking Charging	Parking equipment				50,000	50,000			0				0				0				0	0	0	50,000	50,000			
		School Safety Improvements																												
			Annual Programme		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000				75,000	75,000	0	375,000	0	375,000		
		Footways																												

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Priority	Cost Centre	Project Title	Description of Project	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17				2017/18				2018/19				All Years				
				Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	
		Improved Footways	Annual Programme		50,000		50,000		70,000		70,000		70,000		70,000		70,000		70,000		70,000		0	330,000	0	330,000		
		A340 Aldermaston Rail approach widening	Annual Programme			100,000	100,000						0				0				0		0	0	100,000	100,000		
		Paices Hill footway investigation	S106 funded			20,000	20,000						0				0				0		0	0	20,000	20,000		
		Cycleways																										
		New / Improved Cycleways	Annual Programme		50,000		50,000		70,000		70,000		70,000		70,000		70,000		70,000		70,000		0	330,000	0	330,000		
		Hermitage to Hampstead Norreys	Potentially grant funded foot/cycle link			50,000	50,000						0				0				0		0	0	50,000	50,000		
		Works Arising from Studies																										
		Newbury Movement																										
		St Johns Roundabout (assessment)	Air quality & traffic assessment			500,000	500,000						0				0				0		0	0	1,000,000	1,000,000		
		East of Newbury Study works	Works arising from study group			100,000	100,000						0				0				0		0	0	100,000	100,000		
		Parish S106 Improvements																										
		Hungerford S106 investigations	S106 investigation/studies			10,000	10,000						0				0				0		0	0	50,000	50,000		
		Thatcham Town Centre Improvements	S106 investigation/studies			20,000	20,000						0				0				0		0	0	20,000	20,000		
		Safety and Accident Reduction Works																										
		Accident Reduction Works	Annual programme		50,000		50,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000		0	350,000	0	350,000		
		Speed Limit Reviews	Annual programme		20,000		20,000		30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000		0	140,000	0	140,000		
		Network Signing	Annual programme		20,000		20,000		30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000		30,000		0	140,000	0	140,000		
		Traffic Signal Upgrades	Annual programme		25,000	25,000	50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		0	225,000	25,000	250,000		
		Network Management Improvements																										
		Kings Road Link, Newbury.	Design, assessment and construction.		0	50,000	50,000		1,500,000	250,000	1,750,000		1,000,000	200,000	1,200,000		0				0		0	2,500,000	500,000	3,000,000		
		A4 Calcot Widening	Pinchpoint funding from DfT		1,364,000	385,000	1,749,000		50,000		50,000		0				0				0		0	1,414,000	385,000	1,799,000		
		Falcon Gyrotory MOVA investigation	S106 Boundary Hall			20,000	20,000						0				0				0		0	0	20,000	20,000		
		Thatcham signals comms and Mova upgrade	S106 funded			30,000	30,000						0				0				0		0	0	30,000	30,000		
		Network Rail Access for all Programme																										
		Midgham	Partnership work with First Great Western			10,000	10,000						0				0				0		0	0	10,000	10,000		
		Travel Plans																										
		Travel Plans (Transport Planning)	Annual programme		10,000	5,000	15,000		10,000	5,000	15,000		10,000	5,000	15,000		10,000	5,000	15,000		10,000	5,000	15,000	0	50,000	25,000	75,000	
		Assessment and Evaluations																										
		Future Project Assessment & Evaluations	Assessment and feasibility of works to support bids for grant, S106, CIL, LDF and LTP3.		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		50,000		0	250,000	0	250,000		
							0						0				0				0		0	0	0	0		
		Public Transport																										
		Public Transport Infrastructure	RTPI + Infrastructure		0	70,000	70,000		0	70,000	70,000		0	70,000	70,000		0	70,000	70,000		0	70,000	70,000	0	0	350,000	350,000	
		Newbury Thatcham RTPI	RTPI + Infrastructure			35,000	35,000						0				0				0		0	0	35,000	35,000		
		Tilehurst & Purley RTPI	RTPI + Infrastructure				0						0				0				0		0	0	10,000	10,000		
							0						0				0				0		0	0	0	0		
		Salaries																										
		Highways & Transport	Annual Salaries for Projects Team - part funded by s.106		440,240	204,520	644,760		447,848	203,352	651,200		478,052	179,668	657,720		469,030	195,260	664,290		469,030	201,910	670,940	0	2,304,200	984,710	3,288,910	
							0						0				0				0		0	0	0	0		
							0						0				0				0		0	0	0	0		
							0						0				0				0		0	0	0	0		
					2,207,098	7,536,000	1,964,520	10,477,618	1,040,968	6,764,000	1,078,352	8,838,320	1,031,968	7,276,500	454,668	8,763,136	1,028,968	4,159,000	270,260	5,458,228	1,197,968	4,159,000	276,910	5,633,878	6,506,970	29,894,500	4,044,710	40,446,180

Planning & Countryside

		81220	The Ridgeway National Trail	To maintain the trail at the standard required by Natural England	9,200		9,200		9,200		9,200		9,200		9,200		10,000		10,000		46,800	0	0	46,800
		81240	Walking the way to health	Improve the health of West Berkshire residents through regular exercise by walking. Increased bid to provide for project management.	6,000		6,000		6,000		6,000		6,000		6,000		6,500		6,500		30,500	0	0	30,500
		81150	Recreational walking routes	To improve selected pedestrian rights of way in order to increase their recreational value	14,000		14,000		14,000		14,000		14,000		14,000		14,740		14,740		70,740	0	0	70,740

Priority	Cost Centre	Project Title	Description of Project	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17				2017/18				2018/19				All Years						
				Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total			
	81241	Rights of way volunteer scheme	To undertake rights of way maintenance work by the use of volunteers	2,500			2,500	2,500				2,500	2,500				2,500	2,500				2,500	2,500				12,500	0	0	12,500
	81242	Improvements to pedestrian routes	Improve the condition of pedestrian routes	9,000			9,000	9,000				9,000	9,000				9,000	9,800				9,800	9,800				45,800	0	0	45,800
	81243	Disabled access to the countryside	Improve selected rights of way in order to increase their usability and recreational value for less able users.	6,830			6,830	6,830				6,830	6,830				6,830	7,500				7,500	7,500				34,820	0	0	34,820
	81244	Bridleway/cycling improvements	To improve selected rideable and cycleable rights of way in order to increase their recreational and/or utilitarian value	9,150			9,150	9,150				9,150	9,150				9,150	10,000				10,000	10,000				46,600	0	0	46,600
	81246	Recreational cycle routes	To improve selected cycleable rights of way in order to increase their recreational and/or utilitarian value.	14,000			14,000	14,000				14,000	14,000				14,000	1,000				1,000	1,000				57,000	0	0	57,000
	81247	Rural signing	Maintenance & improvement of direction signage on rural rights of way	9,100			9,100	9,100				9,100	9,100				9,100	9,950				9,950	9,950				46,350	0	0	46,350
	81249	Countryside Capital salaries	To manage the capital projects the Countryside Service is responsible for under the Local Transport Plan	23,340			23,340	23,340				23,340	23,340				23,340	24,279				24,279	24,279				117,639	0	0	117,639
	83059	Repairs to Public Conveniences	Upgrade and major repair of all public convenience facilities in order to ensure they are safe and in good condition	6,880			6,880	6,880				6,880	6,880				6,880	6,880				6,880	6,880				34,400	0	0	34,400
	85116	Playground Improvement	To refurbish existing children's' play areas that are now reaching the end of their recommended life span to ensure their compliance with relevant modern safety standards	15,000			15,000	15,000				15,000	15,000				15,000	15,000				15,000	15,000				75,000	0	0	75,000
				125,000	0	0	125,000	125,000	0	0	125,000	125,000	0	0	125,000	125,000	0	0	0	0	0	118,149	0	0	118,149	618,149	0	0	618,149	

Culture and Environmental Protection

	85134	Shawhouse Mansion Mtce	Maintenance Programme as advised by Consultants and under terms of HLF grant (25 year duration)	50,000			50,000	50,000				50,000	50,000				50,000	50,000				50,000	50,000				250,000	0	0	250,000
	85143	Museum Redevelopment	To redevelop the museum on Newbury Wharf - provisional Council allocation subject to review pending HLF Grant application decision	78,415	122,585		201,000																				78,415	122,585	0	201,000
	New	Museum lifetime maintenance					25,000	25,000				25,000	25,000				25,000	25,000				25,000	25,000				100,000	0	0	100,000
	85188	Leisure Centre Compliance and Modernisation	Capital Investment in Leisure Provision - required to maintain existing sites as EoA new site currently removed.	190,000			190,000	88,000				65,000	65,000				100,000	100,000				100,000	100,000				543,000	0	0	543,000
	85192	Northcroft Pool Changing Rooms Refurbishment					0	0				0	0				0	0				0	0				0	0	0	0
	85180	Essential Capital Investment in Leisure Core Sites	Capital Investment in Leisure Provision as contractually agreed as part of Parkwood contract.	18,262			18,262	49,712				38,853	38,853				84,405	84,405				84,405	84,405				275,637	0	0	275,637
	83050	London Road Tip Bracknell	West Berkshire's share of removal of generating unit, gas plant and oil tanks and replacement of flare stack as per joint arrangement				0	0				0	0				0	0				0	0				0	0	0	0
	83103	Energy Efficiency Programme	Schemes to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in Council buildings, funded from revenue savings from carbon management schemes implemented from 2011/12 to 2013/14	233,800			233,800					0	0				0	0				0	0				233,800	0	0	233,800
				570,477	122,585	0	693,062	212,712	0	0	212,712	178,853	0	0	178,853	259,405	0	0	259,405	259,405	0	0	259,405	259,405	0	0	1,480,852	122,585	0	1,603,437

Education (Excluding Corporate Buildings)

1.0	82103	Education Capital Salaries	Property Team Capital Salaries	298,735	0	11,520	310,255	310,255	0	0	310,255	310,255	0	0	310,255	310,255	0	0	310,255	310,255	0	0	310,255	310,255	0	0	310,255	1,539,755	0	11,520	1,551,275
1.0	87131	Education Capital Maintenance Programme	Rolling maintenance programme formulated for each service using the current condition survey data.	0	2,335,032	0	2,335,032	0	2,296,396	0	2,296,396	0	2,307,765	0	2,307,765	0	2,296,019	0	2,296,019	0	2,300,000	0	2,300,000	0	2,300,000	0	11,535,212	0	11,535,212		
1.1	82231	Theale Primary School	Expansion of accommodation to meet impact from additional numbers of pupils in catchment (Basic Need) for 2-year blip	0	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	0	1,000		
1.1	82236	Burghfield St Mary's Primary School	To address insufficient number of primary places in area – Burghfield/Mortimer (basic need)	0	20,000	0	20,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20,000	0	20,000		

Priority	Cost Centre	Project Title	Description of Project	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17				2017/18				2018/19				All Years				
				Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total					
1.1	82257	Long Lane Primary School	Remodelling a poorly designed school layout to address condition and suitability issues.	0	13,000	0	13,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13,000	0	13,000
1.1	82269	Kennet School	To provide new and expanded Physical Disability and HI/VI resourced Unit accommodation to reduce costly out-of-area placements. See cost centre 82255.	20,555	0	0	20,555	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20,555	0	0	20,555
1.1	82270	The Downs School - Science Block	New science block to expand and improve insufficient and inadequate science accommodation.	54,369	0	0	54,369	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54,369	0	0	54,369
1.1	82272	John Rankin Infant and Junior Schools - Basic Need	Expansion of the schools to meet the primary basic need pressures.	1,207,583	0	23,275	1,230,858	0	36,393	0	36,393	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,207,583	36,393	23,275	1,267,251
1.1	82275	Hungerford Primary - Basic Need	Expansion of the school from 2FE to 2.5FE to meet local primary basic need.	2,750	6,750	0	9,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,750	6,750	0	9,500
1.1	82276	Basilidon School - Basic Need	Expansion of accommodation to address basic need and significantly undersized classroom.	3,500	6,000	0	9,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,500	6,000	0	9,500
1.1	New Project	Universal Infant Free School Meals			365,895		365,895					0													0	365,895	0	365,895
1.2	82224	Little Heath School	To address unsuitable, undersized accommodation for sixth form numbers	1,189,091	1,215,635	175,274	2,580,000	208,988	306,941	0	515,929	0	75,000	0	75,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,398,079	1,597,576	175,274	3,170,929
1.2	82268	Spurcroft Primary School	Expansion of Spurcroft Primary school from 1.5FE to 2.5FE to address insufficient primary places for catchment area numbers (basic need)	0	1,478,228	0	1,478,228	0	37,500	0	37,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,515,728	0	1,515,728
1.2	82273	Francis Baily - Basic Need	Expansion of yr2 accommodation to address basic need and significant suitability issues.	185,388	0	0	185,388	4,800	0	0	4,800	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	190,188	0	0	190,188
1.2	82281	Targeted Basic Need Bid for Castle Special School	Expansion of Castle school to address insufficient places for anticipated pupil numbers (Basic Need)	0	617,072	8,027	625,099	0	0	13,375	13,375	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	617,072	21,402	638,474
1.2	82289	DGCF Bid for Brookfields School Post-16	Expansion of 6th Form Accommodation to provide suitable and sufficient places for an expanding 6th form population.	0	635,373	0	635,373	0	14,000	0	14,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	649,373	0	649,373
1.2	New Project	Hungerford Primary - Basic Need (Phase 2)		117,300			117,300	2,700			2,700														120,000	0	0	120,000
1.3	82238	The Willows Primary School (Phase 3)	The expansion of accommodation to meet the impact from the proposed Racecourse housing development.	0	226,860	274,700	501,560	612,323	1,257,597	136,940	2,006,860	620,760	609,160	1,229,920	46,560	609,160	655,720	15,940	0	15,940	612,323	2,167,717	1,629,960	4,410,000	612,323	2,167,717	1,629,960	4,410,000
1.3	82274	The Winchcombe School - Basic Need	Expansion of the school from 1.5FE to 2FE to meet local primary basic need.	56,731	717,394	0	774,125	0	24,375	0	24,375	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	56,731	741,769	0	798,500
1.3	82277	Theale Primary School - Basic Need	Expansion of the school from 1.0FE to 1.5FE to meet local primary basic need.	0	834,490	0	834,490	0	1,597,390	172,120	1,769,510	0	46,575	0	46,575	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,478,455	172,120	2,650,575
1.3	82280	Falkland Primary - Basic Need	To undertake the necessary accommodation works to enable the school to take up to 30 additional pupils as a 1-year bulge from September 2013.	0	40,000	0	40,000	0	38,038	0	38,038	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	78,038	0	78,038
1.3	82285	Additional Primary Places in Newbury	Accommodation solution(s) to significant primary basic need across Newbury.	50,000	0	0	50,000	2,000,000	438,038	0	2,438,038	2,070,408	1,821,200	3,891,608	0	800,000	800,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,120,408	3,059,238	0	7,179,646
1.3	82286	Park House - Basic Need	Explore options to address additional pupil numbers from Racecourse development and Sandford Park development (basic need)	0	0	0	0	0	0	114,627	114,627	0	0	1,163,064	1,163,064	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,277,691	1,277,691
1.3	82287	Calcot Junior Basic Need	Expansion of accommodation to address local basic need.	0	15,986	0	15,986	0	334,014	0	334,014	0	7,440	0	7,440	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	357,440	0	357,440

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Priority	Cost Centre	Project Title	Description of Project	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17				2017/18				2018/19				All Years			
				Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total				
1.3	82288	Secondary School Development - John o'Gaunt	To refurbish a proportion of the existing accommodation to address a lack of capital investment over the years and to support the school with the work they're doing to make John o'Gaunt the school of choice.	0	120,910	0	120,910	687,030	750,000	0	1,437,030	0	1,133,630	0	1,133,630	58,430	0	0	58,430	0	0	0	0	745,460	2,004,540	0	2,750,000
1.3	New Project	Additional Places in Compton - Primary Basic Need.		32,540			32,540		907,150		907,150		160,090		160,090		23,870		23,870			0	32,540	1,091,110	0	1,123,650	
1.3	New Project	Additional Places in Downland - Secondary Basic Need					0				0	32,000		32,000		136,500		136,500			1,048,690	1,048,690	32,000	1,185,190	0	1,217,190	
1.3	New Project	Additional Places in Thatcham - Secondary Basic Need					0				0	32,000		32,000		167,960		167,960			2,835,940	2,835,940	32,000	3,003,900	0	3,035,900	
2.1	82284	Purley Infant School - Extension of Age Range	Financial contribution to the conversion of Purley Infant school to a 105 place primary school	190,000	0	0	190,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	190,000	0	0	190,000	
2.2	82283	Reintegration Service at Riverside - Accommodation Solution	Short-term accommodation solution for the reintegration service at Riverside.	550,000	270,927	0	820,927	0	640,000	0	640,000	0	10,000	0	10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	550,000	920,927	0	1,470,927	
2.4	82237	Lambourn Primary School	Replace and rationalise current poor condition and unsuitable accommodation	816,954	150,037	50,887	1,017,878	21,875	0	0	21,875	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	838,829	150,037	50,887	1,039,753	
3.1		Additional ASD Resourced Provision - Primary	Provision of an additional primary ASD resource.	0	0	25,827	25,827	30,000	315,797	0	345,797	7,500	0	0	7,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37,500	315,797	25,827	379,124	
3.1		Additional ASD Resourced Provision - Secondary	Provision of an additional secondary ASD resource	0	0	25,828	25,828	486,672	0	486,672	10,600	0	0	10,600	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	497,272	0	25,828	523,100	
3.2	82271	Kennet School - acoustics	Rolling programme of acoustic improvements to teaching accommodation to provide a more appropriate environment for Hearing Impaired pupils, and therefore to assist in the reduction of HI pupils having to be placed in external provision.	15,000	0	0	15,000	15,000	0	0	15,000	15,000	0	0	15,000	15,000	0	0	15,000	0	0	0	60,000	0	0	60,000	
3.3		Brookfields Special School	Accommodation Master Plan	0	0	0	0	30,000	0	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30,000	0	0	30,000	
3.3		Castle Special School	Accommodation Master Plan	0	0	0	0	30,000	0	0	30,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30,000	0	0	30,000	
3.4	82240	Kennet Valley Primary School		0	169,073	55,927	225,000	30,000	1,215,000	0	1,245,000	30,000	0	0	30,000								60,000	1,384,073	55,927	1,500,000	
				4,790,496	9,239,662	651,265	14,681,423	4,469,643	10,208,629	437,062	15,115,334	2,507,763	6,182,460	1,772,224	10,462,447	383,685	3,470,909	609,160	4,463,754	310,255	6,200,570	0	6,510,825	12,461,842	35,302,230	3,469,711	51,233,783

Corporate Buildings

87103	Council PMP Budget (Excluding Schools)	Annual maintenance provision - will be allocated to individual services in year using Condition Survey data.	400,000			400,000	400,000			400,000	400,000			400,000	400,000			400,000	400,000			400,000	2,000,000	0	0	2,000,000	
87115	Cap Sal Property	Capitation Costs of Property Project Managers	399,000			399,000	405,650			405,650	412,878			412,878	420,038			420,038	427,341			427,341	2,064,907	0	0	2,064,907	
87119	Cond/Asb/Meas Surveys		40,000			40,000	40,000			40,000	40,000			40,000	40,000			40,000	40,000			40,000	200,000	0	0	200,000	
87126	Access Works/Disabled		20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	100,000	0	0	100,000	
87129	Asbestos - PMP		20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	100,000	0	0	100,000	
87190	Fire Risk Remedial Works	Actions required from Fire Risk Assessments	280,000			280,000	450,000			450,000	450,000			450,000	450,000			450,000	450,000			450,000	2,080,000	0	0	2,080,000	
				1,159,000	0	0	1,159,000	1,335,650	0	0	1,335,650	1,342,878	0	0	1,342,878	1,350,038	0	0	1,350,038	1,357,341	0	0	1,357,341	6,544,907	0	0	6,544,907

Children's and Youth Services

86013	Building work to foster homes		20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	20,000			20,000	100,000	0	0	100,000	
				20,000	0	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	20,000	100,000	0	0	100,000

Adult Social Care

86030	Prepayment Cards			30,000		30,000				0				0				0				0	0	30,000	0	0	30,000
86031	Telecare			65,000		65,000				0				0				0				0	0	65,000	0	0	65,000
86032	Aids and Adaptations			75,000		75,000				0				0				0				0	0	75,000	0	0	75,000
86037	Supported Living			67,821		67,821				0				0				0				0	0	67,821	0	0	67,821
New	New schemes to be funded from 2012/13 to 2014/15 Community Capacity Grants					0				780,420				0				0				0	0				780,420
86008	O/T Equipment	Annual provision for essential aids & equipment for vulnerable people.	85,500			85,500	85,500			85,500	85,500			85,500	85,500			85,500	85,500			85,500	427,500	0	0	427,500	
				85,500	237,821	0	323,321	85,500	780,420	0	865,920	85,500	0	0	85,500	85,500	0	0	85,500	85,500	0	0	85,500	427,500	1,018,241	0	1,445,741

Commissioning Housing and Safeguardin

80001	Home Repair and Discretionary Renovation Grants	Grants for emergency home repairs for older/vulnerable people	50,000			50,000	50,000			50,000	50,000			50,000	50,000			50,000	50,000			50,000	250,000	0	0	250,000
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Priority	Cost Centre	Project Title	Description of Project	2014/15				2015/16				2016/17				2017/18				2018/19				All Years			
				Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External Funds (excl s.106)	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total	Council	External	Dev Contr (s.106) Funds	Total
	80003	Disabled Facilities Grants	Mandatory grant for disabled adaptations, to enable local residents to live independently in their own homes.	725,000	661,000		1,386,000	725,000	661,000		1,386,000	725,000	661,000		1,386,000	725,000	661,000		1,386,000	725,000	661,000		1,386,000	3,625,000	3,305,000	0	6,930,000
		Redevelopment of Horncastle Ford Site from cap receipts						850,000		140,000		0		0										850,000	0	140,000	990,000
	86020	Temp Accn		17,500			17,500	17,500			17,500	17,500		17,500	17,500		17,500	17,500		17,500	17,500		17,500	87,500	0	0	87,500
Corporate Schemes				792,500	661,000	0	1,453,500	1,642,500	661,000	140,000	2,443,500	792,500	661,000	0	1,453,500	792,500	661,000	0	1,453,500	792,500	661,000	0	1,453,500	4,812,500	3,305,000	140,000	8,257,500
	87289	Superfast Broadband		150,000			150,000	550,000						0										700,000	0	0	700,000
	87620	Coporate Allocation		25,000			25,000	25,000				25,000		25,000	25,000		25,000		25,000	25,000		25,000	125,000	0	0	125,000	
				175,000	0	0	175,000	575,000	0	0	575,000	25,000	0	0	25,000	25,000	0	0	25,000	25,000	0	0	25,000	825,000	0	0	825,000
Grand Total of All Service Areas				10,820,521	17,797,068	2,615,785	30,003,374	10,316,973	18,414,049	1,655,414	30,341,436	6,865,462	14,119,960	2,226,892	23,212,314	5,071,096	8,290,909	879,420	14,241,425	4,785,118	11,020,570	276,910	16,082,598	37,859,170	69,642,556	7,654,421	115,156,147

West Berkshire Council's Corporate Property Asset Management Plan 2014/15

Adventure Dolphin, Pangbourne



Thatcham Nature Discovery Centre



The Castle Post 16 School

Hungerford Library

West Berkshire Council's Corporate Property Asset Management Plan 2014/15

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Corporate Asset Management Plan 2014/15

1 Introduction

1.1 This Asset Management Plan is a document which sets out the principles and actions needed to deliver the most effective use, and the best value, from the Council's tangible assets. It is intended to be a high level document covering a number of the Council's strategies and we have set the plan out under these headings:

- Existing arrangements
- Asset Strategy
- Progress
- Review and action plan

1.2 The Corporate Asset Management Plan supports the Council's year Council Strategy for 2013 to 2017. The Council Strategy takes into account the changing financial conditions and legislative framework and has as its themes caring for and protecting the vulnerable, promoting a vibrant district, improving education and lastly protecting the environment.

1.3 Other plans which have asset management planning implications include:

- The Medium Term Financial Strategy
- The Housing Strategy,
- Supporting People Strategy,
- Waste Strategy,
- The Visions for Newbury, Thatcham and the East of the Area
- The Capital Strategy and
- Individual service plans.

1.5 Property Asset Management Arrangements

1.5.1 Responsibility for management of the Council's properties is split between service areas, the Property Team (in Education Services) and the Asset Team (in Finance). Generally the service departments are responsible for the day to day management of the assets currently used to perform their respective functions – e.g. libraries, care homes and leisure centres. The Assets Team is responsible for the leased properties and empty properties. The Property Team is responsible for the management of the Council's administrative office buildings. Repair, maintenance and building projects for all properties are also routed through the Property Team as are the refurbishment and rebuilding schemes for Education.

1.5.2 The arrangements for the management of all assets are steered by the Capital Strategy Group, which is a cross service group of officers and members, to oversee property and capital matters. Matters specifically relating to property assets are considered by the Asset Management Group which is a sub group of the Capital Strategy Group.

1.5.3 Although the Services are responsible for making changes to the property they occupy, the decision for property matters such as capital expenditure, sales, leases, property sharing and purchase of new property are corporate led and Services need to submit a business case to the Asset Management Group which has the following principal functions:-

- Prioritising and allocating expenditure on maintenance in accordance with condition survey information plus other criteria to be established
- Consideration of the total accommodation needs of all services
- Reviewing the justification for the Council holding properties on the basis of strategic importance, suitability, condition and cost
- Consideration of proposals to acquire, lease and dispose of properties
- Consideration of other property issues involving expenditure outside the annual budget by way of a business case submitted by the occupying Service.

1.5.4 The Asset Management Group has an input into the planned maintenance programme for the following financial year. The planned maintenance programme for each service area is generated annually from a database and other sources that hold information on the condition of assets. The available funds are allocated as a proportion of priority 1 repairs as a total of the whole. The priority 1 repairs are identified in the condition surveys which are updated on a rolling basis. The programme is therefore based on the needs of the property and will be interlaced with any routine requirements due in the next 5 years, e.g. electrical testing and statutory tests.

1.6 Framework for Review of Current Property Portfolio

1.6.1 The Council has acquired properties over time in two ways. Firstly, the Council has acquired or renovated buildings in line with its strategic direction, e.g. the purchase of Turnhams Green and West Street House and the disposal of other buildings. Secondly, assets have been acquired in a piecemeal way, sometimes as a result of local government re-organisation or by way of developer contributions as part of the planning process. This means that the properties do not always meet our current business needs.

1.6.4 The Asset Management Group has therefore established a framework for reviewing the existing property portfolio. The aim of this framework is to base decisions on future use or disposal of assets on the importance of each property to the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities. It also aims to prioritise maintenance resources on the basis of operational efficiency. The framework also places the onus on Heads of Service to keep the Asset Management Group informed of any actual proposed change of use of the properties which are the responsibility of their service area. The framework for review is set out in more detail in Section 4 of this document.

2 Property Asset Strategy

- 2.1 The reason the Council owns land and buildings is to support service delivery either directly through the provision of accommodation for frontline services, such as schools, libraries, car parks and open space, indirectly through support service functions housed in the administrative offices or to generate income through rent or capital receipts.
- 2.2 There are several demands on the Council's land and buildings which can often be conflicting. For example the Council is expected to reduce the size of its estate in order to raise maximum capital receipts and reduce expenditure, whilst at the same time transferring assets at less than market value to partners and the local community in order to achieve local objectives. Therefore, decisions will need to be made on a case by case basis in order to fulfil the most pressing objective at the time.
- 2.3 The strategic aims and objectives for management of the Council's property assets are to:
- Treat property as a valuable resource and ensure that the value of the assets is protected, by optimising rental and capital return and effective expenditure control to ensure that value for money is obtained.
 - Ensure efficient, effective and sustainable use of land and buildings.
 - Use property assets to contribute to the process of service improvement, with the creation of new ideas and working practices to help solve service issues.
 - Ensure that the Council complies with statutory obligations pertaining to property.
 - Rationalise the use of land and buildings and establish criteria for retaining, disposing of and acquiring property.
 - Utilise property in support of the Council Strategy.
 - Support the Capital Programme through targeted asset disposal.
 - Pursue partnership working and co-location opportunities.
 - Enable full public access to the Council's building and services.
- 2.4 The Council's properties can be broadly split into three categories being operational, non-operational and vacant. The following paragraphs describe how these strategic aims and objectives can be applied to each category.

2.5 Operational Portfolio Strategy

2.5.1 Operational property is occupied by or on behalf of the Council for the direct delivery of its services, for example Council offices and community schools. Outsourced functions such as sports centres, waste collection and some community care buildings are occupied by organisations providing services on Council's behalf but are still classified as operational property.



Turnhams Green offices

2.5.2 The strategic aims for the Council's operational property are:

- To support service delivery.
- To provide fit for purpose buildings.
- To minimise cost.
- To have a lean portfolio with the minimum number of properties required to maintain service provision.
- To exploit sharing opportunities with other public sector organisations.
- To consider opportunities for urban or rural regeneration using Council property as a catalyst.

2.5.3 We aim to implement the strategy by:

- Reviewing the use and cost of the Council's buildings.
- Reducing building running costs, for example, by the use of the lowest energy tariffs, targeting planned maintenance in order to reduce the cost of reactive maintenance and the appeal of rating assessments.
- Continuing with condition surveys to monitor the state of the Council's property.
- Promoting and actively seeking opportunities to share buildings and facilities with partner organisations.
- Disposing of surplus properties where appropriate.
- Acquiring properties if the need cannot be met by property already owned.
- Capital expenditure on buildings to provide fit for purpose buildings where it is cost effective to do so.
- The use of option appraisal in decision making.
- Implementing the Newbury, Thatcham and East of Area Visions.

2.6 Non-operational Portfolio Strategy

- 2.6.1 Non-operational property is not used to meet service needs, and is therefore either let to third parties or is surplus to requirements. The Council's investment property includes the London Road Industrial Estate in Newbury and the Kennet Enterprise Centre, Hungerford.



Kennet Enterprise Centre

- 2.6.2 The strategic aims for non-operational property are:

- To extract maximum income.
- To review the cost effectiveness of the portfolio.
- To support use by the third sector where a benefit to the community will be achieved.
- To consider opportunities for regeneration using Council property as a catalyst.

- 2.6.3 We aim to implement the strategy by:

- Collection of rent and pursuit debtors in a timely manner.
- Implementing rental increases under the lease agreements.
- Taking the opportunities as they arise to extract value from changes in lease terms.
- Re-letting of vacant properties as soon as practicable.
- Further consideration of the options available for the regeneration of the London Road Industrial Estate.
- Property review and challenge.
- Disposals or alternative uses for under performing properties.

2.7 Strategy for Vacant Properties

- 2.7.1 The Council will seek to minimise vacant and non-productive property within our portfolio and will consider options for other uses, either an alternative use by another service or partner organisation or a sale or lease to a third party.

- 2.7.2 In times of low market value it may not always be in the Council's best interests to put a surplus property straight to market. Where appropriate, consideration will be given to temporary uses or leaving a property unused, until market conditions improve.

2.8 Disposals and Acquisitions

- 2.8.1 If a service has a new or changed accommodation need for which no existing Council property is suitable, the Council will need to acquire new property. However, property acquisition will only be considered where it addresses a corporate objective.

- 2.8.2 The Council's strategic aims for disposal and acquisition of property are:

- To seek a lean portfolio with the minimum number of properties required to maintain service provision;
- To obtain the best price for properties which are surplus to requirements;
- Where appropriate, to use our property to support regeneration projects and/or the supply of affordable or special needs housing.
- To acquire properties which are fit for purpose and represent value for money for the Council.

2.8.3 The Council aims to implement the strategy and deliver the priorities by:

- Reviewing all properties to assess suitability, service need and value for money
- Identifying properties which are surplus to the Council's requirements
- The preparation and implementation of a disposal programme of surplus assets. The current programme is shown in Table 1.
- Use option appraisal to assist in decision making.
- Disposing of property at best value unless there is an overriding community benefit, in particular the provision of affordable housing and special needs accommodation for vulnerable people.
- Consideration of the options available for the London Road Industrial Estate regeneration and other Newbury Vision projects.

2.9 Community Asset Transfer

2.9.1 As a general rule when the Council lets or sells properties to third parties it will be at market prices. However, in line with the Government's Localism agenda, organisations working in the voluntary sector on a 'not for profit' basis, consideration will be given to allowing such organisations to occupy Council property at a discount. The organisation will be expected to demonstrate that it is providing a community service to local residents, which helps to support one of the key strategic objectives for the Council. Properties occupied under this concession will be monitored to ensure that the original objectives are still being met.

2.9.2 Requests for community asset transfers will be considered on a case by case basis by the Asset Management Group. A process for dealing with these requests is set out in Appendix 1.

3 Progress

3.1 Recent achievements

3.1.1 Recent achievements in line with the Asset Management Plan's strategic aims are:-

- Expressions of interest were sought for London Road Industrial Estate, the shortlisted parties have presented their schemes for consideration and a recommendation is due shortly.
- HMRC has taken desk space in the Market Street Offices
- Successful marketing of the former depot in Pound Lane and the former Control Tower at Greenham Common. Both properties are currently under offer. The Control Tower was sold under the remit of the Community Right to Bid provisions and a community based offer was successful.

3.2 Partnership working

3.2.1 West Berkshire Council has a good record of sharing its properties with other organisations, where this offers service benefits and/or value for money improvements. Some examples of working in partnership and property sharing initiatives are as follows:

- Children's Centres. Services directed at families with young children are provided by multi-agency team in buildings provided by the Council in 10 locations across the district.
- Youth Offending Team – a multi-agency team operating from a single building provided by WBC
- Chieveley depot – a highways maintenance depot shared on a long standing arrangement between the Highways agency and West Berkshire Council.
- Sharing space in our libraries with the Parish Councils of Mortimer and Hungerford.
- The Community Mental Health Team is a joint service with the NHS operating from Hillcroft House, a property provided by the Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

3.2.2 Other examples of partnership working which do not involve property sharing but do involve asset transfer and significant involvement from the Council to move forward projects for the benefit of the local community are:

- Working with registered social landlords to provide new extra care housing for elderly people at Alice Bye House, Thatcham and at The Priory Hungerford.
- Working with the Council's registered social landlord partners to identify strategic sites for affordable housing.

3.2.3 The Assets team and service areas, through the Asset Management Group, will continue to pursue further opportunities for property based partnerships

3.3 Data Collection

3.3.1 Performance measurement is the mechanism by which audit, review and improvement are achieved. An essential element in measuring performance is the availability of reliable and readily accessible information. Property Services has a database which can record the core information about the Council's properties – for example, its address, size, legal status and leasehold

information where appropriate. Collection of condition data for the Council's properties is important to providing a basis for expenditure on maintenance based on need. The condition data is reviewed and updated on a rolling basis. The provision of a web based system is being implemented and should provide all stakeholders with easy access to property related data.

3.4 Factors Affecting Progress

- 3.4.1 The current economic climate has had an effect on the aims and aspirations of our asset management plan largely due to the restrained financial circumstances which means there is less money available for property improvement or acquisition. Coupled with this is the decline in market value for properties which might be sold resulting in lower capital receipts. Consequently, the capital monies available need to be targeted at properties where expenditure would enable the building to meet service demand or comply with statutory requirements. The squeeze on public finances means that all opportunities for extracting value or reducing cost for the Council's portfolio need to be pursued.
- 3.4.2 Recent government initiatives which affect our property include the Localism Bill and Academy Schools. The Localism Bill encourages Councils, amongst other things, to transfer its community buildings to the voluntary sector. West Berkshire Council does not have a large number of community buildings within its ownership and the ones we do have are already let to not for profit organisations. However, where a building becomes available which could be used by the third sector then consideration will be given to offering it to the third sector, particularly where a community need is already identified, for example the Riverside Community Centre.
- 3.4.3 A set of guidelines has been prepared to assist in the identification and allocation of Council owned properties under a community asset transfer and this is included in Appendix 1.
- 3.4.4 The Localism Bill also gives certain groups the opportunity to nominate properties within the district as assets of community value and once the nomination is approved the asset cannot be sold until the local community groups have been given an opportunity to bid for it. These provisions apply to properties owned privately and those owned by the Council. If any of our buildings are listed then there may be a delay in achieving a capital or rental receipt.
- 3.4.5 The opportunity for schools to transfer to academy status has already been taken up by six secondary schools and two primary schools with another in progress. This means that the buildings effectively move out of our property portfolio, although the Council remains responsible for ensuring that these schools have sufficient capacity to meet demand for school places across the district. This change in responsibilities will affect future planning for school buildings.

4 Property Review

4.1 In order to achieve the aim of a fit for purpose portfolio the properties will need to be reviewed. We can do this either as part of service review or by way of an asset challenge survey. Following the reviews the most likely options will be whether the properties should be:

- retained and existing use continued or intensified,
- in need of investment, including expenditure on maintenance or improvement,
- sold, including a transfer to a community organisation,
- retained and used pending future development opportunity,
- considered for co-location for more than one Council Service or shared with other public sector partners,
- in the case of investment properties, opportunities for lease restructuring.

4.2 Several reviews have taken place at Service level which have a bearing on property needs and show that there is a potential to realign or disinvest of property in order to meet changing requirements, for example some of the day centres. Reviews in Youth Services have identified that some of the services and buildings they are run from could be transferred to other providers, such as the Riverside Community Centre. There are some parts of the Council's portfolio which do not reflect corporate need, based on location, suitability or condition, (for a block of flats formerly used for the temporary accommodation for homeless families,) and other properties where more efficient use of the buildings is possible (for example the corporate offices).

4.3 The following framework for future asset reviews has been developed by the Asset Management Group.

4.4 The Asset Management Group will classify each property as Red, Amber or Green from the point of view of:

- Strategic Importance – i.e. the extent to which they support the delivery of the Council Strategy
- Operational Efficiency

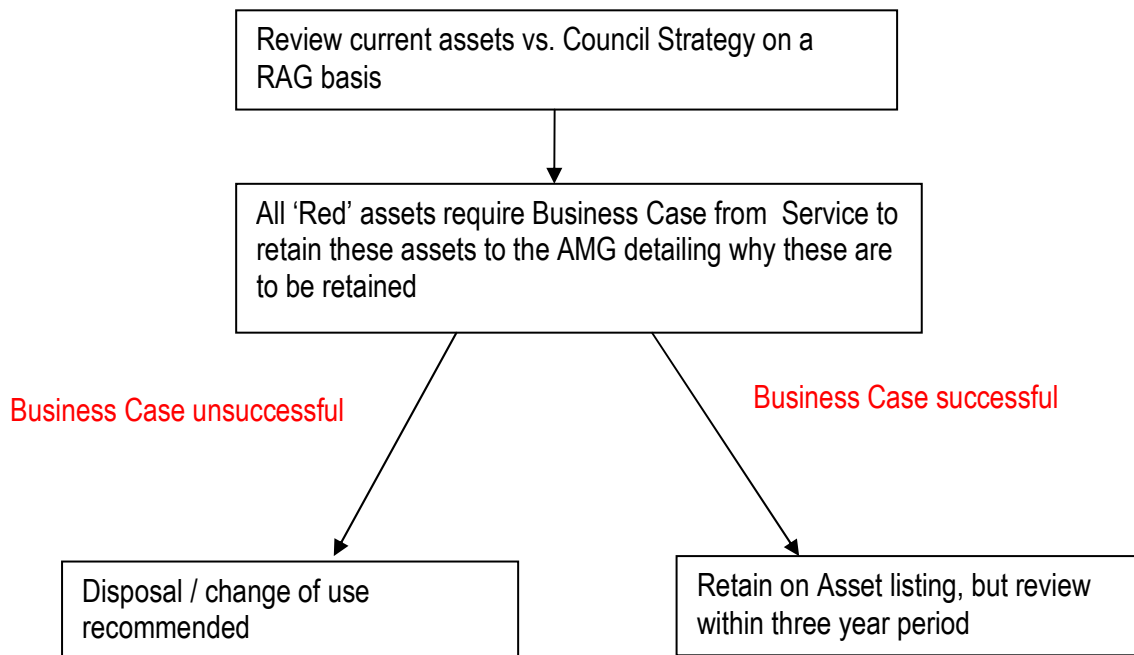
Each property is the responsibility of a designated a Head of Service.

4.5. The Asset Management Group will review the list of assets annually by asking the responsible Heads of Service to inform the group of any actual or planned change in use and/or status, i.e. Services will be responsible for reporting when assets become surplus to requirements, but the Asset Management Group will regularly monitor the status of all the Council's assets.

4.6 The Service responsible for any assets designated "Red" in terms of strategic importance should prepare a business case to justify why the asset should be retained by the service if they feel it should not be disposed of, for review by the Asset Management Group.

4.7 If the business case is successful, this should be noted on the asset listing and the status of the asset should be reviewed again within a three year period.

- 4.8 If the business case is not approved, the Asset Management Group will normally recommend to Corporate Board, Management Board and Executive the sale of the property on the open market unless a case is made either:
- i. To transfer it to another service where it is needed to help deliver one of the Council's key strategic priorities e.g. to replace an inefficient/unsuitable asset with a more efficient and/or suitable one;
- or:
- ii. To transfer it to another organisation who will help to support one of the Council's key strategic priorities (the asset may in some circumstances be offered below market value, if the service benefit is held to outweigh the potential capital receipt);
- 4.9 Investment in maintenance and/or replacement of assets will be targeted at Assets which are Green for strategic importance but Amber or Red in terms of operational efficiency.
- 4.10 Flowchart for property reviews



- 4.11 The "red" assets reviewed so far are the Councils smallholdings. Kennet Enterprise Centre and the private day nurseries. In all cases the Asset Management Group agreed to retain them for strategic and/or income generating purposes.

Draft Community Asset Transfer Policy

1.0 What is Community Asset Transfer?

1.1 Community Asset Transfer is the transfer of the Council's land and buildings to community and voluntary organisations at less than best consideration, normally on a leasehold arrangement.

1.2 The policy will apply when either:

- A community or other voluntary organisation approaches the Council to request the use of a Council property asset.
- The Council identifies an asset as being surplus to its requirements and is considering how best to dispose of it.

2.0 Purpose of the Policy

2.1 The Council has a disposal policy which is contained in the Asset Management Plan and the general presumption is that disposals will be on the open market for best price. Reference is made in the Asset Management Plan about disposals to not for profit organisations. This community and asset transfer policy is to give fuller guidance on how to achieve that.

2.2 The purpose of the policy is to set out a framework to show how West Berkshire Council will consider requests from the community and voluntary sector to use the Council's land and buildings. It is also sets out

the information that is required from the community and voluntary sector and the expectations for the transfer fulfilling the Council's strategic objectives and to empower local communities.

3.0 National Policy Context.

3.1 National Government has, for some time, encouraged local authorities to involve local people in the direct running of their communities and has produced legislation, such as the Local Government Public Involvement Act 2007 and the Localism Act 2011, to create strong communities and deliver better public services through a rebalancing of the relationship between local people and public bodies.

3.2 The Localism Act has introduced the concept of the Community Right to Bid. This process allows relevant bodies (e.g. Parish Councils and Community Groups) to ask for assets of community value to be listed. This effectively means that the asset cannot be sold until the relevant body has been given a chance to confirm that they wish to bid for the asset. If so they must also be given sufficient time to submit their bid. A separate process has been introduced to manage this requirement, although the properties and applicants involved are likely to be similar to those affected by the Community Asset Transfer Policy.

3.3 The Quirk Review undertaken in 2007 set out the benefits to local groups by the management or

ownership of public property assets which, in turn leads to stronger communities. The Quirk review recognised that the voluntary and community groups would need assistance to understand the risks and rewards of community asset transfer.

4.0 Local Context and Links to Council Strategies

4.1 Working in partnership with the local voluntary sector should help the Council to achieve some of its own objectives such as those in the Council Strategy including to reshape the way cultural, countryside and other services are delivered, with significantly greater involvement from local communities, the voluntary sector and parish councils and seek to transfer assets and services where these can clearly be delivered more effectively..

5.0 Criteria for community asset requests

5.1 When considering requests for a community asset transfer the Council must bear in mind the following in relation to the affected property:

- The need to raise capital receipts.
- The loss of any income or opportunity costs.
- Requirements for the property for direct service delivery by the Council.
- The benefits to all parties by transferring the property.
- That, where the property is needed to deliver a service, additional

ongoing revenue costs are not incurred.

5.2 The Property

- The property must be owned by the Council, either freehold or leasehold and be legally capable of being transferred.
- It must be surplus to operational requirements.
- The transfer of the property has been approved by the Asset Management Group.
- The transfer will deliver a strategic or operational benefit to the Council.

5.3 The Use

- The use will support the Council's strategic priorities set out in the Council Strategy.
- The property will be used for the benefit of the local community to enable local people to have access to services or facilities that meet their local needs.
- The use will be inclusive of a wide and diverse range of people.
- The use will deliver a demonstrable social, economic or environmental benefit to the local community.
- The use is not already provided in the locality.
- The use to be environmentally sustainable and Disability Discrimination Act compliant.

5.4 The Applicant

- Interested organisations must be community led with strong local links.
- Be properly constituted and be capable of being a legal entity.
- Not for profit.
- Be financially viable.

- Have good governance through open and accountable processes.
- Have the skills and capacity to deliver the service and manage the property.
- Have a well prepared business case.
- Have a track record of delivering similar projects.

community or voluntary organisation for a particular property. In the latter case the property may be operational so consultation will be required with the service to see if the property could be released from operational use.

5.5 *Basis of transfer of property*

- Transfers will be on a leasehold basis. This makes it easier to limit the use for community benefit.
- Freehold will only be considered if the applicant pays full market value.
- The applicant will be responsible for all management of the property including health and safety matters and all required surveys.
- The use is to be for community benefit and the organisation is to provide continuing evidence of a community benefit on a periodic basis.
- If planning consent is required then the applicant must obtain this.
- The applicant will be expected to meet all the running, maintenance and repair costs of the property.
- Collaboration and sharing of the property with other community or voluntary groups will be encouraged.
- The Council may be prepared to take back the property in cases where the transfer has been unsuccessful.

6.2 Valuation undertaken bearing in mind that the transfer may be at less than best consideration.

6.3 Expressions of interest invited from suitable groups.

6.4 Expressions of interest appraised by Asset Management Group to include the relevant portfolio holder and recommendation to be made to Management Board.

6.5 Short listed groups requested to submit a business case for the transfer.

6.6 Business cases appraised by the Asset Management Group and relevant portfolio holder along with the option of an open market disposal. The assessment matrix shown later can be used to assist in the decision making process.

6.7 Decision recommended to Executive if outside the delegation of the Head of Legal Services.

6.8 Terms agreed with successful applicant and lease completed.

6.0 The Community Asset Transfer Process

6.1 A property asset is identified, either by WBC as being surplus to requirements or by a request by a

6.9 The timescale for applications will vary depending upon the complexity of the proposal, the number of applicants, the route it needs to take through the Council's governance structure and for the completion of the lease. However, applicants

should be aware that the process could take 12 months.

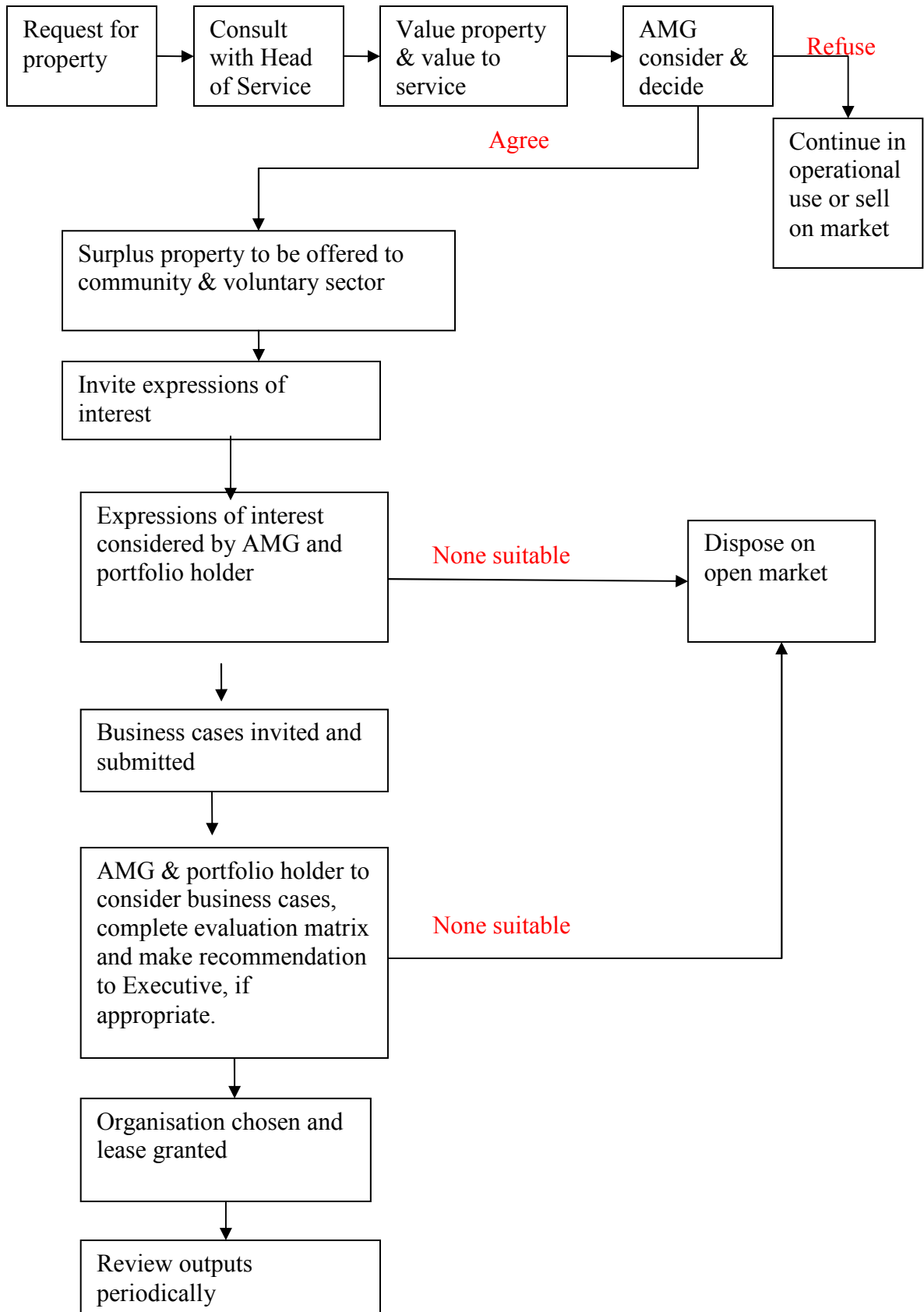
7.0 Business Case Requirements

- 7.1 It is likely that potential applicants for community asset transfer will have limited financial and property management experience so it is important that a robust business case is submitted. The business case can be in any format but should contain the following information and evidence:
- Proposed use and maintenance of the property.
 - Details of the local needs that will be met by the proposal and how the benefits will be measured and reported on an annual basis.
 - Details of any new jobs that might be created.
 - Evidence of local consultation and that there is a demand and local support for the scheme.
 - How the scheme fits in with the Council's strategic objectives.
 - Evidence of the ability, skills and capacity of the organisation to run the proposed service, including governance details.
 - Evidence of the scheme complying with equal opportunity, sustainability and health and safety requirements.
 - Financial details of the organisation and how the scheme will be funded, at the outset and going forward.
 - Project plan to show likely timescales to set up and fund the scheme.
 - A risk assessment and contingency plan in the case that the scheme is not successful.

8.0 Risks in Community Asset Transfer

- 8.1 There is an element of risk in a community asset transfer and the potential risks are listed below. These will need to be considered in conjunction with any application.
- Organisation does not have the capacity or skills to take over the property and provide the service, or loses these at a later date.
 - Reliance on key personnel either within the organisation or at the Council, lack of succession planning.
 - Organisation cannot fund the proposed scheme either at the outset or at some time in the future.
 - Property is not used for community purposes or taken over by a minority interest.
 - Transfer contravenes State Aid or procurement regulations.
 - Confusion over roles and responsibilities between the Council and the organisation.
 - Objectives of the organisation are unclear and not aligned to Council objectives.
 - Scheme is not value for money.
 - Potential liability for Council if the scheme fails.
- 8.2 These risks can be reduced by the provision of clear legal documentation and a summary of expectations by each party at the outset.

Process Flow Chart



COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER ASSESSMENT MATRIX

PROPERTY ADDRESS	CURRENT USE:
	OPEN MARKET VALUE:
NAME OF APPLICANT/COMMUNITY GROUP:	PROPOSED USE:

1.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	Score 10	Comments on reasons for score
1.1 Capital receipt or rental offered <i>(compare to market value)</i>		
1.2 Capital costs secured <i>(higher score the greater the percentage)</i>		
1.3 Estimated revenue savings to WBC: <i>(include building and maintenance costs)</i>		
	SUB-TOTAL: /30	
2.0 VIABILITY OF BUSINESS PLAN	Score 10	
2.1 Evidence of projected revenue stream for next 5 years		

2.2 Reliance on revenue grant aid <i>(lower score the greater the reliance)</i>		
2.3 Financial covenant strength of applicant		
2.4 Track record of applicant		
	SUB-TOTAL:	
	/40	
3.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL'S STRATEGY <i>(proposal should contribute to at least one)</i>	Score 10	
3.1 Caring for and protecting the vulnerable		
3.2 Promoting a vibrant district		
3.3 Improving education		
3.4 Protecting the environment		
	SUB TOTAL	
	/40	
4.0 CONTRIBUTION TO LOCAL NEEDS	Score 10	
4.1 Which groups will benefit? <i>(e.g. young people, disabled, older people, sports users, unemployed)</i>		
4.2 Involvement of volunteers <i>(What will they do and how sustainable is their use?)</i>		

4.3 Number of jobs created (if applicable)		
4.4 Is joint use with other agencies proposed?		
	SUB TOTAL /40	
GRAND TOTAL	/150	

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Equality Impact Assessment

Name of item being assessed:	Capital Strategy and Programme 2014/15 to 2018/19
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	Executive 13-2-14
Owner of item being assessed:	Gabrielle Esplin
Name of assessor:	Gabrielle Esplin
Date of assessment:	4-2-14

1. What are the main aims of the item? (What does the item try to achieve?)

To allocate resources for capital investment in the Council's assets to enable the Council Strategy 2013-17 to be implemented within available resources in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014-18;

2. What are the results of your research?

Note which groups may be affected by the item. Consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Older People and people with disabilities	The capital strategy allocates resources to maintain and improve services to these groups in line with the overarching Council Strategy.	See paragraphs 4.5.9 – 4.5.13 of the Capital Strategy 2014-19
People with disabilities	The asset management plan also includes a draft policy giving criteria for transfer of Council properties to community groups. One of the criteria is that the proposed use of the property must be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act.	See appendix 1 of the Capital Strategy and Programme - Asset Management Plan 2014-19

Further comments relating to the item:

The capital strategy itself does not have any direct equalities impact, but more detailed equalities assessments will be carried out for any new schemes within the capital programme, or potential asset transfers, prior to implementation

3. What actions will be taken to address any negative effects?

Action	Owner	By When	Outcome
Equalities impact of capital schemes in adult social care	Tandra Forster	In line with timetable for implementation	

2014/15 capital programme			
Equalities impact of capital schemes in adult social care 2014/15 capital programme	June Graves	In line with timetable for implementation	
Ensure any requests for community asset transfers take into account the needs of any groups of people likely to be affected.	Gabrielle Esplin	In line with timetable for dealing with community asset transfer requests as they arise.	

4. What was the final outcome and why was this agreed?
 (Was the item adjusted, rewritten or unchanged? Refer to page 15 of *Meeting the Equality Duty in Policy and Decision Making* for more information.)

5. What arrangements have you put in place to monitor the impact of this decision?
 Post implementation review of major capital schemes to be carried out by Capital Strategy Group; Results of community asset transfer requests to be reviewed by Asset Management Group.

6. What date is the Equality Impact Assessment due for Review?
 31st March 2015

Name:

Date:

Agenda Item 10.

Title of Report:	Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS): 2014-17
Report to be considered by:	Council
Date of Meeting:	4 March 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	C2748

Purpose of Report: To inform Members of the medium term financial planning and strategy for the organisation.

Recommended Action: That the Executive recommends to Council that the 2014-2017 Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved and adopted.

Reason for decision to be taken: To set the Council's financial planning framework for the coming years.

Key background documentation: Revenue Budget 2014-15
Capital Strategy and Programme 2014-19
Council Strategy 2013-17

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy principles:

- CSP6 - Living within our means**
- CSP8 - Transforming our services to remain affordable and effective**

Portfolio Member Details

Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Alan Law - Tel (01491) 873614
E-mail Address:	alaw@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	30 January 2014

Contact Officer Details

Name:	Andy Walker
Job Title:	Head of Finance (S151 Officer)
Tel. No.:	01635 519619
E-mail Address:	awalker@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy:	The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) seeks to provide a medium term financial planning framework for the Authority.
Financial:	Integral to the report
Personnel:	n/a
Legal/Procurement:	n/a
Property:	n/a
Risk Management:	The MTFS is strongly aligned to the strategic risk register

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:			
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)			
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at www.westberks.gov.uk/eia			<input type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the financial planning framework for the Council over the coming three years. The MTFS is a rolling three year strategy which is fundamentally about ensuring the financial resources, both revenue and capital, are available to deliver the Council Strategy.
- 1.2 The document itself outlines the key challenges that the Council faces from 2014 to 2017 and the how these are expected to be met at a strategic level

The contents of the document are set out as follows:

- (1) Introduction
- (2) Background
- (3) The financial challenge
- (4) Delivering the Council Strategy
- (5) Rising to the Challenge
- (6) Conclusions

2. Proposals

- 2.1 To approve the report

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 This item is not relevant to equality as Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken on individual savings proposals.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Council has a track record of strong financial management. Historically budgets have been delivered without significant over or under spends. The Council's ability to manage within significant financial change is vital to its continuing success in delivering the Council Strategy.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Medium Term Financial Strategy: 2014-17

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: n/a
Officers Consulted: Corporate Board
Trade Union: n/a

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Medium Term Financial Strategy: 2014-17

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the financial planning framework for the Council over the coming three years. The MTFS is a rolling three year strategy which is fundamentally about ensuring the financial resources, both revenue and capital, are available to deliver the Council Strategy.
- 1.2 The document itself outlines the key challenges that the Council faces from 2014 to 2017 and how these are expected to be met at a strategic level.

The remainder of the document is set out as follows:

- Section 2: Background
- Section 3: The Financial Challenge
- Section 4: Delivering the Council Strategy
- Section 5: Rising to the Challenge
- Section 6: Conclusions

2 Background

- 2.1 Since 2010 there have been unprecedented reductions in the Council's funding from Central Government as part of the Government's deficit reduction programme, amounting to a near 50% reduction from 2010/11 to 2016/17 of circa £15m.
- 2.2 West Berkshire Council has taken unprecedented action in response to reduced funding. Since 2010 we have continued to make efficiency savings and transform services. Staff numbers have reduced by 204 since 2010. 309 posts in total have been reduced representing 15% of the total workforce.

Government announcements affecting the MTFS

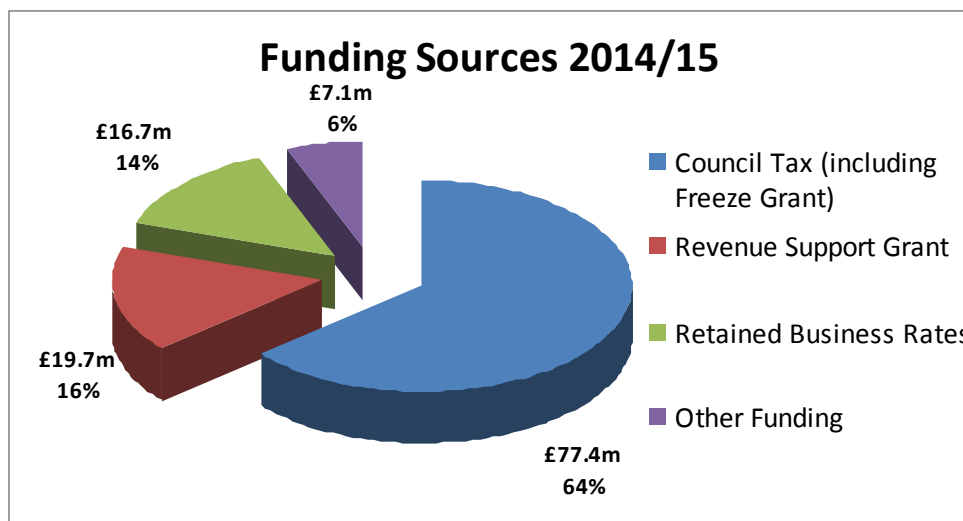
- 2.3 The June 2013 Spending Review, announced pooled funding between the NHS and local authorities for joint commissioning of health and social care. The Better Care Fund will provide funding to achieve closer integration and improve outcomes for patients, services users and carers. A condition of accessing the money is that the CCGs and Councils must jointly agree plans for how the money will be spent. The fund is also intended to meet the costs of meeting the Care Bill. This funding increases the total funding available to the Council in comparison to previous years, but also increases the Council's expenditure by the same amount.
- 2.4 Government has announced that the Council tax freeze grant will be extended over the next two years and will form part of the Revenue Support Grant thereafter. This MTFS assumes that WBC will freeze Council Tax and accept the freeze grant which is equivalent to 1% of Council Tax, although additional savings are still required to meet this freeze objective.
- 2.5 For 2014/15 the small business rates multiplier has been capped at 2%, rather than the September 2013 RPI rate of 3.2%. Local authorities will be compensated for this.

Key issues over the life of the MTFS

- 2.6 The Council's ability to manage within significant financial change and reduced Government grant, is vital to its continuing success in delivering the Council Strategy. Ensuring that businesses thrive and grow within West Berkshire has become an increasing priority for the Council as reliance on this area of funding increases over the life of the MTFS. Due to Government reforms to business rates, the Council is now exposed to the volatility in both the local and national economy.
- 2.7 Demand is expected to increase for services such as Adult Social Care and Children's Services, where additional cost pressures are occurring due to extra child placements. The Council's universal services such as waste management, highways, planning and cultural services must respond to an increasing population, reduced Government funding and built-in contractual cost increases in line with inflation measures.
- 2.8 In Education, Government reforms create significant instability over the Council's future role in influencing the education of the district's children, with funding flows moving away from LEA maintained schools.

3 The financial challenge

- 3.1 The Council has seen significant reductions to Government Grants over the past three years, and expects to see further reductions in the coming years. At the same time, the Council has suppressed Council Tax levels and the working assumption is to maintain low levels of Council Tax rises in the future.
- 3.2 As the graph below highlights, in 2014-15 the Council's primary financing sources will be from three main areas:

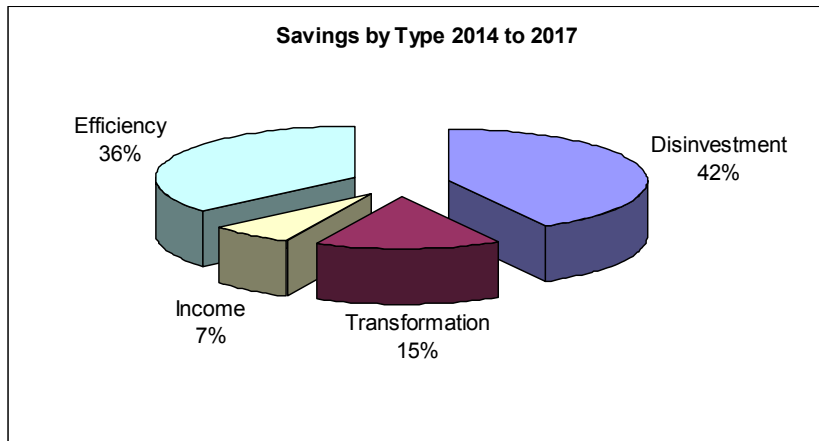


- 3.3 This highlights that nearly two thirds of Council funding comes directly from the local population in the form of Council Tax; therefore decisions around its level, and the increase in properties on which the Council can charge Council Tax (the Taxbase) are extremely important for West Berkshire Council.
- 3.4 For the Council to perform exactly the same functions year on year with no new demands, the Council's costs rise by around 2% each year. This is due to a combination of nationally driven pay awards and cost increases on the contracts the Council has with external service providers. Therefore, just to 'stand still' the Council must find over £6.7m of savings over the period of the MTFS. This is before adjusting for any new cost pressures and reduction in funding levels as can be seen in the following table.

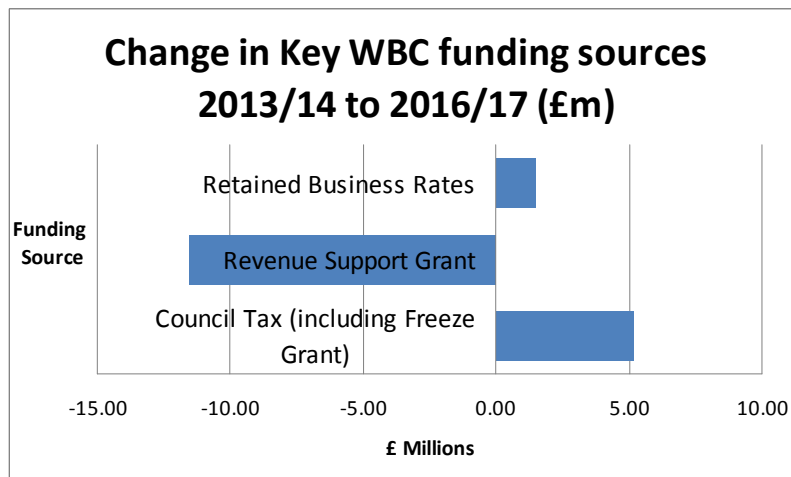
Changes to Revenue Budgets 2014/15 to 2016/17	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Reduced Government funding	3.67	4.82	1.43	9.92
Increase in Council Tax and Business Rate income	-2.19	-2.90	-2.26	-7.35
Pay and contractual increases	2.16	1.85	2.73	6.74
New cost pressures	1.20	0.71	1.41	3.32
Increase in capital financing costs	0.66	0.61	0.50	1.77
Other adjustments and use of reserves	0.13	-0.20	0.91	0.84
Savings Programme	-5.63	-4.89	-4.72	-15.24
Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Note: this table excludes the impact of the Better Care Fund on both income and expenditure.

3.5 The resulting savings requirements are circa £15.2m over the next three years. The chart below shows how these savings are broken down by type.



3.6 The changes to the three main areas of WBC's funding is highlighted below:



3.7 The Medium Term Financial Plan is summarised below, with further explanation behind each item within the model explained in Appendix 1. In summary, income remains constrained within this model over the next three years.

2013/14	Line ref	Medium Term Financial Strategy	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
£m			£m	£m	£m
-75.66	1a	Council Tax income	-76.56	-77.48	-78.41
0.00	1b	Council Tax Freeze Grant	-0.82	-1.60	-2.38
-23.97	2	Revenue Support Grant	-19.69	-14.61	-12.42
-17.13	3	Retained Business Rates	-16.66	-18.02	-18.56
-2.67	4	Education Services Grant (ESG)	-2.52	-2.01	-2.01
-1.79	5	Better Care Fund	-2.21	-8.58	-8.58
-1.50	6	New Homes Bonus	-2.26	-3.03	-3.79
0.77	7	Council Tax Collection Fund deficit / surplus (-)	-0.16	0.00	0.00
-121.94	8	Funds available	-120.88	-125.33	-126.16
117.09	9	Opening Directorate Budget	115.57	113.71	117.76
2.09	10	Base budget growth (pay and non-pay)	2.26	7.95	2.54
0.41	11	Super inflation	0.31	0.27	0.19
1.68	12	Unavoidable service pressures	1.20	0.71	1.41
-5.70	13	Savings identified	-5.63	-4.89	-4.72
115.57	14	Directorate budget requirement	113.71	117.76	117.17
6.78	15	Levies & capital financing costs	7.45	8.05	8.55
-0.66	16a	Use of reserves	0.00	0.00	0.00
	16b	Use of Medium Term Financial Volatility Reserve	-0.44	-0.59	0.38
0.25	17	CTSS support for Parishes	0.16	0.11	0.05
121.94	18	Budget requirement	120.88	125.33	126.16

Nb roundings may apply in table

Note: Line 10 increases in 2015/16 due to the extra costs associated with meeting the Health Integration and Transformation agenda along with Care Bill requirements, and funded by additional Better Care Funds shown in Line 5. If these costs and funding were excluded from the MTFs, the budget requirement would be as follows:

2013/14		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
£m		£m	£m	£m
121.94	Budget requirement	120.46	118.54	119.37

3.8 Excluding the Better Care Fund areas it can be seen that there has been a real terms cut in budget requirement levels over the 3 years of the Strategy.

4 Delivering the Council Strategy

- 4.1 The Council Strategy sets out our priorities and a realistic set of objectives that we will deliver for the people of West Berkshire, whilst living within our means. The Strategy focuses on four key priority areas which are underpinned by a set of principles which will guide how we are responding to changes in the policy, financial and legislative landscape and how we intend to shape future service delivery.

Our overarching vision:
Keeping West Berkshire a great place in which to live, learn, work and do business

West Berkshire Council

The purpose of the Council:

1. Helping you to help yourself
2. Helping you when you cannot help yourself
3. Helping you to help one another
4. Promoting and acting in the interests of the communities, people and businesses of the district.

Our priorities in delivering public services:

- Caring for and protecting the vulnerable
- Promoting a vibrant district
 - Improving education
- Protecting the environment

The principles we work to:

- Putting people first
- Living within our means
- Empowering people and communities
- Doing what's important well

- 4.2 This provides the framework for future decision making; prioritising those areas seen as most important and setting out our overarching approach to dealing with the reduction in our resources, whilst keeping the impact on local communities to a minimum.

- 4.3 The Medium Term Financial Strategy allocates our available resources focussing on those determined as most critical in supporting our priorities and statutory responsibilities. This, in turn, determines the level of service we will realistically be able to provide in different areas.
- 4.4 During 2013/14 a business rate shortfall arose due to valuation changes. The total business rates shortfall is estimated to be in the region of £440k by year end. As a result, the Medium Term Financial Volatility Reserve will be called upon to make up the shortfall in income in 2014/15.

Asset and Capital Strategies

- 4.4 It is also important that the Council's asset and capital strategies follow the Council Strategy as the guiding document for the Authority's activities. To ensure that the Council Strategy is imbued across all capital-related activities, the Asset Management Strategy (part of the Capital Strategy that accompanies this document) has been more closely aligned to the Council Strategy. This is to ensure that over the life of this MTFS the Council's tangible assets reflect the services currently provided, these assets are efficient as possible, and assets that do not align with the Council Strategy are disposed of. Within the Capital Strategy itself, funding decisions over the lifespan of the document are considered in light of the Council Strategy and fit to achieve these objectives. Key spend areas within the strategy encompass *Promoting a Vibrant District* and *Improving Education*.
- 4.5 The financial challenge to the capital programme is to meet the service requirements within the available funding as set out in the Capital Strategy also on this agenda.

5 Rising to the challenge

- 5.1 The underlying approach to financial management over the medium term remains similar to the previous year; i.e. Council Strategy led, Directorates supporting the provision of the Council Strategy and then Business Planning beneath this.
- 5.2 To ensure that the MTFFS represents the themes expressed in the Council Strategy, the Council sets Capped Expenditure Levels (CELs) for directorates over the period 2014-2017. These set out the net change to directorate budgets over the three years based on assumptions such as expected cost pressures, major contracts and savings plans and priorities in the Council Strategy.
- 5.3 In recent years the Council has delivered historically low levels of Council Tax changes year on year, including a Council Tax freeze in 2011-12 and 2012-13, and aims to continue freezing Council Tax over the term of this financial strategy.
- 5.4 The Council has identified an expenditure reduction programme that will save in the region of £15m over the course of the medium term financial strategy in order to match predicted income levels. This gap will be closed through a mix of income generation, expenditure reductions and efficiency savings. Costs have been reduced across its different services whilst ensuring that services remain focussed on the priorities contained within the refreshed Council Strategy (2014-17).
- 5.5 As per previous years the Council will focus on making efficiency savings first to ensure the organisation is as effective as possible. However, to get more efficient will require us to evolve our budgeting methodology. In 2014/15 we will be piloting a Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB) approach in a major service area. Given the scale of the budget reductions, and the level of savings already identified, further reductions beyond efficiency will be required. The Council will therefore need to look more at income generation, which it has been successful in doing in the past, though opportunities to raise fees significantly remain constrained. This leaves the Council to

pursue further options to transform services and also to disinvest in services.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 The Government's strategy to reduce the national financial deficit is likely to continue through to 2018 at the very earliest. Local Government has been one of the areas of the public sector that has seen the highest reductions in Government spend, and this is likely to continue to be the case. In light of the ongoing funding reductions and constraint with any new Council Tax rises, the Council will be considering its core models of service delivery over the coming months in light of the Council Strategy and local priorities.
- 6.2 The local economy is improving which is having a positive impact on our Council taxbase, but we need to monitor this closely as any changes to both the local and national economy will impact our funding.
- 6.3 The Council needs to ensure that it has a robust financial structure on which to base its long term decisions. Continued capital investment (albeit at lower levels than in recent years) continues to ensure that the Council Balance Sheet and core assets are maintained and protected. The Council will also review its asset base to ensure that it is in line with the refreshed Council Strategy.
- 6.4 There needs to be sufficient levels of reserves for the Council to deliver services and take appropriate risks in amending service delivery models without impacting on the financial viability of the organisation. The main reserves that the Council holds in light of the MTFS are the 'General Reserves' of just over £6m (or just over 5% of net revenue expenditure¹) and the Medium Term Financial Volatility Reserve (MTFVR) of just over £1m.
- 6.5 The Council has a track record of strong financial management. Historically budgets have been delivered without significant over or under spends. The Council's ability to manage within significant financial change is vital to its continuing success in delivering the Council Strategy.

¹ This is the level traditionally recommended, though s151 officers must set out the final % used

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Medium Term Financial Strategy – Appendix 1

Assumptions behind the financial model

1) Council Tax

Current taxbase growth assumptions are 1.2% per annum, reflecting new developments from 2014/15. Assumes taking the Council Tax freeze grants for 2014/15 and 2015/16 and that a grant will be offered in 2016/17.

2) Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

This figure is based on the Local Government Finance Settlement (December 2013). Figures from 2016-17 and beyond are unknown at present, but assumptions have been put in place for reductions over 15%, using trends in national control totals.

3) Retained Business Rates

This is the anticipated element of retained Business Rates. The performance of the national and local economy in maintaining and growing the number (and size) of businesses in the local area will be important. For 2014/15 increases have been capped at 2%, which will be compensated by a settlement funding assessment adjustment grant.

4) Education Services Grant (ESG)

This figure represents a Government Grant in respect of Local Education Authority (LEA) support service functions to schools. The assumption in the MTFs is that there is a 5% reduction in children in maintained schools in 2014-15 with no further schools converting to Academy status beyond then. For every pupil that is in an Academy school, the financial loss via this grant will be circa £116 per pupil.

5) Better Care Fund

The Better Care Fund (previously the Integration Transformation Fund) provides funding to be spent locally on health and care with the aim of achieving closer integration and improve outcomes for patients and service users and carers. The fund is also intended to meet the costs from meeting the Care Bill. In 2015-16 the fund will be

allocated to local areas where it will be put into pooled budgets under Section 75 joint governance arrangements between CCGs and Councils. A condition of accessing the money is that the CCGs and Councils must jointly agree plans for how the money will be spent, and these plans must meet certain requirements.

6) New Homes Bonus

This is monies received from central Government (equivalent to the Council Tax received on a band D property) for every net new additional property in the district. The Government created this scheme to incentivise planning authorities to help promote new properties being built.

7) Council Tax Collection Fund

This is the surplus or deficit from the previous year's Collection Fund. The Collection Fund is a ring-fenced account for Council Tax collected. The variation compared to the expected Council Tax collected is pass-ported into the next financial year.

8) Funds Available

Summary of the total non-ringfenced funds available for setting the Council's budget

9) Opening Directorate Budget

This is the opening budget before new costs and savings are built in.

10) Budget build growth

Adjustments to the Council's core costs; primarily non-pay inflation up to 1.5% on contracts, pay inflation and incremental pay awards

11) Super Inflation

The amounts over 1.5% for Council inflation linked contracts

12) Unavoidable service pressures

Any additional investments required for new costs; for example due to additional demand in social care

13) Savings

The totals of savings requirements to ensure a balanced budget

14) Directorate Budget Requirement

The closing base budget for the Directorates

15) Levies and capital financing costs

Budget for payments to the Environment Agency, Magistrates courts, interest paid and received on Treasury Management (Investment) activity and, primarily, the revenue costs of paying for long term capital borrowing to fund the Council's Capital Programme.

16) Use of reserves

This is the planned use of reserves to support the revenue budget.

17) CTSS support for Parishes

This is reducing transitional funding to assist Parish Councils in dealing with the impact of the Council Tax Support Scheme (CTSS) on their local precepts.

18) Budget requirement

Total budget required

2014/15	£120.88m
2015/16	£125.33m
2016/17	£126.16m

Note: the 2013/14 requirement was £121.94m

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Agenda Item 11.

Title of Report:	Revenue Budget 2014/15
Report to be considered by:	Council
Date of Meeting:	4 March 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	C2749

Purpose of Report: To consider and recommend to Council the 2014-15 revenue budget.

Recommended Action: That the Executive recommends to Council

(1) That the Fees & Charges be approved as set out in Appendix F and the appropriate statutory notices be placed where required in accordance with the decision of the Executive on 13th February 2014

(2) That the Special Expenses be approved as set out in Appendix G in accordance with the decision of the Executive on 13th February 2014.

(3) That the 2014-15 savings proposals, as detailed in Appendix Ci) and Cii) are agreed along with the 2015-16 savings proposals, as detailed in Appendix Ciii).

(4) That the 2014-15 budget requirement for Council tax setting purposes of £76.56 million requiring a Council Tax freeze be approved.

Reason for decision to be taken: Formulation of the 2014/15 Budget is a requirement to meet the Council's Statutory duties.

Key background documentation: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014-17
Capital Strategy and Programme 2014-19
Council Strategy 2013-17

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy principles:

- CSP6 - Living within our means**
- CSP8 - Transforming our services to remain affordable and effective**

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Alan Law - Tel (01491) 873614
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Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	30 January 2014
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Implications

Policy:	The formulation of the Budget is in accordance with the policies within the Financial framework.
Financial:	These are contained in further detail within the report. The key implication is a Council Tax freeze assumption and a significant reduction to the Council's funding from Central Government. The savings programme for 2014/15 totals £5.6m with additional cost pressures and investment of £1.5m.
Personnel:	These were addressed in a separate report to the December meeting of the Executive.
Legal/Procurement:	Requirement to produce a Revenue Budget under the various Local Government Finance Acts. Key savings proposals included in this report are determined by effective procurement decisions. The savings proposals will be monitored throughout the financial year by Corporate and Management Board.
Property:	None
Risk Management:	A number of budget risks have been identified as part of the budget proposals, and these will be kept under constant review. As part of the 2014/15 financial monitoring, savings proposals will be kept under monthly review to ensure they are delivered. Appendices D and E set out how the impact of increased volatility in Local Government finance will be managed.

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes		Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:				
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)				
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at www.westberks.gov.uk/eia				<input type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or
associated Task Groups within preceding six months
Item is Urgent Key Decision
Report is to note only

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 This report:

- (1) Advises Members of the Council's Formula Grant settlement for 2014/15 received in December 2013
- (2) Outlines the revenue budget for 2014-15, including details regarding additional cost pressures and savings

1.2 This paper should be read in conjunction with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014-2017 (MTFS) also on this agenda.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 To set a Council Tax requirement of £76.56m for 2014-15 with a Council Tax freeze for West Berkshire Council, and to approve the revenue budget and appendices.
- 2.2 To set a 2014-15 net revenue budget of £120.88m. This includes additional cost pressures and investment of £1.5m in Council priorities and a savings programme of £5.6m.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

3.1 Assessments have been done and are included on the relevant savings items.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The Council, like all public bodies, has, and will continue to see, a significant decrease to its funding streams as result of Central Government reducing expenditure over the period of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 2011-15. The Council has therefore seen a significant decrease to its funding from Central Government as part of this review.
- 4.2 There is greater volatility within the financing of the Council due to Central Government reforms. This combined with the point above, has lead to a continued high level of savings required.
- 4.3 Within the context above, the Council continues to develop and transform its services in line with the Council Strategy and outcomes that this Strategy seeks to deliver.

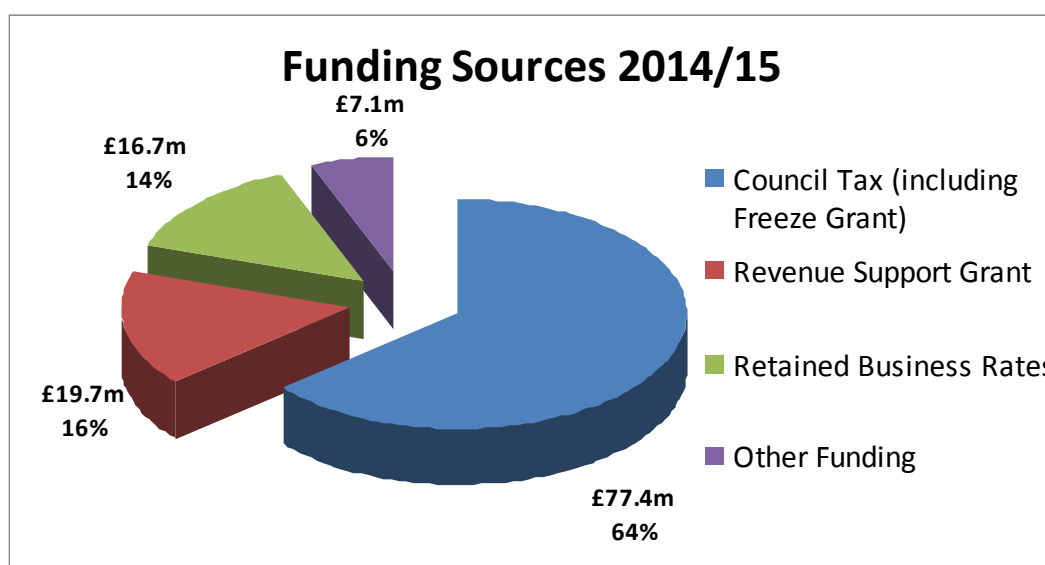
Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to propose the Council's revenue budget for 2014/15, to outline the context within which it is set, and to set a Council Tax requirement for 2014/15.
- 1.2 This report highlights that for West Berkshire residents there will be Council Tax freeze in 2014/15.
- 1.3 The Government's 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) allocated a tough settlement for local government with large reductions in grant funding. In the period since then, we have put in place a programme to remain within our budget which has delivered savings of around £23m. This programme of controlled expenditure will continue for the period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, 2014 to 2017.

2. Sources of Funding

The pie chart below shows the funding sources for West Berkshire Council in 2014/15.



Council Tax

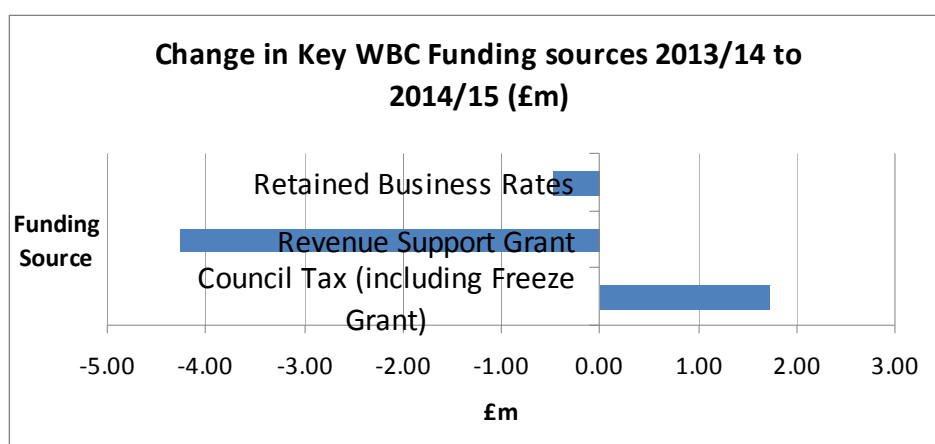
- 2.1 West Berkshire Council's main source of funding is from Council Tax, which is collected from local residents based on the value of the property in which they live. The recommendation included within this report is a Council Tax freeze for 2014/15.
- 2.2 The Government has announced funding for a Council Tax freeze, which is equivalent to the income we would have received from a 1% rise. For West Berkshire Council this amounts to £820k in 2014/15. The Government has confirmed that the freeze grant will become part of our baseline funding.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

- 2.3 Councils receive general grant from Government to support the services provided. There are no restrictions on how this is used, within a council's legal powers. West Berkshire Council will receive Revenue Support Grant of £19.7m in 2014/15. This is a decrease of slightly over £4m from 2013/14. This equates to a loss of £62 per dwelling from last year.

Retained Business Rates

- 2.4 From 2013/14, councils keep a proportion of the income they receive from business rates raised in their area. Half of our business rates have to be paid over to central government. Of the other half, some are retained by West Berkshire Council and some are paid to central government as a tariff.
- 2.5 There has been a slight reduction in the amount West Berkshire Council is expecting to retain from Business Rates compared to last year mainly due to valuation changes. The bar chart below shows the change to the three main funding sources compared to last year.



Other Funding

- 2.6 West Berkshire Council receives a number of specific grants to support its priorities.

Education Services Grant

- 2.7 This is allocated on a per-pupil basis to local authorities according to the number of pupils for whom they are responsible. This has fallen slightly from last year due to loss of pupils to Academy Schools.

Better Care Fund

- 2.8 The Better Care Fund (previously the Integration Transformation Fund) provides funding to be spent locally on health and care with the aim of achieving closer integration and improve outcomes for patients and service users and carers. The fund is also intended to meet the costs from meeting the Care Bill. In 2015-16 the fund will be allocated to local areas where it will be put into pooled budgets under Section 75 joint governance arrangements between CCGs and Councils. A condition of accessing the money is that the CCGs and Councils must jointly agree

plans for how the money will be spent, and these plans must meet certain requirements.

New Homes Bonus

- 2.9 This is paid to councils to encourage them to build new homes. This gives councils a grant equivalent to their increase in Council Tax income for a period of six years for each new home. There is additional money if any of these new homes are affordable housing. West Berkshire Council will receive £2.26m from this grant in 2014/15.

3. Planned Expenditure and Savings

Base Budget Growth

- 3.1 This is the budget increase required for the Council to perform exactly the same functions year on year. As part of the budget setting process, the Council builds for salary increases (1% assumption) based on the established number of posts. Budgets are inflated where a contract is in place and is subject to annual inflationary increases of up to 1.5%.

Item	Type	Base Budget Growth	Amount £'000
1	Non-pay inflation	For contracts such as waste PFI (£280k), cleaning, energy and rates (£108k), highways maintenance, fostering allowances	740
2	Pay inflation	1% pay award assumed	495
3	Pension increase	0.5% increase	305
4	Incremental rises	As per WBC's terms and conditions of employment	523
5	Other adjustments	Includes a variety of minor adjustments due to central funding changes, prior year changes etc.	-220
6	NHS funding	Expenditure budget required to support social care	417
	Total		2,260

Super Inflation

- 3.2 This represents the inflation paid on contracts over 1.5% and amounts to £314k. The main amount of super inflation the Council faces is from the waste PFI contract. This contract increase is based on the RPIx measure in January of each year. Full details are given in Appendix A.

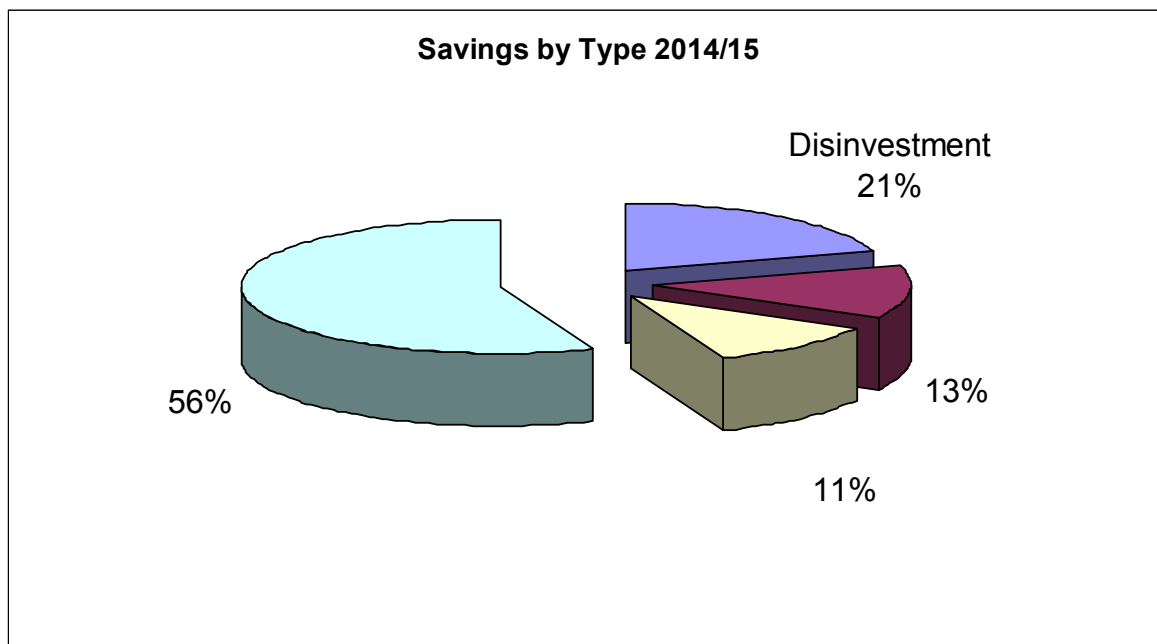
Unavoidable Service Pressures

- 3.3 These are new pressures that require additional budget in 2014-15 which amount to £1.2m. Full details are given in Appendix B.

Savings

- 3.4 Given the scale of the savings requirement for both 2014/15 and 2015/16, we recognise that a number of the proposals being put forward within the revenue budget will be considered 'front line' services that people use and notice. As such, in November 2013 we published a list of those proposed savings relating to both the 2014/15 and the 2015/16 financial years which would likely have a direct impact on users, and sought to elicit from those directly affected and interested what the impact of the proposed saving might be.
- 3.5 The purpose of this exercise was for residents, users or partners to put forward – and for us to ensure we more fully understood – the impact of the savings proposal on those who use them and should they be agreed, to explore ways in which the impact may be mitigated against.
- 3.6 All proposals were posted on our Consultation Finder database on our website, and those affected were contacted directly informing them of the proposals and how to respond. The proposals were emailed to around 900 members of the community panel as well information posted on our Facebook and Twitter accounts. This process generated a great deal of feedback. Individual papers providing an overview of responses received and subsequent recommendations for each of the proposals are provided as Appendix C iii) to this report.
- 3.7 These 'overview and recommendations' papers should be read in conjunction with the more detailed 'summaries of responses' and verbatim responses received in relation to each of the proposals to ensure decision makers have a sufficient overview of the breadth and tenor of the comments received. These have been circulated electronically to all members alongside the agenda pack and published online on our [Consultation Finder](#) database.
- 3.8 The full list of remaining savings proposals are detailed in Appendix C i) and ii). The savings total £5.63m for 2014/15. The chart below shows the 2014/15 savings by type.

3.9 2014/15 Savings by type



Funding Statement

2014/15 Funding Statement	£m	£m
Income		
Council Tax income		76.56
Council Tax Freeze Grant		0.82
Revenue Support Grant		19.69
Retained Business Rates		16.66
Education Services Grant (ESG)		2.52
Better Care Fund		2.21
New Homes Bonus		2.26
Council Tax Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus		0.16
Funds available		120.88
Expenditure		
Opening Directorate Budget	115.57	
Base budget growth (pay and non-pay)	2.26	
Super inflation	0.31	
Unavoidable service pressures	1.20	
Savings identified	-5.63	
Directorate budget requirement		113.71
Levies & capital financing costs		7.45
Use of Medium Term Financial Volatility Reserve		-0.44
CTSS support for Parishes		0.16
Budget requirement		120.88

4. Levies and Capital Financing Costs

- 4.1 This budget includes approximately £7.7 million for principal and interest payments on the long term loans which the Council has taken out to fund its capital programme. This cost is offset by interest earned on the Council's investments estimated at about £0.44 million. The remaining budget also includes levies set by the Environment Agency and the Thames Valley Magistrates Courts Service.

5. Reserves

- 5.1 As part of the financial planning process, the Council will consider the establishment and maintenance of reserves. Reserves are categorised into General Reserves (General Fund and Risk Fund), Working Balances, Earmarked Reserves, Capital Reserves and Unusable Reserves.
- 5.2 The purpose of the General Fund is to act as a fund to be used in emergencies and to protect council taxpayers from any steep rises in future Council Tax if the Council overspends against its budget.
- 5.3 The Council s151 officer (the Head of Finance) recommends that the general reserve is a minimum of 5% of the Council's net budget, which in 2014/15 would be £6.1m. The Council General Fund currently stands at £6.4m which is just above the minimum recommended level.
- 5.4 The General Fund exists to cover a number of risks. These are detailed as per the s151 officer's statement in Appendix E; there are a number of items that have inherent but not specific risks.
- 5.5 If the risks occur, then this would reduce the general reserves, assuming that every other Council budget breaks even. If the Council does not break even in 2013-14 then it will need to establish a mechanism for replenishing reserves in future years.
- 5.6 The Council in 2012/13 created the Risk Fund or Medium Term Financial Volatility Reserve (MTFVR). This reserve exists for a number of risks, primarily resulting from changes to local government finances and the volatility that these present.
- 5.7 The s151 officer has concluded that the MTFVR should be at least 50% of the 'gap' between the predicted Business Rates level and the level at which the Council receives a safety net payment from Government. At present, this total gap is £3m. The MTFVR should therefore be at a minimum of £1.5m to ensure that the Council does not experience a significant pressure going into future financial years from any losses due to appeals and rateable value changes.
- 5.8 The MTFVR will fund the shortfall in retained Business Rates in 2013/14 estimated at circa £0.44m leaving a balance of £1.06m which would be below its recommended minimum level and would raise some additional financial risk in the future. It is the intention to build this reserve back up to the recommended level as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 5.9 Further detail on reserves is given in Appendix D

6. Special Expenses

6.1 There are four special expenses areas within the District and the special expenses to be levied are detailed below:

Hungerford Footway Lighting	£5,750
Kintbury – St Mary’s Church yard	£500
Shaw – St Mary’s Church yard	£500
Theale – Holy Trinity Church yard	£800
Total	£7,550

6.2 The special expenses to be levied for these areas are detailed in Appendices G.

7. Recommendations

7.1 That the Executive recommends to Council

- (1) That the Fees and Charges be approved as set out in Appendix F and the appropriate statutory notices be placed where required in accordance with the decision of the Executive on 13th February 2014
- (2) That the Special Expenses be approved as set out in Appendix G in accordance with the decision of the Executive on 13th February 2014
- (3) That the 2014/15 savings proposals, as detailed in appendix Ci) and Cii) are agreed along with the 2015/16 savings proposals as detailed in Appendix Ciii).
- (4) That the 2014-15 budget requirement for Council Tax setting purposes of £76.56m requiring a Council Tax freeze be approved.

Appendices

Appendix A – Super Inflation

Appendix B – Unavoidable Service Pressures

Appendix C i) to iii) – Savings proposals 2014-15 and saving summary responses to consultation.

Appendix D – Reserves statements

Appendix E – Adequacy of Reserves and robustness of budget estimates

Appendix F – Fees and Charges

Appendix G – Special Expenses

Appendix H – Council Tax Collection Fund

Appendix I - Unison comments to follow

Appendix J – Minutes of the business panel held on 10th February 2014 - to follow

Appendix K – Council Tax Resolution - to be completed

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: Consulted local business leaders on 10th February 2014 and notes from meeting can be found in Appendix J.

Officers Consulted: Directorate SMTs, Heads of Service and Corporate Board.

Trade Union: See Appendix I.

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Appendix A - Super-inflation: 2014-15

Item	Service Area	Super Inflation 2014-15	Amount £000
1	Communities: Children's Services	Allowances paid to West Berkshire foster carers are up-rated in line with NFCA recommended rates	38
2	Communities: Adult Social Care	Agreed contract inflation to secure ongoing access to beds.	42
3	Environment: Planning & Countryside	A range of Services that require super inflation	8
4	Environment: Culture and Environmental Protection	Waste PFI - based on January RPIx	189
5	Environment: Culture and Environmental Protection	Leisure contract	5
6	Environment: Highways & Transport	Highways maintenance contract	32
	Total		314

Appendix B - Unavoidable Service Pressures: 2014-15

Item	Service Area	Unavoidable Service Pressures 2014-15	Amount £000
1	Communities: Adult Social Care	The estimated additional costs of care for young adults with learning disabilities as they transition from Children's Services to Adult Services. It must be stressed that this investment level shown is purely an estimate at this stage. This investment is required each year as these young people come into Adult Services. The costs of care change and some of the funding sources diminish. The Council would not be able to meet its legal obligations to these vulnerable young people and would face legal challenge if this were not approved.	600
2	Communities: Education	Administrative support for two year old free entitlement provision now funded by Council. Under S251 regulations, this can no longer be charged to the DSG.	45
3	Communities: Education	Educational Psychologist now funded by Council. Under S251 regulations, this can no longer be charged to the DSG.	11
4	Environment: Culture and Environmental Protection	Increase to the tax base for Waste due to additional houses requiring waste collection.	30
5	Environment: Culture and Environmental Protection	Government increase on the cost of Landfill Tax	140
6	Environment: Culture and Environmental Protection	West Berkshire Museum - the budget was reduced whilst the museum was closed for refurbishment. This will re-instate the previous budgets required to run the museum.	70
7	Environment: Planning & Countryside	Income from planning fees has reduced due to a decrease in the number of applications for small residential developments (due to an amendment to the Permitted Development Rights Legislation). The impact of this is reduced fee income with no corresponding reduction in workload.	100
8	Resources: Strategic Support	Increased BT costs associated with CCTV service. If this were not approved, we would be unable to fulfil the contract with RBWM.	6
9	Resources: Strategic Support	Economic Development Officer budget - Newly appointed development officer needs a supplies and services budget in order to promote the service	10
10	Resources: Finance	Insurance premium increases due to an increase in insurance claims plus loss of income due to academy conversions	19
11	Resources: Legal	Reduction in Procurement Buy back income. This service is no longer offered to schools and therefore the income target cannot be met.	12
12	Resources: Legal	Copyright licence - Required for reproduction of copyrighted materials	10
13	Resources: Customer Services	HMRC will move out of the Council Offices in the new financial year and the income target will no longer be achievable	10
14	Resources: Customer Services	Cut in Housing Benefit Admin Grant. 10% efficiency target imposed in the Government circular relating to HB Admin Grant.	75
15	Resources: Human Resources	One off leadership development programme. New development course required for managers, part funded through service budgets.	33
16	Resources: ICT	New Database Analyst post - to improve capacity and resilience in the Database Support Team, reducing the risk of systems failing or becoming out of date. Will also allow important transformational improvements to be made to systems leading to process efficiencies.	31
			1,202

2014-15 savings Proposals

Line Reference	Directorate	Service	Saving Description	Saving Implications	Saving 2014-15 £000
1	Comm	ASC	Continuing Health Care (CHC). Securing NHS funding for service users whose needs are identified as continuing healthcare, rather than social care.	None	400
2	Comm	ASC	Cross Cutting Themes. A range of efficiency savings from staff reorganisatoin and non-pay budgets and the implementation of a Voluntary Sector Prospectus.	None	350
3	Comm	ASC	Client numbers. Anticipated downward trend in client numbers, in line with reductions in previous years and a similar trend nationally.	None	300
4	Comm	CCHS	Charge for supporting people services in line with Adult Social Care Fair Contributions Policy.	Means-tested charging arrangements will be implemented for non statutory long-term supporting people services provided to ASC client groups, aimed at maintaining independent living.	250
5	Comm	ASC	External Residential and Nursing. Further reductions in the average weekly rate paid to external care home providers.	None	250
6	Comm	Chi	Children's Services efficiency review. A staffing, commissioning and efficiency programme	None	250
7	Comm	Ed	Home to School Transport. A combination of ongoing contract efficiencies, SEN travel training and using buses instead of taxis.	None	200
8	Comm	Chi & Ed	A series of one off changes in provision for vulnerable young people - reduced commissioning budget, reduction in duplication between external NEET prevention services and in-house provision, revision of the model of service provision to adolescents.	There are two key areas relating to this proposal: the first is to integrate services supporting vulnerable young people; the second is to work more closely with schools and a range of other services in the provision of targeted careers information, advice, support and guidance provision.	280
9	Comm	Ed	Disabled children - shift from residential to community-based care so that more young people have their needs met in the community via care packages	Improved local provision for young people enabling them to remain with their families.	160

2014-15 savings Proposals

Line Reference	Directorate	Service	Saving Description	Saving Implications	Saving 2014-15 £000
10	Comm	Ed	Raising Participation Partnership - service reductions reflecting the fact that this implementation programme is coming to an end.	None	150
11	Comm	Ed	Early Years quality and training - restructure of team in response to re-focused priorities.	None	116
12	Comm	ASC	External Domiciliary Care Provision - downward pressure on rates and reduced number of hours commissioned.	None	100
13	Comm	ASC	Internal Domiciliary Care - Provider Services. Efficiency savings in extended hours and night wardens service.	None	100
14	Comm	Ed	Children's Centres - reduction in management posts, introduction of charges for some services and transfer of Toy Library to the voluntary sector.	Charging for some services.	50
15	Comm	ASC	Supported living. Review of clients with learning disabilities currently in residential care to identify those whose needs are better met through supported living.	Impact on a client-by-client basis, dependent on needs.	50
16	Comm	Ed	Property Services. Staffing restructure.	None	50
17	Comm	ASC	Extra Care Housing. Opening of Redwood House extra care housing scheme in Hungerford, leading to lower costs.	None	50
18	Comm	Ed	Increased trading with schools generating more income through greater buy-back of existing traded services.	None	50
19	Comm	Ed	CAMHS. Reduction in the value of external CAMHS contract. Development of in-house CAMHS provision.	Young people with mental health needs directed to lower-level services.	40

2014-15 savings Proposals

Line Reference	Directorate	Service	Saving Description	Saving Implications	Saving 2014-15 £000
20	Comm	Ed	Education Welfare Service generating further income from trading with academies.	None	30
21	Comm	ASC	Resource Centre business model. Generating income from greater use of Resource Centre buildings, increased client numbers.	None	25
22	Comm	Chi	Reduce spend in placements budgets - 50% saving; 50% reinvestment in family support	None	25
23	Comm	Ed	Early Years - reduce spend on workforce development	None	25
24	Comm	Ed	SEN therapies & Area Health Authority.	Reduction in budget to current health contract value only.No reduction in the level of therapies purchased	15
25	Comm	Ed	Pre-School Teacher Counselling	Streamlining support for Early Years providers working with children <5 with special educational needs, to be achieved without increasing waiting times for the service.	20
26	Env	CEP	Reductions in cost arising from adjustments to the waste contract.	None	578
27	Env	HT	Reduction in bus subsidies	Where possible savings will be achieved through efficiencies. There are, however likely to be Public Transport bus routes that may be reduced or cut.	100
28	Env	CEP	General efficiency including deletion of vacant posts.	None	90
29	Env	CEP	Increased income from Waste contract	None.	80
30	Env	PAC	Service efficiencies including deletion of vacant posts.	None.	75
31	Env	CEP	Reduction in library service: staffing restructure alongside a reduction in opening times of branch libraries.	Reduced opening hours at most branch libraries.	51
32	Env	CEP	Environmental Health reduction in Cleaner Greener budget	None	50
33	Env	HT	Reduction in road safety education.Campaigns that may be affected include: Drive Start, Ride Start; Powered two wheeler campaigns; Lewis Taylor Puppet Show; Treasure Hunt and Be Safe Be Seen cycle events; Winter and Summer drink drive campaigns.	Reduction in funding may affect the effectiveness of some campaigns.	40
34	Env	PAC	Cut post in Planning Enforcement (Team reduction from 3 to 2 FTE)	Work will be prioritised with lower priority activities not being undertaken. Feedback to Parishes, Members and the public would cease. Additional enforcement demand and complaints likely.	37

2014-15 savings Proposals

Line Reference	Directorate	Service	Saving Description	Saving Implications	Saving 2014-15 £000
35	Env	CEP	Corn Exchange - reduce funding contribution.	A possible reduction to the Corn Exchange programme.	34
36	Env	HT	Deletion of remaining consultancy budget	Reduction in high profile Traffic Management and parking studies	30
37	Env	HT	Street Lighting - replace lamps with energy efficient lamps, stop evening inspections in summer, bulk buying of lanterns	None	30
38	Env	CEP	Leisure Contract - reduced business rates payment	None	30
39	Env	PAC	Reduction in consultancy budget required to deal with large planning applications.	None in current economic climate but budget will be needed if / when planning application numbers increase.	25
40	Env	CEP	Cinema - contribution ends 31 Dec 2014 - part year saving	None	25
41	Env	PAC	Grounds maintenance - reduced specification and contract efficiency, including a reduction from 3 grass cuts to 2 grass cuts per year of road verges in rural areas.	Slower response times to service requests and complaints, reduced strimming and 'blowing' after grass cutting and reduced small area cutting eg around the base of signage. Visibility splays will be prioritised on classified roads.	21
42	Env	HT	Reduced maintenance of signs and road markings	Some signs in low priority locations will remain dirty and/or damaged.	26
43	Env	PAC	Public Conveniences - Seek a contribution from parish councils or close all public conveniences except the Wharf and Pembroke Rd in Newbury	Kintbury, Aldermaston, Hungerford, Thatcham and both Pangbourne PCs may close.	20
44	Env	HT	Increase Sunday parking charge in Newbury to £1.50	May encourage greater use of privately owned car parks.	10
45	Env	HT	Reduced maintenance of safety fences	May result in increase in emergency expenditure and some barriers/fences not being repaired.	10
46	Env	PAC	Kennet and Avon Canal Trust reduction in contribution	None	7
47	Res	PH	Re-badged budgets - see Appendix C ii)	Existing Council service budgets that are delivering Public Health Outcomes and can be funded from Public Health Grant	546
48	Res	Finance	Various efficiency savings from within Finance.	None	52
49	Res	Finance	Restructuring - delete Finance Manager post	Less financial analysis and support for Directorates	47
50	Res	ICT	Additional income from schools' traded activities	None, but reliant on demand from schools and schools having the budget to buy the service	32
51	Res	Customer	Income from marriage and other registration activity continues to increase and there is an expectation that this will continue	None but fee income is linked to demand.	30

2014-15 savings Proposals

Line Reference	Directorate	Service	Saving Description	Saving Implications	Saving 2014-15 £000
52	Res	ICT	Reduction in the use of the postal service with an increased use of digital communication methods.	None, but dependant on postal users continuing to reduce their demand on the service	26
53	Res	HR	Re-grade Social Care Training manager post	None	24
54	Res	Customer	Delete 1FTE Customer Services	None, the enquiries will be channelled through the website. This forms part of the Customer First Programme	19
55	Res	SSU	Removal of some unspent budgets, realignment of duties and responsibilities, together with reduction in the maintenance of an IT system.	None, due to the fact that staff will be asked to work more flexibly thereby creating capacity. There are no external implications	19
56	Res	ICT	Various efficiency savings.	None	18
57	Res	Customer	Additional income from schools' traded services	None but dependant on schools continuing to buy back	15
58	Res	SSU	Realignment of duties within Policy and Scrutiny	None, due to the fact that staff will be asked to work more flexibly thereby creating capacity. There are no external implications	14
59	Res	Finance	Additional income from schools' Accountancy traded activities	None but dependant on schools continuing to buy back	12
60	Res	HR	Additional income from Schools trading	None but dependant on schools continuing to buy back	12
61	Res	ICT	Reduced WAN costs following re-tendering of the contract	May require us to sign up for longer term deals typically 3 years. We may also need to review and 'downgrade' some circuits - this may meet with opposition from the affected Service Areas.	10
62	Res	Chief Exec	Reduce contingency budget	This will reduce the ability of the Council to fund small one off, in year financial requests often in relation to Berkshire wide initiatives agreed at Berkshire CEX/Leader level.	10
63	Res	Finance	Additional income from schools' Assurance traded activities	None but dependant on schools continuing to buy back	9
64	Res	HR	Reduce printing and subscriptions budgets	None	7
65	Res	Legal	A range of small efficiency savings from within the Legal Service	None	4
66	Res	Customer	A range of small efficiency savings across the Customer Services budget.	None - other than removing flexibility in terms of redeployment	4
67	Res	SSU	A range of small efficiency savings from within the Strategic Support Service	None	4
68	Res	Legal	Additional income from schools' traded activities	None but dependant on schools continuing to buy back	4
69	Res	HR	Reduction in car allowance budget following previous reductions in staffing levels	None	3
70	Res	ICT	Procurement savings through negotiation of ICT support contracts.	No impact on frontline delivery unless there is a need to reduce SLAs as part of cost saving renegotiation	3

Total Savings proposals 2014/15
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5629

Existing Council service budgets that can be funded by Public Health Grant

Line Ref from Appendix Ci)	Directorate	Service	Item	Implications	Saving 2014-15 £000
47 a	Resources	PH	Contribution to seconded post for CPN/substance misuse worker	Existing Council service budget that is delivering Public Health Outcomes and can be funded from Public Health Grant	40
47 b	Resources	PH	Contribution to Lead Officer - Crime Prevention and Health	ditto	13
47 c	Resources	PH	Domestic Abuse Coordinator	ditto	29
47 d	Resources	PH	0.25FTE Accountant Post	ditto	8
47 e	Resources	PH	Contribution to SSRs	ditto	80
47 f	Resources	PH	Contribution to Relate	ditto	6
47 g	Resources	PH	Contribution to Shopmobility	ditto	12
47 h	Resources	PH	Dementia/Stroke/Autism awareness training	ditto	3
47 i	Communities	PH	The Edge Substance Misuse budget	ditto	121
47 j	Communities	PH	ASC Voluntary Sector commissioning	ditto	200
47 k	Environment	PH	Air Quality monitoring	ditto	14
47 l	Environment	PH	Road Safety Speed Indicator Device service (SID)	ditto	20
				Total	546

Revenue Budget: 2014-15

Appendix C iii - Feedback on specific savings proposals

Introduction

Given the scale of the savings requirement for 2014/15–15/16, we recognise that a number of the proposals being put forward within the revenue budget will be considered ‘front line’ services that people use and notice.

As such, we published a list of those proposals which would likely have a direct impact on users and sought to elicit from those directly affected and interested what the impact of the proposed saving might be. The purpose of this exercise was for residents, users or partners to put forward – and for us to ensure we more fully understood – the impact of the savings proposal on those who use them and should they be agreed, to explore ways in which the impact may be mitigated against.

This appendix summarises the feedback on each of the savings proposals where further information was sought.

Approach

There were 18 proposals which were published for comment on the impact in this way and from this individual exercises, eliciting comment and feedback on the implications of the proposals were undertaken.

This ran from November 5th, through to 13th December 2013 (6 weeks in total). As a minimum, details of all the proposals were posted on the Council’s Consultation Finder database with information disseminated to all registered consultees. The proposals were emailed to around 900 members of the community panel as well information posted on our Facebook and Twitter accounts. A press release was issued outlining proposals and directing people to further information and feedback forms which stimulated significant coverage in the local press.

Where relevant, individual service areas also contacted and sought the input of people / organisations directly affected by the proposals. These have been referenced in the individual summary of responses.

Overview of responses received and recommendations

This process generated a great deal of feedback. Individual papers providing an overview of responses received and subsequent recommendations for each of the proposals are provided as part of this appendix.

These ‘overview and recommendations’ papers should be read in conjunction with the more detailed ‘summaries of responses’ and verbatim responses received in relation to each of the proposals to ensure decision makers have a sufficient overview of the breadth and tenor of the comments received. These have been circulated electronically to all members alongside the agenda pack and published online on our Consultation Finder database.

The table below lists each of the proposals in the order which they appear in the revenue budget. For ease of reference, it also provides the conclusions as a result of the feedback and any subsequent recommendations put forward.

Summary of officer conclusions and recommendations as result of feedback on the impact of savings proposals

App Ci) Line Ref:	Proposal	Service area	Initial proposed saving		Officer conclusion	Officer recommendation	Amended proposed saving	
			14/15	15/16			14/15	15/16
4	Charging for Supporting People services	CCH&S	£250k (income)	£200k (income)	<p>In the face to face discussions all recognised it is right that people are asked to make a contribution to services on a means tested basis.</p> <p>The Fair Contributions Policy and process of financial assessment is robust and intended to ensure that the most vulnerable are not unduly disadvantaged by make a contribution towards the cost of their care and support.</p> <p>Charging will only apply to those in receipt of long term services (over 2 years) and therefore will protect those who are likely to be in greatest need receiving short term interventions.</p> <p>The approach of asking those who can pay, to pay, is intended to enable us to retain this level of preventative service in the community rather than reducing the commissioning budget. It also bring supporting people services in line with the charging regime for adult social care.</p>	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	£250k (income)	£200k (income)
8	Integrate of services supporting vulnerable young people and careers information, advice, support and guidance provision.	Children's	£393k (34%)		<p>The feedback includes a strong set of evidence based points about the potential impacts of cuts to early targeted services. These are valid and we acknowledge that the impact of cutting early intervention services has the potential to have negative outcomes for some children and young people.</p> <p>Strong suggestions are put forward for greater integration, more pooling, more collaborative solution-focused thinking and action, particularly with community, voluntary and third sector partners. We will be working to incorporate this thinking in our work as we go forward with a view to ameliorating the impact of these savings.</p>	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	£280k	£113K
9	Community-based care packages for disabled children	Education	£160k (21%)	n/a	<p>It is the Council's policy to make provision for children with SEN and disabilities as locally as possible and to support them to remain living within their own homes wherever possible. In recent years, the range of short breaks services available locally has increased, as has the use of Direct Payments / Personal Budgets, allowing families greater choice and control over how they are supported.</p> <p>As a direct result of this policy, the number of disabled children being placed in residential settings has decreased. It is likely that there will always be a small number of disabled children who require residential placements. It should be possible to further reduce reliance on residential placements by continuing to invest in local services, but it should be noted that the budget for short breaks will need to be protected in order to allow this to happen and also that there will be inevitable pressure on the budget which supports local care packages and Direct Payments if we are to continue to reduce residential placements.</p>	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	£160k	n/a

App Ci) Line Ref:	Proposal	Service area	Initial proposed saving		Officer conclusion	Officer recommendation	Amended proposed saving	
			14/15	15/16			14/15	15/16
14	Children's Centres	Education	£50k (4%)	£105k (8%)	Suggestions and recommendations from the consultation responses are in line with our current approach to make best use of our resources and we will continue to develop in these areas.	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	£50k	£105k
19	CAMHS	Education	£129k (72%)		<p>It was recognised in the feedback that this proposal would potentially affect the poorest and most vulnerable in our communities, at a time where the data show an increase in mental health issues in children and young people.</p> <p>However there is clearly a need to build on the commitment for joint planning and delivery across relevant agencies to try and mitigate against and/or cover the projected funding loss.</p> <p>If funding is found from a different source then the current level of service delivery can continue. Reviews of the delivery options could be undertaken. WBC is committed to developing further Early Intervention Emotional Wellbeing support for children and young people in schools which should reduce the numbers of CAMHS Tier 3 and 4 referrals by tackling some problems earlier. This is not without additional cost and involves a long term commitment to see the results.</p> <p>An alternative proposal would be to maintain the current reduced budget to CAMHS in the next financial year to allow Tier 2 CAMHS services to continue, or to make a small reduction. This would allow more time for Public Health, CCGs, NHS and WBC to work together to form a joint mental health strategy, discuss and agree different funding streams and develop provision in a planned and cost -effective way.</p>	Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken in full in 2014/15. Instead the collaborative working to improve pathways and support across all tiers should be taken forward through further discussion, consultation and service re-design.	£40k	£0
24	Therapy services	Education	£65K (20%)		<p>It was anticipated that this proposal would create anxiety particularly on the part of parents of children with SEN, who have expressed understandable concerns, as have others on their behalf. If this savings proposal is taken forward, our intention would be to seek to minimise its impact by seeking efficiency savings wherever possible, developing robust joint commissioning with health commissioners and reviewing models of service delivery.</p> <p>Opportunities to raise income by charging neighbouring local authorities for therapy services provided for children who attend WBC schools but reside in those authorities are also currently being explored. This was not previously permissible under inter-authority recoupment regulations but now seems to be possible under new SEN funding procedures.</p>	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes.	£15k	£50k
25	PreSchool counselling	Education	£20k (12%)	n/a	<p>Measures have already been put in place to spread the service as effectively as possible and to reduce the waiting list, for example visits to older children on the caseload are less frequent than previously.</p> <p>Suggestions for making better use of resources will all be considered in order to reduce the impact of the saving, but it is</p>	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	£20k	£0

App Ci) Line Ref:	Proposal	Service area	Initial proposed saving		Officer conclusion	Officer recommendation	Amended proposed saving	
			14/15	15/16			14/15	15/16
					unlikely that this saving could be achieved without increasing waiting times for the service.			
27	Public transport subsidies	H&T	£375K (25%)		The exercise has proved valuable in identifying implications of potential changes to routes. These will feed into the conclusions of our review as to how to meet the savings target. However, we recognise the concerns around the impact of savings on voluntary sector transport.	Feedback has brought forward issues to consider in particular in relation to the voluntary and community transport providers. Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the saving relating to the voluntary and community sector is reduced.	£100k	£185k
31	Libraries	C&EP	£75k (5%)	£100K (6%)	The greatest number of responses was received in relation to Pangbourne, Burghfield Common and Mortimer. Responses make a case for seeking smaller reductions. The suggestion that "mobile stops frequency could be reduced from 3 to 4 weekly" could be considered. The potential for shared service working is being explored.	Feedback has brought forward further issues to consider in relation to the reductions in opening hours. Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken in full in 2014/15. It is therefore recommended that the reduction in hours at Pangbourne Library be amended to 5 hours per week (library open 22 hours per week); at Mortimer Library the reduction in hours be amended to 3 hours per week (library open for 19 hours per week) and at Burghfield Common Library the reduction in hours be amended to 2 hours per week (library open for 19 hours per week)	£51k	£100k
33	Road safety	H&T	£96k (42%)		Feedback put forward some helpful comments regarding education and sponsorship which will be investigated. The feedback reinforced the Council's view that the remaining road safety resources need to be targeted effectively.	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	£40k	£56k
34	Planning enforcement	P&C	£37k (30%)	n/a	The exercise has not highlighted any impacts that are not already anticipated.	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	£37k	n/a
35	Theatres	C&EP	Corn Exchange: £170k (45%) Watermill: £10k (24%)		Whilst a number of people voiced concern regarding the need for reductions, a number also recognised the need for budget cuts to be made by the council. The scale and timing of the proposed reductions were regarded as a key factor of concern. The option of a longer term culture trust should be explored. The Corn Exchange has submitted a counter proposal of a lower saving profiled over a 5 year period.	Feedback has brought forward further issues to consider in relation to safeguarding the Corn Exchange. Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken in full and that the reduction in funding to the Corn Exchange be re-profiled over a five year period. With regard to the Watermill theatre, feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the Council from proceeding with this saving. It is recommended to implement this proposal with no changes.	Corn Exchange: £34k	£34k
			Watermill: n/a					£10k
41,42,45	Road and verge maintenance	H&T	£419k (11%)		There was concern from respondents about the impact on road conditions but the responses did not put forward any further evidence of impact, not already envisaged. A number of suggestions were put forward around reducing the frequency of grass cutting which are already being pursued.	Feedback has brought forward further issues in relation to road and verge maintenance. Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken in full in 2014/15. It is therefore recommended that the proposals relating to gully emptying, winter gritting and road maintenance are not progressed at this time.	£57k	£122k
44	Sunday car parking	H&T	£10k	n/a	The vast majority of the 31 responses expressed concern at the	Feedback has brought forward further issues to consider in relation to the increase in car parking charges adversely impacting	£10k	n/a

App Ci) Line Ref:	Proposal	Service area	Initial proposed saving		Officer conclusion	Officer recommendation	Amended proposed saving	
			14/15	15/16			14/15	15/16
	charges		(income)		potential effect of this proposal on town centre trade. Some comments put forward suggested an alternative option to increase the Sunday charge from £1 to £1.50 rather than implementing the full weekday tariff.	on trade in the town. It is therefore recommended that the Sunday charge is increased from £1 to £1.50 rather than implementing the full weekday tariff.	(income)	
43	Public toilets	P&C	£20k (14%)	£50k (34%)	At this stage no viable alternative solutions have been suggested. Beenham Parish Council have confirmed that they will not fund the toilets at Aldermaston Lock so it is recommended that these toilets close. Kintbury Lock and Thatcham Broadway will remain open until 31 March 2015. Further discussions with the respective parish and town councils will be required in the autumn of 2014. Pangbourne and Hungerford are seeking to fund the 3 sites in their areas. If formal agreement cannot however be reached, then it will be recommended that these facilities will close 30 September 2014.	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal as outlined above.	£20k	£50k
N/A	School crossing patrols	Education	n/a	£16k (100%)	The Council needs to ensure that the potential risk of death or injury to a child is mitigated if this proposal is to go ahead. Therefore, it is preferable that school crossing patrollers should continue in place to alleviate the risks. Communities should be encouraged to find alternative sources of funding, thus securing the crossing patrollers and reducing the risks. As the Council is receiving requests for an increasing number of patrollers, the solution of self-funded patrollers where there is demand would ensure that the Council did not receive increasing costs in this area as the number of crossing patrollers increases.	Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken at this time.	£0k	£0k
N/A	Parenting support	Education	n/a	£95k (65%)	West Berkshire currently offers many recognised evidenced based parenting programmes to meet a wide range of needs. However, the Parenting Support Team has trained a high number of staff and as a result the need for a co-ordinating and development function has reduced.	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	n/a	£95k
N/A	Duke of Edinburgh award	C&EP	n/a	£72k (100%)	The initial intention for this proposal was to look for an alternative method of delivery, maintaining the saving for the council. This will continue.	Feedback has not uncovered any further fundamental issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended that the saving remains unchanged and is proceeded with over the next 12-24 months. Alternative methods of delivery will be explored.	n/a	£72k
N/A	Tourism	C&EP	n/a	£60k (100%)	The process has indicated that there is a continuing demand for face to face service provision.	Feedback has brought forward further issues in relation to the TIC. Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken in full. It is recommended that the saving target be reduced to £25k and an attempt be made to find this through contributions from Newbury BID, town and parish councils, local businesses and other potential funding streams.	n/a	£25k
2 Year totals			£2,977k				£2,381k	

Overview of responses and recommendations: Charging People for Supporting People Services		June Graves, Head of Care Commissioning, Housing and Safeguarding	
Proposal:	To introduce a means-tested, charging scheme for people in receipt of long term Supporting People services	Projected income generated:	Total budget: £3.6m 2014/15: £250k 2015/16: £200k
Nos of responses:	11 feedback forms were received; including 3 from organisations and 1 from a councillor. In addition, 11 people attended specific engagement events to find out more about the proposals.		
Key issues raised:	<p>Concerns expressed about the process of establishing the ability to pay and the overall impact the additional cost may bring to already vulnerable people impacted by welfare reforms.</p> <p>Generally anxious that the financial assessment will be used as a blunt instrument that does not take into account all relevant factors, having a particular impact on younger people.</p> <p>Pressure on other services such as A&E, as a consequence of people declining services on the basis of cost and then falling into crisis.</p> <p>Concern that we are moving against the direction of travel in terms of prevention rather than cure and increasing long term costs to community.</p> <p>Overall concern about the impact on the most vulnerable who, it was felt, will be disproportionately targeted in comparison to those who are better off.</p>		
Equality issues:	<p>2 main concerns arise with respect to equalities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firstly, that implementation of this proposal may increase the overall level of contribution for individuals already subject to charging and therefore they could consider themselves financially disadvantage. • Secondly, that vulnerable adults may be put off accessing a service on the basis that they may be charged and therefore increasing risk of going into crisis and needing a more intensive / statutory service. 		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Develop and encourage self-help voluntary groups.	Engagement has already started with new and existing voluntary organisations as part of the Council's new Voluntary Sector Prospectus for preventative services. A key aim is to encourage new entrants as well as build on the good work of existing organisations and therefore the Council is working hard to ensure information about what would be involved and how to apply is circulated as widely as possible.	

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Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response
	Greater use of reserves to supplement this service	Council balances are held primarily to mitigate against any financial risks. These balances are currently considered to be close to minimum levels. Even if there were opportunities to use balances, it is noted that the savings proposals are ongoing, and this would only bridge the gap in the current year, meaning that the savings would still need to be found in the future.
	Increase Council Tax	The administration is proposing to deliver a council tax freeze for the next 2 years as one of their priorities.
	Reduce management tiers in the Council.	This has been and will continue to be addressed as part of delivering any savings required.
	Reduce subsidies for the arts	This is being dealt with through other savings proposals.
	Pass costs back to landlords and remove any duplication of service delivery in the system	These services sit outside housing management tasks and not attributable to the landlord. Work to remove duplication has already been completed.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	West Berkshire Therapy Centre have proposed helping general fitness, well-being, pain relief and mobility for individuals with disabilities, also tackling social isolation – will be making available the necessary resources to cope with the anticipated increase in demand from small local voluntary groups that are likely to come under pressure should the Council implement the cuts as described in through this exercise.	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	<p>In the face to face discussions all recognised it is right that people are asked to make a contribution to services on a means tested basis. The Fair Contributions Policy and process of financial assessment is robust and intended to ensure that the most vulnerable are not unduly disadvantaged by make a contribution towards the cost of their care and support.</p> <p>Charging will only apply to those in receipt of long term services (over 2 years) and therefore will protect those who are likely to be in greatest need receiving short term interventions.</p> <p>The approach of asking those who can pay, to pay, is intended to enable us to retain this level of preventative service in the community rather than reducing the commissioning budget. It also bring supporting people services in line with the charging regime for adult social care.</p>	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Services to Support Vulnerable Young People		Julia Waldman, Commissioning Strategy and Partnerships Manager, Communities directorate Mark Evans, Head of Children's Services	
Proposal:	There are two key areas relating to this proposal: the first is to integrate services supporting vulnerable young people; the second is to work more closely with schools and a range of other services in the provision of targeted careers information, advice, support and guidance provision.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £1.17m Reduce budget by £393k (33%) over 2 years
Nos of responses:	17 responses were received, of which 4 were from organisations and 1 from councillor.		
Key issues raised:	<p>The main concern was around the loss of very specific targeted support and reductions in early intervention work may lead to poorer outcomes for children and young people and increased future costs to the service</p> <p>Concern that these proposals will increase social and rural isolation, which will in turn affect life chances and social mobility.</p> <p>Views were that seeking more collaborative solutions with the voluntary and community sector should be sought and that better measurement of impact could help to identify areas for savings.</p> <p>That the cuts proposed will impact negatively on the other public services (e.g. Police and the Courts).</p> <p>Adviza, as a provider that is very affected by these proposals in terms of levels of reductions, has made the case for greater integration as well we the potential impact on young people of the proposed savings.</p>		
Equality issues:	It is noted that by its nature, this proposal would affect young people who may be considered more vulnerable.		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Review external contracts and ensure effective procurement.	This suggestion is being progressed by the council	
	Cut councillors' expenditure.	The scheme of allowances for West Berkshire is one of the lowest in the country. Members are only paid expenses in relation to predominantly mileage which is based on the Inland Revenue mileage rate.	
	Review efficiency of WBC services.	This is being done with further savings being delivered through reduction of back office services.	
	Use some of the Council's reserves to offset savings.	Council balances are held primarily to mitigate against any financial risks. These balances are currently considered to be close to minimum levels. Even if there were opportunities to use balances, it is noted that the savings proposals are ongoing, and this would only bridge the gap in the current year, meaning that the savings would	

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		still need to be found in the future.
	Improve the measurement of effectiveness of early intervention services.	We are working to improve our effectiveness in this area.
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response
	Increase Council Tax.	The administration is proposing to deliver a council tax freeze for the next 2 years as one of their priorities.
	Develop more integrated and shared services.	We are doing this in a variety of areas. Much of the work in terms of services for vulnerable young people is aimed at developing more integrated services. We are also in discussion with other local authorities to explore expansion of our shared services.
	Prioritise young people ahead of other council service (e.g. road maintenance).	The budget simulator consultation undertaken in 2010 identified prioritising more people orientated services over those more place-based. As a result of this the revenue budget has been shaped over previous years with this in mind. The council has already absorbed a lot of the savings by cutting back on administration, the number of staff has been reduced by around 200 and the council has changed the way a number of services are provided. Although we will continue to do this, given the scale of savings required moving forward, reduced spending on services people use and will notice can no longer be avoided.
	Reduce duplication and ensure the most effective commissioning practice.	We are doing this and it is central to our business strategy
	Maximise use of other revenue sources (e.g. government grants, private and 3 rd Sector funding)	We are, and will continue to, do this.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	A range of suggestions were made these included: Working with schools and the 'City Deal' project to reduce the impact of the savings – we will be trying to do this. Encouraging voluntary sector work in this area by reducing bureaucracy – we are already doing this and will continue to do so. <i>Empowering West Berkshire</i> could promote a conference / workshop to identify the best way to minimise the savings – we would welcome it if EWB or any other relevant body decided to do this.	
Officer conclusion as a result of the	The feedback includes a strong set of evidence based points about the potential impacts of cuts to early targeted services. These are valid and we acknowledge that the impact of cutting early intervention services has the potential to have negative outcomes for some	

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responses:	<p>children and young people.</p> <p>Strong suggestions are put forward for greater integration, more pooling, more collaborative solution-focused thinking and action, particularly with community, voluntary and third sector partners. We will be working to incorporate this thinking in our work as we go forward with a view to ameliorating the impact of these savings.</p>
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	<p>Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes</p>

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Community-Based Care Packages for Disabled Children		Jane Seymour, SEN and Disabled Children Service Manager, Educ	
Proposal:	To shift the focus of care and support for disabled children from residential to more community-based care packages	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £732k 2014/15: £160k (21%) 2015/16: £0k
Nos of responses:	12 responses were received, of which 3 came from organisations - Newbury Town Council, West Berkshire Mencap, Interakt and 1 from a councillor.		
Key issues raised:	<p>Concern expressed about any reduction in services for children with disabilities - increasing the burden on families with disabled children and potentially just shift responsibility to other agencies.</p> <p>Some supported a reduction in the use of residential placements provided that suitable services were available in the community to enable children to continue to be cared for at home.</p> <p>Some concern referenced a lack of capacity in local community services, such as short breaks services, community services being more expensive than residential placements and one queried the safety of children cared for within their local communities, rather than in residential settings.</p> <p>Some respondents, however, felt that it was better for children to remain in their local communities, rather than being in residential placements, but noted that it would be necessary to invest in local services in order to achieve a reduction in residential placements.</p>		
Equality issues:	It is noted that this proposal would affect children with disabilities, who are already vulnerable, and their families.		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Increasing the provision made by Castlegate	This could not be done without additional revenue funding.	
	Carrying out an audit of existing short breaks services to identify gaps	It is noted that audits of short breaks provision and requirements of families for particular types of short break services are routinely undertaken on a regular basis.	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Council Tax should be increased in order to continue to support services such as these.	The administration is proposing to deliver a council tax freeze for the next 2 years as one of their priorities.	
	Council reserves should be used to continue to support services such as these.	Council balances are held primarily to mitigate against any financial risks. These balances are currently considered to be close to minimum levels. Even if there were opportunities to use balances, it	

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		is noted that the savings proposals are ongoing, and this would only bridge the gap in the current year, meaning that the savings would still need to be found in the future.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	West Berkshire Mencap stated that they are willing to work with the Council to increase their short breaks provision.	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	<p>It is the Council's policy to make provision for children with SEN and disabilities as locally as possible and to support them to remain living within their own homes wherever possible. In recent years, the range of short breaks services available locally has increased, as has the use of Direct Payments / Personal Budgets, allowing families greater choice and control over how they are supported.</p> <p>As a direct result of this policy, the number of disabled children being placed in residential settings has decreased. It is likely that there will always be a small number of disabled children who require residential placements. It should be possible to further reduce reliance on residential placements by continuing to invest in local services, but it should be noted that the budget for short breaks will need to be protected in order to allow this to happen and also that there will be inevitable pressure on the budget which supports local care packages and Direct Payments if we are to continue to reduce residential placements.</p>	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Children's Centres		Janet Scott, Adult and Community Learning Service Manager, Educ	
Proposal:	To make savings in the budget for Children's Centres by streamlining and integrating some of its functions and introducing charges for some of the services which are provided	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £1.4m 2014/15: £50k (4%) 2015/16: £105k (8%)
Nos of responses:	57 responses to the consultation were received in total. Within these, 40 were from Children's Centre Users; two from a Nursery School / Children's Centre; two from Head Teachers of Primary schools; 1 from Newbury Town Council and 1 from a district councillor.		
Key issues raised:	<p>Concern around the long term impact of reducing resource in an early intervention / preventative service such as children's centres. The main thrust of comments recognised the contribution children's centres made to the lives of families and a fear that these would be diminished.</p> <p>The importance of providing services to the most vulnerable families was seen as very important as was the need for the services to be available in the towns, villages and isolated communities.</p>		
Equality issues:	There was some concern around the impact on vulnerable families and particularly the value of the centres as a means of networking – as such, the use of centres by particular groups such as new / first time mothers; those without families in the area and families in isolated communities.		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	-		
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Investigate the charging for some activities or ask for voluntary contributions. Remove voluntary contributions and introduce mandatory costs for activities Introduce a £10 registration fee	Suggestions for increasing income will be explored alongside a consultation on charging	
	Greater sharing of resources across centres (ie. staff with specialisms, management, staff) or merge some centres to cover larger geographical areas	<p>We are investigating merging Children's Centres and sharing management where the buildings are situated relatively close together. However we recognise this is more difficult when centres service a large rural area.</p> <p>Equally, it is important for staff to form relationships with families and therefore the individual aspect of the Children's Centre work needs to be retained.</p> <p>There are sufficient numbers of staff trained in each programme to support delivery</p>	

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		<p>of different programmes across the area and support for staff with specialist training to deliver programmes beyond their own centre. This proposal will also ensure that groups have at least the minimum number of attendees to support discussion and be cost effective.</p> <p>To note however, merging Children’s Centres will not reduce the number of buildings where Children’s Centre activities take place. It will better utilise management time where centres are geographically close together.</p>
	Developing the centres as the central hub for all pre-school services (ie integrating health and social care through a central venue)	Good collaborative working practices exist with colleagues in health and Children’s Services. Further joint working opportunities will be investigated.
	Opening up the centres for use by other services – eg integrating more with libraries. Offer the venues for hire to community groups.	Children’s Centres can be used to support community groups and raise some income. This will be explored.
	Seek donations (ie from ex-service users) of old toys	Toys and equipment in good condition would be welcomed.
	Seek charitable status for centres	The benefits to be explored and if positive then this will be considered.
	Seek sponsorship from local businesses to support centres Centres to support fund raising events	Fundraising ideas, along the lines of a PTA will be explored.
	Use of more volunteers to support the centres Use trainee nursery teachers / assistants in centres	The recruitment of volunteers is ongoing and is supported by a training programme. Many volunteers are lost to the centres because the experience of volunteering has enabled them to find paid employment
	The council generally should not award pay bonuses to senior staff	Our Statutory Pay Policy indicates that the ratio between the highest and lowest paid employees in the council (11:1) is well within national government guidelines (20:1). The council does not operate a bonus scheme. However honoraria payments are paid to staff in exceptional circumstances.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	Children’s centre buildings are available for use by other organisations that deliver services to young children and their families and make a contribution towards the running costs	

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Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	Suggestions and recommendations from the consultation responses are in line with our current approach to make best use of our resources and we will continue to develop in these areas.
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS)		Cathy Burnham, Principal Educational Psychologist, Educ	
Proposal:	To reduce the council's contribution to the Tier 2 Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust's CAMHS service, seeking to re-negotiate cost of the current contract for therapy services , explore other funder options and alternative and more cost effective ways of delivering all the services.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £180k Reduce budget by £129k over 2 years
Nos of responses:	12 responses were received (shared with the savings proposal for therapy services) including from parents, a town council, an advisor for Health Watch, a councillor and the head of Berkshire Healthcare Trust.		
Key issues raised:	<p>Concern expressed about services being cut for the most vulnerable.</p> <p>Concern that if unable to secure contributions from the NHS / CCGs then possibility of a reduction to service delivery for the children and young people in the area.</p> <p>Concern that short term savings could lead to a longer-term increase in costs for a number of organisations when young people with unmet mental health needs become adults with even greater mental health needs.</p> <p>Concern that proposals would result in longer delays, with the CAMHS service already under strain due to an increase in demand.</p> <p>However, a level of support for the proposal was expressed, and it was noted that the Health services/NHS should be contributing more to this area.</p>		
Equality issues:	Given the nature of the service, children and young people with severe and long-term mental health difficulties could be adversely and disproportionately affected if these health needs are not addressed through Health funding. Developing young people's mental health provision is a WBC and LSCB priority.		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	It was noted that it may be possible to make efficiency savings and streamline services, and perhaps make savings by amalgamating the parenting team and CAMHS.	<p>CAMHS cannot identify any potential efficiency savings.</p> <p>Some of the current contribution pays directly for Tier 2 Primary Mental Health workers. The Parenting Team is currently working with the Children's Centres and is due to move into the Early Support hub.</p> <p>Some Early Intervention Tier1/2 Emotional Wellbeing support to schools will be developed further by the Council's Educational Psychology Service. However, to develop this further would require additional funding.</p> <p>CAMHS referrals have increased greatly, with longer waiting times for vulnerable young people and their families. The aim of developing 'in house' support is to reduce the pressure on CAMHS and ensure an early response to potential mental health issues</p>	

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		through increased awareness and skills in schools.
	Share services across local authorities or with other service providers.	CAMHS already works across Berkshire.
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response
	Use of council reserves to support such services	Council balances are held primarily to mitigate against any financial risks. These balances are currently considered to be close to minimum levels. Even if there were opportunities to use balances, it is noted that the savings proposals are ongoing, and this would only bridge the gap in the current year, meaning that the savings would still need to be found in the future.
	Increase council tax to support such services	The administration is proposing to deliver a council tax freeze for the next 2 years as one of their priorities.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	There is a willingness and interest amongst representatives of Public Health, Children and Young People's Services, CCGs and the NHS to work together improve pathways to and the support available for mental health support across all tiers. However, the size and suddenness of this current proposal has meant there has not been enough time to consult on these potential developments fully.	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	<p>It was recognised in the feedback that this proposal would potentially affect the poorest and most vulnerable in our communities, at a time where the data show an increase in mental health issues in children and young people.</p> <p>However there is clearly a need to build on the commitment for joint planning and delivery across relevant agencies to try and mitigate against and/or cover the projected funding loss.</p> <p>If funding is found from a different source then the current level of service delivery can continue. Reviews of the delivery options could be undertaken. WBC is committed to developing further Early Intervention Emotional Wellbeing support for children and young people in schools which should reduce the numbers of CAMHS Tier 3 and 4 referrals by tackling some problems earlier. This is not without additional cost and involves a long term commitment to see the results.</p> <p>An alternative proposal would be to maintain the current reduced budget to CAMHS in the next financial year to allow Tier 2 CAMHS services to continue, or to make a small reduction. This would allow more time for Public Health, CCGs, NHS and WBC to work together to form a joint mental health strategy, discuss and agree different funding streams and develop provision in a planned and cost-effective way.</p>	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken in full in 2014/15. Instead the collaborative working to improve pathways and support across all tiers should be taken forward through further discussion, consultation and service re-design.	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Therapy Services		Jane Seymour, SEN and Disabled Children Service Manager, Educ	
Proposal:	To renegotiate the current contract for commissioning therapy services from the NHS.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £325k Reduce budget by £65k (20%) over 2 years
Nos of responses:	12 responses were received (shared with the savings proposal for CAMHS). However, 3 of these respondents commented on the CAMHS proposals only, leaving 9 respondents who commented on this proposal. Of these 9 responses, 2 were from organisations (Newbury Town Council and Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust).		
Key issues raised:	<p>Concerns expressed that a reduced service would be detrimental to children's progress leading to greater difficulties and associated costs later in their lives;</p> <p>Concern that waiting times are too long already and that use of less qualified staff such as speech and language therapy assistants would damage children's progress.</p> <p>Concern regarding the impact on delivery of training for staff in schools which would reduce schools' ability to meet the needs of children with specific difficulties.</p>		
Equality issues:	<p>Given the nature of the service, more vulnerable children would be affected.</p> <p>One comment noted that children with speech, language and communication difficulties are more likely to be from poor socio economic backgrounds.</p>		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	-		
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Make greater efficiency savings rather than cutting direct therapy services	It is intended that efficiency savings will be sought in order to mitigate impact on direct service delivery	
	Share services with other councils and service providers Work jointly with health providers and commissioners to agree priorities and alternative service delivery models	Joint commissioning of therapy services with health commissioners is being pursued and could help to rationalise costs.	
	Review systems for identifying children for access to therapy services to ensure that too many children were not gaining access.	We are satisfied that identification systems are robust, but we will be reviewing procedures for discharging children from therapy services.	

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	Use of council reserves to support such services	Council balances are held primarily to mitigate against any financial risks. These balances are currently considered to be close to minimum levels. Even if there were opportunities to use balances, it is noted that the savings proposals are ongoing, and this would only bridge the gap in the current year, meaning that the savings would still need to be found in the future.
	Increase council tax to support such services	The administration is proposing to deliver a council tax freeze for the next 2 years as one of their priorities.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	The Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust stated that it would be happy to work with the Council to identify how efficiencies can be achieved.	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	<p>It was anticipated that this proposal would create anxiety particularly on the part of parents of children with SEN, who have expressed understandable concerns, as have others on their behalf. If this savings proposal is taken forward, our intention would be to seek to minimise its impact by seeking efficiency savings wherever possible, developing robust joint commissioning with health commissioners and reviewing models of service delivery.</p> <p>Opportunities to raise income by charging neighbouring local authorities for therapy services provided for children who attend WBC schools but reside in those authorities are also currently being explored. This was not previously permissible under inter-authority recoupment regulations but now seems to be possible under new SEN funding procedures.</p>	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes.	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: PreSchool Teacher Counselling Service		Jane Seymour, SEN and Disabled Children Service Manager, Educ	
Proposal:	To streamline the PreSchool Teacher Counselling Service which supports preschool children with significant special educational needs.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £167k Reduce by £20k over 2014/15 and 2015/16 (12%)
Nos of responses:	15 responses were received, of which 3 were from organisations (the Community Paediatric Service, Newbury Town Council and the PreSchool Teacher Counsellor Service) and 1 from a councillor.		
Key issues raised:	<p>There was a recognition that the service provides important practical and emotional help to families at a difficult time in their lives.</p> <p>Concern that there is no equivalent service which promotes the educational development of young children with SEN</p> <p>Early intervention is critical in order to maximise progress and development of children referred to the service who have severe SEN. Delaying intervention will detrimentally affect progress - likely to result in them having greater difficulties in school and later in life. From this, there was concern that the waiting times for this service already too long (on average 9 months from referral), and this proposal would further exacerbate the issue.</p> <p>Recognition that the service has an important role in facilitating access to the support children may require within educational settings, such as 121 support or specialist placements.</p> <p>Recognition that the service provides training and support for staff in pre-school and school settings in meeting the needs of children with SEN and disabilities. Without this support children may not have their needs met appropriately which may result in placement breakdown and could also detrimentally affect the education of other children in the setting.</p>		
Equality issues:	<p>This proposal would impact children with disabilities who are already vulnerable.</p> <p>Some noted the service supports children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder who have difficulty coping with change and who therefore have a particular need for professional support with transitions in to pre-school and from pre-school to school.</p> <p>It was noted that more well off and emotionally resilient parents may be able to compensate for a reduction in service by identifying / funding other sources of help whilst waiting to be seen by a PSTC. Less advantaged parents and their children are less likely to be able to do this and would therefore be disproportionately affected.</p>		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Families who were able, could travel to see the PSTC in a setting such as a Children's Centre to reduce staff travelling time	This has some potential and is being investigated.	
	Offer shared sessions for children with similar needs	There may be some scope for this but it would be limited as children with complex disabilities can have very disparate needs. It should also be recognised that whilst the	

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		primary role of the service is to promote the children’s educational development, the PSTCs also have an important role in providing emotional and practical support to parents who are coming to terms with their child’s diagnosis and the fact that they will have lifelong disabilities. Many parents need to have this support on a one to one basis and may be reluctant to attend group sessions.
	Parents could choose when to use their sessions and might be willing to have fewer sessions when the child is older in exchange for having more sessions early on.	There may be some scope to reduce sessions for older children in order to bring younger children off the waiting list and on to the caseload sooner. This will be explored. Involvement at the stage the child is transitioning to pre school or school is, however, critical.
	Reduce bureaucracy – shorter written reports	The only detailed reports which are written are the initial report and also the report for the statutory assessment / statementing process (if this is required). The initial report needs to be fairly detailed in order to aid the parents’ understanding of their child’s difficulties, and it is also used by other agencies and professionals. The report for the statutory assessment also needs to be thorough. However, all interim reports are already done as brief notes of visit only, so it is felt that opportunities to minimise report writing have already been taken.
	Charge families a small contribution to use the service, on a means tested basis	This would create an administrative burden which could be equal to the savings / income achieved. Means testing is always problematic as families who come just above the threshold may nevertheless be on low incomes and have difficulty paying. This could result in children being denied the service.
	Explore use of voluntary agencies	There are no known voluntary agencies who would have the capacity, expertise or resources to deliver an equivalent service.
	Greater use of online materials for parents	We are promoting on line training for parents which will certainly help them to support their children’s development. However, use of on line materials would not be a substitute for sessions with a PSTC ,as the effectiveness of their use would depend on parents having the educational ability to access and use the materials and the emotional resilience and motivation to do this at a time when they may be very emotionally vulnerable themselves.
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response
	Increase Council Tax rather than cutting the service.	The administration is proposing to deliver a council tax freeze for the next 2 years as one of their priorities.

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Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	None were put forward
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	Measures have already been put in place to spread the service as effectively as possible and to reduce the waiting list, for example visits to older children on the caseload are less frequent than previously. Suggestions for making better use of resources will all be considered in order to reduce the impact of the saving, but it is unlikely that this saving could be achieved without increasing waiting times for the service.
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Public Transport Subsidies		Mark Edwards, Head of Highways and Transport, H&T	
Proposal:	Review of subsidised bus routes and contributions to community transport operators.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Reduce this budget by £375k (25%) over 2 years.
Nos of responses:	97 responses were received, of which 12 were from town / parish councils and a further 6 from organisations.		
Key issues raised:	<p>The main concerns were the threat and fear of travel deprivation and social isolation.</p> <p>The availability of transport in rural areas was believed to underpin the ability of people, especially those without private transport and those who were disabled, to live in such rural locations.</p>		
Equality issues:	<p>Responses highlighted the fear of travel deprivation and social isolation. Comments noted that this proposal would adversely affect those who rely on services delivered by Readibus, the volunteer transport services and local buses. The availability of transport in rural areas was believed to underpin the ability of people, especially those without private transport and those who were disabled, to live in such rural locations.</p>		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Reduced frequency of services rather than full withdrawal.	This is being examined as part of the process.	
	The means of delivering services may have to change to reduce costs.	Agreed.	
	Better advertising / marketing for existing services.	This became apparent during meetings held as part of the consultation process, particularly in respect of community transport. However a budget would initially be required.	
	Enhance the bus station in Newbury to make it more appealing.	Some improvements have recently been made but it should be noted that the bus station will be relocated as part of the Market Street redevelopment	
	Create incentives for people to use the buses - loyalty discounts and savings in shops etc.	This would be a matter for local businesses and the transport operators. However, the Council is looking at the 'Reward Your World' concept, to include incentives on bus tickets. Janet Duffield, Economic Development Officer, is the lead on this.	
	Increase the volunteer schemes into the rural areas which have no / poor bus services.	We are discussing this with the relevant voluntary sector organisations.	
	Extend travel training to individuals who may benefit	This is addressed through the work of the Learning Independence For Travel	

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		(LIFT) organisation.
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response
	Raise fares to make the services more profitable. However, some noted that higher fares would cause hardship for those on low incomes.	We are looking at the fare structure. However this would also increase payments on concessionary fares reimbursement that Council has to make.
	Some services to be operated commercially (The Vitality 2 evenings and Sunday services).	The late evening and Sunday Vitality 2 journeys will operate commercially from 1 April 2014.
	Change the terms and conditions of the National Off-Peak Bus Pass scheme.	This is not within the power of local authorities and could only be instigated by the Department for Transport.
	Seek private or corporate sponsorship of the services.	This can be done as tenders come up for renewal. In the past it has not proved successful.
	Integrate the Vodafone services into the local bus network	There are legal reasons why this is currently not done.
	Switch to smaller buses in the off peaks (there are logistical reasons why this is not done).	This is a matter for the transport operators.
	Tender out networks of services, not single routes. This may attract more companies to bid for contracts.	We are looking at this. However recent contracts let on a wider network basis are still attracting very little interest from transport operators.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	.	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	The exercise has proved valuable in identifying implications of potential changes to routes. These will feed into the conclusions of our review as to how to meet the savings target. However, we recognise the concerns around the impact of savings on voluntary sector transport.	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has brought forward issues to consider in particular in relation to the voluntary and community transport providers. Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the saving relating to the voluntary and community sector is reduced.	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Libraries		Mike Brook, Library Services Manager, C&EP	
Proposal:	To reduce funding within the library service through reducing opening hours for libraries across the district, thereby honouring the commitment not to close any libraries.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £1.6m 2014/15: £75k (5%) 2015/16: £100k (6%)
Nos of responses:	366 response forms received in total, of which 16 were from organisations.		
Key issues raised:	<p>Clear and evident support for libraries amongst respondents, valuing both the service and the staff that assist the users. Libraries seen by respondents as a cornerstone of the community, they are more than a book lending service, holding a wide range of activities and attracting a diverse audience. Recognition that libraries contribute to education, lifelong learning, literacy and IT literacy and to the preventative agenda. Several referred to the importance of libraries to their local economy.</p> <p>The traditional and growing contribution of volunteers is acknowledged by many. Some feel the balance between paid staff and volunteers is currently about right. Some expressed concern about greater use of volunteers: reliability and expertise.</p> <p>Noted that IT facilities in libraries used by those with low incomes: job seekers, applying for universal credit and social housing. Will likely add further demand in libraries to meet the assisted digital agenda. Also used by silver surfers to catch up on IT skills in the soft learning environment provided by their library.</p> <p>Concern that reduced hours are a step towards closure, and potentially a cynical step to create a spiral of decline to justify closure. Some felt proposed reduced hours in Pangbourne and Burghfield are unfairly savage. Some users at Hungerford and Mortimer said they'd accept this cut but no further cuts to their hours.</p> <p>Some complaints from people in the east, both in library and general terms, that their area doesn't get a fair share of resources, some feeling Newbury is favoured.</p> <p>Some concern that community-run library services would fragment a district-wide service.</p>		
Equality issues:	<p>Some responses referred to the impact on groups such as the elderly and young people and those unable to travel easily</p> <p>There is also reference to the impact on those less computer literate that depend upon more face to face contact.</p>		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	If hours are reduced, care needed to spread available hours around to match the needs of as many groups as possible.	This is being done	
	Mobile stops frequency could be reduced from 3 to 4 weekly.	This would be a further variation to the front line service; the service reviews the schedule of stops frequently	
	Encourage more events in libraries to increase footfall, eg art	The service is working to increase additional activities and use of the	

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	exhibits, workshops etc	branch library venues
	Introduce coffee shops in libraries to draw people in	This has been previously trialled but proven not to increase footfall although it could be argued that it improved the visitor experience
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response
	Introduce charging for internet use	This is being considered
	Partnership activities – CAB / credit union / health advice	This is being considered
	Cap on management salaries	Our Statutory Pay Policy indicates that the ratio between the highest and lowest paid employees in the council (11:1) is well within national government guidelines (20:1).
	Increase council tax to support services	The administration is proposing to deliver a council tax freeze for the next 2 years as one of their priorities.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:		
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	<p>The greatest number of responses was received in relation to Pangbourne, Burghfield Common and Mortimer. Responses make a case for seeking smaller reductions.</p> <p>The suggestion that “mobile stops frequency could be reduced from 3 to 4 weekly” could be considered.</p> <p>The potential for shared service working is being explored.</p>	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	<p>Feedback has brought forward further issues to consider in relation to the reductions in opening hours.</p> <p>Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken in full in 2014/15. It is therefore recommended that the reduction in hours at Pangbourne Library be amended to 5 hours per week (library open 22 hours per week); at Mortimer Library the reduction in hours be amended to 3 hours per week (library open for 19 hours per week) and at Burghfield Common Library the reduction in hours be amended to 2 hours per week (library open for 19 hours per week)</p>	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Road Safety Expenditure			Mark Edwards, Head of Highways and Transport, H&T		
Proposal:	To reduce spend on road safety campaigns to withdraw from the Safer Roads Partnership and end our contribution for funding of a Road Safety Constable.	Proposed reduction in funding:	<i>Road safety education</i> Total budget: £96k 2014/15: £40k (42%) 2015/16: £0k	<i>Road Safety Constable</i> Total budget: £16k 2014/15: £0k 2015/16: £16k (100%)	<i>Safer Roads Partnership</i> Total budget: £96k 2014/15: £0k 2015/16: £40k (42%)
Nos of responses:	In total, 20 responses were received, of which 3 were from organisations: Newbury Town Council, the Institute of Advanced Motorists and Road Safety Analysis Limited.				
Key issues raised:	Concern that this would have a detrimental impact on road safety. However, a number of responses felt that this would have little impact.				
Equality issues:	The impact on children, pedestrians, young drivers and cyclists were highlighted. It was noted that it was important to educate young people as soon as possible and instil good responsible road safety attitudes.				
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion		Council response		
	Replace hands-on education in schools with e-learning.		There will be no budget available for this but the Council may be able to support schools.		
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion		Council response		
	Seek sponsorship from pubs, drink manufacturers and taxi firms for events such as drink / drive campaigns.		We understand that the Police will still operate their regular campaigns but the Council will no longer be able to provide support.		
	Parish / town councils and complaining resident associations should fund any investigations		Officers will investigate this on a case by case basis.		
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	The Institute of Advanced Motorists could assist to improve driver skills, but there would be a cost implication with this.				
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	Feedback put forward some helpful comments regarding education and sponsorship which will be investigated. The feedback reinforced the Council's view that the remaining road safety resources need to be targeted effectively.				
Officer recommendation as a	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore				

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result of responses:	recommended to implement this proposal with no changes
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Overview of responses and recommendations: Planning Enforcement			Gary Lugg, Head of Planning and Countryside, P&C
Proposal:	To reduce the resource in the planning enforcement team from 3, to 2FTE.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £120k 2014/15: £37k (30%) 2015/16: £0k
Nos of responses:	20 in total, 4 from town / parish councils		
Key issues raised:	Concern that lead to people flouting planning law. Suggestion that this would lead to delays in planning process, increased disputes and poor quality buildings.		
Equality issues:	None were drawn out from the responses		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Clearer decision notices	Officer experience suggests that the vast majority of action results from developer or builder action not from misinterpretation of approval notices so any improvement here would not have a significant on the level of enforcement resource required.	
	Encouraging local communities to report breaches of planning controls	Local communities including town / parish councils do actively report breaches of planning control although it is also accepted that they do not have the capacity or expertise to investigate and progress enforcement action through the formal enforcement process.	
	Improve the reporting system for notifying the planning authority of breaches	A new public form is to be included on the Council's web site to allow easy notification of breaches of planning enforcement.	
	Take a harder line with offenders to discourage breaches	Increased fines to act as a deterrent is a matter for the courts and not something that the Council can control or influence.	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Use of fines to recover costs for breaches of planning law	Fees and charges cannot be implemented as Government set planning fees and we have no local discretion in this area.	
	Use of capital reserves	Council balances are held primarily to mitigate against any financial risks. These balances are currently considered to be close to minimum levels. Even if there were opportunities to use balances, it is noted that the savings proposals are ongoing, and this would only bridge the gap in the current year, meaning that the savings would still need to be found in the future.	

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	Increase council tax	The administration is proposing to deliver a council tax freeze for the next 2 years as one of their priorities.
	Provide a more explicit link between resources available for planning applications and enforcement	Planning resources are monitored and adjusted based on the current economic climate. Historically there is no evidence to suggest that Planning Enforcement workload is linked to the number of planning applications received.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	Greater use of parish councils to report breaches of planning control Parish councils should be more involved and should contact builders / developers directly should they note an issue	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	The exercise has not highlighted any impacts that are not already anticipated.	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Theatres		Chris Jones, Arts and Leisure Manager, C&EP		
Proposal:	To reduce funding for the Corn Exchange and Watermill theatres in Newbury.	Proposed reduction in funding:	<i>Corn Exchange</i> Total budget: £378k 2014/15: £50k (13%) 2015/16: £120k (32%)	<i>Watermill</i> Total budget: £42k 2014/15: £0k 2015/16: £10k (24%)
Nos of responses:	322 response forms received in total, including 17 from organisations. In addition, discussions were held with both the Corn Exchange and Watermill theatres and key strategic funding bodies to look at the wider implications of the proposal.			
Key issues raised:	<p>Given the scope of the reduction proposed to The Corn Exchange, the greater majority of the comments related to this venue.</p> <p>A substantial number of respondents commented on the importance of both venues / organisations to the cultural and visitor economy of wider Newbury and in particular the town centre.</p> <p>Concern over the impact on families who use the venues – many young people have been introduced to careers in the theatre / arts and creative sectors as a result of attending performances or workshops provided through the venues.</p> <p>Concern was raised about the consequence of narrowing the content and volume of programmes (possibly more risk averse less creative selections), reducing the range of stakeholders by limiting choice and further create a spiral of declining opportunity.</p> <p>With regard to the geography of the venues, it was commented that The Corn Exchange is considered by many to provide the only true community resource within the town.</p> <p>Concern about the impact on special elements of the programme, in particular the Relaxed Performance provided at the Corn Exchange which cater specifically to the needs of children on the autism spectrum and their families.</p> <p>Concern about the impact on the non-performance element of the programme: outreach to local schools, cinema, outdoor events, variety and quality of live performance programme, hiring charges for local groups to perform at the Corn Exchange, volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>Concern about the negative impact on the Market Place as a focal point for the night time economy – would revert to a pub/clubbing focus rather than the diverse economy that is developing.</p> <p>Concern about the scale of the proposed reductions, especially to The Corn Exchange.</p>			
Equality issues:	The proposal for reductions in budgets will impact across the board at both venues without specifically prejudicing any specific sector of the community. Several respondents expressed a fear that any subsequent rise in ticket prices may have a detrimental effect on people with limited income.			
Suggestions for	Suggestion	Council response		

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mitigating the impact on service users:	Range of concession priced performances to mitigate impact on people with low/limited income.	This will be a matter for the theatres to consider
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response
	Levy on local pubs and restaurants which benefit from additional custom generated by attendees.	This would need to be examined in line with the growth of the BID and perhaps aligned to local commerce through Newbury Vision.
	Rise in ticket price / introduce a £1 levy on tickets	This will be a matter for the theatres to consider
	A reduction in the proposed saving implemented over a longer time scale.	This would need to be examined with a wider range of partners including key strategic arts and grant giving organisations.
	Cutting expenses in other non-arts budget areas to offset the impact of the reduction.	The savings package proposed sees reductions across the whole Council
	Supplement the revenue stream of the venues through broadening the range of events / hires to include non arts activities (small scale sporting events / weddings or regular community group activity hire).	This will be a matter for the theatres to consider
	Reducing the programming at New Greenham Arts to focus on the Corn Exchange.	This will be a matter for the Corn Exchange to consider
	Sponsorship of seats by more 'wealthy' residents or church groups to support subsidy for people with limited income. Sponsorship / investment from local businesses to support the venue(s) or key elements of the programme.	This will be a matter for the theatres to consider
	Transfer ownership of the Corn Exchange to Greenham Common Trust to reduce building and maintenance overheads.	This might form part of any discussion in consideration of a Cultural Trust
	Increase Council tax to offset or minimise the impact of the proposed savings.	The administration is proposing to deliver a council tax freeze for the next 2 years as one of their priorities.
Increase volunteer roles at both venues where appropriate.	This will be a matter for the theatres to consider	
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	Other than the ideas already highlighted the only key suggestion to alleviate the impact of the proposals was in relation to establishing a Newbury town centre based Culture Trust. This is an option which whilst it might not deliver immediate savings appears to warrant further examination for longer term safe-guarding of the district's cultural and theatre assets.	

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<p>Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:</p>	<p>Whilst a number of people voiced concern regarding the need for reductions, a number also recognised the need for budget cuts to be made by the council.</p> <p>The scale and timing of the proposed reductions were regarded as a key factor of concern.</p> <p>The option of a longer term culture trust should be explored.</p> <p>The Corn Exchange has submitted a counter proposal of a lower saving profiled over a 5 year period.</p>
<p>Officer recommendation as a result of responses:</p>	<p>Feedback has brought forward further issues to consider in relation to safeguarding the Corn Exchange. Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken in full and that the reduction in funding to the Corn Exchange be re-profiled over a five year period.</p> <p>With regard to the Watermill theatre, feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the Council from proceeding with this saving. It is recommended to implement this proposal with no changes.</p>

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Road and Verge Maintenance		Mark Edwards, Head of Highways and Transport, H&T	
Proposal:	To reduce various budgets associated with road and verge maintenance.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Reduce expenditure over 2 years in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sign and road marking maintenance</i>: £53k (28%) • <i>Crash barrier and guard railing maintenance</i>: £10k (14%) budget is £76k • <i>Gully emptying</i>: £30k (15%) • <i>Winter gritting</i>: £40k (6%) • <i>Roads maintenance</i>: £165k (17%) • <i>Unscheduled highway events</i>: £50k (8%) • <i>Grass cutting maintenance</i>: £71k (7%)
Nos of responses:	43 responses were received, of which 5 were from town / parish councils, 1 from an organisation and 1 from a councillor.		
Key issues raised:	<p>Signs and road markings Concern that would compromise safety.</p> <p>Safety fences/barriers Few comments however noted that the work should be carried out on a risk assessment basis, focusing around schools.</p> <p>Drainage/gully emptying Concern that this was a false economy as the reduced drainage capability would only lead to local flooding and further erosion of road surfaces.</p> <p>Winter gritting Concern that this was a crucial service that should not be reduced due to the likely increase in accidents and impact on access to services including work and school.</p> <p>Highway Maintenance Concern that road conditions would worsen and negatively impact on road safety.</p> <p>Verge maintenance/grass cutting Level of support for this element provided that sight lines are safely maintained. Concern about maintaining safer walking to school routes and in rural areas where no footways are present.</p>		
Equality issues:	Although would impact on all, some concern about the impact on the elderly should footway and verge maintenance be reduced, particularly, on the rural network. However, there are no proposals to reduce footway maintenance.		
Suggestions for	Suggestion	Council response	

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mitigating the impact on service users:	Removed superfluous signs to reduce maintenance costs.	Officers follow DfT guidance concerning sign clutter where resources permit.
	Remove unnecessary guardrails / safety fences where safety was no longer an issue	Officers follow this practice.
	Reductions in road maintenance should focus on little used rural roads and those serving individual properties like farms.	The Council has a responsibility to maintain all public highways but priority is given to well trafficked routes in accordance with the code of practice/national guidelines.
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response
	Reduce the frequency of grass cutting even further to fund essential services provided that road safety is not compromised.	The proposal already includes a reduction in the number of rural cuts from 3 to 2. A further reduction would compromise road safety and is not recommended. In urban areas it is considered that any further reduction in standards would be unacceptable.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	Parish councils could help identify priority areas for verge grass cutting. Explore voluntary activity.	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	There was concern from respondents about the impact on road conditions but the responses did not put forward any further evidence of impact, not already envisaged. A number of suggestions were put forward around reducing the frequency of grass cutting which are already being pursued.	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has brought forward further issues in relation to road and verge maintenance. Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken in full in 2014/15. It is therefore recommended that the proposals relating to gully emptying, winter gritting and road maintenance are not progressed at this time.	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Sunday Parking Charges		Mark Edwards, Head of Highways and Transport, H&T	
Proposal:	To introduce the weekday parking tariff on a Sunday to car parks in central Newbury.	Projected income generated:	2014/15: £10k
Nos of responses:	In total 31 responses were received, including 3 from organisations: Newbury Town Council, the West Berkshire Ramblers' Association, Interakt and 2 from councillors.		
Key issues raised:	<p>Concern that the increase in car parking charges would have a detrimental effect on Sunday trading in Newbury town centre.</p> <p>Concern about the impact on events in the town centre run on a Sunday (ie Crafty Raft).</p> <p>Concern that this would result in similar charges being levied in other towns in due course.</p> <p>Concern that would inhibit groups such as the Ramblers' Assoc. who use the car parks as a rendezvous before heading off for the day.</p> <p>Concern that would lead to increased on-street parking just outside of the residents' parking zones</p>		
Equality issues:	Noted that the elderly and disabled will be affected, as will people attending Sunday church services.		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Provide free parking for club members on days when there are significant events in the town centre (ie Crafty Raft)	This would be very difficult logistically. There would be a significant increase in resources needed to administer this and revenue would be lost. The Council would receive large number of requests for free parking from clubs and societies.	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Have a more modest increase in the flat Sunday fee (to say £1.50).	Sunday is just another normal shopping day for many people and the proposed parking tariff reflects that. However this alternative proposal has merit and is perhaps better suited to nature of Newbury.	
	Sunday parking charges should be applied to all other town car parks outside of Newbury.	The numbers in Hungerford, Theale and Pangbourne for Sunday parking are relatively small with very little financial effect.	
	Develop a parking refund scheme with retailers if you spend over a set amount.	This already exists in the Kennet Centre but has not been received enthusiastically more widely by local businesses.	
	Introduce a charging scheme for cyclists using cycle stations across the town centre	The Council does not want to discourage cycling.	
	Reduce parking charges to zero to encourage greater	Who will then pay for all the car park fixed costs? Such a proposal will not encourage turnover or necessarily increase trade for town centre	

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	footfall.	businesses.
	Sell off all council-owned car parks to the private sector to encourage competitive pricing	Council car park charges are competitive and there is no reason to believe that charges would be more competitive if they were privately operated
	Reduce the number of traffic wardens instead	The Council has a duty to provide adequate enforcement under the Traffic Management Act 2004. Civil Enforcement Officers are required to patrol the many towns and villages, including schools, where parking restrictions are in place. Reducing the number of CEOs would not necessarily save any money.
	Increase the charge for issuing resident parking / visitor permits	The residents parking scheme is currently being reviewed.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	None provided.	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	The vast majority of the 31 responses expressed concern at the potential effect of this proposal on town centre trade. Some comments put forward suggested an alternative option to increase the Sunday charge from £1 to £1.50 rather than implementing the full weekday tariff.	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has brought forward further issues to consider in relation to the increase in car parking charges adversely impacting on trade in the town. It is therefore recommended that the Sunday charge is increased from £1 to £1.50 rather than implementing the full weekday tariff.	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Public Conveniences		Stewart Souden, Grounds Maintenance Manager, P&C	
Proposal:	To withdraw funding for public toilets in Kintbury, Aldermaston, Hungerford, Thatcham and Pangbourne and seek alternative funding through parish councils.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £146k 2014/15: £20k (14%) 2015/16: £50k (34%)
Nos of responses:	37 response forms received in total. 4 from organisations. The majority of responses related to Pangbourne toilets. In addition a number of meetings were held with town and parish councils.		
Key issues raised:	Concern that the lack of facilities would put people off visiting the localities. Pressure on local businesses to accommodate people – may be unfair if not paying customers. No facilities for people in Kintbury waiting for the train Concern about health issues with people relieving themselves outside		
Equality issues:	Concern that people with medical conditions and disabilities may need the facilities. Discussions with the West Berkshire Disability Alliance however suggested that disabled people would not be more adversely affect than anyone else in the community.		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Local businesses could promote the use of their toilet by non-paying customers (and be recompensed as such)	This would be welcomed by the Council but it is for local business to promote the use of their facilities.	
	Convert part of Pangbourne toilet into a coffee shop to cover the cost of its upkeep	This is not considered a viable proposal.	
	Open up use of Adventure Dolphin toilets for public use	This can be explored.	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Use of car park charges to pay for toilets	This refers to the toilets would require an increase in car park charges to provide a public convenience service that is only used by a limited number of people using the car park.	
	Charge for use of toilets	With the possible exception of Thatcham Broadway, the nature of these small buildings is such that charging systems cannot be installed due to a lack of space. A charging system at Thatcham would only make up a small proportion of the saving to be found if a fee of for example 20p per visit were to be charged.	

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	Reduced opening hours of toilets	This would not help reduce costs significantly. The cost of repair, maintenance and cleaning would still be required.
	Local businesses (food establishments) should be asked to contribute to the upkeep of local toilets	This could be requested but it is unlikely that it will generate the required income to cover the cost of operating the toilets.
	Charge coffee / ice cream sellers for use of car parks	This is being investigated but it is unlikely to recover the cost required to operate the toilets.
	Increase council tax	The administration is proposing to deliver a council tax freeze for the next 2 years as one of their priorities.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	<p>Beenham Parish Council This parish council will not fund the Aldermaston Lock public toilet</p> <p>Thatcham Town Council There is a legal agreement in place between Thatcham Town Council and West Berkshire Council that means that the site must remain open until 31 March 2015.</p> <p>Kintbury Parish Council This parish council has decided to fund the Kintbury Lock public toilet until 31 March 2015. It will carry out a consultation at a local level to ascertain whether residents wish to fund this beyond that date.</p> <p>Pangbourne Parish Council The parish will consider funding this once new Council Tax bands are agreed.</p> <p>Hungerford Town Council The town council is looking to fund this site.</p>	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	<p>At this stage no viable alternative solutions have been suggested.</p> <p>Beenham Parish Council have confirmed that they will not fund the toilets at Aldermaston Lock so it is recommended that these toilets close.</p> <p>Kintbury Lock and Thatcham Broadway will remain open until 31 March 2015. Further discussions with the respective parish and town councils will be required in the autumn of 2014.</p> <p>Pangbourne and Hungerford are seeking to fund the 3 sites in their areas. If formal agreement cannot however be reached, then it will be recommended that these facilities will close 30 September 2014.</p>	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	<p>Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal as outlined above.</p>	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: School Crossing Patrols		Caroline Corcoran, Access, Planning, Governance and Trading Manager, Educ	
Proposal:	To cease funding of school crossing patrols and seek funding for these services through schools directly.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £16k 2014/15: £0k 2015/16: £16k (100%)
Nos of responses:	45 response forms were received. 6 from organisations: Newbury Town Council, Thatcham Town Council, Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council, Pangbourne Parish Council, Pangbourne School Governing Body, and Mortimer St Johns Infant School governor, and 1 from a councillor. In addition, 2 petitions were received (relating to Fir Tree Lane and Theale schools).		
Key issues raised:	Concern raised about the increased risk of accidents and serious injury or death to children. To note that 3 requests are pending for crossing patrols at additional sites in the district.		
Equality issues:	This proposal will affect every school community who has a school crossing patrol. One comment expressed concern about the impact on children or parents who have a visual disability.		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Increased focus on the promotion of road safety Put in traffic calming measures such as pedestrian crossing or traffic lights.	The cost of these measures has not been assessed for a range of sites at this point. However, in general terms, the cost would be c.£40k per pelican or toucan crossing, so this option would be more expensive, and the cost would need to be balanced against the risk.	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Seek funding from particular school	Under the law, in order to be able to stop traffic, a school crossing patroller must be employed by the Council. The Council already has an arrangement with an independent school for a self-funding option, which works well, and this solution could be rolled out more fully.	
	Seek funding from parish / town council or sponsorship from local business	The Council already has an arrangement for a self-funding option, and this solution could be rolled out more fully. The cost per crossing patrol is c £2,500 p.a., including overheads.	
	Reduce back office functions in order to protect more fully front line services	The council has already absorbed a lot of the savings by cutting back on administration. The number of staff has been reduced by around 200 and we have changed the way some services are provided. Although we will continue to do this, reduced spending on services people use and will notice can no longer be avoided.	

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Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	<p>The Council needs to ensure that the potential risk of death or injury to a child is mitigated if this proposal is to go ahead. Therefore, it is preferable that school crossing patrollers should continue in place to alleviate the risks.</p> <p>Communities should be encouraged to find alternative sources of funding, thus securing the crossing patrollers and reducing the risks.</p> <p>As the Council is receiving requests for an increasing number of patrollers, the solution of self-funded patrollers where there is demand would ensure that the Council did not receive increasing costs in this area as the number of crossing patrollers increases.</p>
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	<p>Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken at this time.</p>

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Parenting Support Team		Janet Scott, Adult and Community Learning Service Manager, Educ	
Proposal:	To reduce the budget for training practitioners to deliver parenting programmes in line with reduced demand and to integrate the service with other related parent support programmes.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £145k 2014/15: £0k 2015/16: £95k (65%)
Nos of responses:	8 responses were received for this proposal. There were no organisations listed.		
Key issues raised:	<p>Comments noted the value of this service to both the parents and the children.</p> <p>The greatest concerns were around vulnerable families, those with low incomes and where mental health is a factor.</p> <p>Another concern was around the provision of parenting courses in the future when the 'pool' of those currently trained was reduced.</p> <p>It is noted, responses focussed on the delivery of parenting courses rather than the reduction in the team set up to train those delivering the programmes.</p>		
Equality issues:	It is noted that by its nature, this proposal would affect families who may be considered more vulnerable.		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	<p>Ensure there is a funding reserve to pay for new staff to be trained in the future</p> <p>To engage with the voluntary sector and invest in their training.</p>	<p>Historically the parenting programme delivery has been funded through central government grants. Any further local delivery would be contingent on either new funding sources being available or developing collaborative joint funding models locally. This would still require time and resources to develop these kinds of arrangements.</p> <p>Some workforce development has been resourced jointly with Public Health and Troubled Families Programme funding and there is potential for parenting support to be considered in the future for funding via this route as it relates to wide health and well being agenda.</p>	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	<p>Work with the CCG to commission mental health services for parents and to work closely with the council;</p>	<p>This would need to be raised through the Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>Some initiatives to be jointly funded by the Council and health jointly.</p> <p>There is also a possibility of working with another local authority.</p>	
Suggestions for how others may help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pooling resources • Being part of a capacity mapping exercise 		

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contribute:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being part of further 'think tank' type activity • Paying for parenting programme training at cost • Charging those parents who can pay for parenting programmes
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	West Berkshire currently offers many recognised evidenced based parenting programmes to meet a wide range of needs. However, the Parenting Support Team has trained a high number of staff and as a result the need for a co-ordinating and development function has reduced.
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has not uncovered any further issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended to implement this proposal with no changes

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme			Chris Jones, Arts and Leisure Manager, C&EP
Proposal:	To withdraw funding which supports the West Berkshire DoE award scheme	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £72k 2014/15: £0k 2015/16: £72k (100%)
Nos of responses:	79 in total of which 15 were from organisations		
Key issues raised:	<p>Valued programme, supporting young people to develop social and life skills – preparedness for higher education and potential employment, recognises talents and promotes independence, healthy lifestyle and community / social inclusion.</p> <p>Scheme already supported and supplemented by volunteers.</p> <p>Concern that although other organisations are able to provide the scheme, capacity to deliver would be reduced and young people would have to join these organisations to participate.</p> <p>Recognise economies of scale in terms of training, quality assurance, and consistent support as a result of a central licence holder / provider and concern amongst some organisations that they are not large enough to assume the responsibility, or the cost, of the licence.</p>		
Equality issues:	<p>This is a universal service, so young people generally would be affected.</p> <p>However, particular groups who do currently benefit from the scheme include PRUs, YOT programmes, special needs young people and young people from deprived areas where youth provision has been cut in previous budgets.</p>		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Reduce / amalgamate the function, rather than cease altogether	Options for alternative deliver will be explored but on the basis of zero cost to WBC	
	Reduce the funding over a nos of years / gradual increase in cost of placements	The Council is looking at increasing income but it is unlikely that this could match the savings target.	
	Run a tiered scheme so participants who are able to contribute, do so	All participants pay. Options for increasing charges based upon the ability to pay are being explored	
	DoE centres paying a sign up fee to WBC as the central licence holder	The Council is looking at increasing income but it is unlikely that this could match the savings target	

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	Close award centres so that schools operate the scheme independently	Alternative hosts are being considered. Schools generally reluctant to run a scheme at this level, generally only cater for their own students.
	Utilise pupil premium funding and / or funding from Children's Services for more disadvantaged pupils	Draw down of Pupil Premium can be looked into. Funding from Children's Services would not generate a saving for the council
	Run jointly with a partner organisation / charity / neighbouring LAs	This would not realise the total saving
	Run the entire service through volunteers	A large number of volunteers deliver the service with WBC's provision. A voluntary group will be at liberty to obtain a licence and run the scheme
	Generate income through making use of existing staff to provide expedition training and management	There is no spare capacity within the team
	Greater sponsorship and grant aid	The Council is looking at increasing income in this and other ways but it is unlikely that this could match the savings target.
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:	<p>Noted that the scheme already supported greatly by volunteers.</p> <p>Some organisations indicated that would be prepared to consider increasing their contributions</p> <p>Some indicated they would be like to be involved in further discussions around the provision of the service</p> <p>Suggested that participating organisations could pool equipment and transport to reduce costs of expeditions – grant licences to inter-schools collaborative groups</p> <p>Seek sponsorship from local businesses – through their training budgets and getting younger staff involved as part of their development plans.</p> <p>Berkshire Youth indicated that would seek to spread the overhead costs by partnering with other areas.</p>	
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	The initial intention for this proposal was to look for an alternative method of delivery, maintaining the saving for the council. This will continue.	
Officer recommendation as a result of responses:	Feedback has not uncovered any further fundamental issues which would prevent the council from proceeding with this saving. It is therefore recommended that the saving remains unchanged and is proceeded with over the next 12-24 months. Alternative methods of delivery will be explored.	

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Overview of responses and recommendations: Tourism		Amanda Loaring, Heritage and Tourism Manager, C&EP	
Proposal:	To cease funding for the Newbury Tourist Information Office and withdraw technical support for the <i>Visit Newbury</i> official tourism website managed by the Newbury BID.	Proposed reduction in funding:	Total budget: £60k 2014/15: £0k 2015/16: £60k (100%)
Nos of responses:	78 responses were received, 9 of which were from organisations.		
Key issues raised:	Support for the service as a valuable resource in supporting the local economy by encouraging visitors to the area but also as a beneficial resource to the local community. A number noted the use of the internet, but some preferred face-to-face contact.		
Equality issues:	This is a universal cut and the service itself is not intended to target any specific group, however, some respondents noted a greater impact on those not as computer literate, such as the elderly who therefore rely on more face to face contact.		
Suggestions for mitigating the impact on service users:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Improve and encourage greater use of the Visit Newbury website and the TIC transferring to the BID	Discussions with potential hosts of the TIC are in hand. The Visit Newbury Website is currently managed and maintained by the Business Improvement District company (Newbury BID)	
Alternative options for applying the saving in this area:	Suggestion	Council response	
	Move the TIC to a rent-free location	There may be some potential to make savings in that regard but they are unlikely to be significant to meet the target in this savings proposal.	
	Make more use of volunteers alongside paid staff	This would only make a small saving as the staffing levels are already very low. The costs of the venue and materials would not fall.	
Suggestions for how others may help contribute:			
Officer conclusion as a result of the responses:	The process has indicated that there is a continuing demand for face to face service provision.		
Officer recommendation as a	Feedback has brought forward further issues in relation to the TIC. Given the better than anticipated improving local economy, it is recommended that the proposed savings is not taken in full. It is recommended that the saving target be reduced to £25k and an		

NB: This overview and recommendation paper should be read in conjunction with the summary of responses and verbatim responses received in relation to this proposal, circulated electronically to all members alongside the agenda pack and published online on our [Consultation Finder](#) database.

result of responses:

attempt be made to find this through contributions from Newbury BID, town and parish councils, local businesses and other potential funding streams.

NB: This overview and recommendation paper should be read in conjunction with the summary of responses and verbatim responses received in relation to this proposal, circulated electronically to all members alongside the agenda pack and published online on our [Consultation Finder](#) database.

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Appendix D – Reserves Statements

As at the 1.4.2013 the Council's General Fund (i.e. reserves that can be used against any activity) stood as follows:

Table 1 – General Reserves summary – as at April 2013

Item	Amount / £m
General Fund	6.5
Medium Term Financial Volatility Reserve	1.5
total	8.0

There have been a variety of adjustments and these are highlighted below:

Table 2 – Movements to General Reserves

	Amount / £m
As at 1.4.2013 – Total General Reserves	8.0
Utilisation of £120k from reserves for the 2013-14 budget as agreed at Council – March 2013	(0.1)
<i>Estimate at 31.3.2014</i>	<i>7.9</i>
Use of MTFVR in 2014/15 for loss of Business Rates	-0.4
Anticipated general reserves as at 31.3.2015	7.5

Table 3 – General Reserves summary as at 31.3.2015 – prediction February 2014

Item	Amount / £m
General Fund	6.4
Medium Term Financial Volatility Reserve	1.1
total	7.5

Purpose of the General Fund

The purpose of the general fund to act as a fund to be used in emergencies due to an outturn overspend and to protect council taxpayers from any steep rises in future Council Tax if the Council overspends against its budget.

The Council s151 officer (the Head of Finance) recommends that the general reserve totals, as a minimum, 5% of the Council's net revenue expenditure. As at the 1.4.2014, this would be a minimum reserve of £6.1m.

Within the expected General Fund of £6.4m, assuming no over or under spend, as at 31st March 2014, the Council has a number of risks as follows:

- Economy measures and service reductions always contain some degree of uncertainty as to whether their full effects will be achieved.
- The effect of the macro-economy on West Berkshire Council, and subsequent loss of income from Council Tax, from fees and charges, and a decline in house building and the corresponding impact on new house building.
- The impact of significant increases in demand to Council budget areas, specifically in Adult Social Care and Children's Social care; it should be noted that during 2012-13 Adult Social created their own risk fund for known items on the risk register that is maintained; these do not address significant spikes in demand
- The delivery of all savings targets
- Unforeseen events such as the flooding during July 2007
- Risks in relation to litigation.
- Risk of changes from specific grants to the non ring fenced government grants.
- Risks of grants being introduced or removed mid year, requiring authority contributions.
- The need to retain a general contingency to provide for unforeseen circumstances.
- The need to retain reserves for general day to day cash flow needs and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing
- Risk of reduced income due to deferred income and social care clients' property decreasing in value

If the risks above occur, then this will deplete the general reserves, assuming that every other Council budget breaks even. If the Council does not break even in 2013-14 then it will need to establish a mechanism for replenishing reserves into future years.

Medium Term Financial Volatility Reserve (MTFVR)

The Council should maintain a MTFVR balance of at least 50% of the gap between the expected retained business rates and the safety net payment level from Government. At present, this 'gap' is £1.5m; i.e. the Council expects to receive £1.5m of retained business rate above its baseline, and the safety net begins at 7.5% of the Councils funding support (£1.5m). The reserve is required to cover a forecast net shortfall in the business rates of

circa £440k in 2013/14 with the closing balance expected to be just over £1m. This fund should be replenished to its recommended level as soon as practical.

Adult Social Care Risk Fund

Anticipated to be close to £900k by the end of the 2013-14 financial year. This reserve was created from one-off savings in Adult Social Care to meet known risks within the service. A separate risk register is held for the service. As with all reserves, these are one-off solutions and any on-going pressures will need to be adjusted via the CEL process.

Other reserves

The Council has a variety of other reserves which are earmarked for specific purposes. The significant items are highlighted below

Restructuring Provision

The Council has set aside £269k (worst case scenario) in the specific earmarked reserves to fund the cost of the savings proposals for the 2014-15 budget proposals.

It is anticipated that this reserve will mitigate, as much as possible, the impact of any savings related costs to the Council over the short term and so protect the Council's levels of general reserve to at least the minimum amount recommended by the s151 officer.

Any balance in this reserve at the end of the financial year will be rolled forward to fund any future restructuring costs to the Council.

Waste Management Reserve

A fund set up to help to meet the revenue and capital costs associated with the Council's PFI arrangement for the provision of waste collection and disposal services.

Long term commitments

Funding specifically set aside for capital financing purposes; either funding for future capital schemes or financing costs for future principal payments on maturity loans. These vary according to the progress of capital schemes and the utilisation of s106 monies.

A full list of the Council's reserves are disclosed in the Council's financial statements (2012-13)¹:

<http://www.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=27165>

¹ Please note that these reserves are before any changes from the 2013-14 financial year

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Adequacy of Reserves and Robustness of Budget Estimates – s151 Officer Statement

1. Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Section 151 Officer (Head of Finance) to formally report to Council as part of the tax setting report his view of the robustness of estimates and the adequacy of reserves. The Council is required to take these views into account when setting the Council Tax at its meeting on 4th March 2014.

2 Adequacy of Reserves

- 2.1 This statement focuses upon the unallocated general reserve and excludes schools' budgets and schools' unspent balances, which will be reviewed by the schools funding forum when Governing Bodies have submitted their budgets. The minimum prudent level of reserves that the Council should maintain is a matter of judgement and cannot be judged merely against the current risks facing the Council as these can and will change over time.
- 2.2 The consequences of not keeping a prudent minimum level of reserves can be serious. In the event of a major problem or a series of events, the Council would run a serious risk of a deficit or of being forced to cut spending during the year in a damaging and arbitrary way.
- 2.3 CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) have issued a notification from the LAAP (Local Authority Accounting Panel) stating that there should be no imposed limit on the level or nature of balances required to be held by an individual Council (except under section 26 where this has been imposed by ministers). West Berkshire Council policy has consistently kept a prudent minimum level of balances of 5% of net revenue expenditure (NRE); this represents £6.1m for the 2014-15 budget requirement.

It is recommended that general reserve balances be set at a minimum of 5% of net revenue expenditure

3 Robustness of Estimates

3.1 The treatment of inflation and interest rates

The 2014-15 pay award for staff has been estimated at 1% in line with the Government's pay announcements. Non pay related budgets have been inflated at the contractually committed rate of inflation or where services can demonstrate a requirement to do so to maintain service delivery levels. Interest rates for 2014-15 have been assumed at just over 4% for new long term borrowing. Increases to fees and charges have been set in line inflation where appropriate.

3.2 Efficiency saving and productivity gains

The budget contains proposals to deliver nearly £6m of savings. The medium term financial strategy includes a three year savings programme to ensure that future revenue budgets remain in financial balance to ensure the council has adequate resources to deliver its Council Strategy outcomes. The savings programme will also help to ensure that Council Tax increases are kept to as low a level as possible and deliver efficient local

services. The proposals set a far greater level of required savings than in past years and there are inherent risks to the delivery of a balanced budget at the end of the 2014-15 financial year.

3.3 Budget and Financial management

West Berkshire has an excellent record of budget and financial management. The level of under and overspends in recent years is as follows

- 2007/08 £ 196k underspend 0.22% of budget excluding DSG
- 2008/09 £ 351k overspend 0.34% of budget excluding DSG
- 2009/10 £ 5k underspend 0.01% of budget excluding DSG
- 2010/11 £ 580k underspend 0.48% of budget excluding DSG
- 2011/12 £ 491k underspend 0.39% of budget excluding DSG
- 2012/13 £ 620k underspend 0.50% of budget excluding DSG
- 2013/14 £183k underspend as at M9

This level of control is achieved by significant management and policy action to ensure that spending is kept within budgets each year. All relevant reports to the Executive have their financial effects identified and Management Board keeps any emerging budget pressures under review during the year. Monthly reports are received by Corporate Board and quarterly reports to the Executive, and the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission detail both budgetary and performance indicators. A traffic light system of indicators is used.

The Council has a number of demand led budgets. The Council has historically been able to manage changes to demand to ensure a sound financial standing at the end of the financial year.

3.4 Adequacy of insurance and risk management

Strategic risk management is being embedded throughout the Council to ensure that all risks are identified, ameliorated and managed appropriately. The Council's insurance arrangements are a balance of external insurance premiums and internal funds to self-insure some areas. As well as an internal risk manager the Council also make use of an external consultant to advise on the level of funds required to underpin those risks not externally insured.

3.5 Overall financial standing of the authority

West Berkshire Council now borrows money to support the Council's capital programme. It has calculated its capacity for borrowing within the provisions of the prudential framework and budgeted accordingly. The assumed Council Tax collection rate is 99.6% and this is an achievable if demanding target. Each 1% uncollected amounts to approximately £800k and any surplus or deficit on the collection fund is apportioned between the Council and its major precepting bodies the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authority, and the Thames Valley Police Authority.

4 Maintaining balances

- 4.1 The balance of the in year budgetary position against the proposed budget will be managed against the general reserve. If budget pressures emerge then it is first for the service to contain, then the directorate and finally a corporate issue. If there is still

Appendix E

a pressure at year end then General Reserves will reduce and will need to be replenished up to a 5% level in future years. This helps ensure that the Council is in a position to maintain its service provision without drastic actions.

- 4.2 If an event occurs that is so serious it depletes the Council reserves to below the limit set, then the Council will take appropriate measures to raise general fund reserves to the recommended level in as soon a timeframe as possible without undermining service provision.

Andy Walker
Head of Finance
January 2014

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Resources Fees & Charges Proposals – 2014/15

1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the starting points in building the base budget is that fees and charges should increase by a minimum of 2.7%. In reality, however, officers seek to look at every opportunity to maximise income accepting that:
- Fees and charges can have a direct impact on usage and take up of services;
 - In some circumstances the Council is providing services in direct competition to the private sector. Where this is the case, price is likely to have a direct link with demand and it is important that the Council does not 'price itself out of the market';
 - Raising fees and charges can in some instances work against the Council's social inclusion agenda by effectively discriminating against those who are less able to pay;
 - For some services there is a clear expectation that fees and charges will reflect the costs incurred in providing the service. The Council may open itself to legal challenge if the increases it makes cannot be justified.
- 1.2 Within the Resources Directorate the main services and functions to which fees and charges apply are detailed in the specific proposals section below.

2. Specific Proposals

2.1 Registration Services

Registration fees are largely controlled by statute. In 2011 a bench marking exercise took place in order to ensure our charges were commensurate with the other Berkshire authorities.

2.2 Electoral Services

These charges are statutory, set by Government and the Council has no discretion to vary.

2.3 Land Charges

There has been increasing private sector competition in the area of Land Charges in recent years. As a result of this competition the Council has improved its performance. However, it should be noted that any improvement in turnaround times has to be offered to the private sector as well.

From 1st July 2007 a new fee structure was introduced to comply with new legislation, which requires the Council to only recover cost incurred in service delivery. For 2014/15 the fee structure has been reviewed to continue compliance with the cost recovery model. This requires an uplift of 2.7%. In addition, the statutory fee for personal searches has been revoked by HM Government this will result in further increased competition from the private sector, as personal search companies will be able to offer even more competitive pricing.

2.4 Legal Fees

It is proposed to increase the Council's Legal charges for third party work to bring the charges in line with other Berkshire Authorities.

Description	Current Fee 2013/14	Proposed Fee 2014/15	Notes
Registration			
Decommissioned room fees:			
Mon-Thu	£100	£110	
Fri	£130	£140	
Sat am	£150	£160	
Sat pm	£210	£220	
Sun	£310	£320	
Ceremonies at approved premises (Mon-Thu)	£330	£340	All increases rounded to the nearest £10
Ceremonies at approved premises (Fri)	£350	£360	
Ceremonies at approved premises (Sat)	£380	£390	
Ceremonies at approved premises (Sun and Bank Holidays)	£440	£450	
Approved Premises Licence (more than one room)	£1900	£1950	
Approved Premises (one room)	£1720	£1770	
Celebratory Services –Baby Naming/Affirmation of vows - Shaw House			
Mon to Fri	£170	£180	
Sat	£200	£210	
Sun	£270	£280	
Celebratory Services – Baby Naming/Affirmation of vows-at Approved Premises			
Mon to Fri	£200	£210	
Sat	£230	£240	
Sun	£290	£300	
Private Citizenship ceremony			Cannot justify increase based on the time involved
Mon to Fri	£100	£100	
Sat	£100	£100	

Description	Current Fee 2013/14	Proposed Fee 2014/15	Notes
Nationality Checking			
Single application	£55	£60	£20 extra charged for Saturday appointments
Joint application	£75	£90	As above
Minor	£20	£25	As above
Elections			
All fees are statutory			No change.
Local Land Charges			
LLC1	£59	£61	
Con29 PT1	£36	£37	
Con29 PT11	£19	£20	
Additional Questions	£36	£37	
Con29 additional parcel	£24	£25	
LLC1 additional parcel	£43	£44	
Personal search	£0	£0	Statutory fee removed
Personal search additional parcel	£0	£0	Statutory fee removed
Legal			
Hourly charging costs:			
Managers	£123	£130	
Team Leader	£118	£125	
Solicitor	£113	£120	
Legal Executive / Senior Legal Assistant	£103	£110	
Trainee Solicitors		£95 (new)	
This covers salary, employers' costs and other support charges – rent, office space, photocopying, postage, etc.			

Social Care Training

- 2.5 The Government provides funding for care sector training and we use this funding to deliver a comprehensive joint training programme for staff and people working in the private and voluntary care sector. Anyone can access training and charges represent the average costs, for example for a place on a course. The grant funding enables charges to local and accredited social care providers to be subsidised, hence the lower rate fee. Charging is essential to make the funding go further and ensure people book on courses and turn up. We have applied an increase to our charges to recognise increasing costs.

The Department of Health requires Councils to work closely with its partners on joint training and to facilitate improved standards of care through training initiatives; therefore some joint training will have the same charges as the partners involved and will sit outside this charging policy.

	Full Day	Half Day
Adult & Children's Social Care Staff at WBC	Funded	Funded
Private, Voluntary & Independent social care providers, partners & accredited organisation & Direct Payments service users	£39.00	£25.70
Anyone else	£70.90	£39
Social Care Trainer Hire to Private, Voluntary & Independent social care providers, partners & accredited organisation	£133.50	No half day rate
Social Care Trainer Hire to anyone else	£336.90	No half day rate
Hire of training room & equipment for Private, Voluntary & Independent social care providers, partners & accredited organisation	£72.90	No half day rate

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Environment Fees and Charges Proposals – 2014/15

1. Introduction

1.1 One of the starting points for the base budget for 2014/15 is that fees and charges should increase by 2.7%. In reality, however, officers look for every opportunity to maximise income, accepting that:

- Fees and charges can have a direct impact on usage and take up;
- In some circumstances the Council is providing services in direct competition to the private sector. Where this is the case, price is likely to have a direct link with demand and it is important that the Council does not price itself out of the market. In some areas benchmarking has taken place to ensure West Berkshire can compete with other authorities.
- Raising fees and charges can in some instances work against the Council's social inclusion agenda by effectively discriminating against those who are less able to pay;
- For some services there is a clear expectation that fees and charges will reflect the costs incurred in providing the service; the Council may be subject to legal challenge if increases in fees and charges cannot be justified.

1.2 Within the Environment Directorate fees and charges deliver an annual income of approximately £7,152,470 (2013/14 original budget). The majority of the fees and charges increases are in line with the 2.7% guideline in the budget strategy.

2. Specific Proposals

2.1 Planning and Countryside

2.1.1 The original budget for 2013/14 income from fees and charges in Planning and Countryside was £1,892,240. This amount includes the Nature Discovery Centre which has transferred to BBOWT on 6th January 2014. Income is generated from the following areas:

- Hire of sports facilities at Henwick Worthy, Holy Brook and Northcroft – This should be identified so as not to confuse with the Northcroft Leisure centre, the fees/charges for which are retained by the Leisure contractor Parkwood.
- Development Control.
- Building Control.

2.1.2 Development Control

Fees for planning applications are set centrally by the DCLG. Fees for formal advice given and related meetings at the pre-planning application stage (Pre-App) are set by the Council.

2.1.3 Building Control

Legislation requires Building Control charges to be set at a level to recover costs over a three year rolling period and that the service should not be profit making.

2.2 Highways and Transport

2.2.1 The original budget for income from fees and charges for the Highways and Transport service in 2013/14 was £3,865,750. Fees and charges have been reviewed in order to generate additional income wherever possible. Fees and charges are generated from the following four areas:

2.2.2 Car Park Charges

Car Parking charges increased in 2012 and it has been agreed not to increase these in 2014. There are however, a number of proposals to increase the amount of on street parking.

2.2.3 Licence Fees and Other Charges

Fees are charged for a range of services e.g. where Highway Authority approval is required to place items or to work on the public highway. These include vehicular crossings, skips, scaffolds, table and chairs on the highway, inspecting utility operations, temporary or permanent traffic regulation orders.

2.2.4 Highways Development Control Fees

Fees are charged to developers for design checking, supervision and inspection of new roads under construction and off site highway improvements. There is no increase proposed in the supervision fees for 2014.

2.2.5 Charges to Householders for Sewage Treatment

Approximately 150 properties, mainly in rural areas, are connected to small sewage treatment plants. These are the responsibility of West Berkshire Council to maintain, having previously been the ownership of Newbury District Council from when the housing stock was transferred to Sovereign Housing Association. The householders pay a fee to the Council which contributes to the maintenance costs.

2.3 Culture and Public Protection

2.3.1 The original budget for 2013/14 for income from fees and charges for Culture and Public Protection was £1,394,480. Income is generated from the following areas:

2.3.2 Trading Standards

Fees for this service include weights and measures, registration of poisons and licences for petroleum.

2.3.3 Waste Service

Fees include bulky household collection, provision of additional wheelie bins and garden waste collection.

2.3.4 Licensing and Environmental Health

Includes taxis, temporary events, premises, food safety etc

2.3.5 Culture

Cultural Services moved into Environment in April 2012. Fees and charges fall into four main arrears: Leisure, Shaw House admission and hire fees, heritage and tourism services and libraries.

Leisure – The leisure centres are managed by Parkwood Community Leisure. The Council agrees the maximum fee that can be charged for core activities. Increases in Parkwood's prices have no impact on the Council's budget.

Shaw House – For 2014-15 it has been decided to increase admission charges in line with inflation and for the increased charge to start on 1st

April 2014 rather than increasing the charge on 1st February as in previous years.

Heritage – West Berkshire Historic Environment record is used by enquirers for a variety of purposes. The charge is made for commercial enquiries to cover the costs of staff time.

No change in income is being proposed for the use of images from the museum collection as the museum is currently closed.

Libraries – As with last year there is no proposal to increase fines as it is felt this could have a detrimental effect on library use however, it there are plans in place for a daily charge on children's overdue books.. The Service is proposing not to increase the hire fees for computer games because they have not purchased any new games this year and feel that the public will not be willing to pay an increased charge for old games

Description		2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Planning and Countryside			
Henwick Worthy Sports Ground:			
Cricket – 1 st Hand Wicket (per match)	Adult	£74.30	76.30
	Junior	£37.10	38.10
Cricket – 2 nd Hand Wicket (used grass)	Adult	£55.60	57.10
	Junior	£27.40	28.10
Cricket – Artificial Wicket	Adult	£50.80	52.20
	Junior	£25.90	26.60
Cricket – 2 nd (Reserve) Artificial Wicket	Adult	£24.70	25.40
	Junior	£25.30	26.00
Football – Grass (per game)	Adult	£57.80	59.40
	Junior	£28.30	29.10
Football - Mini Pitch	Adult	£32.70	33.60
	Junior	£16.30	16.70
Rugby – Grass (per game)	Adult	£57.80	59.40
	Junior	£28.30	29.10
Full Pitch Artificial Grass - peak	30 Mins	£32.20	33.10
	1hr Only	£64.30	66.00
	1hr 30mins (11 a side)	£96.40	99.00
Half Pitch Artificial Grass - peak	30 Mins	£18.00	18.50
	1hr Only (5 a side)	£36.10	37.10
	1hr 30mins	£54.10	55.60
Full Pitch Artificial Grass – off-peak	30 Mins	£14.60	15.00
	1hr Only	£29.30	30.10
	1hr 30mins (11 a side)	£43.90	45.10
Half Pitch Artificial Grass – off-peak	30 Mins	£7.60	7.80
	1hr Only (5 a side)	£15.30	15.70
	1hr 30mins	£22.90	£23.50
Hardcourt Activities:		£0.00	£0.00
Netball (per court per hr)	Adult	£16.90	£17.40
	Junior	£8.60	£8.80
Tennis (per court per hr)	Adult	£5.30	£5.40
	Junior	£2.70	£2.80
Basketball	Adult		
	Junior		
Bike Scrambling (Grassy Mounds)	Adult		
	Junior		
Holybrook Park:			
Football – Grass (per game)	Adult	£48.30	£49.60
	Junior	£22.90	£23.50
Northcroft Recreation Ground:			
Football - Grass (per game)	Adult	£48.30	£49.60
	Junior	£24.00	£24.60
Michaelmas Fair		£3,635.00	£3,733.00
Public Rights of Way			
Search fees		£65.50	£67.30
Path order fees		£1397-£3492	£1,435-£3586
Dog Warden Services:			
Stray Dogs Administration Charge (seizure fee)		£59.10	£60.70
Out of hours seizure Fee		£105.10	£107.90
Kennels per Day (Class A – Fee Discretionary)		£12.90	£13.20
Planning Applications			
Building Regulation Applications			
Demolition Notice		£218.00	£224.00
Property Search Fee		£27.20	£28.00

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Highways and Transport		
Highways Act Charges:		
Vehicular Crossing (S.184)	£96.00	£99.00
Skips on the Highway (S.139)	Initial fee	£36.00
	per week	£45.00
Scaffold/hoarding on the Highway (S.169/172)	Initial fee	£68.00
	per week	£44.00
Tables and Chairs on the Highway (based on number of Chairs) (S.115)	1 to 10	£173.00
	11 to 26	£288.00
	27+	£576.00
Storing Materials on the Highways (S.171)	Initial fee	£65.00
	per week	£24.00
Temporary Excavation in the highway (S.171)	£85.00	£87.00
Cranes, machinery, structure on the highway (S.178)	£125.00	£128.00
Per Necessary inspection	£50.00	£51.00
S142 Licence to Plant in the highway		£100.00
Other Licences and Charges:		
Streetworks licence (S.50 NRSWA)	£205.00	£211.00
Utility Works Inspection (NRSWA/TMA)	£50.00	£51.00
Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Section 14(1)	£568.00	£583.00
Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Section 14(2) & Section 21 of PTCA	£61.00	£63.00
Tourist / Direction signs	£436.00	£448.00
Traffic Signs / Signals Equipment damaged by Road Traffic Accident or other event	£364.00	£374.00
Provide temporary bus stop facility for utility company or other 3rd party carrying out streetworks		£100.00
Highway search enquiries	£38.00	£39.00
Provision of recorded injury accident Data	£110.00 + £35.00 per additional block of up to 10 accidents	£110.00 + £35.00 per additional block of up to 10 accidents
Provision of Traffic Data	£102.80	£106.00
	£82.20	£84.00
	£61.70	£63.00
Access Protection Marking	£103.00	£106.00
Sewerage treatment property charge	£317.00	£326.00
Fixed Penalty Charge (Utility Companies) NRSWA/TMA	£120/£80	£120/£80
Events/Promotions on the Public Highway	£100.00 to £1,000.00 per day	£100.00 to £1,000.00 per day
Cycle Training	£40.00	£40.00
Highways Development Control Fees:		
New Road Construction Supervision (S38)	10%	10%
Highways Works Supervision (S278)	10%	10%
Licence to work on highway (S.115E)	£402.00	£413.00
Street naming and numbering	£68.00	£70.00
Production of current statutory undertakers schedule for commercial companies	£50.00	£50.00

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Newbury - Car Park Charges (Mon to Sat inc Bank Holidays)		
Kennet Centre and Northbrook Multi-storey Car Parks		
Up to 1 hour	£1.00	£1.00
Up to 2 hours	£2.20	£2.20
Up to 3 hours	£3.40	£3.40
Up to 4 hours	£4.50	£4.50
Up to 5 hours	£6.50	£6.50
Up to 6 hours	£6.50	£6.50
Up to 7 hours	£8.50	£8.50
Up to 8 hours	£8.50	£8.50
Over 8 hours	£12.00	£12.00
Evening Charge	£1.00	£1.00
Short and Long Stay Car Parks - Pelican Lane, West Street, 8 Bells, Market Street .		
Up to 1 hour	£1.00	£1.00
Up to 2 hours	£2.20	£2.20
Up to 3 hours	£3.40	£3.40
Up to 4 hours	£4.50	£4.50
Up to 6 hours	£6.50	£6.50
Up to 8 hours	£8.50	£8.50
Over 8 hours	£12.00	£12.00
Evening Charge	£1.00	£1.00
Central and Library		
Up to 1 hour	£1.00	£1.00
Up to 2 hours	£2.20	£2.20
Up to 3 hours	£3.40	£3.40
Up to 4 hours	£4.50	£4.50
Up to 5 hours	£6.50	£6.50
Up to 6 hours	£6.50	£6.50
Up to 7 hours	£8.50	£8.50
Up to 8 hours	£8.50	£8.50
Over 8 hours	£12.00	£12.00
Evening Charge	£1.00	£1.00
Short Stay Car Parks – Northcroft Lane and The Wharf		
Up to 1 hour	£1.00	£1.00
Up to 2 hours	£2.20	£2.20
Up to 3 hours	£3.40	£3.40
Up to 4 hours	£4.50	£4.50
Over 4 hours	£14.00	£14.00
Evening Charge	£1.00	£1.00
Bear Lane		
Up to 1 hour	£1.00	£1.00
Up to 2 hours	£2.20	£2.20
Up to 3 hours	£3.40	£3.40
Up to 4 hours	£4.50	£4.50
Over 4 hours	£14.00	£14.00
Evening Charge	£1.00	£1.00
Long Stay Car Parks – Northcroft Lane West, Newbury Football Club and Market Street staff car park (Saturday's only).		
Up to 2 hours	£1.50	£1.50
Up to 4 hours	£3.00	£3.00
Over 4 hours	£5.00	£5.00
Evening Charge (not Northcroft Lane West)	£1.00	£1.00
Goldwell Park		
Up to 4 hours	£1.00	£1.00
Over 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
No Evening Charge		
Coach Park		
Up to 2 hours	£4.00	£4.00
Over 2 hours	£8.00	£8.00
Evening charge	£1.00	£1.00

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee

Description		2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Newbury Car Park Charges (Sunday)			
All car Parks			
Daily charge up to 6.00pm		£1.00	£1.50
Evening charge from 6.00pm		£1.00	£1.00
Newbury on-street Charges (Mon to Sat inc Bank Holidays)			
Northbrook Street (west side) - either side of Albert Road Broadway (east side) - near Clock Tower Cheap Street (west side) Kings Road West Bartholomew Street	30 Mins 1 hour		Free £1.00
Newtown Road (north of St John's Road) West Mills	30 Mins		Free
	1 hour		£1.00
	2 hours		£2.00
Pelican Lane (west side)	30 mins		Free
	1 hour		£1.00
	2 hours		£2.20
Newtown Road (south of St John's Road) - west side	2 hours		£1.00
	4 hours		£2.00
	over 4 hours		£3.00
Catherine Road and Link Road	2 hours		£1.00
	4 hours		£2.00
	over 4 hours		£3.80
Station Road (existing)	2 hours	£1.00	£1.00
	4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	over 4 hours	£3.50	£3.80
Old Bath Road (south side) west of Leys Gardens	2 hours		£0.50
	4 hours		£1.00
	over 4 hours		£1.50
Faraday Road area (including Ampere Road, Fleming Road, Marconi Road and Kelvin Road as well as Faraday Road itself)	30 mins		Free
	2 hours		50p
	4 hours		£1.00
	over 4 hours		£1.50

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Newbury On-Street Charges (Sunday)		
Standard daily charge of £1.00 at all locations where on-street charging applies. The 30 minutes free parking will be retained at all locations where it applies Monday to Saturday as will the 50p charge for up to 2 hours parking at the two locations where it applies (Old Bath Road and Faraday Road area). This charged should have been implemented in 2013/14 but was delayed to take account of consultation responses. Will go ahead in 2014/15 if approved.		£1.00
Newbury Season Ticket Prices:		
Kennet Centre MSCP:		
Per Quarter	£260.00	£260.00
Northbrook MSCP:		
Per Quarter	£270.00	£270.00
Per Annum	£850.00	£850.00
Newbury "General":		
Per Quarter	£270.00	£270.00
Per Annum	£900.00	£900.00

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Out of Newbury Car Park Hourly Rates:		
Hungerford: Church St		
Up to 1 hour	£0.50	£0.50
Up to 2 hours	£0.90	£0.90
Up to 3 Hours	£1.10	£1.10
Up to 4 Hours	£1.20	£1.20
Over 4 hours	£2.40	
Up to 10 hours		£4.00
Over 10 hours		£10.00
Hungerford: Station Road		
Up to 1 hour	£0.50	£0.50
Up to 2 hours	£0.90	£0.90
Up to 3 Hours	£1.10	£1.10
Up to 4 Hours	£1.20	£1.20
Over 4 hours	£2.40	
Up to 10 hours		£4.00
Over 10 hours		£6.00
Hungerford High Street		
Up to 1 hour	£0.50	£0.50
Up to 2 hours	£0.90	£0.90
Over 2 hours	£5.40	
Up to 4 hours		£3.60
Up to 8 hours		£6.00
Over 8 hours		£10.00
Pangbourne Station Road:		
Up to 1 hour	£0.50	£0.50
Up to 2 hours	£0.90	£0.90
Up to 3 hours	£1.10	£1.10
Over 3 hours	£5.40	£5.40
Pangbourne River Meadow		
Up to 1 hour	£0.50	£0.50
Up to 2 hours	£0.90	£0.90
Up to 3 hours	£1.10	£1.10
Up to 4 hours	£1.20	£1.20
Up to 8 hours	£2.40	£2.40
Over 8 hours	£5.40	£5.40
Thatcham Kingsland Centre		
Up to 1 hour	£0.50	£0.50
Up to 2 hours	£0.80	£0.80
Up to 3 hours	£1.00	£1.00
Over 3 hours	£2.40	£2.40
Thatcham Gilbert Court		
Up to 1 hour	Free	Free
Up to 2 hours	£0.50	£0.50
Up to 3 hours	£0.80	£0.80
Over 3 hours	£2.00	£2.00
Thatcham Burdwood Centre		
Up to 2 hours	Free	Free
Up to 3 hours	£0.80	£0.80
Over 3 hours	£2.00	£2.00
Thatcham Station		
Off Peak (arrival after 10.00 am and return by midnight same day and up to 24 hours Saturdays and Sundays)	£1.60	£1.60
Up to 24 Hours Monday to Friday (arrival before 10.00 am)	£3.00	£3.00

Description		2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Theale Main			
Up to 2 hours		£0.50	£0.50
Over 2 hours		£0.90	£0.90
Theale West			
Up to 1 hour		£0.40	£0.40
Up to 2 hours		£0.70	£0.70
Over 2 hours		£5.40	£5.40
Out of Newbury Season Tickets			
Hungerford			
Per Quarter		£90.00	£90.00
Annual		£315.00	£315.00
Pangbourne			
Per Quarter		£120.00	£120.00
½ year		£235.00	£235.00
Annual		£370.00	£370.00
Theale - Annual		£130.00	£130.00

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Environmental Protection		
Trading Standards		
Weights and Measures Fees (per hour)	£56.90	£58.40
Explosives Licenses / Registrations		
Poisons:		
Initial Registration	£33.15	£34.00
Re-registration	£18.00	£18.50
Change of Details	£8.36	£8.60
Buy With Confidence / Approved Trader Scheme:		
<10 employees	£114.90	£118.00
10+ employees	£229.90	£236.10
Support with Confidence:		
Individual Supplier / 1-5 employees	£53.80	£55.30
Businesses 5-20 employees	£107.40	£110.30
Businesses >20 employees	£268.60	£275.90
Business Advice Courses	£21.50	£22.10
Business Advice (primary authority)	£36 per hr	£37.00
Petroleum Licensing Fees		
Performing Animals Registration Act 1925 per registration	£36.90	£37.90
Waste Services:		
Special Collection Charges (Bulky Household Collection)		
Normal (within 7 days)	£33.00	£34.00
Within 7 days by appointment outside property	£51.50	£53.00
Within 7 days by appointment inside property	£61.50	£63.00
Provision of wheelie bin	£25.00	£26.00
Collection of garden waste for year (scheduled)	£35.00	£36.00
Removal of fly tipping on private land	P.O.A	
Removal of graffiti up to 2m ² area	£31.00	POA
Food and Nutrition Training:		
Level 2 Award in Nutrition	£71.00	£73.00
Food Hygiene Training:		
CIEH Level 1	£36.00	£37.00
CIEH Level 2	£71.00	£73.00
CIEH Level 3	£304.00	£313.00
Anti-Social Behaviour Act:		
High Hedges Fee (Class A – Fee Discretionary)	£739.00	£760.00

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee	
Licences, Registrations and Similar Consents:			
<i>Licensing Act 2003:</i>			
Premises Licence – "one off" fees set by statute based upon rateable value (RV) of premises (Class B – Statutory Fee)			
Band A – RV up to 4300	£100.00	£100.00	
Band B – RV 4300 to 33000	£190.00	£190.00	
Band C – RV 33001 to 87000	£315.00	£315.00	
Band D – RV 87001 to 125000	£450.00	£450.00	
Band E – RV 125001 and above	£635.00	£635.00	
<i>Premises Licence – Annual Fee (Class B – Statutory Fee)</i>			
Band A	£70.00	£70.00	
Band B	£180.00	£180.00	
Band C	£295.00	£295.00	
Band D	£320.00	£320.00	
Band E	£350.00	£350.00	
Personal Licence - (Class B – Statutory Fee)			
Temporary Event Notices (TEN's) - (Class B – Statutory Fee)	£21.00	£21.00	
<i>Gambling Licences</i>			
Casinos (small)	New Application	£7,500.00	£7,500.00
	Annual Fee	£3,750.00	£3,750.00
Bingo Clubs	New Application	£2,625.00	£2,625.00
	Annual Fee	£750.00	£750.00
Betting Premises	New Application	£2,250.00	£2,250.00
	Annual Fee	£450.00	£450.00
Tracks	New Application	£1,875.00	£1,875.00
	Annual Fee	£750.00	£750.00
Family Entertainment Centres	New Application	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
	Annual Fee	£562.00	£562.00
Adult Gaming Centres	New Application	£1,500.00	£1,500.00
	Annual Fee	£750.00	£750.00
Lotteries and Amusements	New Application	£40.00	£40.00
	Annual Fee	£20.00	£20.00
<i>Sex Establishments – (Class A – Fee Discretionary)</i>			
	Cinema	£34 per hr min £3,000 to max £5000	£34 per hr min £3,000 to max £5,000
	Shop	£34 per hr min £3,000 to max £5000	£34 per hr min £3,000 to max £5,000
	Entertainment Venue	£34 per hr min £3,000 to max £5000	£34 per hr min £3,000 to max £5,000
<i>Street Trading Consents – (Class A – Fee Discretionary)</i>			
	Annual Fee	£2,221.00	£1,200.00
	6 month	£1,111.00	£600.00
	Monthly Rate		£100.00
Refund for Street Traders	application withdrawn		£34.00
<i>Skin Piercing Registrations (one off registration) – (Class A – Fee Discretionary)</i>			
Individual		£129.00	£129.00
Premises		£256.00	£256.00
Joint Application		£351.00	£351.00
<i>Animal Licences – (Class A – Fee Discretionary)</i>			
Dog Breeding Establishments		£168.00	£340.00
Animal Boarding Establishments		£441.00	£374.00
Home Breeding			£170.00
Pet Shops		£256.00	£374.00
Dangerous Animal Consent		£599.00	£408.00
Zoo Licences		£1,892.00	£1,892.00
Riding Establishments (1 to 5 horses)		£292.00	£408.00
Each additional 10 horses or part		£100.00	£103.00
Scrap Metal Dealers	3 Years		£102.00

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Private Water Supplies (Statutory Maximums stated) Hrly Rate £34		
Risk Assessment	£500.00	£500.00
Sampling	£100.00	£100.00
Investigation	£100.00	£100.00
Granting an Authorisation	£100.00	£100.00
Analysis - Regulation 10	£25.00	£25.00
Check Monitoring - Commercial and Public Supplies	£100.00	£100.00
Audit Monitoring - Commercial and Public	£500.00	£500.00
Environmental Protection Act 1991b		
Scheduled Processes - (Class B – Statutory Fee)		
Inspection of Housing Premises for Immigration purposes (Class A – Fee Discretionary)	£293.00	£301.00
House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licence NEW	£609.00	£625.00
HMO Licence NEW - assisted application	£812.00	£835.00
HMO Licence RENEWAL	£306.00	£315.00
HMO Licence RENEWAL assisted	£442.00	£454.00
Fees for Information – per hour rate, minimum two hour charge (Class A – Fee Discretionary)		
Environmental Info Individual, Non Commercial	£68.00	£68.00
Commercial and Government	£68.00	£68.00
Civil Actions (Class A – Fee Discretionary)	£68.00	£68.00
Safety Certification and administration	£68.00	£68.00
Taxi Licenses – (Class A – Fee Discretionary)		
Vehicle – New	£157.00	£157.00
Vehicle – Renewal of Licence	£157.00	£157.00
Replacement Plate	£38.00	£38.00
Transfer of Ownership	£105.00	£105.00
Driver – 3 year Licence	£251.00	£251.00
Replacement Badge	£38.00	£38.00
Replacement Licence	£38.00	£38.00
Demand Survey Recharge	£17.00	£17.00
HC Knowledge Test (per test)	£69.00	£69.00
Criminal Records Disclosure	£60.00	£60.00
Change of Address (PH & HC)	£13.00	£13.00
Private Hire Vehicles – (Class A – Fee Discretionary)		
Operator – New and renewal 1-4 vehicles	£176.00	£176.00
Operator – New and renewal 5-9 vehicles	£282.00	£282.00
Operator - New and renewal 9+ vehicles	£439.00	£439.00
Vehicle – New	£148.00	£148.00
Vehicle – Renewal	£148.00	£148.00
Replacement Plate	£38.00	£38.00
Transfer of Ownership	£105.00	£105.00
Driver – 3 year Licence	£251.00	£251.00
Replacement Badge	£38.00	£38.00
Replacement Licence	£38.00	£38.00
PH Knowledge Test (per test)	£69.00	£69.00
Dual Driver Licence	£251.00	£251.00

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Heritage		
Shaw House - Heritage Service Fees and Charges		
Adult	£4.50	£4.60
Child (aged 5-16)	£2.25	£2.30
Concession (over 60s, not in employment)	£3.60	£3.70
Adult (with WB residents card)	£4.00	£4.10
Child (with WB residents card)	£2.00	£2.10
Concession (with WB residents card)	£3.30	£3.40
Family (2 adults + up to 3 children)	n/a	
Family of 4	£11.00	£11.30
Family of 5	£12.50	£12.80
Family of 6	£14.00	£14.40
Group Visit (15+ adults)	£2.90	£3.00 per person
Group Visit (15+ children)	n/a	
Group Tour (15+ people)	£6.55 per person	£6.75 per person
Season Ticket (2 adults)	£20.00	£21.00
Season Ticket (Family - up to 6 people, 1 of which must be under 16)	£30.00	£31.00
Shaw House - Room Hire Charges - per hour		
West Berkshire Council	£18-£22	
Registered Charity	£19.00 - £28.00	£18.00 - £29.00
Public Sector and Community use	£23.00 - £34.00	£25.00 - £36.00
Commercial use	£30.00 - 45.00	£32.00 - £47.00
West Berkshire - Archaeological Archive Box Fee		
Standard Box (470mm x 270mm x 170mm)	£25.00	£25.00
Half box	£12.50	£12.50
Paper archive box	£8.00	£8.00
Plan/drawing sheet	50p	50p
Archaeology - Historic Environment Record Charges		
A4 computer print out (b/w) HER Data	10p	10p
A4 computer print out (colour) HER data	£1.00	£1.00
A3 computer print out (colour) HER Data	£1.60	£1.60
Research charges - HER enquiries	Hourly rate of £100 exc. VAT with a minimum of £60 exc. VAT for the first half hours	Hourly rate of £100 exc. VAT with a minimum of £60 exc. VAT for the first half hours
Heritage Service - Use of Image Collection		
If supplied for private personal use only the image production fee is payable. Images supplied for publication incur both an image production fee and a reproduction charge.		
Image Production Fee		
Photo Print - up to A6	£5.00	£5.00
Photo Print - up to A5	£10.00	£10.00
Photo Print - up to A4	£15.00	£15.00
Laser Scan - up to A4	£5.00	£5.00
Digital Scan - to CD	£15.00	£15.00
Digital Scan - to CD - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations	Free	

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Reproduction Charges		
Up to full page, B&W or Colour	£40.00	£40.00
Up to Full Page B&W or Colour - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations	£15.00 one image; £5.00 for all subsequent images	£15.00 one image; £5.00 for all subsequent images
Cover (front or back)	£75.00	£75.00
Cover (front or back) - Discounted rate	30.00 one image	30.00 one image
Local Publication	£15.00	£15.00
Local Publication - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations	£15.00 one image; £5.00 for all subsequent images	£15.00 one image; £5.00 for all subsequent images
Academic Publication	£30.00	£30.00
Academic Publication, etc - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations	£15.00 one image; £5.00 for all subsequent images	£15.00 one image; £5.00 for all subsequent images
Magazine or Newspaper	£40.00	£40.00
Advertising or Brochure	£75.00	£75.00
Exhibition Use	£40.00	£40.00
Exhibition Use - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations	£30.00 one image £10.00 for all subsequent images	£30.00 one image £10.00 for all subsequent images
Website	£75.00	£75.00
Website - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations	£30.00 one image £10.00 for all subsequent images	£30.00 one image £10.00 for all subsequent images
Copying and laminating charges		
These charges are common with the library service		
A4 Photocopy b/w	10p	10p
A4 Photocopy colour	£1.00	£1.00
A3 Photocopy b/w	30p	30p
A3 Photocopy - colour	£1.60	£1.60
Tourist Information Centre		
Accommodation Bookings	10% of total stay charge	10% of total stay charge + £2 admn charge
Ticket commission	Ticket commission fee 10%	Ticket commission fee 10%

Description	2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee
Library Fees and Charges		
Request Charges		
In stock items	Free	
Items available in SELMS libraries	£2.00	£3.00
Items obtained from British Library or other non-SELMS authorities	£10.00	£15.00
Notification charge for posted request notices Not applicable to pensioners	£1.00	£1.00
Notification charge for SMS messages	10p	10p
Overdue Charges		
Notification charge for posted request notices Not applicable to pensioners	£1.00	£1.00
Books for children	Free	5P per day
Books for Adults	20P per day	20P per day
Theale Green Students overdue charge	5P per day	5P per day
DVDs, CDs games etc	60p per day	60p per day
Admin fee for debt recovery process	£10.00	£10.00
Printing and Photocopying charges		
A4 B&W	10p	10p
A4 Colour	£1.00	£1.00
A3 B&W	30p	30p
A3 Colour	£1.60	£1.60
Other Charges		
Lost Tickets	£2.50	£2.50
Reference and Research enquiry charges	£3 admin charge plus copying charge if appropriate	£3 admin charge plus copying charge if appropriate. Also £10 per half hour for research where the enquiry takes over 30 minutes
Book group service	£10 per annum	£15 per annum
Vocal Scores	£6 per month per set of 20 scores. (loans in multiples of 20) £8 for sets from outside SE region	£6 per month per set of 20 scores. (loans in multiples of 20) £9 for sets from outside SE region
Orchestral sets from SE region	£12 per month	£12 per month
Orchestral sets from outside the SE region	£15 per month	£18 per month
Play sets from SE region	£5 per month	£6 per month
Play sets from outside SE region	£7 per month	£7 per month

Description		2013/14 Fee	2014/15 Proposed Fee	
Hire charges (Residents Card Holders)				
Gold Star (new titles) DVDs		£3 per week	£3 per week	
Music CDs		£1 per week	£1 per week	
U Cert DVDs		£1 per week	£1.50 per week	
Other Cert DVDs		£2 per week	£2 per week	
Playstation 3 Games		£2 per week	£2 per week	
Xbox 360 games		£2 per week	£2 per week	
Wii games		£2 per week	£2 per week	
PC Games		£2 per week	£2 per week	
Playstation 1 and 2 games		£2 per week	£2 per week	
Hire charges (Non Card Holders)				
Gold star (new titles) DVDs		£3.30 per week	£3.30 per week	
Music CDs		£1.10 per week	£1.10 per week	
U Cert DVDs		£1.10 per week	£1.65 per week	
Other Cert DVDs		£2.20 per week	£2.20 per week	
Playstation 3 Games		£2.20 per week	£2.20 per week	
Xbox 360 games		£2.20 per week	£2.20 per week	
Wii games		£2.20 per week	£2.20 per week	
PC Games		£2.20 per week	£2.20 per week	
Playstation 1 and 2 games		£2.20 per week	£2.20 per week	
Leisure Centre Fees and Charges				
	2013		2014	
	WBC Card	Non WB Card price	WBC	Non WB Card Price
West Berkshire Card -Resident	Free		Free	
West Berkshire Card - Non resident	£20.00		£20.00	
Swimming				
Adult	£3.40	£3.80	£3.50	£3.90
Junior	£1.50	£1.85	£2.20	£2.40
Early Morning Swim				
Adult	£2.60	£2.85	£2.70	£2.95
Junior	£1.50	£1.65	£1.55	£1.70
Gym				
Casual User	£6.90	£7.60	£7.00	£7.70
Casual User Induction	£15.00	£20.00	£15.00	£20.00
Classes	£5.30	£6.00	£5.40	£6.10
Activity for Health - GP Referral	£3.00	£3.25	£3.00	£3.25
Monthly Direct Debit	£30.00	£39.00	£36.00	£39.00
Hall Hire/Sports				
Full Sports Hall (4 courts) - adult	£41.00	£46.00	£41.00	£46.00
Full Sports Hall (4 courts) - Junior	£21.50	£24.50	£21.50	£24.50
Badminton Court - adult	£8.40	£9.45	£8.40	£9.55
Badminton - Junior	£5.30	£5.90	£5.30	£5.90
Squash Court - adult	£9.70	£10.80	£10.00	£11.00
Squash Court - junior	£3.60	£3.90	£3.60	£3.90
Concession				
Gym	£3.20		£3.20	
Swimming/Badminton/Squash/Table Tennis	£1.70		£1.70	

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Community Services Fees and Charges Proposals – 2014/15

1 Adult Social Care

- 1.1 Councils have the power to charge for certain social care services, and are required to have a charging policy that is demonstrably fair and does not undermine the overall objectives of social care – that is, to promote both independence and social inclusion of service users. It is recognised that the level of fees and charges can have a direct impact on usage and take up, and in some instances work against the Council's social inclusion agenda by effectively discriminating against those who are less able to pay.
- 1.2 The Council's policy is therefore to charge service users an 'affordable' amount, which is uplifted by inflation each year where appropriate. However, where other local authorities, or Health organisations, are purchasing Council services on behalf of their service users, the charges made to these organisations are designed to reflect the actual costs of the service.
- 1.3 West Berkshire Council's Fairer Charging Policy for non residential services, introduced in 2003, states the individual will have one assessed charge for all services. All services will be added together before a service user is financially assessed. This principle is retained in the 2012 revision of this policy, WBC Fairer Contribution Policy.
- 1.4 The guidance allows for a prescribed list of allowances, for example, rent, mortgage, council tax, buildings insurance etc plus disability related costs, for example, community alarm system, extra heating costs that meet an individual's presenting care needs.
- 1.5 These allowances are then deducted from the total income to give an assessable income.
- 1.6 From April 2012 any new or reviewed eligible individual requiring support from Adult Social Care will receive this in the form of a Personal Budget through which they can arrange their support. As of 1st April 2011 individuals have been charged for each day they have booked at a Resource Centre and only in exceptional circumstances will charges be waived for non attendance.
- 1.7 There are generally two types of charges – discretionary and statutory.

Discretionary Charges

- 1.8 The Council has chosen, where appropriate to increase prices by 2.7% in line with current estimations of CPI.
- 1.9 The increase proposed for laundry is 20p bringing the total cost to £7.80.
- 1.10 Community Based Services will be charged at the actual cost of the service, including administration costs.
- 1.11 Meals provided in WBC Resource Centres will be increased by 10p to £4.70.
- 1.12 Outreach workers based at WBC's Resource Centres will increase by 50p to £17.50.
- 1.13 WBC Provider Services offers Footcare service which will rise from £15.50 to £19.00. The first visit from Footcare will provide the necessary equipment and this will increase from £11.30 to £11.50.
- 1.14 WBC provided Day Opportunities will increase by £1.20 to £44.20 per day. Transport provided by WBC to transport service users to Council Resource Centres or West Berkshire MENCAP services will increase by 25p to £8.00.
- 1.15 The charge to other local authorities and Health organisations for place in West Berkshire Resource Centres is increasing by 2.7%. The charge is based on an inflationary uplift. The proposed new charges will be:
- | | |
|---------------------|---------|
| Older People | £ 61.60 |
| Learning Disability | £100.60 |
| Physical Disability | £ 94.00 |
- 1.16 Other Day Centre and Transport will be charged at the actual cost.
- 1.17 The Adult Placement management fee will increase by £2.20 from £81.00 to £83.20.

Statutory Charges

- 1.18 The method of assessing contributions from clients in long-term residential care is covered by CRAG regulations issued by the Department of Health.
- 1.19 The charges to full cost payers in WBC Homes for the Elderly, and to other local authorities who access services run by West Berkshire Council, are

based on current information in respect of cost and the estimated number of clients using the service. The proposed full standard charge for WBC Homes for the Elderly is to remain at £753.00.

1.20 Deputyship Fees are set by the Court of Protection.

Adult Social Care		
Description	Fees 2013/2014	Proposed Fee 2014/2015
Service - All client groups		
Residential care independent sector homes - full cost per week	Actual cost	Actual cost
Laundry Service	£7.60	£7.80
Meals provided in WBC Resource Centres	£4.60	£4.70
WBC Resource Centre outreach workers	£17.00	£17.50
WBC Transport - maximum charge per journey	£7.75	£7.95
WBC Footcare service regular appointment	£15.50	£19.00
WBC Footcare Equipment	£11.30	£11.50
External day activities	Actual cost	Actual cost
WBC Resource Centres - charge to other LA's/PCT's		
- Older People	£60.00	£61.60
- LD	£98.00	£100.60
- PD	£91.50	£94.00
Charges to any organisation using WBC Resource Centres; Greenfields, Hungerford & Phoenix	Actual cost	Actual cost
WBC Resource Centres - charge per day	£43.00	£44.20

Adult Social Care		
Description	Fees 2013/2014	Proposed Fee 2014/2015
Service - Older People		
Residential care WBC Homes - full cost per week	£753.00	£753.00
Residential care WBC Homes - charge the assessed contribution whilst in hospital if bed retained at the home	Assessed charge	Assessed charge
Residential care WBC Homes - charge the assessed contribution from date of admission even if client subsequently decides to leave the home during the review period	Assessed charge from date of admission	Assessed charge from date of admission

Service - Learning Disabilities		
Transporting clients from care homes to resource centres (charge to provider)	Actual cost	Actual cost
Adult Placement - management fee	£81.00	£83.20

Resource Centre - Rental Charges						
Room	Fees 2013/2014			Proposed Fees 2014/2015		
	Daily Rate	Half Day Rate	Hourly Rate	Daily Rate	Half Day Rate	Hourly Rate
Phoenix Resource Centre						
Ground floor woodwork room	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
External car washing facility	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Ground floor Theatre	From £60.00 to £100.00	From £30.00 to £50.00	From £10.00 to £18.00	From £61.60 to £102.70	From £30.80 to £51.40	From £10.30 to £18.50
First floor Theatre office	£12.00	£6.00	N/a	£12.30	£6.20	N/a
Ground floor frailty and dementia suite	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Ground floor physical disability suite	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Ground floor sensory cooking room	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Ground floor sensory room	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Ground floor optimusic room	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Ground floor snackbar and dining room	£60.00	£30.00	£10.00	£61.60	£30.80	£10.30
Ground floor small activity room	£20.00	£10.00	£4.00	£20.50	£10.30	£4.10
Craft activity room	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
First floor computer suite	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
First floor activity / office space - full space	£80.00	£40.00	£14.00	£82.20	£41.10	£14.40
First floor activity / office space - half space	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
First floor activity / office space - medium	£60.00	£30.00	£10.00	£61.60	£30.80	£10.30
Art room	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
First floor large meeting room	£25.00	£12.50	£5.00	£25.70	£12.80	£5.10
First floor small meeting room	£15.00	£7.50	£2.50	£15.40	£7.70	£2.60
Accessible shower facility and personal care rooms	N/a	N/a	£7.50	N/a	N/a	£7.70

Resource Centre - Rental Charges						
	Fees 2013/2014			Proposed Fees 2014/2015		
Room	Daily Rate	Half Day Rate	Hourly Rate	Daily Rate	Half Day Rate	Hourly Rate
Hungerford Resource Centre						
Ground floor main activity room	£80.00	£40.00	£14.00	£82.20	£41.10	£14.40
Ground floor computer suite	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Ground floor quiet room	£20.00	£10.00	£4.00	£20.50	£10.30	£4.10
Ground floor hairdressing salon	£20.00	£10.00	£4.00	£20.50	£10.30	£4.10
First floor meeting room 1	£40.00	£20.00	£4.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
First floor meeting room 2	£40.00	£20.00	£4.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Accessible bath facility and personal care rooms	N/a	N/a	£7.50	N/a	N/a	£7.70

Greenfield Resource Centre						
Atrium	£30.00	£15.00	£5.00	£30.80	£15.40	£5.10
Computer suite	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Frailty and dementia suite	£60.00	£30.00	£10.00	£61.60	£30.80	£10.30
Physical disability suite	£60.00	£30.00	£10.00	£61.60	£30.80	£10.30
Learning disability suite	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Optimusic / sensory room	£40.00	£20.00	£7.00	£41.10	£20.50	£7.20
Small office	£20.00	£10.00	£4.00	£20.50	£10.30	£4.10
Accessible bath facility and personal care rooms	N/a	N/a	£7.50	N/a	N/a	£7.70

Hourly rate applies for bookings of between 1 and 2 hours, all bookings over this time duration are charged as a half day.

Housing

- 1.21 The rental costs of temporary accommodation, secure tenancies, Do It Yourself Shared Ownership (DIYSO) and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation owned or let by West Berkshire Council, will be increased by 3.7%. This represents the national formula of RPI (as at September) plus 0.5%.
- 1.22 The Council also charge for homeless households placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Households will need to claim Housing Benefit, or will be charged up to the amount Housing Benefit would pay, if they were eligible, in addition households will need to pay the ineligible charges set out in the table below.
- 1.23 In some instances, the Council provides transport to temporary accommodation for households who have no other means of getting to that accommodation. The full cost of providing the transport will be recharged, in full to the client.
- 1.24 The Council provides repairs and maintenance to a small supply of temporary accommodation, including an out-of-hours service. In the event that a tenant or licensee uses the emergency service for a non-emergency repair, or fails to attend an appointment for a contractor to attend to a repair, a charge of £30 will be made to cover the call-out. Where repairs arise as a result of neglect or damage caused by the tenant or licensee, or a member of their household, or a visitor to their home, the full cost of the repair will be recharged to the tenant or licensee.

Care Commissioning, Housing & Safeguarding			
Description	Fees 2013/2014	Proposed Fee 2014/2015	Notes
Service - Housing			
Copy of Housing Needs Assessment	No charge	No charge	Local Authorities do not charge for this
Average rent for temporary accommodation per week	£99.79	£103.48	Rents vary according to the size of the accommodation offered. This shows the average charge per week.
Do It Yourself Ownership rent	3.1% on individual contracts	3.7% on individual contracts	
Bed and Breakfast charging	See table below	See table below	Policy adopted 15/12/11
Transport costs to temporary accommodation	Actual cost	Actual cost	Policy adopted 15/12/11

Ineligible charges for Bed and Breakfast accommodation					
	Fees 2013/2014				Proposed Fees 2014/2015
Household	Heating, lighting & hot water	Breakfast	Total per week	Total per day	
Single person	£15.30	£3.15	£18.45	£2.64	Charges are set by the Department for Work and Pensions and will not be known until February 2014
Couple - no children	£15.30	£6.30	£21.60	£3.09	
Single person + 1 child	£15.30	£6.30	£21.60	£3.09	
Single person + 2 children	£15.30	£9.45	£24.75	£3.54	
Single person + 3 children	£15.30	£12.60	£27.90	£3.99	
Single person + 4 children	£15.30	£15.75	£31.05	£4.44	
Couple + 1 child	£15.30	£9.45	£24.75	£3.54	
Couple + 2 children	£15.30	£12.60	£27.90	£3.99	
Couple + 3 children	£15.30	£15.75	£31.05	£4.44	
Couple + 4 children	£15.30	£18.90	£34.20	£4.89	

2 Young People Services

- 2.1 The Children Service's half of the directorate has two areas of income generation. The majority of income (non buy back) generated relates to Home to School Transport and the Youth Service. An increase to fees and charges has not been applied to the base budget for the Youth Service in 14 -15 due to economic factors impacting on the services ability to generate income in financial years 12-13 and 13-14. Also the Youth Service in line with Council priorities has moved away from universal youth provision toward more targeted work which does not have the capacity to generate significant income.
- 2.2 Fees and charges can have a direct impact on usage and take up.
- 2.3 In some circumstances the Council is providing services in direct competition to the private sector. Where this is the case, price is likely to have a direct link with demand and it is important that the Council does not 'price itself out of the market';
- 2.4 Raising fees and charges can in some instances work against the Council's social inclusion agenda by effectively discriminating against those who are less able to pay;
- 2.5 Some income generating activities are subject to contractual arrangements where the actual levels of charges are set by the contractor, taking into account market factors and the parameters agreed with the Council to meet its social inclusion agenda. In these cases, marginal increases in fees and charges (within Council parameters) are retained by the contractor and therefore do not have a direct impact on council budgets

Youth Service.

- 2.6 Youth Officers have set fees and charges across all the centres to ensure compatibility. This includes size of venue and resources available. The fees and charges will remain unchanged due to the economic downturn impacting on demand levels for universal youth services. By keeping costs the same the intention is to generate increased demand.

Youth Services - Youth and Community Services		
Description	Moorside Centre	Waterside Centre
	Proposed Fees 2014-15	Proposed Fees 2014-15
Small Hall / Theatre	£13:25	£13:30
Large Hall / Gymnasium	£18:00	£18:00
Kitchen & coffee Bar	£11:00 + £5:30 for kitchen per booking	£11:00 + £10 per booking for kitchen
Outside Courts/ Play Areas	£19:00 and £29:95 with lights	N/A
Stage / Lighting / Sound Additional Charge dependent upon individual requirements	On application	On application
Facility hire to Commercial Organisations		
Small Hall / Theatre	£19:90	£19:90
Large Hall / Gymnasium	£27:50	£27:50
Kitchen & coffee Bar	£16:60 + £5:30 per booking for kitchen	£16:60 + £10 per booking for kitchen
Outside Courts/ Play Areas	£19:00/with lights £29:95	
Evening Parties/Weddings		
Meeting Room	As for commercial hire	
Small Hall / Theatre	As for commercial hire	
Large Hall / Gymnasium	As for commercial hire	
Kitchen & coffee Bar	As for commercial hire	
Activity programme for Young People		
Annual Youth Club Membership varies according to Nature of Club		
Basic Sessional Charge	£0.60	n/a

Children's Centres

2.7 The Children Centre may enter into hire agreements in order to deliver services to children, young people, families and the local community and in order to generate an income to support the running costs of the Children's centre. Children's centres are non-profit making organisation and as such it is agreed that West Berkshire Children Centres do not charge statutory or voluntary providers for use of the Centres' facilities where they are delivering services for families with children 0-5 years that fall within the remit of Children's Centres e.g.

2.8 Family Groups and contact visits held by Children Services

2.9 Clinics and drop-in's held by Health Professionals

2.10 Services provided by Voluntary Organisations

Children Centres		
Room Hire	Non profit Organisation	Profit Organisation
Burghfield	£8.00	£15.50
South Newbury	£8.00	£15.50
Pangbourne	£8.00	£15.50
Calcot/Theale	£8.00	£15.50
Chieveley & Area	£8.00	£15.50
Tilehurst	£8.00	£15.50
South Thatcham	£8.00	£15.50

Note : contributions are accepted for Stay and Play activities towards refreshments

Children Centres				
North Thatcham				
Hall Hire Charges				
Length of Hire	Cost of Hall Hire	Caretaker Opening Charge	Caretaker Waiting Time Charge	Total
1 Hour	£15.50	£9.08	N/A	£24.08
2 Hours	£30.50	£9.08	£6.06	£45.14
3 Hours	£45.50	£9.08	£9.09	£63.17
4 Hours	£60.50	£9.08	£12.12	£81.20
5 Hours	£75.50	£9.08	£15.15	£99.23
6 Hours	£90.50	£9.08	£18.18	£117.26
7 Hours	£105.50	£9.08	£21.21	£135.29
8 Hours	£120.50	£9.08	£24.24	£153.32

Charges after 6pm Weekdays and on Saturdays; refundable deposit of £50 is required for hiring the hall

Children Centres				
North Thatcham				
Room 3 Hire Charges				
Length of Hire	Cost of Room 3 Hire	Caretaker - Opening Time	Caretaker Waiting Time Charge	Total
1 Hour	£9.00	£9.08	N/A	£17.58
2 Hours	£17.50	£9.08	£6.06	£32.14
3 Hours	£26.00	£9.08	£9.09	£43.67
4 Hours	£34.50	£9.08	£12.12	£52.17
5 Hours	£43.00	£9.08	£15.15	£66.73
6 Hours	£51.50	£9.08	£18.18	£78.26
7 Hours	£60.00	£9.08	£21.21	£89.79
8 Hours	£68.50	£9.08	£24.24	£101.32

Charges after 6pm Weekdays and on Saturdays

Children Centres				
North Thatcham				
Room 6 Hire Charges				
Length of Hire	Cost of Room 6 Hire	Caretaker Opening Charge	Caretaker Waiting Time Charge	Total
1 Hour	£8.00	£9.08	N/A	£16.58
2 Hours	£15.50	£9.08	£6.06	£30.14
3 Hours	£23.00	£9.08	£9.09	£40.67
4 Hours	£30.50	£9.08	£12.12	£51.20
5 Hours	£38.00	£9.08	£15.15	£61.73
6 Hours	£45.50	£9.08	£18.18	£72.26
7 Hours	£53.00	£9.08	£21.21	£82.79
8 Hours	£60.50	£9.08	£24.24	£93.32

Charges after 6pm Weekdays and on Saturdays

Children Centres				
North Thatcham				
Office 3 Hire Charges				
Length of Hire	Cost of Office 3 Hire	Caretaker Opening Time	Caretaker Waiting Time Charge	Total
1 Hour	£7.00	£9.08	N/A	£15.58
2 Hours	£13.50	£9.08	£6.06	£28.14
3 Hours	£20.00	£9.08	£9.09	£37.67
4 Hours	£26.50	£9.08	£12.12	£47.20
5 Hours	£33.00	£9.08	£15.15	£56.73
6 Hours	£39.50	£9.08	£18.18	£66.26
7 Hours	£46.00	£9.08	£21.21	£75.79
8 Hours	£52.50	£9.08	£24.24	£85.32

Charges after 6pm Weekdays and on Saturdays

Education Services – Home to School Transport

2.11 The Fare Paying Scheme for Home to School Transport charges is now a graded based on radial distance, this policy was approved and implemented in financial year 2010-11.

Home to School Transport			
	Fees 2013/2014		Proposed Fees 2014/2015
Current Banding	Per Year	New Banding	Per Year
Band A - Up to 2 Miles	£210	Band A - Up to 2 Miles	£220
Band B - 2 - 6 Miles	£420	Band B - 2 - 6 Miles	£430
Band C - over 6 miles	£785	Band C - over 6 miles	£800

APPENDIX G

**SAINT MARYS CHURCHYARD KINTBURY
FUNDING REQUIREMENT FOR 2014/2015**

2013/2014	£
Balance B/fwd 1/4/2013	4,478.46
Forecast Expenditure 2013/14	-1,500.00
Council Tax	2,392.00
Balance 31/3/14	<u>5,370.46</u>
2014/2015	
Balance B/fwd 1/4/14	5,370.46
Estimated expenditure 2014/15	-1,400.00
Special Expenses - new wall 10 yr period	-4,451.00
Council Tax	500.00
Balance 31/3/15	<u>19.46</u>
2014/2015 Band D Equivalent Tax	0.42
2014/2015 Tax Base Equivalent Band D properties	1,179.94
NOTES	
2013/2014 Band D Equivalent Tax	2.22
2013/2014 Tax Base Equivalent Band D properties	1079.46

APPENDIX G

SAINT MARYS CHURCHYARD SHAW CUM DONNINGTON FUNDING REQUIREMENT FOR 2014/2015

2013/2014	£
Balance B/fwd 1/4/13	331.82
Forecast Expenditure 2013/14	-858.00
Council Tax	1,000.00
Balance 31/3/14	<u>473.82</u>

2014/2015	
Balance B/fwd 1/4/14	473.82
Estimated expenditure 2014/15	-880.00
Council Tax	500.00
Balance 31/3/15	<u>93.82</u>

2014/2015 Band D Equivalent Tax	0.74
2014/2015 Tax Base Equivalent Band D properties	674.41

NOTES

2013/2014 Band D Equivalent Tax	1.52
2013/2014 Tax Base Equivalent Band D properties	660.04

APPENDIX G

**HOLY TRINITY, THEALE
FUNDING REQUIREMENT FOR 2014/2015**

2013/2014	£
Balance B/fwd 1/4/13	238.72
Forecast Expenditure 2013/14	-1,325.00
Council Tax	1,670.00
Balance 31/3/14	<u>583.72</u>

2014/2015	
Balance B/fwd 1/4/14	583.72
Estimated expenditure 2014/15	-1,360.00
Council Tax	800.00
Balance 31/3/15	<u>23.72</u>

2014/2015 Band D Equivalent Tax	0.79
2014/2015 Tax Base Equivalent Band D properties	1,011.63

NOTES	
2013/2014 Band D Equivalent Tax	1.74
2013/2014 Tax Base Equivalent Band D properties	959.48

HUNGERFORD FOOTWAY LIGHTING FUNDING REQUIREMENT FOR 2014/2015

2013/2014	£
Balance B/fwd 1/4/13	1,421.36
Forecast expenditure 2013/2014	-4,475.00
Council Tax	2,200.00
Balance 31/3/14	<u>-853.64</u>

2014/2015	
Balance B/fwd 1/4/14	-853.64
Estimated expenditure 2014/15	-4,920.00
Council Tax	5,750.00
Balance 31/3/15	<u>-23.64</u>

2014/2015 Band D Equivalent Tax	2.47
2014/2015 Tax Base Equivalent Band D properties	2,327.21

NOTES

2013/2014 Band D Equivalent Tax	0.97
2013/2014 Tax Base Equivalent Band D properties	2,257.54

Appendix Hi): WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL TAX COLLECTION FUND - 2013/2014

	£	£
Income		
Net Council Tax Debit	101,114,599	
Less Exemptions	-1,607,444	
Council Tax Relief	-7,517,018	
		91,990,137
MOD contribution (estimate based upon current amount received)	430,675	430,675
		<hr/>
		92,420,812
Expenditure		
West Berkshire Council	-75,660,209	
Police	-9,424,582	
Fire	-3,632,578	
Parishes	-3,360,425	
Special Expenses	-7,262	-92,085,056
		<hr/>
Surplus		335,756
Provision for w/o or non-collection	-102,777	-102,777
		<hr/>
		232,979
Deficit Brought Forward from 12/13		-947,624
Recovery from Precepting Authorities		903,497
Anticipated Collection Fund surplus(+) / deficit (-)		<hr/> <hr/> 188,852 Surplus

SIGNED :



DATE: 15th January 2014

DISTRIBUTION OF ESTIMATED SURPLUS

Estimated Deficit	<u>188,852</u>
West Berkshire Council	162,074
Thames Valley Police	19,328
Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	<u>7,450</u>
	<u>188,852</u>

Agenda Item 12.

Title of Report:	Response to the Scrutiny Review into the Adult Social Care Eligibility Criteria
Report to be considered by:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	13 February 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	EX2786

Purpose of Report: To respond to the recommendations of the investigation into the operation of the Adult Social Care eligibility criteria.

Recommended Action: The Executive is requested to endorse the responses to the given recommendations.

Reason for decision to be taken: To provide feedback following a scrutiny review

Other options considered: As set out in the report

Key background documentation: Report of the Scrutiny review into the Adult Social Care eligibility criteria on 10th December 2013.

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:

CSP1 – Caring for and protecting the vulnerable

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Strategy principles:

CSP5 - Putting people first

CSP7 - Empowering people and communities

CSP8 - Transforming our services to remain affordable and effective

Portfolio Member Details

Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Joe Mooney - Tel (0118) 9412649
E-mail Address:	jmooney@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	22.01.14

Contact Officer Details

Name:	Balwinder Kaur
Job Title:	Interim Head of Adult Social Care
Tel. No.:	01635 519736
E-mail Address:	bkaur@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy: N/A
Financial: N/A
Personnel: N/A
Legal/Procurement: N/A
Property: N/A
Risk Management: N/A

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes		Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:				
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)				
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at www.westberks.gov.uk/eia				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality				<input type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Executive Summary and Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting of 10th December 2013, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) agreed to the recommendations arising from the review into Adult Social Care eligibility criteria report (see Appendix 1).
- 1.2 The rationale for this review was that, on 14 May 2012 an application for a Judicial Review of the Council's Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) policy was brought, via litigation friends, on behalf of 5 learning disabled clients. The case was considered twice by the High Court and rejected. On 3 July 2012 the High Court heard an application from the claimants on appeal at an oral hearing but again this was refused. The claimants then lodged an appeal against this decision but the Court of Appeal similarly rejected their claim. Importantly, the Judge considered the Department of Health FACS guidance and rejected the argument made by the Claimants that it was not permissible to have a critical only policy, stating this was 'unarguable.' The Local Authority was entitled to choose critical, rather than any lower category. Whilst the judgment was very clearly in the Council's favour, it has highlighted the importance of undertaking regular and robust reviews of the policy in respect of the eligibility criteria. As the policy was last subject to a full review in 2008, the Executive Member for Community Care and the Head of Adult Social Care had agreed throughout the legal proceedings that it would be prudent for another review to take place. Subsequent to the legal proceedings being finalised therefore, a review took place.
- 1.3 The report below provides the response to these recommendations.

2. Response to the recommendations

- 2.1 The recommendations from the review are set out below along with a response from each recommendation owner.

Recommendation 12 (1)	The Head of Adult Social Care should keep the Council's Fair Access to Care Services eligibility criteria at 'critical' and continue to ensure that appropriate levels of funding remain for the provision of preventative services outside of that required for assessed care packages (currently £700,000 per year).
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	The council plans to consult on its approach to commissioning Preventative services to ensure their strategic fit with council priorities (the 6 outcomes) and services are outcome rather output focussed.
Target deadline	This will be included in the Budget for Adult Social Care in 2014
Evidence of achievement	All staff and stakeholders aware of the offer from Preventative services and the access criteria.

Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)
Recommendation 12(2)	The Head of Adult Social care should ensure, through annual review, that in its operation of the Fair Access to Care Services Policy the Council continues to comply with its statutory duties. In addition to any required policy changes, the reviews should incorporate an assessment of equality impact.
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	The Head of Service will ensure that Fair Access to Care Services Policy continues to comply with its statutory duties through annual review. We will conduct a further assessment of Equality impact in 2014 and schedule a light touch review of the Level at which the eligibility criteria are set.
Target deadline	EIA will be completed by June 2014 and the light touch review by end of March 2015.
Evidence of achievement	EIA in place and the review completed.
Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)

Recommendation 12(3)	The Head of Adult Social Care should monitor the effectiveness of the steps that have been taken to reduce both the time taken to complete Section 47 assessments and the backlog of those cases awaiting assessment. Additionally, a further action might be a cessation of the practise of the Access for All team fielding telephone calls for other social care teams and the allocation of more staff time for the completion of assessments. Reports on effectiveness and progress should be made quarterly to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	Time taken to complete assessments is being validated but there is some progress with new staff-See the table below. Funding made available for additional temporary staff until the end of March 2014 is being utilised. 4 staff have been recruited, 2 of whom joined before the holiday break, and 2 in January. One of these 4 staff is a senior practitioner responsible for overseeing the work of the Information and Signposting Specialists and prioritising work going forward for care management assessment.

1. Waiting times for assessments for the period 1st January 2013 to 31st December 2013

The waiting times from first contact to completed assessments for new clients are as follows:-

	1. Under 18 / unknown	2. 18 - 64	3. 65 and Over	Total	
1. Less than or equal to 2 days	2	18	46	66	7%
2. More than 2 days and up to 2 weeks	0	47	55	102	11%
3. More than 2 weeks and up to 4 weeks	0	60	39	99	10%
4. More than 4 weeks and up to 3 months	0	92	195	287	30%
5. More than 3 months	1	114	296	411	43%
Total	3	331	631	965	

WAITING LISTS

The total initial waiting list on 8/11/13 was recorded as 576 and currently stands at 523. The case allocations during the Christmas period have kept pace with incoming work volumes whilst new workers are inducted and get up to speed.

The plan is that all staff (permanent and agency) will be allocated 5 cases (pro rata) each week and work to a 2 – 3 week turn around on these with close weekly caseload supervision. This should lead to approx 40 cases being allocated each week. In the 11 weeks remaining of this year there should be sufficient resources to allocate in excess of 400 cases some of which will be new cases referred to Access for All (AFA) in those 11 weeks. The average numbers of cases added to list each week will be reported in the next update. The waiting list is therefore projected to be reduced to minimal numbers with the extra staff by the end of March. The ongoing challenge will be to maintain this position once the temporary staff leave the council.

Fielding telephone calls / backlog of calls coming into AFA

A briefing note has been sent out to all teams within ASC and to other relevant teams in other Directorates to explain how the AFA system works and primarily to ensure that the number for the public is not used by staff as a 'switchboard' for ASC.

There was a backlog of 200 calls awaiting a response in October (due to staff absence and a vacant post). The backlog has been cleared and the vacant post has been filled, and the team are now on top of all calls coming in.

	Since 25 th November AFA is now using Pro-Centre (same system used by Contact Centre) which has enabled the Team Manager to monitor the activity. The numbers of calls coming in are between 46 and 76 a day and there will also be calls going out made by the Information and Signposting staff. These are varied in what people are calling about and each call can take between 30 seconds and 45 minutes.
Target deadline	September 2014
Evidence of achievement	This will be reported to Corporate Board by Quarterly performance Report.
Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care) in cooperation with the ASC performance team.

Recommendation 12 (4)	The Head of Adult Social Care should evaluate the operation of the Access for All team to ensure that its position within the organisational structure provides the most effective operational environment. Any changes to the role, formation or positioning of it should ensure that staff in this crucial team are appropriately trained, resourced, focussed and supported
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	<p>The Service Manager has produced a scoping document to undertake a full review of AFA but this work will not commence until March 2014 when the new permanent Service Manager takes up his post.</p> <p>In the meantime the effectiveness of the additional staff will be evaluated and the results will inform the review work. Two of the job roles (Information Co-ordinator and Surgery Link Worker) are in the process of being reviewed and revised to better reflect their roles and responsibilities. The new JDs will ensure that the key agenda items under the Care and Support Bill of prevention and support to carers are included.</p> <p>It has also been agreed to fund one additional permanent post from April 2014 and a decision will be made in January as to which job role is the most effective / required within the sum of money available.</p> <p>There are no plans at present to reposition the AFA.</p>
Target deadline	September 2014
Evidence of achievement	Review completed and report considered by the Head of Service and Corporate Director.

Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)
Recommendation 12 (5)	The Head of Adult Social Care should continue to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the Multifunctional Assessment/Review Document to further improve its effectiveness and ensure that the administrative burden it necessarily imposes is kept to an absolute minimum
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	<p>The Substantial redesign of the multifunctional Assessment/Review Document (MARD) is in progress and will be implemented on 1st June 2014. The Redesign of the Multifunctional Assessment/Review Document has taken place in light of Care Bill and Munro Report recommendations. Moreover, we will ensure that this is kept under review and any suggestions to further improve are acted upon.</p> <p>This will significantly reduce the workload for assessors.</p> <p>Evaluate in June, 2015</p>
Target deadline	Implementation date is –June 2014
Evidence of achievement	Implementation completed
Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)

Recommendation 12(6)	The Head of Adult Social Care should ensure that those completing the Multifunctional Assessment/Review Document understand that the information it contains will be used by the Resource Panel to make decisions on the provision of care. If necessary, training should be provided to ensure that the delays caused by incomplete or poorly completed forms are reduced.
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	<p>The redesigned Multifunctional Assessment/Review Document will require that all practitioners are familiar with its functionality; as it will be used for the Resource panel decisions for allocating funding.</p> <p>Service Manager will ensure that all staff have opportunity to attend training to familiarise with this document.</p>
Target deadline	Training will start from April, 2014
Evidence of	Improved decision making and less delays encountered by the resource panel

achievement	
Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)

Recommendation 12 (7)	The Head of Adult Social Care should ensure that all staff undertaking social care assessments understand the need to keep those undergoing the process fully apprised of progress. This should ensure that expectations are managed and that dissatisfaction is resultantly kept to a minimum.
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	An element of Multifunctional Assessment/Review Document Training will be focussed on needs of all practitioners to manage expectations so that dissatisfaction is kept to a minimum.
Target deadline	September 2014
Evidence of achievement	Less complaints and record of staff attending training
Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)

Recommendation 12(8)	The Head of Adult Social Care should ensure that the lessons drawn from the Transitions Project (which examined the period when people move from children's social care to adult social care) are widely communicated and fully understood both by those going through it and the staff supporting them.
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	The Transitions Project is still operational and currently due to close end of March 2014. There are monthly project group meetings working through a detailed set of objectives and tasks. Part of this work has been a consultation process with families and other stakeholders about the transition process. There was a consultation workshop on 14 th November 2013 and there is a consultation survey which has closed on 6/01/14.
Target deadline	By the End of May 2014- all relevant staff will be informed of the progress made through this project
Evidence of	We would have a more formalised structure across Adult and Children services working to roles/responsibilities and agreed

achievement	protocols. Service will ensure that lessons learnt from this project are widely communicated and understood by users of this process.
Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)

Recommendation 12 (9)	<p>The Head of Adult Social Care should undertake further work to test the perception of some stakeholders that some groups, regardless of the level at which the eligibility criteria are set, are being disadvantaged. Specifically on the grounds of their</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age, particularly older people or those not receiving care from a particular and specific age-related service provider (eg Age UK) • Disability, particularly those with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ remitting or relapsing conditions ○ sensory impairment ○ a condition on the autistic spectrum • Gender, particularly women who may have a societal expectation that they should act as a primary carer • Religion, particularly those with a cultural requirement for hygiene or washing routines. <p>Should a disproportionate adverse effects be determined to be present then measures should be introduced to mitigate them.</p>
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	The Head of service will establish a group to undertake this work forward with a view to ensuring that any disproportionate adverse effects are identified and measures are then introduced to mitigate them.
Target deadline	June 2014
Evidence of achievement	EIA completed
Lead Officer	Head of Service –Adult Social Care

Recommendation 12(10)	The Head of Adult Social Care should review and then re-issue the guidance to staff about the necessity to ensure a holistic assessment is carried out in line with the 'Cross team working protocol'.
Service response	Accepted

Action to be taken	Head of Service will delegate this role to all service Managers via Adult Social Care Management meetings, to ensure compliance with the 'cross team working protocol'.
Target deadline	February, 2014
Evidence of achievement	Minutes and Notes of meetings
Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)

Recommendation 12(11)	<p>The Head of Adult Social Care should give consideration to the introduction of measures to meet the needs of carers, especially</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their capacity to provide care and the impact that it may have on the effective delivery of support packages • The beneficial effects of preventative respite care • The widespread and early provision of the Carer's Handbook • The production of a newsletter or bulletin
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	<p>Response to the four bullet points is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The capacity of carers is determined through carer's assessments. A new set of procedures has been produced to guide staff through the process and ensure that all teams work in a consistent way. We have also reviewed and revised the carer's assessment and all teams will use the same form. The procedures and new forms will be launched on 1st January once the online carers assessment has been updated. ▪ Respite care to support carers is already offered and the procedures mentioned above cover this area as well ▪ The Carers Information Pack is the most frequently requested document and it is reviewed and updated twice a year. It is available as a download online and all teams are provided with copies to take out. Berkshire Carers Service (first point of contact for carers) also has copies to distribute. However – despite this we still find that people are unaware of its existence and ask for all the information to be in one place. There is a local Carers Strategy Group that meets quarterly and they will be asked for suggestions as to how the booklet can be made more widely available. ▪ There are a number of voluntary organisations involved in supporting carers already produce the newsletter (BCS, Crossroads etc) and we will explore this further.
Target deadline	September 2014
Evidence of achievement	Implementation of the above actions and minutes provided.

Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)
Recommendation 12(12)	The Head of Adult Social Care should strengthen the links between their service and GPs to ensure that the unique and trusted status of GPs is used to identify an early need for social care or the provision of support for carers.
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	At present, we are engaged in lot of work around integrated work around Better Care Fund with Health Colleagues. The services Managers are exploring ways to raise the profile around GPs supporting carers better.
Target deadline	September 2014
Evidence of achievement	Evidence GPs referring more people for Carer support and assessment
Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)

Recommendation 12 (13)	The Head of Adult Social Care should disseminate widely to their service the report on the findings of the public consultation in order that improvements in operational systems, processes and practise might be further identified.
Service response	Accepted
Action to be taken	Head of Service will ensure that all staff are made aware of the public consultation document by service managers and team managers
Target deadline	June 2014
Evidence of achievement	Minutes of meeting
Lead Officer	Balwinder Kaur – Interim Head of Service (Adult Social Care)

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The Executive is requested to endorse the responses to the recommendations as set out above.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Report of the Scrutiny Review into the Adult Social Care Eligibility Criteria on 10 December 2013.

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: N/a

Officers Consulted: Various, relevant to the areas they are responsible for, Corporate Board

Trade Union: N/a

Title of Report:	Scrutiny review into the Adult Social Care eligibility criteria
Report to be considered by:	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
Date of Meeting:	10 December 2013

Purpose of Report: To outline the results of the investigation into the operation of the Adult Social Care eligibility criteria.

Recommended Action: That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission endorses the recommendations of the Task Group prior to their consideration by the Executive.

Key background documentation: The minutes of and papers provided to the task group (available from Strategic Support).

Task Group Chairman	
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Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting of 11 December 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) agreed to conduct a review into Adult Social Care eligibility criteria.
- 1.2 This report sets out:
- (1) The Terms of Reference for the review
 - (2) The methodology used to gain evidence in support of the review
 - (3) The rationale for undertaking the review
 - (4) The Council's statutory duties
 - (5) The current operating model
 - (6) Assessment of statutory compliance
 - (7) Other matters of note
 - (8) Intended legislative changes
 - (9) Analysis and conclusions
 - (10) Recommendations.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 The Terms of Reference were for a Task Group to conduct a review of the Council's Fair Access to Care Services policy and in particular:
- Understand the policy's context, scope and intent
 - Assess the effect of the policy's application in practice, particularly the extent to which it is statutorily compliant
 - Consider what might be done further to improve the policy
 - Report to the OSMC thence the Executive with recommendations as appropriate.

3. Methodology

- 3.1 The review has been conducted by a cross-party task group, working with Council officers and representatives of other organisations.
- 3.2 The members of the working group were Councillors Dominic Boeck, Gwen Mason and Quentin Webb. Councillor Webb was elected as the Chairman. In May 2013 Councillor Boeck was appointed as the Executive Member for Cleaner & Greener, Waste, Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Thatcham Vision. As such he was unable to continue with any involvement with scrutiny and therefore the review was concluded by the remaining two members of the task group.
- 3.3 The task group held the meetings outlined in the table below.

Meeting date	Meeting focus
Monday 14 January 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of the Chairman • Agreement of the Terms of Reference • Briefing on

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Legal position ○ The national framework ○ Emerging policy developments (including Dilnot) ○ West Berkshire's statistics ○ Previous activity (policy development and review) ● Agreement of the review activity and schedule
Monday 21 January 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● West Berkshire Fair Access to Care Services policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Context (social care policy framework) ○ Aim and intent ○ Scope ○ Exclusions and diversions ○ Cost of operation ○ Cost of a change of policy ● Practice elsewhere <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comparative data
Friday 25 January 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The equality duty ● Equality Impact Assessments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Purpose and content ○ Methodology
Monday 4 March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Further examination of performance information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collected by the Council ○ Comparator data from other Councils ● Agreement of the consultation process
Friday 15 March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examination of performance information ● Understanding of the application process
Monday 25 March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Judicial Review case studies ● Sign off of the consultation plan
Monday 24 June 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access for All
Monday 5 August 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Receipt of the consultation report
Wednesday 11 September 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In depth analysis of consultation results
Tuesday 26 November 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formulation of the recommendations

3.4 The review also included a significant public consultation which employed a broad range of engagement techniques. Publicity was widespread and much use was made of the networks available to the local voluntary sector. Over 4000 people were contacted directly.

3.5 The following methods were used for gathering information:

- Questionnaire (paper and online)
- Focus groups
- Attendance at meetings
- Workshops with the voluntary sector and with social care staff
- Written responses

3.6 The review has also considered data drawn from annual user satisfaction surveys undertaken by the Adult Social Care Service.

4. Acknowledgements and thanks

4.1 The Chairman and Members of the task group would like to acknowledge and thank all those who supported and gave evidence to the review.

5. The rationale for undertaking the review

5.1 On 14 May 2012 an application for a Judicial Review of the Council's Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) policy was brought, via litigation friends, on behalf of 5 learning disabled clients.

5.2 The case was considered twice by the High Court and rejected. On 3 July 2012 the High Court heard an application from the claimants on appeal at an oral hearing but again this was refused.

5.3 The claimants then lodged an appeal against this decision but the Court of Appeal similarly rejected their claim.

5.4 Importantly, the Judge considered the Department of Health FACS guidance and rejected the argument made by the Claimants that it was not permissible to have a critical only policy, stating this was 'unarguable.' The Local Authority was entitled to choose critical, rather than any lower category.

5.5 Whilst the judgment was very clearly in the Council's favour, it has highlighted the importance of undertaking regular and robust reviews of the policy in respect of the eligibility criteria.

5.6 As the policy was last subject to a full review in 2008, the Executive Member for Community Care and the Head of Adult Social Care had agreed throughout the legal proceedings that it would be prudent for another review to take place. Subsequent to the legal proceedings being finalised therefore, a review took place. This is the report of that review.

6. The Council's statutory duties

6.1 The review has been undertaken with cognisance of the Council's responsibilities in law. These fall into two broad areas, both of which have responsibilities that the Council must meet. The requirements for each are set out in the sub-sections below.

Social care duties

- 6.2 The requirement for local authorities to provide social care services is well established in statute. The legislative provisions and their requirements are in broad terms:
- National Assistance Act 1948 (Part III)
 - Accommodation to those over 18 who by reason of age, illness, disability or other circumstances are in need of care and attention not otherwise available
 - Welfare arrangements for blind, deaf, dumb and crippled persons
 - Health Services and Public Health Act 1968 (Section 45)
 - Promoting the welfare of older people
 - Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 (Section 2)
 - Practical assistance, recreational facilities, meals etc.
 - Mental Health Act 1983 (Section 117)
 - After-care services
 - NHS and Community Care Act 1990
 - Assessment of needs
 - National Health Service Act 2006
 - Prevention, care, after-care, home help and laundry facilities
- 6.3 A key piece of legislation for this review is Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990, which states that where it appears to a LA that any person for whom they may provide or arrange for the provision of community care services may be in need of any such services, the authority has a duty to carry out an assessment of that need. If a need is demonstrated, councils must then decide whether they should put in place services to meet it with reference to their eligibility criteria (see below).
- 6.4 Direction on the discharge of social care duties under Section 47 has been provided by the 2002 Department of Health's Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) guidance to local authorities and its successor the 2010 Prioritising Need guidance, both of which are mandatory. The guidance states that councils can independently determine at what level – or band – of need they will provide services. This is termed eligibility criteria. The bands describe the seriousness of the risk to independence and well-being or other consequences if needs are not addressed. They are
- Critical - where life is in danger, or serious abuse or neglect has occurred or might occur;
 - Substantial - where abuse or neglect has occurred or might occur, or the individual is unable to carry out the majority of personal care (i.e. activities such as washing, dressing, going to the toilet, eating, etc.) or domestic routines and there is no-one available to assist;
 - Moderate - where the individual is unable to carry out several personal care or domestic routines, or several of their family and social roles;
 - Low - where the individual is unable to carry out one or two personal care or domestic tasks, or one or two of their family and social roles
- 6.5 In setting their local level, local authorities should take account of their resources, local expectation and local costs and any agreements they may have in place with

partner agencies. Decisions taken on banding levels must be kept under annual review.

6.6 In 2003 West Berkshire Council set a policy of 'critical' only. There are just two other councils operating at critical only: Northumberland County and Wokingham Borough.

6.7 The qualifying criteria for critical are that

- life is, or will be, threatened; and/or
- significant health problems have developed or will develop; and/or
- there is, or will be, little or no choice and control over vital aspects of the immediate environment; and/or
- serious abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur, and/or
- there is, or will be, an inability to carry out vital personal care or domestic routines; and/or
- vital involvement in work, education or learning cannot, or will not, be sustained; and/or
- vital social support systems and relationships cannot or will not be sustained; and/or
- vital family and other social roles and responsibilities cannot or will not be undertaken.

6.8 The FACS guidance also articulates that local authorities must

- ascertain the individual's presenting needs
- evaluate how the needs might pose a risk to independence and well-being if the need is not met
- grade the need against the band used by the authority.

6.9 If it is assessed that there is an eligible need (ie for West Berkshire Council a critical need) then it must be met. The council can however take account of its own resources as to how to meet the need if there are two or more objectively real alternatives and can also take account of whether needs are being met by others (and can continue to be so). Councils charge for the provision of care services where the applicant is able to afford it. Currently if their means exceed a financial threshold of £23,250 then they will pay full cost. If they are below £23,250 there is a financial assessment conducted on the individual.

Equality duty

6.10 The 2010 Equality Act harmonises and enhances the requirements of previous equality legislation (such as the Sex Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Acts and the Disability Discrimination Act).

6.11 Chapter 1 of the Act articulates 9 'protected characteristics' as set out below. Public authorities must, through an 'equality duty' (s.149 Equality Act 2010) have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between those with protected characteristics in the exercise of their functions. The protected characteristics are

- Age
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

6.12 In fulfilling the Equality Duty, guidance produced by the Government stresses adherence to the following principles

- Knowledge
 - Compliance with the Equality Duty involves a conscious approach and state of mind.
- Timeliness
 - The Equality Duty must be complied with before and at the time that a particular policy is under consideration or decision is taken.
- Real consideration
 - Consideration of the aims of the Equality Duty must form an integral part of the decision-making process. The Equality Duty is not a matter of box-ticking; it must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.
- Sufficient information
 - The decision maker must consider what information they have and what further information may be needed in order to give proper consideration to the Equality Duty.

These principles have been drawn from case law.

6.13 This means that when developing proposals and making or reviewing policy decisions, including those about finance and service provision, public authorities must comply with their statutory equality duties. Public authorities must ensure that decisions are made in such a way as to minimise unfairness and any disproportionate negative effect on people who have a protected characteristic.

6.14 Cases on the meaning of the public sector equality duty have shown that there should be a clear process of equality impact assessment (EIA) being undertaken in order to demonstrate 'due regard' before making the relevant policy decision. This must include consideration as to whether any identified detrimental impact can be mitigated.

6.15 A written record to demonstrate that due regard had been taken is also expected.

6.16 The EIA is the primary tool for identifying the actual or potential impact of a policy, service and function on service users, staff and other stakeholders. It should be used to help provide excellent services by making sure that they reflect the needs of local communities

7. The current operating model

7.1 As articulated in para 6.6, the Council provides social care for critical needs only as set out in its own Fair Access to Care Services policy. The policy was last updated in March 2012.

7.2 The local FACS policy sits in the context of a wider adult social care service model. The elements of this model are

- Prevention
 - provision of information, advice and support
 - early interventions
 - voluntary sector commissioning
 - universal community services
 - financial assessment and means testing
- Recovery
 - reablement with the NHS
 - therapeutic and time limited interventions
- Long term support
 - assessment of need and eligibility for services
 - control through personal budgets
 - through specialist teams –
 - adults with physical disabilities (PD)
 - older People (OP)
 - adults with learning disabilities (LD)
 - adults with mental health problems (MH).

7.3 Underpinning all three elements of the model is the need to safeguard vulnerable adults and the provision of support to carers.

7.4 The annual adult social care net budget for 2013/14 is £37.6m. This figure will be reduced by £1.85m for 2014/15, although front line services should not be affected.

7.5 In broad outline, the Council operates a process for the determination of needs that can be defined as 'referral and assessment'.

7.6 For those adults with mental health problems the NHS operates a Common Point of Entry, which can be accessed on the internet, by e-mail, phone and post.

7.7 For all other adults in potential need of social care services (those with physical or learning disabilities, or older people), the Council provides a single point of contact through a team called 'Access for All' (AfA).

7.8 AfA receives referrals from health and social care professionals and directly from members of the public, either on their own behalf or on that of others. Referrals can be made through an 'online hub' website, for which processes and personnel are in place to ensure that its content remains current, by phone and e-mail. Information

and Signposting specialists, each of whom have received extensive training on the diverse range of enquiries that they may receive, handle requests received by these media.

- 7.9 In addition to the Information and Signposting staff, AfA has Surgery Link Workers who are able to conduct assessments to provide simple pieces of assistive equipment such as toilet seats and grab rails, provide advice and information or arrange care services. Occupational Therapists conduct assessments when equipment needs are more complex.
- 7.10 Social Workers carry out the statutory community care assessments in accordance with the requirements of s.47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990. Those whose needs are not assessed as being critical are provided with advice and guidance then directed to other organisations, such as Citizens Advice and the Department for Work and Pensions.
- 7.11 On receipt of a valid referral, AfA will undertake an assessment to determine eligibility. Two broad factors are assessed
- Needs
 - Through discussion and asking appropriate questions, the Information staff are able to determine whether or not the individual should be considered for an assessment. Where it is clear that it is not appropriate then staff offer information and advice. Those who may be eligible for an assessment are passed to a manager to allocate to the most appropriate worker to visit and complete an assessment.
 - Community Care Assessments are then conducted to identify an individual's presenting needs and to determine whether, under FACS, they would be eligible for a service. The assessment also identifies whether any of the needs are being met by informal carers and whether these arrangements can realistically continue.
 - Financial circumstances
 - Anyone entitled to a community care assessment will be assessed regardless of their financial situation. However, financial circumstances are discussed early on in the process with the service user so that they are fully aware and able to take a decision as regards progressing involvement with the Council. If they decide not to continue with assessment and Council assistance then Information staff will ask appropriate questions to direct them to the right information or services (perhaps in the voluntary sector) so that they can self-fund.
 - Although the Council has a duty to meet all assessed unmet social care needs, there may be alternative routes of funding available to meet need. For example, if someone needed a wheelchair this would be funded by the Wheelchair Service, which is part of the NHS. Adaptations to properties are funded through the Disabled Facilities Grant, administered by the Council's Housing Service.
- 7.12 All people over the age of 65 who have a disability or are perceived by themselves or others to be vulnerable are eligible for an assessment.

- 7.13 Should the applicant be eligible for a Council intervention, a care (or support) plan will be produced. The care/support plan outlines expected outcomes, how they will be achieved and the cost of the services to be provided. The care plan can be commissioned either directly by the Council or by the person concerned (or their carer) through a 'personal budget', which for some people offers more flexibility and control.
- 7.14 The consideration of all care plans and the allocation of resources to meet them is carried out by the Resource Panel. The Panel comprises senior management from Adult Social Care (including the Head of Service) and provides for consistency between cases. It meets weekly but in very urgent cases, an immediate decision can be taken by the Head of Service or a service manager in Adult Social Care.
- 7.15 Annual reviews are conducted for all those in receipt of a service.
- 7.16 Results for both initial assessments and annual reviews are recorded on the Multifunctional Assessment/Review Document (MARD).
- 7.17 If an applicant does not wish to receive direct Council support or does not qualify for direct Council support, either on initial receipt of the referral or following a formal assessment, they are redirected to appropriate support services in the health or voluntary sectors. Many of the voluntary sector organisations receive funding from the Council for the delivery of the services they provide. Each year AfA conducts a sampled review of those directed to support services to establish if their needs were met effectively.

8. Assessment of statutory compliance

- 8.1 The task group obtained evidence to test the concept that in setting its Fair Access to Care Services threshold at 'critical' only:
- (1) the requirements of Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 (as outlined in para 6.3) are being met; and
 - (2) that they are being done so in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (as set out in para 6.13).
- 8.2 The findings are set out below. Additional, significant, observations on the Council's operations, if relevant, are included.

Social care assessments are being carried out and, if unmet needs are identified, services are put into place

- (1) For 2011/12 (the most recent period for which results were available), the Council received 4940 contacts, 69% of which were through Access for All, the remainder being through the Common Point of Entry. Of these, 1625 went on to complete an assessment (32%).
- (2) Of the 1625 people who had an assessment, 1440 (89%) then went on to receive a service. These figures are comparable to those of the other Berkshire unitaries (all of which, with the exception of Wokingham, are providing services for both 'substantial' and 'critical' need), as set out in the table below, and might indicate that West Berkshire Council is

applying a liberal interpretation to the requirements of the 'critical' eligibility threshold.

	Bracknell Forest	Reading	Slough	West Berkshire	RBWM	Wokingham
Number of contacts received	3730	4000	2430	4940	4285	7290
Of which, number of assessments completed	1330 (36%)	1925 (48%)	1530 (62%)	1625 (32%)	960 (22%)	1195 (16%)
Of which, number of services received as a result of assessment	1090 (82%)	1375 (71%)	685 (45%)	1440 (89%)	695 (72%)	940 (79%)
Percentage of assessments per first contact	29%	34%	28%	29%	16%	12%

- (3) For those people who do not receive an assessment, around a third receive a short term intervention with the remainder receiving information, advice or direction to other organisations. The organisations to which callers may be signposted are many and varied. The Council provides £700,000 per year in grant funding in support of many of these services.
- (4) Although the number of contacts that AfA received in 2012/13 increased by 10% over the previous year, the amount of resources allocated to it did not. In some part this increase is due to AfA fielding telephone calls for other parts of Adult Social Care.
- (5) Although the effectiveness of the AfA organisational model, with the team being managed through Adult Social Care, is assessed by managers to be working well, its effectiveness relative to other organisational models, for example the public point of access being handled by the contact centre, has not been formally evaluated.
- (6) At the time at which the review was undertaken, a snapshot showed that 541 cases (new assessments or reviews due to changes in circumstances) were awaiting consideration by the AfA team. Although down from the 864 cases awaiting assessment when AfA was established in June 2011, this backlog continues to affect the Council's ability to meet its target of conducting assessments within 28 days of referral. The table below shows the length of wait between referral and assessment, by age, for the second quarter of 2013/14. Additional staffing resources have recently been directed to this service to reduce the waiting times for assessment by 31 March 2014.

	Under 18 / unknown	18 – 64	65 and Over	Total	%
Less than or equal to 2 days	0	17	41	58	6%
More than 2 days and up to 2 weeks	0	70	65	135	13%
More than 2 weeks and up to 4 weeks	0	52	53	105	10%
More than 4 weeks and up to 3 months	1	89	226	316	30%
More than 3 months	0	129	309	438	42%
Total	1	357	694	1052	

- (7) Individual circumstances are taken into account when determining the urgency with which assessments need to be carried out but the waiting time does create a risk that independence might deteriorate between referral and assessment, with a resultant further demand on care resources.
- (8) The documentation through which assessments are conducted and recorded (the MARD) has been recently reviewed. Although, practitioners report that the form is more fit for purpose than previously, the process overall remains paperwork heavy, primarily to provide evidence of statutory compliance, and some staff find it difficult to complete. Previous attempts to use electronic methods of record keeping in the service user's home were perceived as being impersonal and unsympathetic to those undergoing assessment.
- (9) Many of those undergoing assessments find the process complex and lengthy and perceive that this can create a risk of individuals' circumstances deteriorating. There are reports that those seeking care are not kept fully informed of timelines, particularly during the early phases.
- (10) Practitioners report that the operation of the Resource Panel can sometimes be inflexible to challenge and that delays in the making of decisions about care packages could be avoided if case officers were to be present when they were made.
- (11) To ensure that service levels are appropriate and that needs are being met, the Adult Social Care service conducts periodic surveys. The use of the survey provides an effective tool for measuring satisfaction. None of the surveys have indicated that there are undue problems or biases with the provision of the service, including the use or appropriateness of re-directions away from services delivered directly by the Council.
- (12) A complaints system that is compliant with statutory requirements is in operation and provides an effective form of redress, including if necessary by the Local Government Ombudsman, for dissatisfaction with any aspect of care services.

- (13) The provision of services to prevent the necessity for the provision of full social care intervention is an essential part of the current operating model. If this were not to be in place then more assessments – which incur cost and are time consuming – would be likely to be required.
- (14) Although most people who do not go on to receive a full assessment agree with the Council's decision that they should not have had one, a sizeable minority either believe that they should have had or do not know whether they should.
- (15) Carers feel themselves to be at a disadvantage if they do not have the ability to challenge decisions made on care provision. This is particularly so if they are caring for people who are older or disabled and who may then be more likely to have carers who are themselves older.

The operation of the FACS policy does not have a disproportionate effect on any of the 'protected characteristics' groups

- (1) The Council has an established policy framework to assess the extent to which there might be a disproportionate impact on people with any of the protected equality characteristics. This includes the use of Equality Impact Assessments.
- (2) An EIA was conducted during the substantial examination of the Council's eligibility threshold, through the Healthier Communities and Older People Policy Development Commission in 2007/2008. No adverse or disproportionate equality effects have historically been identified.
- (3) Aside from cases referenced in the Judicial Review as referred to above, no complaints have been recorded about the overall setting of a 'critical' FACS threshold or that its application in practice is discriminatory.
- (4) As articulated in Section 5, the legality of the Council's FACS policy has been tested through the courts. As part of the legal process, the Council offered reassessments for those bringing the legal action. Of the three case studies presented to the Task Group, in only one case was a further need identified.
- (5) Although almost 30% of people, when asked, thought that they had been disadvantaged by the Council's decision to offer care to those in critical need only, research appears to indicate that this is because they did not meet the criteria rather than because of any bias against their having one or more protected characteristic.

Notwithstanding the statements made in (1) to (4) above, the following (specific) matters have been identified.

- (6) The transition from child social care to adult social care appears to be a period in the life of young people and their carers that present particular difficulties. The Council's policy position that young people moving from children's social care to adult social care should usually remain in the familial home does not appear to be widely understood. The service has

established a Transitions Project that ends in March 2014 addressing a range of issues associated with this transition from children's to adult services including access to services.

- (7) Third sector organisations providing care are aware that in some cases their focus is on people who fall into certain age brackets, for example the elderly or young adults. This creates a risk that some of those who should be in receipt of care but who are outside of these age brackets might not get appropriate support.
- (8) The desire to be independent and their stoicism may mask the needs of some older people.
- (9) Council staff are concerned that the age of the person seeking care is a significant factor in its provision. They perceive that under 65 year olds get a higher allocation of services than over 65s with identical needs. This leads to the perception by staff that service provision is dictated by age and that the level of service is better and more flexible for younger service users.
- (10) There is concern from a number of stakeholders, including Council staff, that those with remitting or relapsing conditions (both physical and mental) may have heightened safety and independence risks as they become alternatively eligible and ineligible for care. This may be to some degree due to the complexity of the process, the time taken for the assessment process to complete and the absence of follow up when care packages are removed after the condition has improved. This was particularly a concern in the area of Mental health services.
- (11) Whilst recognising that it may sometimes be impractical, people who have mental illness and those who care for them have expressed a desire to be more involved in the decisions taken about their support packages.
- (12) Because of their unique communication circumstances, people who are deaf or hearing impaired may have difficulty accessing care. This is particularly so if they are older or do not communicate in any way other than by use of British Sign Language. Council staff highlight that those with other sensory needs, particularly blind people, may experience similar difficulties.
- (13) There is a widely held view that those with conditions on the autistic spectrum may have difficulties obtaining appropriate levels of support.
- (14) Council staff report that male carers appear to be more likely to contact social services sooner for support and female carers are more likely to provide support for longer. This could indicate that male carers are less able to cope which could place those being cared for by them at risk. Women may therefore be disproportionately affected by this.
- (15) Council social care staff have expressed a view that although religious or cultural needs, for example washing routines, may be identified by the

assessing social worker, they might not always be taken into account by the Resource Panel.

- (16) Whilst the risk of disproportionate adverse impact on those with any particular individual protected characteristic or condition is generally low, notwithstanding those highlighted above, some concern exists that when a person has two or more conditions then the needs of the person are not considered holistically. Examples might include those with a combination of both mental illness and physical disabilities, or those with a learning disability and who are pregnant.

9. Other noteworthy matters

9.1 In addition to the findings and assessments made above, the Task Group conducting the review had a number of matters highlighted to it that, whilst not directly relevant, nonetheless required note and consideration for recommendation. This is particularly so for feedback given during consultation with focus groups. These matters are set out below.

- (1) There is a significant body of opinion that believes the needs of carers are not fully taken into account for or reflected in social care assessments. Unrecognised needs – whether temporary or more permanent – may diminish either the capacity of the carer to provide support or the effectiveness of individual care packages. This appears to be particularly so in the case of older carers.
- (2) When asked, carers have expressed a view that respite care could be used as a preventative as well as crisis intervention.
- (3) Formal and informal support for carers, for example through the provision of a copy of the Carer's Handbook, as soon as they are identified could have positive effects on those in receipt of care.
- (4) There appears to be some demand for periodic newsletters the content of which might signpost those in receipt of social care, regardless of provider, and their carers to the full range of services that are available to them.
- (5) There is a perception that communication ability and knowledge of 'the system' can allow some people to appear to be eligible and gain better access to services whilst others who are less able or willing to state their case but with identical needs may lose out. Council staff have further expressed a view that some workers are able to make more cogent arguments than others and that similar inequities can apparently therefore ensue from Resource Panel decisions.
- (6) Those in receipt of care services report frustration when, due to a change in their needs, on re-assessment they are no longer deemed to be 'critical' and a reduction or cessation in support follows. Staff on the other hand report frustration when – because of need initially having been over-assessed – they have to advise those previously in receipt of support that it is being withdrawn or otherwise reduced, again on the basis of need.

- (7) The role of health professionals and the interface between health care and social care does not appear to be managed to consistent levels. For example, district nurses are reported to be very supportive and helpful whereas GPs could be more proactive in identifying need when they see those who are relying on carers for their support.

10. Intended legislative changes

- 10.1 With effect from April 2015 it is likely that a new, single, national eligibility threshold will be introduced that will remove the power for local authorities to set their own levels. It is likely that this new band will be broadly equivalent to the current level of 'substantial'.
- 10.2 The government has indicated that there may be some financial recognition that, for the three authorities operating at 'critical' only, there will be both a transitional cost for the conduct of re-assessment of cases in line with the revised criteria and for the annual provision of services for the increased numbers of people likely to qualify. As the Council does not record the level of need for those assessed as being below 'critical', the precise number of those who would currently be assessed as having 'substantial' needs and who would therefore qualify under the new system is not known.
- 10.3 Notwithstanding the absence of firm local figures, it is estimated (from government calculations) that the one-off transitional cost for West Berkshire will be around £1.2m, with the requirement to provide services to those whose needs would not currently make them eligible costing an addition around £1.97m annually.

11. Analysis and conclusions

- 11.1 Analysis of the data shown in the table at 8.2(2) shows that although in West Berkshire the Council is operating a Fair Access to Care Services policy at the 'critical' level, the ability of people within the district to access social care assessments and services, when compared with the data from the other councils in Berkshire, is not apparently hampered. This comparison still stands even though West Berkshire Council is one of only two in the county operating at 'critical'.
- 11.2 Whilst a 'critical' eligibility criteria may on the face of it, indicate that less people might be able to access care than if it were to be set at 'substantial' it was found that Council funded preventative care is high and provides for a significant degree of mitigation of any disproportionate negative effect on people with any of the protected characteristics.
- 11.3 These two key findings (above) of this review lead then to the conclusion that there is no evidence that the Council's decision to set its eligibility criteria at 'critical' is having a disproportionately negative effect on any of the groups with protected characteristics.
- 11.4 Whilst some people with the protected characteristics perceive themselves to be being disadvantaged, it also appears that those disadvantages as they currently manifest themselves would probably be present regardless of the level at which the eligibility criteria operate. There does however appear to be a need for further investigation to be undertaken to assess the degree to which their perceptions are

reality and, if necessary, measures identified and put into place to mitigate the effect.

- 11.5 Overall, support for carers also seems to be an area of some concern which requires further investigation.
- 11.6 There is therefore a number of additional specific actions that can and should be taken to move forward further the effectiveness of the work in this area. These are set out in section 12, below.

12. Recommendations

12.1 The following recommendations are proposed:

- (1) The Head of Adult Social Care should keep the Council's Fair Access to Care Services eligibility criteria at 'critical' and continue to ensure that appropriate levels of funding remain for the provision of preventative services outside of that required for assessed care packages (currently £700,000 per year).
- (2) The Head of Adult Social care should ensure, through annual review, that in its operation of the Fair Access to Care Services Policy the Council continues to comply with its statutory duties. In addition to any required policy changes, the reviews should incorporate an assessment of equality impact.
- (3) The Head of Adult Social Care should monitor the effectiveness of the steps that have been taken to reduce both the time taken to complete Section 47 assessments and the backlog of those cases awaiting assessment. Additionally, a further action might be a cessation of the practise of the Access for All team fielding telephone calls for other social care teams and the allocation of more staff time for the completion of assessments. Reports on effectiveness and progress should be made quarterly to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.
- (4) The Head of Adult Social Care should evaluate the operation of the Access for All team to ensure that its position within the organisational structure provides the most effective operational environment. Any changes to the role, formation or positioning of it should ensure that staff in this crucial team are appropriately trained, resourced, focussed and supported.
- (5) The Head of Adult Social Care should continue to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the Multifunctional Assessment/Review Document to further improve its effectiveness and ensure that the administrative burden it necessarily imposes is kept to an absolute minimum.
- (6) The Head of Adult Social Care should ensure that those completing the Multifunctional Assessment/Review Document understand that the information it contains will be used by the Resource Panel to make decisions on the provision of care. If necessary, training should be provided to ensure that the delays caused by incomplete or poorly completed forms are reduced.

- (7) The Head of Adult Social Care should ensure that all staff undertaking social care assessments understand the need to keep those undergoing the process fully apprised of progress. This should ensure that expectations are managed and that dissatisfaction is resultantly kept to a minimum.
- (8) The Head of Adult Social Care should ensure that the lessons drawn from the Transitions Project (which examined the period when people move from children's social care to adult social care) are widely communicated and fully understood both by those going through it and the staff supporting them.
- (9) The Head of Adult Social Care should undertake further work to test the perception of some stakeholders that some groups, regardless of the level at which the eligibility criteria are set, are being disadvantaged. Specifically on the grounds of their
- Age, particularly older people or those not receiving care from a particular and specific age-related service provider (eg Age UK)
 - Disability, particularly those with
 - remitting or relapsing conditions
 - sensory impairment
 - a condition on the autistic spectrum
 - Gender, particularly women who may have a societal expectation that they should act as a primary carer
 - Religion, particularly those with a cultural requirement for hygiene or washing routines.

Should a disproportionate adverse effects be determined to be present then measures should be introduced to mitigate them.

- (10) The Head of Adult Social Care should review and then re-issue the guidance to staff about the necessity to ensure a holistic assessment is carried out in line with the 'Cross team working protocol'.
- (11) The Head of Adult Social Care should give consideration to the introduction of measures to meet the needs of carers, especially
- Their capacity to provide care and the impact that it may have on the effective delivery of support packages
 - The beneficial effects of preventative respite care
 - The widespread and early provision of the Carer's Handbook
 - The production of a newsletter or bulletin
- (12) The Head of Adult Social Care should strengthen the links between their service and GPs to ensure that the unique and trusted status of GPs is used to identify an early need for social care or the provision of support for carers.
- (13) The Head of Adult Social Care should disseminate widely to their service the report on the findings of the public consultation in order that improvements in operational systems, processes and practise might be further identified.

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.

Consultees

Local Stakeholders:	<p>A widespread consultation process was developed and delivered by an independent. In achieving a wide distribution of materials and developing the voluntary sector workshop and the focus groups, the consultant worked closely with West Berkshire Independent Living Network (WBILN) throughout.</p> <p>Publicity Information about the consultation was sent out to approximately 40 different local organisations by the consultant, WBILN and Empowering West Berkshire (EWB). WBILN also sent the information out to all its members. This offered the option of a visit to a meeting and asked for information about the consultation to be sent out to users of services. West Berkshire Council sent out information to all those using social services currently and to members of its citizen’s panel. A link was included on the West Berkshire council website. Vodafone and West Berkshire Council distributed the information to all their staff via its internal system. In addition a newsletter was sent out to the members of the Community Council Berkshire (3,000 including many in West Berkshire) and WBILN featured the consultation in its newsletter. A news item was prepared, for media distribution, by West Berkshire Council.</p> <p>Number of contacts During the consultation in excess of 4,000 people were directly contacted and a much larger number informed about the consultation. Over 150 had an opportunity to make comments direct to the consultation manager through the range of opportunities listed below and 199 responded to the paper questionnaire.</p> <p>The engagement took a range of forms:</p> <p><i>Supporting materials</i> Three supporting documents were prepared, giving a simple introduction to the consultation and to the way social care is delivered. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘About the review’ • ‘What is adult social care?’ • and ‘What are the social care levels?’ <p><i>Questionnaire</i> This was developed over a period of time and it was decided to focus on the experience of services. Distribution was made widely</p>
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	<p>and it was available for completion on paper and online. 199 full responses were received and this included 30 responses on paper.</p> <p><i>Focus groups</i> There were four focus groups with mental health service users, physically disabled, carers and older people. These were designed to consider more deeply the primary question of Protected Characteristics under the Equalities Act (2010) and to consider the experience of services in more depth.</p> <p><i>Attendance at meetings</i> Meetings were attended by request and by invitation. The following meetings were attended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Disability Partnership Board • Patient Panel • Reading Deaf Centre • Healthwatch • Provider Forum (West Berkshire Council Social care providers) • Its My Life Group <p><i>Workshops with the voluntary sector and with social care staff</i> There were three workshops, two with West Berkshire Council social care staff and one with representatives from the voluntary sector. These were designed to explore the Protected Characteristics in more detail and all looked closely at some of the issues about delivery of the critical care level.</p> <p><i>Newsletters/publicity</i> Newsletter articles were sent out via West Berkshire Independent Living Network and Community Council Berkshire. The Council also wrote directly to all local MEPs, MP, district, town and parish councillors.</p> <p><i>Written responses</i> Two organisations Healthwatch and West Berkshire Neurological Alliance sent in written responses.</p>
<p>Officers Consulted:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jan Evans, Head of Adult Social Care • Steve Duffin, Head of Adult Social Care Efficiency Programme • Melanie Ellis, Finance Manager • Leigh Hogan, Team Leader, Legal Services • Debbie Butland, Service Manager, Adult Social Care • Marion Angus, Team Manager, Adult Social Care • Staff attending consultation workshops as described above
<p>Trade Union:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None

Title of Report:	Local Enterprise Partnership - Strategic Economic Plan and response to the Airports Commission Interim Report
Report to be considered by:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	13 February 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	EX2757

Purpose of Report:

i) To inform the Executive of the Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan and seek any comments on the current consultation draft.
 ii) To outline the conclusions of the Airports Commission Interim Report and to establish West Berkshire's position in response to the Interim Report.

Recommended Action:

i) To endorse the consultation draft of the Strategic Economic Plan and inform the LEP of any amendments or comments that the Council wishes to make.
 ii) To agree the statement proposed as a response to the Airports Commission Interim Report which supports the expansion of Heathrow.

Reason for decision to be taken:

To provide comments in relation to these important issues for the District and wider Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership area.

Other options considered: n/a

Key background documentation:

Thames Valley Berkshire: Delivering National Growth Locally, Strategic Economic Plan 2015/16 – 2020/21, Consultation Draft, December 2013.

The Airports Commission Interim Report published on 17th December 2013.

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:
 CSP2 – Promoting a vibrant district

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Alan Law - Tel (01491) 873614
E-mail Address:	alaw@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	Councillors Law and Zverko emailed on the 16.01.14 Councillors Law and Cole emailed on the 04.02.2014

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Nick Carter
Job Title:	Chief Executive

Tel. No.:	01635 519101
E-mail Address:	NCarter@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

- Policy:** The proposed SEP sets a new policy framework for promoting economic growth in Berkshire. That said, the objectives set out in the Plan are not new and all have some resonance with previous policies and strategies. There is nothing within the SEP that is at odds with the Council's current Planning policies or recently adopted Economic Development Strategy.
The Council has not formed a policy view on expansion at Heathrow to date.
- Financial:** The SEP has no direct financial implications for the Council. The SEP will however be an important document in both influencing how much Local Growth Fund the area receives and then in determining how it is spent. As a result the SEP will be important in determining what future public funding comes to West Berkshire.
- Personnel:** n/a
- Legal/Procurement:** n/a
- Property:** n/a
- Risk Management:** The SEP poses no significant risks to the Council.

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes		Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:				
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)				
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at www.westberks.gov.uk/eia				<input type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
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Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Government set out its wish to establish Local Enterprise Partnerships in its Local Growth White Paper which was published in 2010. Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are described by the Government as “Partnerships between local authorities and businesses. They decide what the priorities should be for investment in roads, buildings and facilities in the area.”
- 1.2 Alongside the creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships, the Government has also recently introduced a number of other local measures aimed at promoting economic growth. These have included the establishment of Enterprise Zones, and the introduction of the Regional Growth Fund and Growing Places Fund. More latterly, the Government has also been negotiating City Deals with local areas as a means of localising Central Government funding.
- 1.3 The Government commissioned Lord Heseltine to conduct a review into how local areas might be further empowered to help fuel economic growth. The resultant report ‘Every Stone Turned’ was published in October 2012. The Government subsequently accepted 81 of the 89 recommendations in that report and since then has been working through their implementation.
- 1.4 Local Growth Deals and the establishment of a Local Growth Fund formed an important part of these recommendations. These were seen as providing LEPs not only with additional funding to set against identified growth priorities but also an ability to seek freedoms, flexibilities and influence over resources from Government. In return the Government asked LEPs to develop ambitious multi year Strategic Economic Plans for their area. These now need to be submitted to Government by the end of March 2014.
- 1.5 Separately, on 7 September 2012, the Government announced its intention to create an independent Airports Commission, chaired by Sir Howard Davies, to identify and recommend to Government options for maintaining the UK’s status as a global aviation hub. Whilst this is a separate issue, for Thames Valley Berkshire this is very much linked to the LEP’s Strategic Economic Plan due to the proximity to Heathrow.
- 1.6 On 17 December 2013 the Airports Commission's Interim Report was published (often referred to as the Davies Report). The report is not a document for consultation, more a position statement on what the Commission has achieved so far and its analysis of the various representations and ideas submitted to them. Although the Interim Report is not a consultation document, many organisations with an interest in this work will be preparing responses to submit to the Airports Commission.
- 1.7 The purpose of this paper is therefore twofold: to set out the Consultation Draft of Thames Valley Berkshire’s Strategic Economic Plan for comment; and also to outline the conclusions of the Airports Commission's Interim Report and establish West Berkshire's response.

2. Strategic Economic Plans

- 2.1 LEPs were all asked to produce Growth Plans shortly after they were created. Thames Valley Berkshire produced its Growth Plan in 2012. It is available on their website and is entitled, 'Making the Boat Go Faster'.
- 2.2 The Government is now looking for a more strategic plan to be produced which would have the ability to focus and coordinate action across the entire LEP area. The expectation is that these new Strategic Economic Plans (SEPs) will;
- (i) demonstrate a wider commitment to growth;
 - (ii) align or pool local authority capital and revenue spend on growth;
 - (iii) provide effective collaboration on economic development activities, and;
 - (iv) maximise the synergies with wider local growth programmes.
- 2.3 There is an expectation that the Plans will also;
- (i) deliver collective decisions;
 - (ii) be coterminous with the LEP area, and;
 - (iii) build a strong relationship with the business community.
- 2.4 The assessment of each LEP's Strategic Economic Plan will be based around three core themes;
- (i) ambition and rationale for intervention for the local area;
 - (ii) value for money, and;
 - (iii) delivery and risk.
- 2.5 The Government has already announced that it intends to establish a Local Growth Fund (LGF) for all LEPs for 2015/16. The size of the fund at a national level is shown in Table 1, along with an indication of which current funding streams will make up the LGF. Since that Table was published the Government has announced in the 2013 Autumn statement that the New Homes Bonus (part) will not be transferred to the LGF from local government.

Table 1 – The proposed Local Growth Fund 2015/16 (BIS, July 2013)*

Source	£million 2015/16
Local Authority Transport Majors	819
Local Sustainable	100

Transport Fund (Capital)	
Integrated Transport Block	200
Further Education Capital	330
European Social Fund Match	170
New Homes Bonus	400**
Total	2,019
Of which, capital	1,449

The above Table shows the proposed level of funding that will be available to LEPs in 2015/16 and from where that funding will be found.

** The Government announced in the 2013 Autumn statement that New Homes Bonus would not be used to fund the proposed Local Growth Fund.

- 2.6 The Government has made it clear that whilst all LEPs will receive some LGF funding by right, a proportion will also be allocated through a competitive process. This competitive element will be driven by the 'quality' of each LEP's Strategic Economic Plan and it is for this reason, alongside the opportunity to provide a single cohesive economic plan for each LEP area, that the SEP is particularly important.

3. The Thames Valley Berkshire Strategic Economic Plan

- 3.1 As previously stated the Council has been actively involved in the preparation of the Consultation Draft of the SEP which accompanies this report. Council Officers have been involved in developing key elements of the report along with SQW and Hewden, the consultants chosen by the LEP to prepare the Plan. Earlier drafts have been reviewed by the Chief Executive and Portfolio Member for Economic Development in their respective roles on the LEP Executive and Forum.
- 3.2 The Plan is designed as a Berkshire wide document and care has been taken not to focus the Plan on specific local authority areas. The Plan is also geared to the delivery of economic growth and it was accepted at an early stage that some of the associated elements of economic wellbeing would not be embraced by this Plan. These will be picked up at a local level where appropriate.
- 3.3 The Consultation Draft is based on six main objectives, the first three based on people and the latter three focused on 'ideas';

- (i) use better those who are already in the workforce;
- (ii) inspire the next generation and build aspirations and ambition;
- (iii) ensure that economic potential is not restricted by labour supply issues;
- (iv) ensure that knowledge is effectively communicated and grown within Thames Valley Berkshire;
- (v) strengthen networks and interest in the 'soft wiring' to use ideas better, and;
- (vi) make Thames Valley Berkshire's towns genuine hubs in the ideas economy.

3.4 Sitting underneath these six objectives are 15 investment packages grouped into the following high level programmes;

- (a) Promotion and International Positioning of Thames Valley Berkshire.
- (b) Enterprise, Innovation and Business Growth.
- (c) Skills, Education and Employment.
- (d) Infrastructure – Transport, Communications and Place Shaping.

3.5 The full consultation draft of the Strategic Economic Plan is included at Appendix A. Once the final version is submitted to and agreed by Government, it will form the basis of future economic development activity across Berkshire and will be the means by which bids for LGF are identified and hopefully secured.

4. Airports Commission Interim Report

4.1 The consultation draft of the Strategic Economic Plan in Appendix A highlights on a number of occasions how important Heathrow Airport is to the economy of the LEP area - Thames Valley Berkshire. For example, it talks about why the connectivity of the region matters. It says that "The growth of our economy has been – and continues to be – fundamentally shaped by our connectivity: our international links via Heathrow Airport are the principal reason why inward investors choose to locate in TVB and they are a crucial underpinning of ongoing re-investment." It goes on to say that "good connectivity is not a static assumption but an on-going commitment, and it needs investment."

4.2 The SEP is therefore helpful in providing some economic context when considering the Interim Report published by the Airports Commission.

4.3 The Airports Commission's Interim Report endorses the need for further runway capacity in the South East by 2030, and shortlists two sites for further detailed investigation: Gatwick (1 option) and Heathrow (2 options)

- (a) The option at Gatwick Airport is a new runway over 3,000m in length spaced sufficiently south of the existing runway to permit fully independent operation.

- (b) For Heathrow Airport, there are two potential runway options to be considered further:
 - (i) A new 3,500m runway constructed to the northwest of the existing airport, as proposed by Heathrow Airport Ltd, and spaced sufficiently to permit fully independent operation.
 - (ii) An extension of the existing northern runway to the west, as proposed by Heathrow Hub Ltd, lengthening it to at least 6,000m and enabling it to be operated as two separate runways: one for departures and one for arrivals.

- 4.4 The Interim Report also concludes that during the first half of 2014 the Commission would further investigate an option for new runway capacity at the Isle of Grain (Boris Island) before deciding whether or not to add this to the shortlist. This option would involve the closure of Heathrow for commercial and operating reasons.
- 4.5 An independent Economic Impact Study was commissioned by Slough, Hounslow and Ealing Councils to look at a number of options for Heathrow and the economic impacts that follow. Options included the closure of Heathrow, the reduction to just one runway and the status quo remaining. The report highlighted that the closure of Heathrow would result in 30% unemployment for Slough and that even with the status quo remaining (but no investment) there would be a slow but steady decline in jobs.
- 4.6 The importance of Heathrow to the Thames Valley and to West Berkshire's economy is clear and is highlighted in the Strategic Economic Plan. It is critical to maintain business interest in the Thames Valley and West Berkshire and the continued status and growth of Heathrow is considered pivotal to this.
- 4.7 To date, West Berkshire has not formed a policy view on the expansion of Heathrow. Promoting a vibrant district is, however, one of the Council's priorities and we recognise in the Council Strategy that continued economic growth is vital if West Berkshire is to remain competitive. In order for us to promote the district to business and be part of a successful Thames Valley economy, Heathrow must remain a strong and attractive hub for business interests.
- 4.8 In promoting expansion at Heathrow the concerns in relation to access, the environment and the concerns of local residents are not ignored.
- 4.9 The improvement to public transport surface access arrangements is critical. The project to enable rail access to Heathrow from the west will be delivered regardless of any expansion plans but further opportunities and improvements to access Heathrow by rail and coach are needed.
- 4.10 In the same way improvements in environmental and noise impacts of aviation activity is also important and proper consideration should be given to the impact on local communities and appropriate mitigation measures planned.

5. Conclusion and recommendation

- 5.1 The Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership is consulting on their draft Strategic Economic Plan. This is an important plan for the region and the Council has been actively involved in the preparation of the draft plan.

- 5.2 It is recommended that the Executive endorses the consultation draft of the Strategic Economic Plan and informs the LEP of any comments that the Council wishes to make.
- 5.3 Whilst the Airports Commission's Interim Report is not a consultation document many are treating it as such and forming their response. Given the importance of Heathrow to the economy of the Thames Valley and our local economy in West Berkshire, it is considered that any decision which would potentially weaken Heathrow's position would be detrimental to our district and the region.
- 5.4 If Heathrow does not remain the focus for aviation activity and receive the additional investment and capacity needed, this will undermine the Strategic Economic Plan and the vision and plans for the region going forward.
- 5.5 It is therefore recommended that the Executive agrees the following statements as the Council's position on Heathrow and response to the Airports Commission's Interim Report:

West Berkshire Council acknowledges the Airports Commission's conclusion of the need for additional runway capacity for London and the south east and supports this growth in capacity being provided at Heathrow.

There should be no further investigation of the Isle of Grain option as the economic impacts of the closure of Heathrow would be devastating to the Thames Valley and West Berkshire economies.

Measures to improve public transport access arrangements to Heathrow are critical and the Council supports the Airports Commission's call for these improvements to be made without delay.

The Council recognises the various impacts that will result in the expansion of Heathrow, especially for the local communities, and would expect to see appropriate mitigation measures included in the plans for additional runway capacity.

Appendices

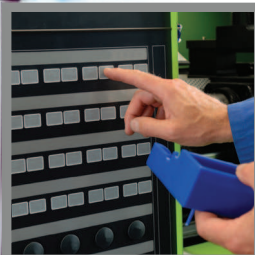
Appendix A - LEP Strategic Economic Plan 2015/16 to 2020/21 – Consultation Draft

Consultees

Local Stakeholders:	Local stakeholders are currently being consulted by the LEP as part of the consultation process on the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)
Officers Consulted:	Andy Day, Corporate Board, Janet Duffield, Bryan Lyttle
Trade Union:	N/A

THAMES VALLEY BERKSHIRE:

Delivering national growth locally
Strategic Economic Plan, 2015/16 – 2020/21





PREFACE: OUR PROSPECTUS FOR GROWTH

Alongside London, Thames Valley Berkshire is the UK's economic powerhouse.

Our businesses are driving forward national economic recovery and growth. In many cases, they are competing successfully in global markets. This really matters. Fundamentally, it matters because **our growth is real growth for the UK as a whole**; in other words, the success of our businesses is largely "additional" and it is not at the expense of those elsewhere in the UK.

We know we have tremendous locational advantages – most notably our proximity to Heathrow Airport. With these advantages come real responsibilities and, looking ahead, we are determined to make our locational advantages count further. We want to do this for the benefit of our residents, communities and businesses. But we also want to do it for the benefit of the wider UK economy.

We are committing – through our Strategic Economic Plan – to deliver an uplift of around £700m (compared to baseline projections) in the wages and profits generated through Thames Valley Berkshire's businesses over the next five years. This in turn will increase returns to the Exchequer (through tax receipts) and it will also stimulate reinvestment locally (through businesses and the voluntary/community sector).

Much of the responsibility for this uplift in projected economic performance is our own – and we are very much "up for it".

We are not seeking "hand-outs" from central government and we will not "chase" grant funding. However we do need to work with central government to ensure that Thames Valley Berkshire is able to marshal its full economic muscle and contribute fully to the national growth agenda.

We need our businesses to reinvest confidently in Thames Valley Berkshire (rather than, say, Shanghai). This outcome is within our grasp, but it needs:

- » an end to the uncertainties surrounding the future of Heathrow Airport
- » planned investments in western rail access to Heathrow Airport and improvements to the M4 motorway to proceed sooner, rather than later, and certainly on schedule
- » a greater supply of skilled people, particularly those with expertise in science, technology, engineering and mathematics
- » stronger and more creative links (both formal and informal) with the research community in (or close to) Thames Valley Berkshire
- » investment in our places so that they continue to provide a good quality of life.

Our Strategic Economic Plan sets out in detail our vision and investment priorities, and it presents evidence relating to both.

Through the collaborative momentum of our partnership we are committed to delivering this accelerated growth. We will work with government to bring this about.

Steve Lamb
Chairman

Thames Valley Berkshire
Local Enterprise Partnership



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document sets out our **Strategic Economic Plan for Thames Valley Berkshire**. It is grounded in evidence, and it has been developed in dialogue with businesses, local authorities and other key stakeholders.

Already our economy is successful: when considered alongside the other 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships in England, it tops the league on many key metrics. Our benchmarks, however, must be understood internationally. On this wider stage, the competition is fierce, although the potential rewards – both for Thames Valley Berkshire and for the UK economy – are substantial. We are strongly placed already, but we need to invest to adapt – as a place and as an economy – to maintain our competitive edge.

In the context of an international economy that is increasingly driven by knowledge, our overarching priority is to **secure better access to talented people and bright ideas, and to use both more effectively**.

Six main objectives follow. With regard to **people** we must:

- 1: Use better those who are already in the workforce
- 2: Inspire the next generation and build aspirations and ambition
- 3: Ensure that economic potential is not restricted by labour supply issues

In terms of **ideas**, we will:

- 4: Ensure that knowledge is effectively commercialised and grown within Thames Valley Berkshire
- 5: Strengthen networks and invest in the “soft wiring” to use ideas better
- 6: Make Thames Valley Berkshire’s towns genuine hubs in the ideas economy

We have identified 15 investment packages – grouped into four high level programmes – through which these objectives will be achieved.

We will deliver these packages through a wide range of implementation mechanisms. Included within these is a bid into the Local Growth Fund. Whilst important, this is only part of our overall resourcing plan. In addition, therefore, we will flex our own collective resources creatively and purposely to deliver our Strategic Economic Plan; we will work closely with government to ensure that wider spending decisions are appropriately aligned and that the fiscal and regulatory framework is broadly supportive; and we will



encourage substantial private sector investment. We approach the latter mechanism with some confidence: we have an outstanding track record in these terms and, with a modest injection of new public sector funds, the private sector contribution will be substantial.

On conservative assumptions, we estimate that the implementation of our Strategic Economic Plan will deliver an uplift in economic output (Gross Value Added) amounting to some £700m (compared to baseline projections) over five years, with additional impacts to follow in the longer term.

As a result, by 2021, we will be well on the way to achieving our overall Vision for Thames Valley Berkshire.

Our Vision:

The vibrancy of our business community will be internationally envied. The ambition and creativity of our established businesses will be energised through strong, knowledge-rich, networks. Our workforce will be the lifeblood of our economy: young people will be inspired and older workers valued. Our infrastructure will match the scale of our ambition and potential. And people will choose Thames Valley Berkshire as the place to live and work

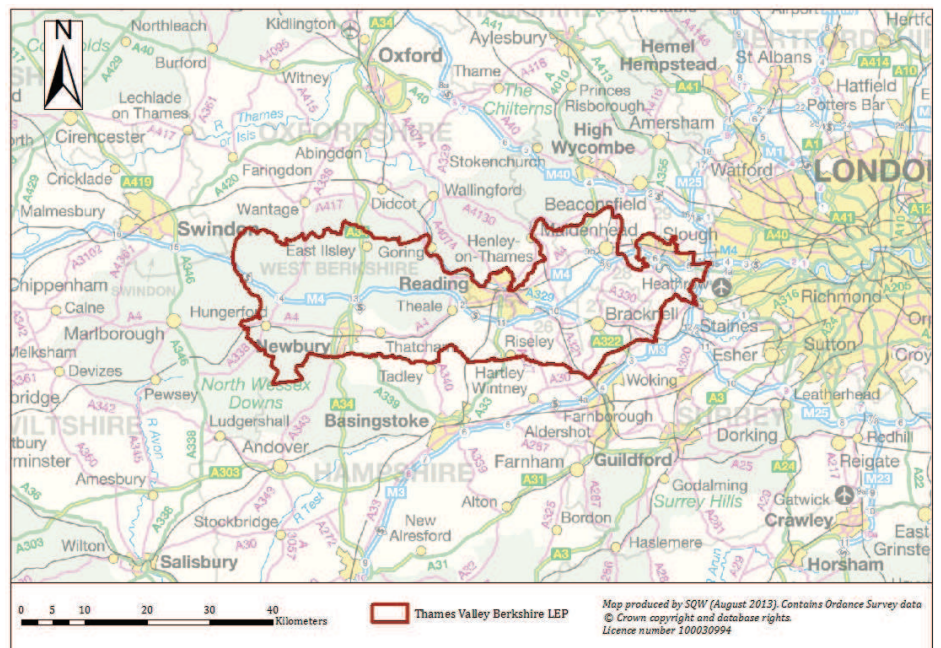


INTRODUCTION

THE THAMES VALLEY BERKSHIRE ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE

Located immediately to the west of London, Thames Valley Berkshire (TVB) is an economic powerhouse of enormous importance to the UK. Administratively it consists of the whole of the former county of Berkshire, now divided into the six unitary authority areas (Bracknell Forest, Reading, Slough, West Berkshire, Windsor and Maidenhead, and Wokingham).

Figure 1: Thames Valley Berkshire



It is home to over 870,000 people and 42,000 businesses. Together these generate economic output – measured in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) – of around £29bn (in current prices). This is equivalent to around 15% of the total for the South East region¹ or just over 2% of the UK-wide figure.

On a national stage, TVB performs strongly on most key metrics. In 2012/13, we secured more inward investment projects than any other Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area apart from London. In addition, a benchmarking report comparing the performance of the 39 LEP areas in England found that²:

1 Defined as the counties (or former counties) of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey and West Sussex

2 *Local Economies and the Growth Challenge: Review of Local Enterprise Partnership area economies in 2013* LEP Network



- » 42.3% of employment in TVB is in “top output growth sectors” (Rank 1)
- » 28.5% of employees in TVB work in the “knowledge economy” (Rank 2, behind London)
- » some 2.5% of enterprises are in foreign ownership (Rank 1)
- » economic output per head in TVB is £32.8k (Rank 2, behind London)
- » the business birth rate is 12.4% (Rank 2, behind London).

Furthermore, a recent report by PwC and Demos identified Reading and Bracknell (considered together) as the highest ranking UK city on the “good growth index”.

However, these headlines leave no room for complacency. We have outstanding locational advantages – not least our proximity to Heathrow Airport and to the world city that is London, but also the quality of our natural environment and the strength of our communities. For the benefit of our own people and businesses – but also for the UK as a whole – we must make these advantages count. This means that benchmarks ought to be defined both nationally and internationally. On this wider stage, the competition is relentless.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Against this backdrop – and as a basis for consultation – this document sets out Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership’s (TVB LEP) Strategic Economic Plan for Thames Valley Berkshire³.

Our Strategic Economic Plan explains how our economy is performing currently and it distils the principal opportunities we must seize – and the challenges we must navigate – as we look to the future. It sets out a Vision of what TVB needs to become; and – in outline – it identifies the investments that are required to bring that Vision about⁴.

These “investments” are not – as perhaps in the past – a wish list. Nor are they a simple statement of what “they” (mainly government) should do for “us”: we understand the state of the public coffers and the need for a different kind of approach to delivering the UK’s national economic growth strategy in local areas; hence this is not a bidding document. Building on our successful City Deal, our investment priorities are therefore a distillation of where we – the local authorities, businesses and other partners across TVB – want to invest our own assets and resources; and where we believe that modest (but important) investments from central government will secure significant leverage and generate impacts which will benefit substantially the UK as a whole.

We are committed to delivering our Strategic Economic Plan. Through it, we will secure a first rate economic future for the benefit of our businesses, and for all of those who live and work in Thames Valley Berkshire. We will also increase further the scale of the net contribution we already make to the UK Exchequer.

³ This is a strategy for economic growth, recognising that other local strategies and plans will address wider issues relating to well-being

⁴ These investments are described and explained in more detail in an accompanying Implementation Plan



OUR ECONOMY IN OVERVIEW



WE HAVE
A VIBRANT
COMMUNITY
OF SMALL
BUSINESSES

TVB has a very strong local economy.

We have a vibrant population of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and TVB is a place where small businesses flourish. At the micro end of the spectrum, we benefit from over 30,000 SMEs (with fewer than five employees) and these operate in all sectors of our economy – from web-based media, to tourism, land-based activities, retail and local services. These are tremendously diverse. Increasing numbers are home-based (and this is especially important for our rural areas) whilst some occupy bespoke business incubators. Some are on a rapid growth trajectory whilst others have more modest ambitions. Collectively, they are a crucial element of our economy.

Our business start-up rate is high: the 5,060 new enterprises formed in 2011 comprised 12.4% of our business stock (compared to start-up rates of 10.8% across the South East and 11.4% in England). Survival rates are also reasonably strong. Among new enterprises formed in 2006, 46.8% were still in business five years later compared to 44.8% England-wide (although on this metric, nearby areas perform better than TVB: data suggest that the five-year survival rate is 50.0% in Buckinghamshire and 52.5% in Oxfordshire).

On conventional metrics, our resident population of working age is highly qualified: 41% is qualified to degree level or above (NVQ4+) compared to just under 37% across the South East region as a whole.



OUR WORKING
POPULATION IS
VERY HIGHLY
QUALIFIED

Our workers are also reasonably well paid. As the graphic below demonstrates, on a residence basis, median weekly earnings for full time employees range from just over £500 in Slough to well over £700 in Windsor and Maidenhead. Conversely, on a workplace basis, the figures range from around £580 in West Berkshire to approaching £650 in Wokingham. The difference between residence- and workplace-based measures is explained through the effects of commuting – both between local areas within TVB, and into and out of TVB from elsewhere (particularly London). There are therefore some major differences within TVB in terms of pay – and the relationship between residence – and workplace-based measures: these reflect, broadly, the rural nature of the west of TVB and the strong London (and Heathrow) influence in the east. Nevertheless, all of the figures reported in Figure 2 exceed the England-wide benchmark. Of course, living (and particularly housing) costs in TVB are also high and median figures do not portray individual circumstances – which, for those in low paid employment in TVB, can be particularly challenging.

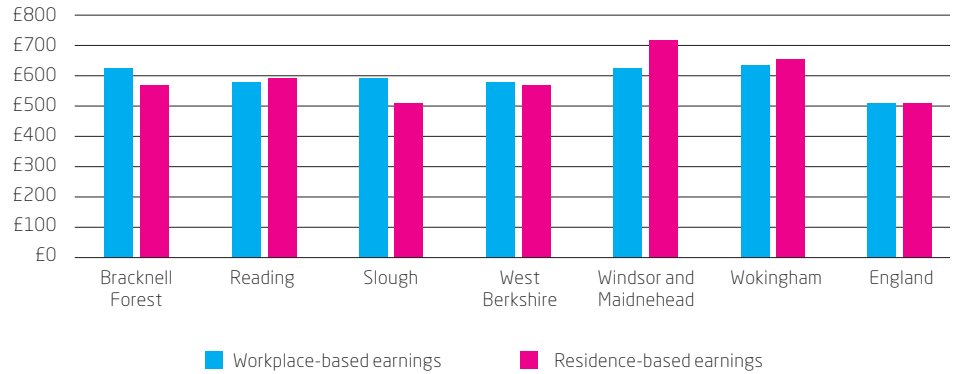
Across TVB, employment rates are high (77.0% compared to 74.7% across the South East⁵). As of October 2013, the total number of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants was less than 10,000 across our whole area – equivalent to 1.8% of the working age population (compared to 1.9% across the South East and 3.0% England-wide). Allowing for “frictional unemployment”, this may suggest – even in the immediate aftermath of recession – that we are close to full employment.

⁵ These data are taken from the Annual Population Survey and they relate to the period July 2012–June 2013



Figure 2: Gross weekly pay across TVB

Median, gross weekly pay for full time employees, across TVB (and England), on workplace and residence-based measures, 2012 (source: ASHE)



THERE ARE MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE – BUT SOME STILL STRUGGLE

However, there are pockets of economic inactivity and unemployment across TVB – particularly in our larger urban areas of Reading and Slough. This is especially concerning in relation to young people. In Reading there are well over 4,000 16–18 year olds not in education, training or employment⁶, some 8.4% of the total; while in Slough, the claimant count rate among 16–24 year olds is notably higher than the regional average. In the midst of a vibrant economy, statistics of this nature are unacceptable; we need to address the surrounding issues and our City Deal has been developed in response.

⁶ Data for the year to end 2012, sourced from Department for Education (DfE) (<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/heet/a0064101/16-to-18-year-olds-not-in-education,-employment-or-training>)



WHAT MAKES OUR ECONOMY DISTINCTIVE

Within the overall context – and based firmly on the available evidence – three distinctive, and inter-related, features of our economy stand out: the importance of technology-based (tech-based) activity; the significance of internationalisation; and the role of the corporates. All three are inherently related to our strong relationship with London; but none of them is reducible to it.

These three features are flagged **not** because they are all that matter; and certainly **not** because other aspects of the economy are unimportant. Rather, they are highlighted because they are important in relation to our Strategic Economic Plan in two key respects.

- » First, they set the economy of TVB apart in relation to future economic growth, both in absolute terms and when considered alongside the role and potential of other LEP area economies across England: our economy is already the most strongly internationally oriented and competitive, and with this comes substantial further potential.
- » Second, they are the attributes on which much of our area's historic economic success has been built but in relation to which, profound changes are afoot with significant risks (both upside and downside) for our economic future.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TECH-BASED ACTIVITY

A recent report published by KPMG mapped the incidence of tech-based employment across every local authority district in England, Scotland and Wales⁷. On a definition which related largely to the IT sector (hardware and software)⁸, it found that Wokingham topped the list in terms of its “tech location quotient” and that each of the other five unitary authority areas within TVB featured in the top 10 nationally. On this measure, without doubt, we lead the way in terms of the strength of our tech-based (or, more precisely, IT-based) economy.

Across the piece, there are some very significant businesses linked – more or less closely – to information and communications technologies. These range from well-established corporates (like Oracle, Cisco, Microsoft, Telefonica and Vodafone) through to smaller firms (such as Volume in Wokingham, Redwood Technologies in Bracknell, and Ntegra in Newbury), some of which are growing at a tremendous pace.



WE HAVE THE
UK'S STRONGEST
TECH-BASED
ECONOMY...

⁷ *Tech Monitor UK: Understanding tech clusters and tracking the UK tech sector's outlook for employment and economic growth*, KPMG, 2013

⁸ Note that tech-based activity was defined in relation to five key sectors: software publishing; computer programming; data processing; manufacturing of computers; and manufacturing electrical equipment



The role of TVB within the tech-based economy - and the risks linked to it


Detailed occupational data (sourced from the 2011 Census) suggest that over 25,000 TVB residents are “*information technology and telecommunication professionals*” (almost 6% of all employed residents and as a share of the total, close to double the figure in both Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire); a further 4,700 are “*information technology technicians*”. From other sources, we know that in 2011, there were around 62,000 jobs in the IT services sector in TVB, and a further 6,000 in the (related) media sector⁹. Whilst these two sets of observations are not directly comparable (as one relates to working residents and the second to workplace jobs), they are important: taken together, they suggest that significant numbers of jobs in these key sectors relate to non-technological occupations. Uppermost among these are tech-based firms’ sales and marketing, management and other corporate functions. We also know that the number of people working in “pure research” is relatively low.

TVB performs strongly in relation to the tech-based economy, particularly that element linked to information and communications technologies. But the risk – looking ahead – is that the bespoke technical content may not always be as great as the headlines imply. Intrinsically, an economy that generates knowledge and technology is in a stronger position than one that packages and sells it to clients and customers, whatever the scale or sophistication of the operation. This is not to belittle the latter, for it is crucial for wealth generation. Nor is it to make sweeping generalisations, for there certainly are knowledge-generating businesses within TVB. However, it is to flag an important risk for TVB as a whole, given our dependence on the sector and the scale and pace of internationalisation within it.

Knowledge-based assets

In this context, we must recognise that there are some world-class knowledge-based assets in – or close to – TVB. The University of Reading is important. It has science-based specialisms (relating, for example, to climate change and satellite imaging) and the University is seeking a far more active role in relation to knowledge-based economic growth than previously. The University of Reading has close links with the Met Office and the European Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasts is also located in Reading. TVB therefore features prominently in assessments of the UK’s research capabilities in the sphere of satellite technology¹⁰. Also within TVB is the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), an organisation with a long history in leading edge defence-related research and development. It is significant in scale, employing well over 4,000 staff, and it too is keen to explore potential commercial applications.

Although just outside our geography, we are also physically very close to some of the UK’s foremost scientific research. This includes, *inter alia*, the activities linked to the



...BUT WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT WE ARE CLOSE TO THE SOURCE OF THE ‘KNOWLEDGE SUPPLY CHAIN’



WE ARE SURROUNDED BY WORLD-CLASS KNOWLEDGE-BASED ASSETS

⁹ Data taken from a set of baseline projections prepared by Cambridge Econometrics using the Local Economy Forecasting Model

¹⁰ *Encouraging a British Invention Revolution: Sir Andrew Witty’s Review of Universities and Growth* Final Report, October 2013



WE NEED TO BUILD STRONGER LINKS BETWEEN OUR OUTSTANDING BUSINESSES AND THE WIDER RESEARCH COMMUNITY



ALONGSIDE LONDON, WE ARE THE FIRST CHOICE LOCATION FOR INWARD INVESTMENT TO THE UK

University of Oxford and to the “big science” facilities at both Harwell and Culham (in southern Oxfordshire). To the east is much of the London-based research community including, for example, science-based Imperial College. On any measure, these are world class institutions. They are on our doorstep.

Building the “soft wiring”

In relation to the tech-based economy, our current strengths are clear – in the form of the scale and depth of our business community and the workforce linked to it. There are also some equally clear risks. These could be mitigated through stronger and more productive links with the research community in the environs of TVB.

The missing ingredient at the moment is the “soft wiring”. Potentially, this could transform an impressive array of tech-related businesses (and their staff) and a group of world class research-based institutions into a dynamic, and knowledge-rich, cluster. The “dots” are all in place; the “joins” just need to be improved, recognising that these depend in part on physical infrastructure and in part on individual and collective behaviours.

From within TVB, there are examples of processes of precisely this type. One illustration stems from the professional services sector in Reading. Over recent years, it has grown substantially and Reading has emerged as the main regional centre for the wider Thames Valley (including Oxford). In part at least, this process is explicable in terms of the physical provision that has been made in central Reading, and the willingness of lawyers, accountants and others to make full use of it. It is also being reinforced by the improvements in rail connectivity and the redevelopment of Reading railway station which, although temporarily disruptive, is widely welcomed by the business community.

The significance of internationalisation

TVB is an intrinsically – and distinctively – international economy.

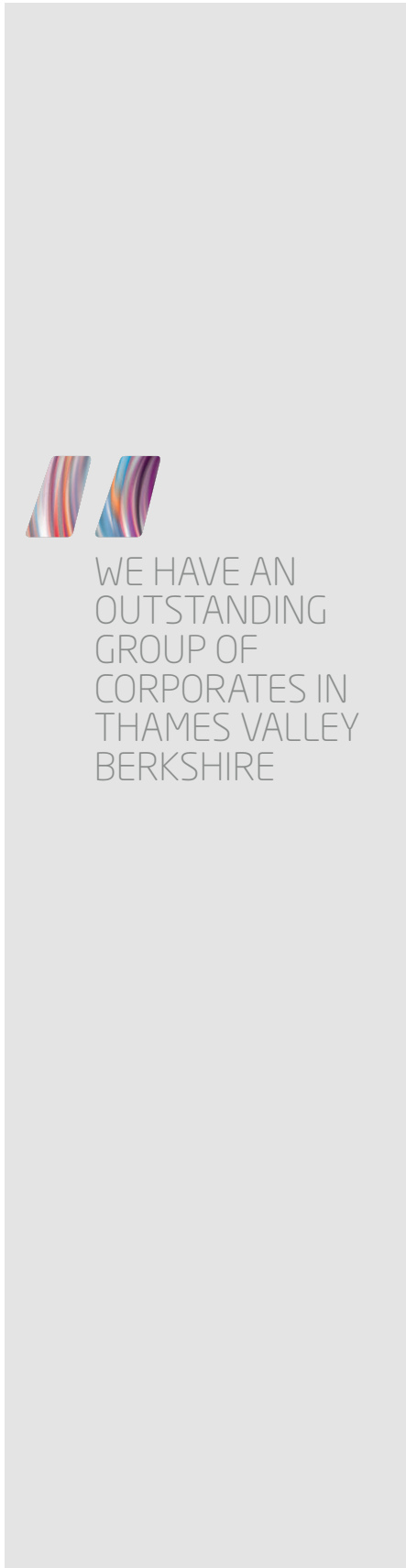
The significance of internationalisation owes much to the proximity of Heathrow Airport which – although outside our boundaries – is crucially important. Most immediately, Heathrow Airport is a major employer: over 18,000 of our residents currently work at the airport¹¹ (and just in terms of the scale of employment, it is worth noting that this is equivalent to almost a third of the IT services sector within TVB).

Proximity to Heathrow Airport has been instrumental in relation to inward investment. Already, we have the highest proportion of foreign-owned businesses (among 39 LEP areas) and estimates suggest that these account for a quarter of all employment and approaching a half of TVB’s overall turnover¹². But the stock of inward investment is not simply an historic legacy. We continue to account for a significant share of inward investment into the UK: in 2012/13, for example, we claimed 56 foreign direct investment “successes”, the highest number in any LEP area (outside of London)¹³.

¹¹ *London Heathrow Economic Impact Study A Report by Regeneris Consulting, September 2013. Ibid. See Table 5-1*

¹² *Ibid. See Table 4-4*

¹³ Data for “involved successes” taken from the *National Inward Investment Pipeline*



WE HAVE AN
OUTSTANDING
GROUP OF
CORPORATES IN
THAMES VALLEY
BERKSHIRE

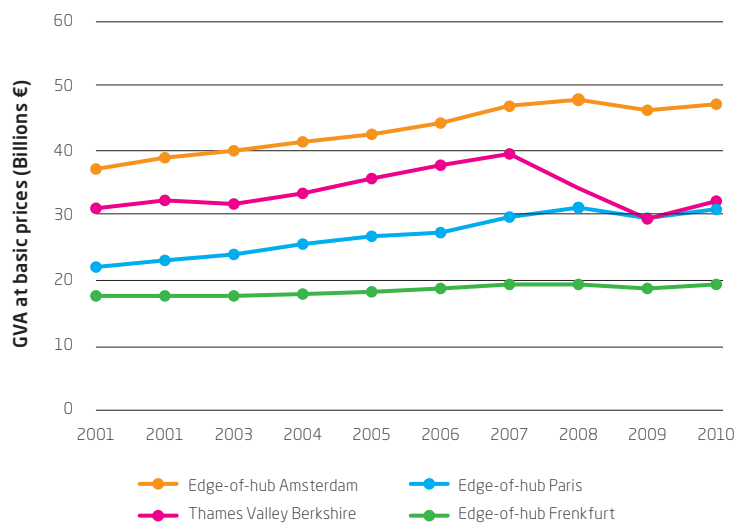
Proximity to Heathrow Airport is therefore – in economic development terms – a substantial asset. But we must reflect on whether we are “sweating” this locational advantage as hard as we might. In this context, it is instructive – although not easy – to compare TVB with “edge of hub airport” economies elsewhere in Europe, namely the non-metropolitan areas abutting Schipol (Amsterdam), Charles de Gaulle (Paris) and Frankfurt¹⁴.

The findings from this exercise are important. Data sourced from Eurostat and reported in Figure 3 suggest that TVB grew more quickly than these comparators¹⁵ prior to the recession, but also that the impact of recession – at least on these data – bit relatively hard¹⁶. These observations – coupled with on-going uncertainties regarding government’s commitment to both the future of Heathrow Airport and the UK’s membership of the EU – present risks in relation to our on-going appeal to would-be investors. Yet for TVB, this international dimension is crucial.

The role of the corporates

The role of the corporates is a third, very distinctive, element of our economic make-up. There are well over 200 European or global HQ operations in TVB. Many of these are long-established, and they are often major employers operating in strategically important sectors – like pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals, energy, food and IT. Locationally, they have tended to gravitate towards our major employment sites such as Slough Trading Estate, Green Park, Thames Valley Park, and IQ Winnersh.

Figure 3: Thames Valley Berkshire and key international comparator locations (Source: Eurostat (data released in June 2013), Statistics Netherlands)



¹⁴ These were defined in terms of NUTS3 areas that were adjacent to the relevant hub airport but were not the main city

¹⁵ Defining appropriate comparators is in practice extremely difficult. We have had to rely on NUTS3 definitions and this raises many issues in terms of the validity of the comparisons. Nevertheless, the underlying data sources are reasonably robust

¹⁶ Note that the GVA figures quoted here for TVB differ from those quoted elsewhere. The source is different and the Eurostat data are presented in euro – which means that assumptions around exchange rates come into play



Discussions with the corporates in developing this Strategic Economic Plan have pointed to some important issues regarding TVB's economic future. Among the most consistent and concerning are those relating to people:

- » for many, recruitment is proving very challenging, particularly in relation to staff with an in-depth knowledge of science, technology, engineering and mathematics; in this domain, the challenge of competing internationally was again flagged, particularly given the volume of high quality science graduates emerging from the likes of South Korea, China and India
- » retention of staff can also be extremely difficult, especially in relation to younger workers for whom the appeal of London (in the form of both higher salaries and the buzz and excitement of the metropolis) seems impossible to resist
- » in response, some corporates are turning to international labour markets and whilst the quality of potential recruits is reviewed in positive terms, the frustration of lengthy negotiations over visas and work permits is palpable.

In varying combinations, these three factors are having a material influence on corporates' future plans, and this in turn will impact on our growth potential. For some, the solution will be to focus future growth abroad, particularly in relation to more routine technical functions, representing a straightforward loss to the UK economy. For others, because of the importance of recruiting and retaining bright young people, and exploiting the disruptive technologies that they can develop, the decision is to expand operations in central London (cost implications notwithstanding).

Two other observations are important.

- » First, the links between our corporates and both the population of small and medium sized enterprises *and* the research base in the environs of TVB are "thin". TVB is a good place to be because of its international connectivity. But our wider and dynamic "B2B" networks are under-developed compared to elsewhere.
- » Second, the corporates themselves are changing. The rigidities and formalities of the past are giving way to new patterns and styles of working, enabled by the possibilities of digital connectivity and the desire/pressure to minimise overhead costs, including those linked to property. There is – across the board – an increasing opacity in the boundaries between "home" and "work", and this in turn is challenging locational preferences.

The economic footprint of the corporates in TVB is linked to a post-war pattern of spatial development; it is structured around edge- (or out-) of-town business parks and is typically highly car-dependent. Elsewhere, as boundaries dissolve, the spatial disconnect between business parks and lively urban environments is becoming difficult to reconcile – hence some apparently odd decisions that break all the rules of economics (like Google's recent decision to locate a major new facility near St Pancras Station in central London).



Against this backdrop, the overwhelming risk for TVB flagged by the corporates is – in general – one of “tiredness”: of buildings from, essentially, a bygone era; of a workforce which is, in many cases, ageing; and of a business model that must adapt to survive with challenging implications for TVB (and indeed the UK).

This narrative must not be taken too far. There is no immediate “crisis” and on all the key metrics, our economy continues to function well. Equally, particularly through some major town centre investments, TVB is starting to re-invent itself.

But there are, evidently, risks. Read alongside the interrelated risks associated with our tech-based sector and the changing pressures and imperatives linked to internationalisation, the importance of our Strategic Economic Plan – both for us and for the UK as a whole – is obvious.





OUR CONNECTIVITY

The biggest single risk to the future economic contribution of TVB concerns our transport and communications infrastructure.

WHY OUR CONNECTIVITY MATTERS

The growth of our economy has been – and continues to be – fundamentally shaped by our connectivity:

- » our international links via Heathrow Airport are the principal reason why inward investors choose to locate in TVB and they are a crucial underpinning of ongoing re-investment
- » the importance of our links with London cannot be overstated – particularly through the M4 motorway, the Great Western Mainline and the Reading to Waterloo Mainline
- » within TVB, our economic geography is polycentric with a number of different towns each playing an important role; connections between our towns are therefore critical at a local level
- » our digital connectivity is of paramount importance to our business community writ large: our tech-based businesses depend on it, and more broadly, it is a critical infrastructure for our small business community in our rural and urban areas alike.

However, the transport and communications infrastructure on which we rely is simultaneously a local, national and international resource. It is very congested. This in turn is threatening to undermine our intrinsic growth potential.

NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR CONNECTIVITY...

We are encouraged that this is recognised by government. In particular:

- » We welcome the observation from the Office of the Rail Regulator that £3bn (20% of the national total) will be invested on the Western route between 2014 and 2019. We have made the case consistently for investment in Western Rail Access to Heathrow (WRAtH) and have demonstrated that the short rail link (which needs 4km of new tunnel between Langley and Terminal 5) will deliver economic benefits of over £2 billion and create 42,000 new jobs. This project is one that Network Rail is required to deliver; and it is crucial to TVB's growth ambitions. Also important is the completion of Reading Station; the provision of Crossrail services to Maidenhead (and beyond); and the electrification of the Great Western Mainline beyond Newbury.
- » We welcome planned enhancements to the M4 motorway. These will derive from the Managed Motorway Scheme from London out to Junction 12 (Reading West and Theale). It is disappointing that this is not scheduled to start until after 2015; it must not slip further.



OUR
CONNECTIVITY IS
OUTSTANDING,
BUT OUR ROADS
AND RAILWAYS
ARE CONGESTED,
AND OUR
BUSINESSES
NEED MORE

On a less positive note, current uncertainties in relation to the future of Heathrow Airport are profoundly unhelpful. This is particularly important in relation to our corporates, many of which are constantly weighing up competing global opportunities. Uncertainties around the future of the UK's only hub airport are therefore compromising our ability to secure the investment and re-investment that is so important for the UK as a whole.

Our Strategic Economic Plan is premised on TVB's connectivity. However, good connectivity is not a static assumption but an on-going commitment, and it needs investment. Over decades, we have demonstrated that we can provide a positive return to the UK Exchequer. This is the "growth deal" to which we are committed in delivering our Strategic Economic Plan.





ONE VIEW ON THE FUTURE: BASELINE PROJECTIONS



WE ARE A
FUNDAMENTALLY
STRONG
ECONOMY...



...PATTERNS
OF PROJECTED
FUTURE
GROWTH ARE
REASONABLY
GOOD

ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS

As an input into our Strategic Economic Plan, Cambridge Econometrics (CE) prepared a set of baseline projections for TVB17. As modelled data – rather than a calibrated forecast – these should not be taken too far, but they are useful insofar as they provide one impartial view on economic prospects.

Consistent with much other evidence and analysis, CE's baseline projections are broadly positive. They highlight our underlying strengths: GVA per job (a key measure of productivity) is notably higher in TVB than across the South East and England, as is GVA per capita (an important measure of wealth). This is an important starting point in relation to our future projected economic growth.

Looking ahead, steady growth is projected overall (see Figure 4). However:

- » projected rates of growth – particularly in GVA and productivity – are lower than those enjoyed by TVB historically
- » projected rates of growth in TVB are really quite similar to the average for the South East as a whole.

From the baseline projection it is also useful to consider how prospects vary by sector (whilst recognising that there are any number of "local" factors that might, in practice, change the outcome).

From Figure 5, it is apparent that projected rates of employment and GVA growth vary significantly by sector. Moreover, some sectors which are projected to see relatively rapid rates of GVA growth (e.g. information and communications) have relatively modest projected rates of employment growth (and *vice versa*). Given the tightness of our labour market, this observation is important. At a more granular level, the apparent significance of IT services in relation to future GVA growth (but not so much to employment growth) is also quite striking.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS

Alongside the economic projections, we have also reflected on projections relating to population growth (see Figure 6). Again these are modelled numbers that have not been calibrated locally and they need to be treated with some caution.

Two important observations however need to be drawn from these data.

¹⁷ These were prepared in September 2013 and are consistent with CE's UK Regional Economic Forecasts, June 2013



ALTHOUGH OUR POPULATION IS PROJECTED TO GROW, THE NUMBER OF YOUNGER ADULTS IN TVB IS LIKELY TO GROW SLOWLY – THIS WILL AFFECT OUR BUSINESSES



WE ALREADY STRUGGLE TO RETAIN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE – AND LOOKING AHEAD, LONDON IS SET TO GROW FURTHER

- » First, within Thames Valley Berkshire, within the working age population, the number of younger adults is projected to grow more slowly than the size of the population overall. The implication is that the workforce available to our businesses and other employers will age between 2011 and 2021; this has clear implications in terms of priorities for skills and workforce development
- » Second, rates of population growth across TVB are lower than those projected in London across every age group other than those aged 70 or more. Already, we struggle to retain our young people, and further relative growth in London is projected.

Figure 4: Baseline projections for Thames Valley Berkshire (Source: Cambridge Econometrics)

Annual growth rates (% pa) – historic performance and baseline projection – for **Thames Valley Berkshire** (GVA at constant (2009) prices)

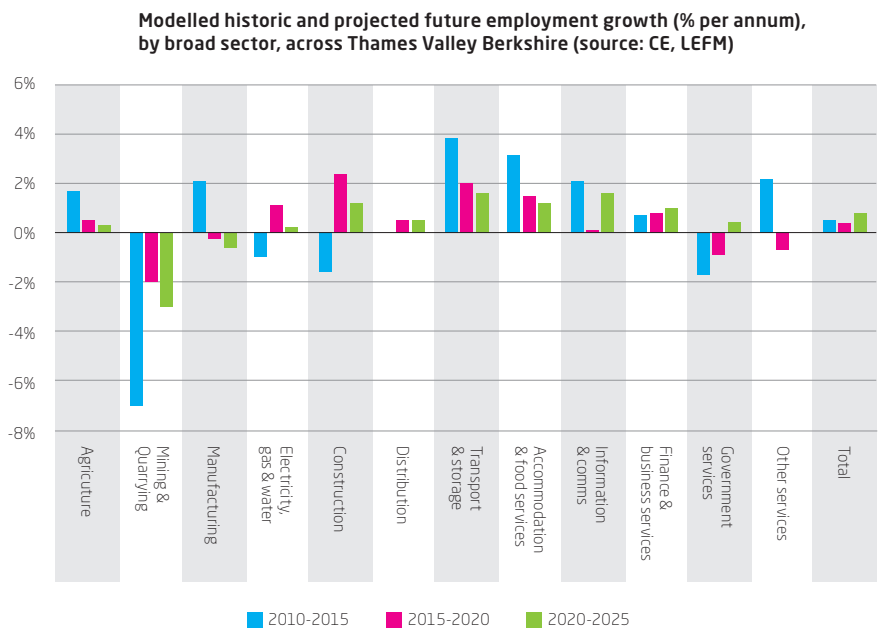
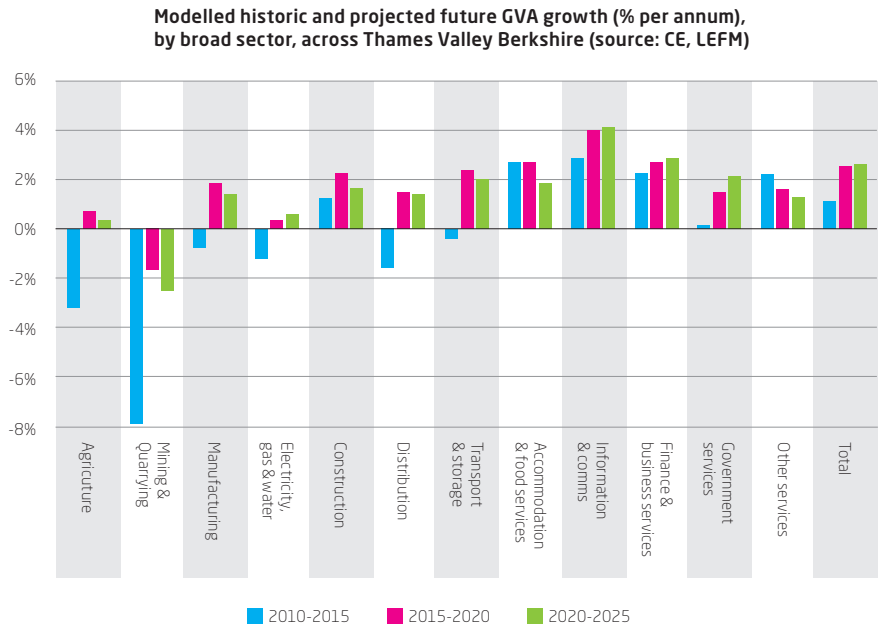
	1995-2000	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2010-2020
GVA	5.1%	3.6%	1.6%	1.1%	2.5%	2.6%	1.8%
Employment	2.3%	-0.1%	0.7%	0.5%	0.4%	0.8%	0.5%
Population	0.6%	0.3%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	0.7%	1.1%
GVA/Population	2.7%	3.7%	0.9%	0.6%	2.1%	1.8%	1.3%
GVA/Employment	4.5%	3.3%	0.5%	0.0%	1.5%	1.9%	0.7%

Annual growth rates (% pa) – historic performance and baseline projection – for the **South East** (GVA at constant (2009) prices)

	1995-2000	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025	2010-2020
GVA	4.4%	3.4%	1.0%	1.3%	2.3%	2.3%	1.8%
Employment	1.6%	0.9%	0.2%	0.5%	0.3%	0.6%	0.4%
Population	0.6%	0.5%	0.8%	1.0%	0.9%	0.7%	1.0%
GVA/Population	2.7%	2.5%	0.9%	0.7%	2.0%	1.7%	1.3%
GVA/Employment	3.8%	2.9%	0.2%	0.2%	1.4%	1.6%	0.8%



Figure 5: Patterns of GVA (in constant (2009) prices) and employment growth on the baseline projection, by broad sector (Source: Cambridge Econometrics)





THE SPATIAL FRAMEWORK FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

Three “givens” underpin the spatial framework for economic growth across TVB:

- » First, as Figure 8 (on page 17) indicates, TVB is highly constrained in development terms. Much of the west of TVB is a protected landscape (North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) while the Metropolitan Green Belt features strongly in the east.
- » Second, TVB is, genuinely, polycentric. A number of different towns play important roles locally, and connectivity between these places is crucial in relation to the functioning of the local economy
- » Third, administrative boundaries – both within and beyond TVB – have little relationship to “how the economy works” currently. In some respects, it is helpful to think of TVB in terms of three functional economic areas: to the west is the predominantly rural area around Newbury; in the centre are the highly interconnected urban areas of Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell; and in the east are Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead with close links both to each other and to adjacent areas in west London (including Heathrow Airport). Within each of these areas, planning for housing and employment growth must occur across administrative boundaries, facilitated by local authorities’ Duty to Co-operate

Five of our six unitary authorities have adopted Core Strategies within their Local Plans. Initially, these will provide the spatial framework for growth over the lifetime of the Strategic Economic Plan.

LOCATIONS FOR GROWTH

Consistent with national planning policy, all of the adopted Core Strategies focus plans for physical regeneration and growth in, or close to, the principal urban settlements:

- » provision is made for a number of ambitious, mixed use, town centre regeneration schemes, some of which are substantially underway; examples include those for Bracknell, the Heart of Slough and Wokingham
- » sites are identified for both housing and employment growth on the edge of the larger settlements (e.g. sites to the north of Bracknell and urban extensions to the east and south of Newbury).
- » provision is made for housing development at a number of other locations; in particular, the Core Strategy for Wokingham identifies four Strategic Development Locations each of which includes provision for between 1,500 and 3,500 new dwellings.



OUR ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY IS DEFINED AROUND A NETWORK OF TOWNS – AND CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN THEM IS CRUCIAL



WE NEED TO PLAN FOR ECONOMIC AND HOUSING GROWTH ACROSS LOCAL AUTHORITY BOUNDARIES



OUR ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY IS DEFINED AROUND A NETWORK OF TOWNS – AND CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN THEM IS CRUCIAL



WE MUST DELIVER THE HOUSING FOR WHICH WE HAVE ALREADY MADE PROVISION

Table 1 shows agreed housing targets (which in the main have been rolled forward from the (now revoked) South East Plan). It also shows progress in achieving them. Over recent years, the rate of housing delivery has been ahead of target in parts of TVB, notably Reading and Slough.

Table 1: Planned housing provision and achieved housing delivery

Unitary Authority area	Date of Adoption of Local Plan Core Strategy	Total planned housing provision 2006-2026	Total number of dwellings delivered 2006-2012	Achieved annual housing delivery 2006-2012	Target annual housing delivery 2006-2012
Bracknell Forest	2008	11,139	2,118	353	557
Reading	2008	10,420	3,582	597	521
Slough	2008	6,300	2,623	437	315
West Berkshire	2012	10,500	2,882	480	525
Windsor and Maidenhead**	Est 2015	7,515	1,999	333	333
Wokingham	2010	13,230	2,593	432	600
Thames Valley Berkshire		59,104	15,797	2,632	2,851

Source: Review of Local Plan Core Strategies and AMRs

**Note that the numbers supplied by RBWM are provisional and not for circulation outside the LEP until they are confirmed at a Cabinet Meeting on 12 December. Any changes will be incorporated into the published version of the SEP

Over the five years of the Strategic Economic Plan, our immediate priority must be to deliver planned provision, noting that this includes some major (and complex) schemes which require up-front investment in infrastructure.

The forecasts created for the now-revoked South East Plan (which are largely reflected in the adopted Local Plans) are, however, fast becoming out of date. Government guidance is that plans, particularly housing requirements, should be based on up-to-date population projections provided by the Department of Communities and Local Government. These projections may have to be adjusted where there is evidence that housing affordability is significantly worse than in adjoining areas (defined in relation to Local Plans); this is a particular concern in TVB.

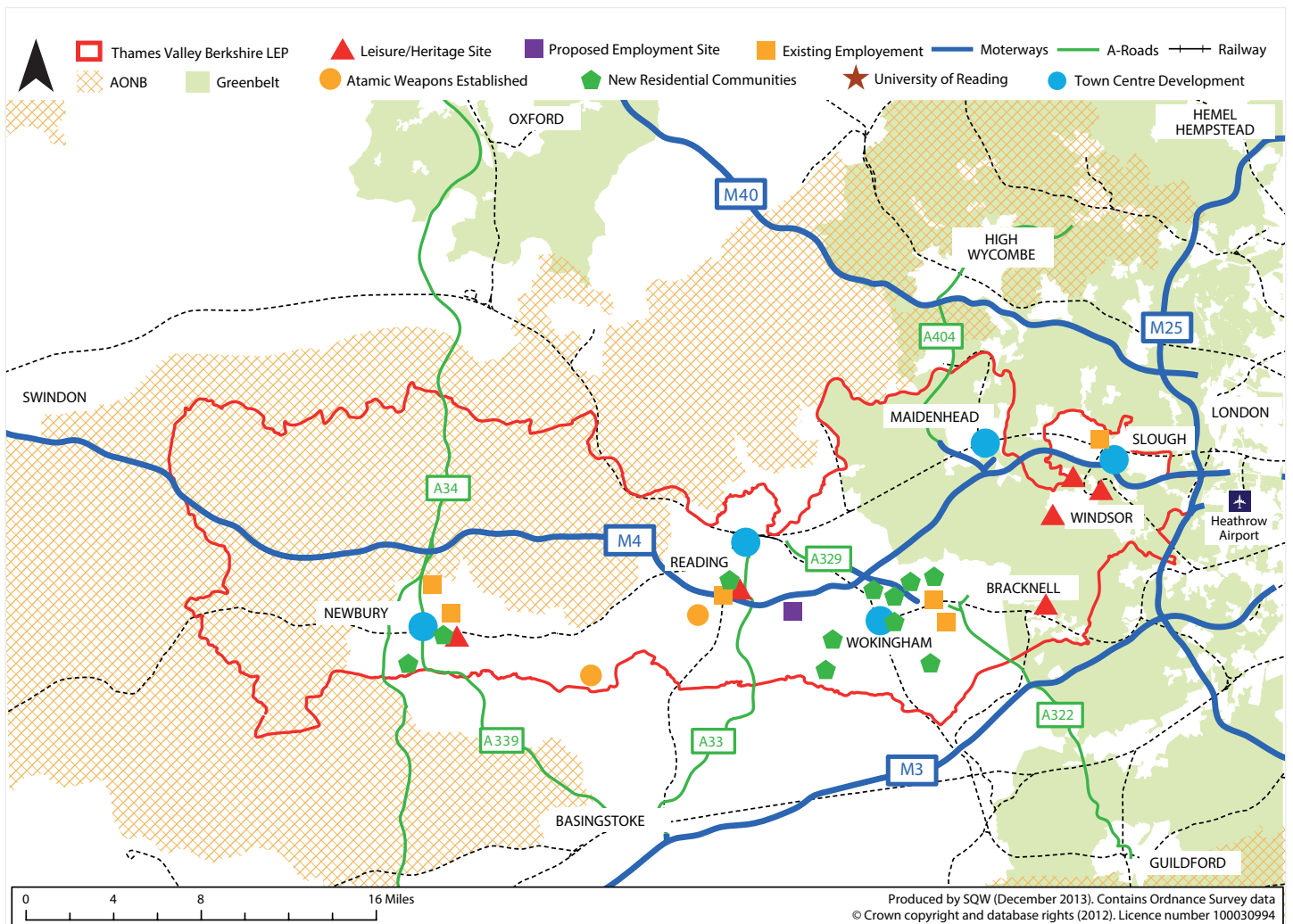


IN THE FUTURE, WE WILL NEED TO CONSIDER WHETHER PLANNED HOUSING PROVISION IS SUFFICIENT

There is an established statutory planning process for local authorities to review their housing targets. Most of our local authorities have already committed to a joint Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment. This is an essential precursor to any revision of planned housing targets.

Looking ahead, it is crucial that housing availability and affordability do not become serious constraints on the future growth of our economy. We are therefore keen to ensure that a review of housing targets is carried out expeditiously, reflecting the ambitions set out in our Strategic Economic Plan, and that any necessary changes are implemented as soon as practicable and with the active co-operation of all those involved.

Figure 8: Spatial Framework for growth across Thames Valley Berkshire





OUR VISION AND OVERARCHING PRIORITY



OUR BUSINESSES ARE STRUGGLING TO RECRUIT



WE NEED, CONSTANTLY, TO REPLENISH OUR PIPELINE OF WORLD CLASS BUSINESSES



WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT MORE OF OUR JOBS ARE BETTER JOBS, PARTICULARLY FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

Our Vision:

By 2021, the vibrancy of our business community will be internationally envied. The ambition and creativity of our established businesses will be energised through strong, knowledge-rich, networks. Our workforce will be the lifeblood of our economy: young people will be inspired and older workers valued. Our infrastructure will match the scale of our ambition and potential. And people will choose Thames Valley Berkshire as the place to live and work

In striving towards our Vision, there are three challenges that we must resolve:

- » Within TVB, there are **world class businesses** (large and small), but many of these – particularly those in tech-based sectors – are **struggling to recruit and retain the staff that they need**. Businesses struggle to grow their workforce for two reasons: national skills shortages (particularly in relation to science, technology, engineering and mathematics), and the ability of TVB to “hold onto” those individuals that do have the requisite skills
- » Looking ahead, TVB’s population of world class businesses must be reinvented constantly, recognising the strength of global competition. Whilst TVB has a high incidence of employment in tech-based businesses, relatively few of these firms focus their R&D in the area. Hence there are **concerns about the pipeline of “next generation” tech-based businesses from within TVB**. Linked to this, the “soft networks” that help mitigate the risks linked to intrinsically “high risk” activities (e.g. starting new tech-based businesses) are underdeveloped locally, and again, this limits the pipeline. These “soft networks” have a strong spatial dimension and they are often linked to particular places (although they also have global components too)
- » TVB is a dynamic economy and employment rates are generally high, but many jobs have limited prospects and – in the context of high living (and particularly housing) costs – “in-work poverty” is an increasing concern. Some young people struggle to enter the workforce. However, many others walk into jobs at the age of 17 but are no



further forward at 27 or 37 and by then, their options are much reduced. Meanwhile, the paradox is that businesses are struggling to recruit and retain the workforce they need.

In response to these challenges, we have identified one overarching priority. This defines the basis for our Strategic Economic Plan:

Our overarching priority is to secure better access to talented people and bright ideas, and to use both more effectively





OUR OBJECTIVES

In securing better access to talented people and bright ideas, and using both more effectively, we have identified six key objectives. The first three relate to “people” and the remainder focus strongly on “ideas”. It is in response to these objectives that we will focus future investment linked to transport/communications, skills, housing, enterprise and innovation, and other infrastructure.

PEOPLE

1: Use better those who are already in the workforce

Although there are localised challenges – particularly in Reading and Slough – in general, employment and activity rates within TVB are already high. This means that over the period of the Strategic Economic Plan, our existing workforce has a pivotal role to play in achieving our overall Vision.

We need to equip our already-employed people to play this role as well as possible, recognising that learning and training must occur throughout an individual’s working life: in an internationally connected economy, there is an ongoing need for better skills. We also need to recognise the value of older workers; demographic projections suggest that these will comprise an increasing proportion of the working population and many more will be willing and able to work for longer than in previous generations.

In up-skilling the existing workforce, account must be taken of the skills that businesses are seeking, now and in the future. They should also provide some basis for progression, creating a route out of the “in work poverty” which affects many people, given the very high living (and especially housing) costs within TVB.

2: Inspire the next generation and build aspirations and ambition

We must focus on the next generation, particularly the young people who will enter the labour market over the next decade. We need to encourage a new generation of entrepreneurs and business leaders, and we need to explain far better the opportunities that exist within TVB.

In order to retain them, we need to recognise and understand the specific aspirations of young people – particularly in relation to the types of environment in which they want to live and work. We need to respond more fully to these aspirations, acknowledging that as both a place and an internationally connected economy, TVB itself needs to evolve.

3: Ensure that economic potential is not restricted by labour supply issues

If our ambitions for economic growth are not to be stifled, we must grow our overall labour supply.



Where particular skills are in very short supply, businesses need to be able to find solutions, recognising that this might sometimes require international migration. Many of our businesses are internationally mobile, and we need to ensure that they can find the people they need.

In relation to labour supply, it is imperative that we deliver our planned housing provision. Working with the local planning authorities – and over the longer term – we will also need to ensure that the scale of planned housing growth is sufficient, and the mix appropriate, given the area’s substantial economic potential and the body of evidence suggesting both labour/skills shortages and housing market stress.

IDEAS

4: Ensure that knowledge is effectively commercialised and grown within Thames Valley Berkshire

We need to take steps to ensure that growing numbers of businesses in TVB are operating at – or close to – the source of the “knowledge supply chain”.

There are substantial knowledge-based resources in – or physically close to – TVB and we must use these more effectively and creatively. Our intention is to build knowledge content both as a basis for creating new businesses and as a means of embedding existing ones more firmly within TVB.

In pursuing this aspiration, we want to encourage disruptive technologies, recognising that these are likely to play creative havoc with existing sectoral specialisms. In the future, boundaries need to dissolve within and between the business and research communities. In anticipation, TVB must put in place the hard and soft infrastructures needed to encourage this process.

5: Strengthen networks and invest in the “soft wiring” to use ideas better

Our polycentric settlement structure means that economic life does not gravitate towards one urban centre and it is, instead, dispersed. This in turn means that networks are disparate: many are in any case global, but within TVB itself there is a lack of critical mass despite the strength, size and diversity of our business community, and across corporates and small and medium sized enterprises alike.

Through our Strategic Economic Plan, we need to build and strengthen these networks across our rural areas as well as our towns so that “the whole” can genuinely exceed the sum of its component parts.



WE NEED TO
MAKE SURE
THAT MORE OF
OUR JOBS ARE
BETTER JOBS,
PARTICULARLY
FOR OUR YOUNG
PEOPLE



6: Make Thames Valley Berkshire's towns genuine hubs in the ideas economy

Finally, it is essential that Reading, Slough, Wokingham, Newbury, Thatcham, Bracknell, Maidenhead and Windsor all function well as towns. They need to have clear and distinctive roles that allow them to complement – rather than compete with – each other. This can be achieved through collaboration. In all cases, they need also to be vibrant centres.

In addition, their out- (or edge-) of town business parks – and the new urban extensions that many are proposing – need to be part of the mix, both functionally and emotionally.

Our towns should be places where ideas can flourish and where these ideas can, in time, lead to a new generation of businesses which will drive the economy of Thames Valley Berkshire forward.





THAMES VALLEY BERKSHIRE STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN: IN SUMMARY

Our vision:

By 2021, the vibrancy of our business community will be internationally envied. The ambition and creativity of our established businesses will be energised through strong, knowledge-rich, networks. Our workforce will be the lifeblood of our economy: young people will be inspired and older workers valued. Our infrastructure will match the scale of our ambition and potential. And people will choose Thames Valley Berkshire as the place to live and work.

Our **overarching priority** is to **secure better access to talented people and bright ideas, and to use both more effectively**

PEOPLE

1. Use better those who are already in the workforce
2. Inspire the next generation and build aspirations and ambition
3. Ensure that economic potential is not restricted by labour supply

IDEAS

4. Ensure that knowledge is effectively commercialised and grown within Thames Valley Berkshire
5. Strengthen networks and invest in the "soft wiring" to use ideas better
6. Make Thames Valley Berkshire's towns genuine hubs in the ideas economy



High level Programmes within our Implementation Plan

A: Promotion and international positioning of TVB

B: Enterprise, innovation and business growth

C: Skills, education and employment

D: Infrastructure – transport, communications and place-shaping



IMPLEMENTING OUR STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN

The process of implementation will rely on four main mechanisms (“the how”), each of which will play an important and distinctive role. Substantively, it will focus on four high level programmes (“the what”).

Our expectation is that the **Local Growth Deal** we negotiate with government will reflect these different elements: four high level programmes and four critical implementation mechanisms.

MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION (“THE HOW”)

Securing private sector investment

Fundamentally, our Vision is premised on continued investment in Thames Valley Berkshire by the business community – both small and medium sized enterprises and the corporate sector. We are fortunate in having an outstanding track record in these terms. We have a long history of successful inward investment and we will continue to promote TVB internationally to encourage investment – and, crucially, re-investment – of this nature. We recognise that to be successful, our “offer” must be globally competitive; and we believe that through the implementation of our Strategic Economic Plan, the case for TVB is compelling.

Within TVB, we also benefit from a vibrant private sector-led development process. Some of our major physical projects of recent years – for example, the redevelopment of Newbury and Bracknell town centres – have had little public subsidy. This is not to suggest that they couldn’t be accelerated with public sector support; but it is to convey that private sector developers are fundamentally interested in Thames Valley Berkshire. In this context, the judicious use of modest public sector funds should unlock a very strong investment process which in turn will be the catalyst for rapid economic growth.

Influencing central government mechanisms and levers

In implementing our Strategic Economic Plan, we will forge an equally strong working relationship with central government. This will include a number of different strands.

- » First, major uncertainties in government policy will need to be resolved quickly. We have flagged already to government that the biggest issue is Heathrow Airport¹⁸.



BUSINESS
INVESTMENT IS
CRUCIAL FOR TVB



WE WILL WORK
WITH CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT
TO DELIVER OUR
STRATEGY

¹⁸ In this context, we co-sponsored an assessment of the impact of Heathrow Airport which has been submitted as evidence to the Davies Commission



Future investment by many firms in TVB is dependent on a positive decision about Heathrow expansion, but for many more, it is critical to get clarity about the airport's future, rather than further debate.

- » Second, it will be important that central government follows through on the commitments it has already made – including, for example, in relation to Western Rail Access to Heathrow and improvements to the M4 motorway.
- » Third, it will be crucial that centrally determined spending decisions are cognisant of local ambition and potential, as set out in our Strategic Economic Plan, and the scale of return on investment to the UK Exchequer. Currently, patterns of alignment are some way adrift. It is telling, for example, that between 2007/08 and 2011/12, central government spending on science and technology increased from £48 to £50 per capita in the South East (+4%) while in London it rose from £55 to £62 (+13%)¹⁹.
- » Fourth, we will work with central government to ensure that the fiscal and regulatory environment is aligned with the ambitions set out in our Strategic Economic Plan. Within the South East, higher rate income tax payers comprise over 15% of the total²⁰, and tax breaks – aimed for example to incentivise investment in new technology-based enterprises – could have a major impact. Equally, in terms of the regulatory environment, a more flexible and streamlined approach to visas and work permits could have a significant bearing on growth prospects, particularly in relation to the corporates.

Issues of this nature cannot be fixed within TVB, yet they will have a disproportionate influence on our ability to deliver our Strategic Economic Plan and achieve our Vision. A strong working relationship with central government will be necessary in order to make progress.

Using local resources better

In delivering our Strategic Economic Plan, we will flex the resources that exist across the wider Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

Local Authorities

These resources include, but are not limited to, those that are controlled by our six Unitary Authorities. Although small by national standards, individually, they have already sought to maximise the use of their assets to deliver growth, especially in town centres. They can already provide examples of innovative Local Asset Backed Vehicles, public/private joint ventures and the use of prudential borrowing to forward fund infrastructure to unlock housing delivery.

Collectively they have a history of collaboration in forward planning through the joint preparation of Strategic Housing Market Area Assessments, and through the work of the Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum and the Berkshire Leaders' Group.

¹⁹ Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses, 2013 – Table 9.8. Note that data are not publically available at more granular spatial scales

²⁰ See <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/statistics/tax-statistics/table2-2.pdf>



WE WILL USE OUR
OWN RESOURCES
BETTER



They also have a track record of collaboration in delivery. For example, Slough Borough Council is leading in delivering Western Rail Access to Heathrow on behalf of all six TVB authorities. Three authorities joined together in relation to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund while our proposals for the Local Growth Fund include several cross-boundary projects.

There is a general recognition that more collaboration and joint working will be essential in future to reduce costs, maximise efficiency and to create a critical mass to enable financial investment in the future of TVB.

Other partners

Other key members of Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership have also indicated their commitment to using their own resources better in seeking to support the delivery of our Strategic Economic Plan.

The response of the University of Reading is especially important in this regard. The University owns substantial land suitable for development, and it therefore has a substantial influence over the amount of housing and commercial space that can be delivered. It is committed to an orderly process of bringing this land forward for development over the next 10 years.

Bidding for - and using - grant/loan-based funding

The final element of our approach to the implementation of our Strategic Economic Plan concerns the use of grant/loan-based funding over which TVB LEP has more direct influence and control. This includes the EU Structural and Investment Funds; Growing Places Fund; and future rounds of Regional Growth Fund. It also includes our bid for resources from the Local Growth Fund. In relation to all of these different funding pots, our intention is that:

- » we will not “chase money” unless it is capable of being used in a catalytic way to deliver our Strategic Economic Plan
- » all the resources we have secured to date – and those which we will bid for in the future – will be channelled to the Strategic Economic Plan’s delivery. This includes, most immediately, our bid to government for resources from the Local Growth Fund.

PROGRAMME PRIORITIES (“THE WHAT”)

In order to deliver our Strategic Economic Plan, we have defined four high level investment programmes:

- » Programme A: Promotion and international positioning of TVB
- » Programme B: Enterprise, innovation and business growth
- » Programme C: Skills, education and employment
- » Programme D: Infrastructure – transport, communications and place-shaping.



WE WILL NOT
'CHASE FUNDING'



WE HAVE
DEVELOPED
FOUR HIGH LEVEL
INVESTMENT
PROGRAMMES



Each investment programme includes between one and six packages. Some packages are relatively simple and are built up around time-limited “projects”. Others are longer term ventures in which all four of the implementation mechanisms outlined above are implicated.

The **Local Growth Deal** we negotiate with government will reflect these different elements: four high level programmes and four implementation mechanisms.

Our four programmes – and the principal packages within them – are outlined in the sections that follow. Project level (and other) detail is provided in a separate Implementation Plan.





PROGRAMME A: PROMOTION AND INTERNATIONAL POSITIONING OF THAMES VALLEY BERKSHIRE

Delivering our Vision:

The vibrancy of our business community will be internationally envied...



WE MUST
CONTINUE
TO ATTRACT
INVESTMENT
AND
REINVESTMENT...

PACKAGE A-I: PROMOTING TVB AS A BUSINESS HUB AND COMMUNICATING THAT IT IS OPEN FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

It is crucial to the future growth of the TVB economy that the area continues to attract new investment, and re-investment, by internationally mobile businesses, and that local businesses trade internationally. Our research indicates that TVB is competitive internationally as well as nationally, and has been successful in attracting investment from new as well as traditional sources. But we must maintain that competitiveness through investment in people, ideas, places and communications.

TVB LEP needs to work closely with others, particularly UKTI, to attract new international investment and to encourage existing firms to develop export markets further. This will include: undertaking and publishing research into TVB's strengths compared to its main competitors elsewhere in Europe; joining overseas missions where appropriate to raise the profile of TVB and support development of B2B relationships; and working with the University of Reading to exploit the business and investment potential of the University's international alumni network, and to make links between foreign students at the University (including its overseas campuses) and firms in TVB.

Table 2: FDI successes, 2012/13

	Total FDI successes	Total new jobs	Total safe jobs
TV Berkshire LEP	56	1,523	942
Rank among 38 LEPs (excluding London)	1	4	12

Source: UKTI National Inward Investment Pipeline



...AND WE MUST ENSURE THAT TVB CONTINUES TO BE A GREAT PLACE IN WHICH TO LIVE AND WORK

Through our Strategic Economic Plan, we will encourage foreign businesses already in the area to reinvest and grow in TVB. This will require regular surveys of, and seminars for, these businesses. We will use these to familiarise the businesses with new initiatives and opportunities in TVB, and to deepen our understanding of the factors which will be crucial to future investment decisions, and how to influence them.

In addition – within the wider visitor economy²¹ – we will actively encourage international business tourism, recognising that this has both direct and indirect economic impacts²².

Other programme areas will all contribute to achieving the conditions necessary to support new investment and re-investment. For example, the incubator space already available in TVB is used by new inward investors as a 'landing pad', from which they can expand, as well as by new local firms. Potentially, it is also available to spin-outs emerging from nearby research-based institutions. The availability of serviced office space at short notice and on fully flexible terms and with related support to access networks is important to enable new investors to settle and take root in the area quickly.

More generally, it will be important that TVB continues to be a place in which people want to live and work. This means that our communities must flourish, our schools must perform well and the quality of our natural environment must be sustained.

Outcomes: An increase of 50% in the number of FDI successes and of new jobs over 2012/13 (based on UKTI data – see opposite); at least two substantial successes in persuading foreign owned corporates in TVB to reinvest locally rather than overseas; significant growth in TVB (and elsewhere in UK) of recent inward investors.

²¹ A recent report suggested that, driven by international visitors, the gross domestic product associated with tourism is set to grow at 3.8% per annum to 2025 (see *Tourism: Jobs and Growth – the economic contribution of the tourism economy in the UK*. Report commissioned by VisitBritain and completed by Deloitte and Oxford Economics, November 2013)

²² Data published by VisitEngland suggest that business visitors spend an average of £178 per day, over 50% more than the average spent by leisure visitor. However, since 2006, the volume and value of business tourism in has fallen by more than 25% for inbound overseas business trips and 6% for UK business trips



PROGRAMME B: ENTERPRISE, INNOVATION AND BUSINESS GROWTH

Delivering our Vision:

The ambition and creativity of our established businesses will be energised through strong, knowledge-rich, networks...



WE HAVE NEVER
HAD A SCIENCE
PARK...

PACKAGE B-I: SCIENCE PARKS IN TVB

TVB has never had a science park – a surprising omission given the exceptional concentration of tech businesses in the area. This gap will be filled by 2016, when the first phase of the University of Reading Science Park will be well underway, and proposals at the Atomic Weapons Establishment will have crystallised.

University of Reading Science Park

University of Reading Science Park





The University has two existing incubator facilities on the Whiteknights campus, providing a total of 8,000 sqm of fully occupied space. It has secured planning permission for 20,000 sqm of R&D space on its own land at Shinfield, as the first phase of an 80,000 sqm science park development. A new bridge across the M4, to provide access for the Science Park, will be funded by adjacent housing development in the South of M4 Strategic Development Location.

The University of Reading Science Park will provide a mix of offices and laboratories for corporate R&D and early stage businesses, combined with specialist services and networks into the University and more widely. Commercialisation of technologies generated in and around TVB (at the University, Harwell, Oxford, Imperial College, etc.), for example relating to satellite imaging and climate change, will complement research, design and development in TVB's more traditional technology areas of ICT, biotech, etc.

Longer term potential linked to AWE

AWE has two sites in the TVB area, at Aldermaston and Burghfield. These AWE facilities offer a world class science capability, an award winning Apprentice Academy and strong links to seven of the UK's leading universities. The current programme of estate consolidation within the AWE sites in West Berkshire could make available surplus land to the MoD, government or other similar institutions or organisations, in order to further these achievements. Potentially this could involve the development of a science park facility.

Outcomes: completion of the first two phases of the University of Reading Science Park, providing approximately 4,000 sqm of new business space within the timeframe of this strategy, accommodating 300–400 new jobs in R&D, and the commercialisation of significant new technologies developed within and close to TVB. Firm plans and timescale for AWE Aldermaston Science Park.

PACKAGE B-II: INVESTING IN INCUBATOR AND CO-WORKING SPACE

To complement the science park developments, an interconnected network of business incubators and co-working space will be established, extending across and beyond TVB, to support the formation and growth of innovative start-ups developing and applying disruptive technologies.

The co-working space (i.e. open plan area with a mix of semi-partitioned spaces, and business and social spaces that encourage interaction) will be modelled on ICT incubators in central London supported by the likes of Google, Cisco and Telefonica. The more traditional incubation space will be modelled on existing successful incubators in TVB, such as those run by the University of Reading and Oxford Innovation.

The provision of co-working space will be complemented by mentoring and start-up funding, which would cover the first 6–12 months of entrepreneurs' premises and living costs. After that they can move into the incubation space on a commercial basis, or move on.



WE WANT TO
ENCOURAGE
DISRUPTIVE
TECHNOLOGIES IN
THAMES VALLEY
BERKSHIRE



The traditional incubator can be operated commercially. The co-working space, together with the business and financial support, will require sponsorship by one or more major corporates which are based in TVB and have a vested interest in promoting the local formation and growth of innovative new businesses.

Outcomes: Four incubators providing 10,000 sqm of incubation space within the next five years, accommodating 1,000 entrepreneurs and generating around 100 new businesses per year. Engagement of four corporates to sponsor the co-working space alongside commercial operation of the incubators.

PACKAGE B-III: IMPROVING ACCESS TO EARLY STAGE FUNDING

TVB LEP has already committed £7.3m of its Growing Places Fund to create a Funding Escalator across three loan schemes managed by the FSE Group: a commercialisation loan scheme providing up to £50k for early stage SMEs; an expansion loan scheme providing up to £200k for established SMEs to invest in growth; and the Growth Loan scheme providing up to £150k with some equity rights. The scheme has been live since 1 February 2013. To date, £1.8m of approved loans have been awarded to 13 small and medium-sized enterprises.

There is also a business angels network in the Thames Valley, run by Oxford Innovation (Thames Valley Investment Network – TVIN), and the area is close to the source of the vast majority of venture capital in the UK, London.

However the challenges of accessing funding remain, particularly (although not exclusively) for early stage businesses. Three initiatives are proposed:

- » design of a proof of concept fund, to support very early stage product/service development – to bridge the gap between business propositions emerging from research and the formation of a company to commercialise the proposals (which potentially could access the commercialisation loan scheme)
- » revitalise TVIN to increase deal flow and secure additional investment funding
- » explore the feasibility of establishing a Regional Bank with the intention of defining a clearer “reinvestment cycle” within TVB. If it is feasible, an entity of this nature should also make a material contribution to the development of business networks (as described under Project B-iv)

Outcomes: establishment and operation of a proof of concept fund; a revitalised TVIN with greatly increased deal flow – 10–15 deals per year worth £2m; and an assessment of the feasibility of forming a Regional Bank.



OUR
BUSINESSES
STRUGGLE TO
SECURE THE
FINANCE THEY
NEED TO GROW



WE NEED TO
DEVELOP OUR
NETWORKS
SO THAT OUR
BUSINESSES
GROW
STRONGER
ROOTS IN
THAMES VALLEY
BERKSHIRE

PACKAGE B-IV: PROVIDING BETTER SUPPORT TO BUSINESSES, AND BUILDING VIBRANT BUSINESS NETWORKS

Strong business networks are an important part of a successful local economy. They greatly improve the flow of information between firms, encourage innovation and reduce risk. Well networked places typically have a plethora of formal and informal, long term and ephemeral, physical and virtual networks, formed for a wide variety of purposes. Typically network structures are 'messy', with multiple access points, new networks emerging and old ones dying.

TVB already has a variety of networks, ranging from well-established local chambers to the social gathering of financial and business service professionals in and around Reading's Forbury Square. If these networks could be deepened and extended, the local economy would function in a more integrated way and firms – particularly the large corporates – would 'grow stronger roots'.

Three things are needed: better meeting places (one business said of one of the TVB town centres – 'no bars, no restaurants, no buzz'); amateurs within key sectors whose (part time) job it is to stimulate the formation and deepening of networks; and on-going commitment from lead firms to make the networks work.

More generally, there is a need to improve the support – formal and informal – that is available to businesses in TVB with the aspiration and potential to grow (including through the development of export markets). To this end, TVB LEP has already secured funding for a Growth Hub and the delivery of this project will be a core element of this Package.

Outcomes: a 50% increase in the number of active business networks across TVB, 50% increase in membership of existing networks, 100% increase in events stimulated by networks, more town centre places in active use by TVB's professional communities for informal social gatherings.



PROGRAMME C: SKILLS, EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Delivering our Vision:

**Our workforce will be the lifeblood of our economy:
young people will be inspired and older workers
valued...**



BUSINESSES ARE
TELLING US THAT
THEY NEED TO BE
ABLE TO RECRUIT
MORE QUALIFIED
SCIENTISTS AND
ENGINEERS



OUR BUSINESSES
ALSO NEED
TO BE ABLE
TO TAP INTO
INTERNATIONAL
LABOUR
MARKETS

PACKAGE C-I: INCREASING SIGNIFICANTLY THE SUPPLY OF PEOPLE WITH STEM EXPERTISE

Among the businesses that contributed directly to the development of this Strategic Economic Plan, the availability of potential recruits with expertise in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) featured among the most frequently aired concerns. For some, the issues are acute: the challenge of both recruitment and retention is such that some businesses are opting to channel future growth to international locations which in turn means that growth is foregone for both TVB and the UK.

The shortage of STEM-related skills is not unique to TVB. Central government has developed a range of strategic responses and the voluntary/charitable sector is also very active; Gatsby, for example, has funded the formation of STEMNET, which creates opportunities to inspire young people in STEM via its 24,000+ STEM Ambassadors, the STEM Clubs network, and projects including brokering enhancement and enrichment activities between schools and business. It will be important that ventures of this type are actively encouraged and promoted within TVB.

Locally, there are examples of businesses within TVB taking a lead directly. Telefonica's Talentum programme recruits interns, graduates and apprentices to work across the company, and many of these young people are based in TVB. In addition, Cisco, Microsoft, PBA and Network Rail are co-sponsoring the Reading University Technical College with a particular focus on computer science and engineering. Our intention is to build on this good practice and publicise and disseminate the lessons that can be learned from it.

However, the supply side deficit is acute. A good number of businesses within TVB are therefore seeking to tap into international labour markets and yet many are thwarted by



WE NEED TO WORK WITH GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE THE RULES AROUND THE FUNDING OF APPRENTICESHIPS



EMPLOYERS' EXPECTATIONS ARE NOT ALWAYS MET WHEN THEY RECRUIT YOUNG PEOPLE

the challenges of visas and work permits. Looking ahead, we want to work with government – and its relevant national agencies – to streamline this process and help ensure that businesses in TVB can find the skilled people that they need.

Outcomes: increase in the number of STEM-skilled people available to work in TVB; reduced numbers of businesses frustrated by the challenges of recruiting and retaining staff with STEM-related specialisms.

PACKAGE C-II: INTRODUCING HIGHER APPRENTICESHIPS FOR “OLDER YOUNG PEOPLE”

Higher Apprenticeships (HAs) could in principle be a key route to up-skilling the workforce across TVB. In the six Unitary Authority areas within TVB, over 300 people have embarked on HAs, with dominant subjects including accounting, care leadership and management, management, and IT web and telecoms (all offering up to Level 4 and some Level 5 qualifications – i.e. certificates of HE/foundation degree, higher diplomas).

However the structure of funding linked to apprenticeships is problematic. Only young people aged 16–18 are eligible for fully funded apprenticeships. Those aged 19–23 need 50% of the funding to be matched by firms, while young people aged 24+ need to be funded through a combination of private sector and individual loan funds. It is this latter group that really lends itself to HAs, but the lack of public funding constrains provision.

We will work with government – and the relevant agencies – to try and effect a change in the rules. Beyond this, we will attempt to develop local responses to the funding gap that exists currently around HAs. Our belief is that these could potentially contribute much to the prospects of “older young people” who might have found employment relatively easily at the age of 17 but a decade later discover they are “stuck” with few formal training opportunities and limited prospects for progression.

Outcomes: increase in the number of Higher Apprentices from among the resident population of TVB that provide the skills and competencies that are in demand by employers.

PACKAGE C-III: BUILDING MUCH BETTER LINKS BETWEEN BUSINESS AND EDUCATION (SCHOOL, FE, HE) TO INFORM AND MOTIVATE

In 2011, the Berkshire Education Business Partnership Organisation (BEBPO) completed a study to assess the work readiness of young entrants to the labour market. This included a survey of 182 employers (including large corporates, SMEs, public sector employers, and a small number of third sector organisations) that either had recent experience of taking on school-age students from work placement schemes, or had expressed an interest in the subject of young people in the workplace. The survey found a substantial gap between employers' expectations of young people and their actual experience of employing them with the greatest mismatch appearing across core literacy and numeracy skills. The study concluded that there is an acute need for continued and improved dialogue and understanding between schools and employers, with significant efforts demanded from both to improve the readiness for work of students.



WE WANT OUR
YOUNG PEOPLE
TO MAKE GOOD
CHOICES



WE NEED TO
INVEST IN THE
SKILLS OF OUR
OLDER WORKERS

Within this overall context, this Package will include a range of measures to improve the links between the business community and the education sector in TVB (defined to include FE Colleges and the area's higher education institutions, as well as schools). The aim will be to raise the aspirations of pupils/students (and their families), and to ensure that the education sector equips young people better for work while businesses are more articulate – and engaged – in expressing their requirements in relation to young people entering the workforce.

Digital Learning Centres will play a role. It will also be essential that vital investment is made in the education estate. More generally, our intention is to effect far greater co-ordination across the skills landscape and to find ways of greatly improving the careers advice and guidance provided to young people as they enter the workforce. Specifically, building on our City Deal, we want to equip young people to be genuinely “informed customers” and to be more aware of the wide range of opportunities that are potentially available to them across TVB.

Outcomes: improved employer satisfaction in relation to the quality of their younger workforce; improved satisfaction amongst young people as to the opportunities available to them; reduced levels of unemployment amongst 18–24 year olds and a reduced incidence of 16 and 17 year olds not in employment, education or learning.

PACKAGE C-IV: RAISING THE SKILLS OF RESIDENTS

As one of the UK's major centres for business, TVB supports a diverse workforce and provides a wide range of employment opportunities. However, some residents across TVB struggle to compete in TVB's labour market, and find themselves under- or unemployed, or working outside of TVB in low skilled employment. It is apparent that too much employment in TVB brings with it limited career progression and the training opportunities that are needed to permanently move people away from “*low-pay – no-pay*” cycles. Further – and informed by the population projections presented on page 14 above – it is clear that TVB must invest in its existing workforce, particularly by refreshing the skills of older workers.

We need to work with businesses in this context and there is a key role also to be played by organisations from the voluntary and community sectors. In supporting the implementation of our City Deal, steps will be taken to (i) ensure that TVB residents are given the opportunity and preparatory support to compete for TVB vacancies, (ii) demonstrate to employers the value of having a strong local workforce, and (iii) engage with businesses to support investment in, and evidence the bottom-line impacts of, workforce development and career progression. The intention is that this package should benefit workers of all ages, recognising that there is a particular imperative linked to older workers who will form an increasing part of the workforce in the years ahead.

Outcomes: increase in the number of people who are retrained and able to command higher wages; and an increase in the propensity of TVB businesses to employ local people.



PROGRAMME D: INFRASTRUCTURE – TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATIONS AND PLACE-SHAPING

Delivering our Vision:

Our infrastructure will match the scale of our ambition and potential. And people will choose Thames Valley Berkshire as the place to live and work...

PACKAGE D-I: ENHANCING THE STRATEGIC TRANSPORT NETWORK

Rail

The government, through DfT and Network Rail, is committed to major investments in the Western Route; as explained on page 12, they amount to 20% of the UK's national investment programme for Control Period 5 (£3bn) including electrification, new trains, Crossrail, Reading Station, and Western Rail Access to Heathrow (WRAtH). These investments are of major importance to sustaining and improving the local, national and international connectivity of TVB, and we value very highly our continued partnership with the railway industry. Our challenge is in designing and delivering local links and interchanges at the key stations.

The Western Route is not the only significant railway serving our area: the Reading and Windsor to London Waterloo and Reading to Gatwick lines are also important, and in need of continued investment. This includes the emerging possibility of a Southern Rail Access to Heathrow. We will continue to work with rail and aviation industry colleagues to compile the evidence to support further investment in these strategic links.

Road

The strategic road network through TVB, and linking us to neighbouring economies, is increasingly constrained; there is little scope for new roads, so the challenge is to maximise existing capacity and to tackle known "pinch-points". The M4 Managed Motorway scheme must be delivered as early as possible and bottlenecks on the A34 in Oxfordshire and at the M3 junction (in neighbouring LEP areas) must be addressed.



WE NEED TO
WORK WITH
GOVERNMENT TO
MAKE SURE THAT
COMMITMENTS
TO IMPROVE
THE STRATEGIC
TRANSPORT
NETWORK COME
TO FRUITION



The strength of the strategic network is the east-west motorways: the M4 in our area, and the M3 and M40 to the north and south. The weakness is the links between these routes. The Highways Agency manages only the A34, the A404 (which does not link to the M3) and the M25. All the other M3/M4/M40 links are dual-purpose strategic and local roads. We will continue to analyse the traffic demands in these key corridors, and bring forward proposals for improving the capacity and journey time reliability on these significant routes.

Outcomes: delivery of the station improvements to complement major rail investment; coherent investment plans for Reading–Waterloo, Reading–Gatwick and Southern Rail Access to Heathrow; improved east-west road capacity on M4 corridor; improved road connections between M3/M4/M40.

PACKAGE D-II: UNLOCKING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Housing delivery targets will be met with the delivery of the planned Strategic Development Locations (SDLs), and the continued intensification of housing in established urban areas. The biggest challenges are the four Wokingham SDLs which amount to 10,000 dwellings, plus significant employment uses. One of them involves the redevelopment of a redundant Ministry of Defence facility at Arborfield Garrison.

These SDLs are only 3–4 miles apart and the concentration of development is placing a significant strain on local infrastructure, particularly the road network, and all are being planned to include a range of facilities including schools and community facilities. To mitigate the traffic impacts, Wokingham Borough Council has planned four local distributor roads, one associated with each SDL, to take the additional traffic. The estimated cost in total is about £100m which is more than one unitary authority could expect to fund by itself. Wokingham Borough Council has already arranged a solution for the South of M4 SDL in collaboration with DCLG, the Homes and Communities Agency and the University of Reading, but the other three SDLs will need more resources. These roads will be part-funded by developer contributions over time, but will require a mixture of grant and forward funding – in the shape of prudential borrowing or other public sector loans.

There are non-SDL housing developments elsewhere, mainly in town centres. Many of these schemes are coming to the market through the normal operation of development processes. We have used the Growing Places Fund to enable two schemes (in Bracknell and Maidenhead) to be brought forward, and we continue to value the support and co-operation of the Homes and Communities Agency in identifying and resolving blockages.

Outcomes: delivery of [NBSQW – Figure to be agreed] dwellings.



WE NEED TO
INVEST IN
TRANSPORT TO
UNLOCK SOME
MAJOR HOUSING
DEVELOPMENTS



WE NEED TO
IMPROVE THE
CONNECTIVITY
BETWEEN
OUR TOWNS
THROUGH VASTLY
BETTER PUBLIC
TRANSPORT



WE WILL
EXPLORE
OPTIONS FOR
INVESTMENT IN
TOWN CENTRES

PACKAGE D-III: ENHANCING URBAN CONNECTIVITY

Since the Second World War, TVB's expansion has been largely car-based and relatively low density. From the 1980s onwards, TVB led the way in developing out-of-town business parks. However, there has been no major new road capacity since the completion of the Newbury Bypass in the 1990s. Inevitably, there has been a continuing need for capacity enhancements to the existing network at pinch-points to cope with increases in traffic volumes.

However, almost unnoticed, the urban areas have grown to a point where this strategy is no longer enough by itself. The three Unitary Authorities of Reading, Wokingham and Bracknell Forest have a combined population of 425,000 making it one of the largest urban areas in England.

Slough – close to the M25, Heathrow and the employment areas of West London – is coping with traffic volumes beyond anything a town of its size would normally generate, including conflicting peak hour flows of inward and outward commuting patterns.

For both urban areas, a mass rapid transit solution is proposed, using dedicated rather than shared highway space for guided and conventional buses. These systems will use smart technology as it becomes available at reasonable cost, and will be developed in phases as resources permit. A key objective is linking residential areas to, mainline railway stations, employment, leisure, learning and retail centres. The early stages of these networks will form part of our Local Growth Fund submission.

We are also promoting active transport and encouraging more sustainable transport (e.g. through car sharing) to ease pressures on the transport network. These connectivity improvements are prioritised through the Local Transport Body.

Outcomes: the delivery of the schemes prioritised by the Local Transport Body, including corridor improvements and mass rapid transit schemes.

PACKAGE D-IV: ENCOURAGING VIBRANT TOWN CENTRES

TVB has a strong track record of attracting town centre investment even in the recent downturn. Town centres are also providing a focus for significant housing development.

There are major public/private town centre investments underway in Bracknell, Maidenhead, Newbury, Reading, Slough, and Wokingham, involving the use of public sector assets and combining retail with residential and other uses. These are all 'live' projects which have been brought forward since the economic crisis and the combined investment value is over £1.5bn. These investments include some transport improvements, most of which are already planned and committed. The major exception, included in our Local Growth Fund submission, is the reconfiguration of the station access arrangements at Maidenhead in response to the projected growth in use by Crossrail passengers.

The current investments are mainly a mix of employment, retail and housing. We will work collaboratively to understand the scope for delivering more housing in town centres and to understand what other combinations of uses would help to attract high value new businesses and their employees.

Outcomes: delivery of the town centre development aspirations set out in the respective local plan documents.



WE NEED
BETTER DIGITAL
CONNECTIVITY
FOR OUR MOST
DEMANDING
USERS – BUT
ALSO FOR THOSE
WHO ARE STILL
FEELING THEIR
WAY

PACKAGE D-V: POSITIONING TVB FOR A DIGITAL FUTURE

TVB has a twin track strategy of 'raising the floor' and 'raising the ceiling' for the digital future. The demands on firms to manage data are increasing exponentially, and TVB has to be internationally competitive in its provision. This includes high capacity broadband, 5G mobile and fibre to cabinet connectivity.

We are already on track to achieve up to 24 Mbps broadband availability to 91% of the population. We have done this through a £8.06 million contract with BT, funded by TVB LEP/local authorities and BDUK (25% each) and 50% by BT. The remaining 10% of the population will also have access to basic 2Mbps broadband by 2015.

BT is expanding its fibre to cabinet provision and also its fibre to premises offer in some areas, providing up to 330Mbps. This needs to be extended to all areas.

As TVB contains a high concentration of tech businesses, there is an opportunity not just to use communications technology as it becomes widely available but to take the lead in developing suitable applications for it.

In addition, across the wider Thames Valley, consensus has developed on aligning resources behind 5G Technologies that are under development at the University of Surrey. These will:

- » give the UK leadership in mobile broadband technologies in 5G and beyond
- » build on the unique strengths of universities across the Greater Thames Valley, establishing this area as THE place for business to invest in Mobile Broadband and aligned technologies
- » boost UK inward investment, support UK exports, create a new generation of UK technology companies making the UK a technology leader in an area that is growing rapidly

The aim is to improve the efficiency of both private and public sector investment around this world-class technology so that it has a wide impact on the local and national economy, creating new jobs and generating prosperity for UK Plc.

The Greater Thames Valley 6 LEPs will also work together to connect the developing 5G cluster to other areas of smart specialisation. This could mean:

- » working with mobile applications, computer games, video and music content providers in the digital content cluster to plug them early to the 5G-technology cluster
- » working to promote early involvement to world leading companies in the digital media sector to develop potential content supply chain opportunities around 5G.

Outcomes: Over 90% coverage for high speed broadband; TVB (and the wider Thames Valley) as a pioneer in 5G roll out; major increase in fibre to cabinet connectivity and capacity.



WE WILL
WORK WITH
GOVERNMENT TO
CHANGE ENERGY
POLICY

PACKAGE D-VI: UTILITIES PROVISION

TVB LEP commissioned an infrastructure capacity report from Peter Brett Associates which concluded that the main identified constraints within the Thames Valley area are localised and concerned with waste water treatment and the associated infrastructure. These constraints mainly affect a few of the SDLs where additional Sewage Water Treatment (SWT) may be required. If Thames Water analysis identifies significant restrictions to expansion in the SWTs that require further assessments, there may be an opportunity to investigate Inset agreements²³ with private water companies. These can provide, own and operate local SWTs within developments and then overcome the potential investment required to upgrade existing sewers to connect to the SWTs.

With regards to energy, there is a need to work with government to improve the capacity and security of future supply. More specifically in the renewable energy sector, the agreement of an area-wide strategic energy framework would enable investment security for both developers and community groups looking to establish energy projects and allow energy infrastructure to support the wider growth of TVB by reducing carbon emissions in line with Government targets, reducing social inequalities, retaining business and attracting new investment.

There are some local capacity shortages. However, the report concludes that the utility provision for gas, electricity and potable water is in a generally excellent position and TVB is superbly located to sustain economic growth into the long term.

Outcomes: resolution of local utilities constraints to enable housing development and quality and capacity of supply to businesses.



²³ Essentially the provision of a self-contained treatment works by another operator



THE CONTRIBUTION WE INTEND TO MAKE TO NATIONAL ECONOMIC GROWTH – AND HOW WE WILL MONITOR PROGRESS

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

Our baseline projections suggest that on “business as usual” assumptions, the economy of Thames Valley Berkshire is set to grow steadily – but not dramatically – over the years ahead (see Figure 4, above). Through the implementation of our Strategic Economic Plan, our firm intention is that we should see above-trend growth, particularly in the key metrics of economic output (GVA) and productivity (GVA/job).

Estimating the scale of net impact is not, however, straightforward:

- » First of all, it depends, crucially, on the extent to which all four of the implementation mechanisms described above can, in practice, be brought to bear. There are clear delivery risks in relation to each, some of which are in our gift to determine whilst others, quite clearly, are not
- » Second, it depends on a raft of macro-economic and geo-political factors, none of which we can control. Our economy is internationally focused and – compared to other LEP area economies – it means that the risks (both upside and downside) are greater
- » Third, it depends on the timescales under consideration. This Strategic Economic Plan is concerned – effectively – with probing the “genetic make-up” of Thames Valley Berkshire’s economy. It is seeking, fundamentally, to re-purpose our outstanding locational advantages so that they are attuned fully with the risks – and possibilities – of 21st Century competition in the knowledge-based economy as defined on a global stage. None of this is easy or quick but it is, we believe, crucial: TVB made a substantial contribution to the well-being of the UK economy in the second half of the 20th Century and we intend to do likewise in the 21st, but the “ground rules” are changing and TVB – as both an economy and as a place – will need to adapt, all of which takes time.

Our baseline projection points to GVA growth of 2.5% per annum over the period 2015–20. Through the implementation of our Strategic Economic Plan, we want to increase this by at least half a percentage point, to 3.0% per annum. Our aim is to achieve this primarily through productivity improvements.

If we are successful, we will:

- » increase TVB’s economic output by about £700m compared to the baseline projection. By 2020, our GVA is currently projected to be £31.7bn. As a result of our Strategic Economic Plan, we want to see that figure rise to £32.4bn (at constant, 2009, prices)



WE WILL ACHIEVE ABOVE-TREND ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR STRATEGY



WE WILL
MONITOR THE
PROGRESS OF
OUR STRATEGY IN
IMPLEMENTATION

» increase GVA/job by about £1,300 compared to the baseline projection. By 2020, GVA/job is projected to be £56.4k. As a result of our Strategic Economic Plan, we want to increase this figure to around £57.7k (again at constant, 2009, prices).

In turn, these changes will mean that:

- » more of our residents will pay higher rates of income tax
- » our business base will increase and more of these businesses will be more profitable; the corporation tax take from TVB should therefore increase substantially.

In addition, if we can increase effective labour supply – beyond that which is currently projected – we are confident that the GVA impacts linked to the delivery of our Strategic Economic Plan will be greater again.

HOW WE WILL MONITOR PROGRESS

Our high level contribution to the UK's economy will be monitored as our Strategic Economic Plan is implemented.

In addition, however, we intend to chart progress in relation to a series of intermediate outcomes. These are more immediate, and less susceptible to external influences that we cannot control. The key intermediate outcomes on which we will establish a baseline and then monitor progress include²⁴:

- » the number and type of new inward investment projects within TVB; and the value of reinvestment by foreign firms already in TVB
- » the rate of new business formation and survival
- » the physical provision of incubator/science park space
- » the value of exports generated by businesses in TVB
- » the number of businesses reporting intractable skills shortages/gaps
- » the number of research collaborations involving businesses in TVB and research organisations, whether these are based inside or outside of the area
- » the rate of new housing delivery
- » the vibrancy of town centres – measured through number and size of business networks; number of new bars, restaurants, etc. opening in key town centres; footfall; and rents in town centres
- » the leverage of public spend over private investment.

²⁴ Note that where appropriate, we will ensure that these outcome indicators map onto those we monitor for the purposes of the EU Structural and Investment Funds programme



For more information contact:

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www.thamesvalleyberkshire.co.uk

Title of Report:	Update on Apprentices
Report to be considered by:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	13 February 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	EX2753

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval for:

1. A change to the pay rates for apprentices with effect from 1st April 2014.
2. Two apprenticeship posts to be created; one to be funded by Public Health and a budget to be identified by the Head of Finance.
3. To provide information for the Executive on the employment of apprentices at the Council to date.
4. To set a target of appointing a minimum of 15 apprentices each year.

Recommended Action:

1. To establish one apprenticeship post reserved for a disabled applicant. This post to be funded by, and placed in, Public Health in 2014/15.
2. To establish one apprenticeship reserved for a Looked After Child (LAC) applicant. This post to be funded from a budget to be identified by the Head of Finance (a budget pressure).
3. With effect from 1st April 2014 to pay all new and existing apprentices the age related national minimum wage (NMW) unless the Head of Service creates a more responsible apprenticeship role which will be paid on the minimum spinal column point on the WBC pay grades.
4. The Executive to set a target for Directorates to employ a minimum of 15 apprentices each year (five per directorate unless otherwise agreed at Corporate Board).

Reason for decision to be taken:

Requested by Management Board.

Other options considered:

To discontinue the scheme. Rejected for the reasons described in the report.
To continue to pay most apprentices on the NMW for Apprentices. Rejected for the reasons described in the report.

Key background documentation:

none

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:

CSP2 – Promoting a vibrant district

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Strategy principle:

CSP5 - Putting people first

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Alan Law - Tel (01491) 873614
E-mail Address:	alaw@westberks.gov.uk
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	9 January 2014

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Robert O'Reilly
Job Title:	Head of HR
Tel. No.:	01635 519358
E-mail Address:	roreilly@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy: None

Financial: Apprenticeships are paid for from existing service budgets. This report suggests that funding is allocated for two particular apprenticeship posts: one reserved for a Looked After Child (LAC) applicant and one reserved for a disabled applicant (both under age 19 on appointment). The funding for the disabled applicant post will come from the Public Health and Wellbeing service budget, which will employ the disabled applicant in 2014/15. The funding for the LAC applicant will come from a budget to be identified by the Head of Finance (a budget pressure). The cost will depend on the ages(s) of the applicant(s) and will range from £14,314 pa to £19,355 excluding on-costs. Assuming WBC employs 15 apprentices per year the financial implications of the proposed change to the rate of pay will depend on the age of the apprentices. The difference between the current rate of pay and the proposed rate of pay will be between £30,015 pa (if all recruits were under 18 for the whole of their 12 month apprenticeship) and £67,815 pa (if all recruits were aged over 18 for the whole of their 12 month apprenticeship). This additional cost will be absorbed by service budgets when they decide to recruit an apprentice. There is no budget pressure.

Personnel: In report

Legal/Procurement: None

Property: None

Risk Management: None

Is this item relevant to equality?	Yes	No
<p>Please tick relevant boxes</p> <p>Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> • Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 		
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)		
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at www.westberks.gov.uk/eia		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality		<input type="checkbox"/>

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report updates the Executive on the apprenticeship recruitment scheme in WBC (excluding schools).
- 1.2 The Personnel Committee decision in December 2011 to encourage the recruitment of apprentices has resulted in a rise in the number of young people employed by the Council.
- 1.3 Apprentices must be aged 19 or under when starting their training with West Berkshire Training Consortium (WBTC) to attract government funding. The wage costs of the apprentices are met from existing service budgets (for example by using funding from an employee moving from full to part time employment after maternity leave).
- 1.4 The national minimum wage (NMW) for apprentices is £2.68 per hour. This rate was sufficient to attract sufficient quality applicants in the past but the most recent recruitment campaign in November 2013 attracted no applicants. This is probably because the economy is improving and £2.68 per hour is no longer a competitive rate in the recruitment market for young people.
- 1.5 Two services have developed a job description with more responsibilities and these two apprentices are paid on Grade B on £6.69 per hour (one in Libraries and one in ICT).

2. Proposals

- 2.1 This report recommends that a target is set for the recruitment of a minimum of 15 apprentices per year (five per directorate unless otherwise agreed by Corporate Board).
- 2.2 This report recommends that funds are earmarked for one apprenticeship reserved for a disabled applicant under 19 on appointment. The external training is free for applicants under 19 on appointment. Lesley Wyman (Head of Public Health and Wellbeing) has volunteered to fund the salary costs from her service budget and employ this person in 2014/15.
- 2.3 This report recommends that the Head of Finance identifies a budget to fund one apprenticeship reserved for a Looked After Child (LAC) applicant under 19 on appointment. This is a budget pressure.
- 2.4 This report recommends that with effect from 1st April 2014 the pay rate for apprentices is the age-related National Minimum Wage. For under-18 year olds this is £3.72 per hour. For 18-20 year olds this is £5.03 per hour. The higher rate(s) will be more likely to attract quality candidates than the current rate of £2.68 per hour. Assuming that WBC appoints 15 apprentices per year the additional cost of this change to the wage rate will be between £30,015 pa and £67,815 pa.
- 2.5 Heads of Service will continue to be able to recruit on the minimum point of Grade B (£6.69 per hour) where the apprenticeship post has a more responsible job description.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

3.1 No negative equality issues – see appendix A.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The apprenticeship scheme has been successful to date but with the economy picking up it is time to increase the hourly rate from £2.68 per hour to ensure that it remains successful in future. The age-related national minimum wage (NMW) rates are significantly higher than the current NMW for apprentices pay rate.
- 4.2 Approval for two funded apprenticeships, one for a disabled applicant and one for a LAC applicant, will help achieve the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The current apprenticeship scheme was agreed by Personnel Committee on 14th December 2011. The scheme allows new apprenticeship posts to be added to the WBC establishment when created by individual services. No new money was provided for the scheme and services have to fund any apprenticeships from existing service budgets.
- 1.2 Apprentices are employed on a one year fixed term contract.
- 1.3 The trade unions were consulted in 2011 and agreed that WBC could pay the national minimum wage (NMW) for apprenticeship posts if the posts were 'supernumerary'. 'Supernumerary' means that the apprentice post is an addition to the staffing structure of a service and the post would not need to be replaced when it ends.
- 1.4 A report was taken to Personnel Committee on 14th December 2011 to approve the change to the Council's pay and grading structure to allow payment of the NMW for apprentices. The NMW for apprentices is £2.68 per hour from 1st October 2013.
- 1.5 If an apprenticeship post has additional responsibilities the apprentice is paid at Grade B (£6.69 to £7.71 per hour). There are currently two apprenticeships posts which are paid on Grade B (one in Libraries and one in ICT).
- 1.6 West Berkshire Council already had apprentices in some services in 2009/10 (16 apprentices were employed, funded by the now defunct 'Future Jobs Fund'; 10 remained in employment with WBC after the scheme ended).
- 1.7 In early 2012 HR contacted all Heads of Service and launched a recruitment campaign to increase the number of apprentices.
- 1.8 In 2012, West Berkshire Council was awarded a Certificate of Excellence by West Berkshire Training Consortium (WBTC). The certificate is the highest accolade given to companies who show exceptional leadership in the provision of apprenticeships to local young people.
- 1.9 The Disability Equality Scrutiny (DES) Board asked the Head of HR on 18th July 2013 to include in this report a request to the Council to fund an apprenticeship to be reserved for a disabled young person. Suitable applicants would be provided by Job Centre Plus. Lesley Wyman (Head of Public Health and Wellbeing) has volunteered to fund this post and employ the successful applicant in 2014/15.
- 1.10 This report recommends that the Council funds an apprenticeship from a budget to be identified by the Head of Finance which would be reserved for a Looked After Child (LAC) applicant (this is a budget pressure). This funded apprenticeship post would be offered to services. Suitable LAC applicants would be provided by the Communities Directorate.
- 1.11 Apprentices are employed on a fixed term contract for one year, during which time they undergo a structured programme of work and training, aiming to achieve and NVQ Intermediate level 2 in a relevant subject.

2. Partnership with West Berkshire Training Consortium (WBTC)

- 2.1 To support the recruitment and training process, since 2012 the Council has worked in partnership with West Berkshire Training Consortium who:
- (1) Support the advertising process through raising awareness of WBC apprenticeship vacancies with job-seekers;
 - (2) Provide funding for qualification training and provide the off-the-job training (for those who are 16, 17 or 18 years of age at the start of the apprenticeship there is no cost to the employer for this training);
 - (3) Support line managers with developing a work-based training and development programme for the apprentices; and
 - (4) Support the apprentices through their year of work and training.
- 2.2 If a service chooses to use the template job description provided by Human Resources the apprentice has been paid on the National Minimum Wage for apprentices of £2.68 per hour (see Appendix B).
- 2.3 If the role requires any prior knowledge or skills, or requires a higher level of responsibility, the job description is submitted to HR for approval to pay on a Grade B.
- 2.4 A generic advert is placed on the West Berkshire Council website and the WBTC website. Applicants are asked to click a link to the dedicated apprenticeship vacancies page which links to the WBC online application system powered by Jobs Go Public.
- 2.5 Applicants are provided with a brief overview of the apprenticeship scheme; a copy of the job description; and details of how to apply for the vacancy online. In addition, the vacancies are publicised through recruitment fairs, libraries, secondary schools, sport centres, local businesses, Facebook and weekly feeds through Twitter.
- 2.6 Once the campaign has closed (after one month), HR reviews the applicants to ensure they are the correct age for available funding and they do not currently hold a Level 2 Intermediate NVQ in the same subject (which would mean that funding for training was not available).
- 2.7 Successful applicants are invited to attend an assessment centre, as the first stage of the selection process. This is held in the Council Chamber and comprises:
- (1) A clerical checking test, designed to assess speed and accuracy in checking detailed information. The test consists of 40 questions and applicants are given 7 minutes in which to complete the test;
 - (2) A written exercise;
 - (3) An overview of the recruitment process.
- 2.8 At this stage, applicants are also asked to nominate a preferred area of work.

- 2.9 The results of the ability testing undertaken at the assessment centre are provided to service managers and they begin the short-listing process, assessing applicants against the job description and person specification.
- 2.10 Shortlisted applicants are invited to attend a recruitment interview with the service manager, which forms the final stage of the recruitment process. Service managers confirm to HR the applicant whom they wish to appoint.
- 2.11 Unsuccessful applicants are asked by HR whether they would like their application to be put forward for any other apprenticeship vacancies.

3. Appointment and induction process

- 3.1 Apprentices under the age of 19 have been paid on the national minimum wage (NMW) for apprentices (£2.68 per hour from 1st October 2013) or, where the responsibilities of the post are at a higher level, on Grade B (range £12,915-£14,880 per annum/£6.69 to £7.71 per hour).
- 3.2 Once an appointment has been made, the service manager receives confirmation of the new starters' induction course with West Berkshire Training Consortium (WBTC).
- 3.3 The under-19 age group is able to access fully-funded training, via West Berkshire Training Consortium. Recruitment to apprenticeship vacancies has therefore been limited to this age group.
- 3.4 The NVQ Assessor from WBTC makes contact with the service manager to book the first meeting to discuss developing a support programme for the apprentice.
- 3.5 HR organises an induction event and encourages the apprentices to meet together for social and networking benefits. This has met with limited success to date as most of the apprentices prefer to bond with their new teams rather than with other apprentices.

4. Training provided to apprentices

- 4.1 National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are work based awards that are achieved through assessment and training.
- 4.2 West Berkshire Council offers apprenticeships at Level 2. This level involves the application of knowledge in a significant range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts. Collaboration with others, perhaps through membership of a work group or team, is often a requirement. Level 2 is equivalent to GCSE grade A*-C.
- 4.3 To achieve an NVQ, apprentices must prove that they have the ability (competence) to carry out their job to the required standard. NVQs describe the 'competencies' expected in any given job role (based on national occupational standards). Apprentices work towards an NVQ that reflects their role.
- 4.4 WBTC advises that apprentices should commit around 1.5/ 2 hours per week to their electronic portfolio. This is the NVQ competency part of the training.

4.5 Apprentices also undertake a Knowledge and Technical Certificate, achieved in 12 taught sessions (half days) over the year.

4.6 All WBC apprentices to date have undertaken Level 2 qualifications in Business Administration or Customer Services.

5. Numbers of apprentices appointed to date

5.1 In 2012:

(1) 18 Apprentices were appointed from two rounds of recruitment in April and June 2012 (excluding schools).

5.2 In 2013:

(1) 17 apprenticeships were advertised.

(2) Three apprentices were appointed to start in September 2013.

(3) A further three apprentices have been appointed outside the main round of advertising, totalling six new appointments.

(4) Social care apprenticeships are less popular than office based apprenticeships.

(5) The November 2013 recruitment campaign had no applicants.

6. Next steps for apprentices recruited in 2012

6.1 One apprentice has secured a one year fixed term contract as an Administrative Assistant with the Registration Service based at Shaw House

6.2 One apprentice has secured a permanent post within Adult Social Care as an Adult Social Care Admin Assistant.

6.3 One apprentice has remained working for Libraries following her apprenticeship as Apprentice Library Assistant and has also taken up a further post as Community Learning Assistant.

6.4 One apprentice was successfully appointed internally to the post of HR Administrator within the Training team on a permanent contract.

6.5 One apprentice secured employment outside the Council working as a Teaching Assistant in the SEN Department at a local Academy School.

6.6 One apprentice secured employment with Stacatruc as an Administration Assistant.

6.7 Two apprentices left the scheme before completing the one year apprenticeship, one applying to university.

6.8 One apprentice left at the end of the fixed term contract to go travelling.

6.9 Three apprentices left at the end of their apprenticeships with no confirmed destination.

6.10 Four apprentices are employed as casual workers in social care.

6.11 Two apprenticeships are due to end in March 2014.

6.12 Six apprenticeships will end in 2014/15.

7. Recommendation to pay the age related national minimum wage (NMW) with effect from 1st April 2014

7.1 The NMW for apprentices is £2.28 per hour. As the economy improves this is now too low to attract quality candidates. Therefore this report recommends an increase in the rate paid to apprentices.

7.2 An alternative to paying £2.68 ph would be to instruct Heads of Service to pay on Grade B for apprentices in future recruitment rounds from April 2014. However, this would probably reduce the number of posts in the apprenticeship scheme because services might not be able to absorb the increased costs within existing budgets.

7.3 Therefore this report recommends a compromise which will see future apprentices paid on a higher rate from 1st April 2014, but not so high that it might reduce the number of apprenticeship posts created by services. The higher rate recommended is the age-related NMW. This is £3.72 for under-18 year olds and £5.03 per hour for 18-20 year olds. The job description at Appendix B will apply for this rate of pay.

7.4 The increase in the wage rate will have the following financial consequences. Assuming that WBC appoints 15 apprentices per year, the additional cost of this change to the wage rate will be between £30,015 pa and £67,815 pa. If all the apprentices were below aged 18 for the whole 12 months of their apprenticeship the additional cost would be as follows: £3.72 x 37 x 52 x 15 minus (current rate) £2.68 x 37 x 52 x 15 = £30,015 pa. If all the apprentices were aged 18 or over for the whole 12 months of their apprenticeship the additional cost would be as follows: £5.03 x 37 x 52 x 15 minus (current rate) £2.68 x 37 x 52 x 15 = £67,815 pa.

7.5 Four apprentices employed in 2013 will move from the lower rate of £2.68 to the higher age related national minimum wage on 1st April 2014. They are in ASC, C&EP (2) and Customer Services. Two other apprentices are on Grade B and will not be affected.

7.6 It is recommended that a target of 15 apprentices per year is set. This is five per directorate (unless the distribution is agreed differently by Corporate Board).

8. Recommendation for an apprenticeship reserved for a disabled applicant.

8.1 The idea of reserving an apprenticeship post for a disabled applicant aged under 19 was put to the Head of HR at the meeting of the Disability Equality Scrutiny (DES) Board on 18th July 2013. The DES Board asked that their idea was included in this report.

8.2 It is difficult for disabled young people to find employment and a reserved post for a disabled young person (under 19) would ensure that at least one young disabled young person was employed by WBC every year (fixed term for one year).

- 8.3 Implementing this idea will help with the public sector equality duty to "advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not".
- 8.4 It is not unlawful to do this because being a non-disabled person is not a 'protected characteristic' under the Equalities Act.
- 8.5 Establishment of the post would help to promote disability awareness in the service concerned. Disabled applicants would be provided by Job Centre Plus.
- 8.6 Public Health and Wellbeing have volunteered to fund and recruit to this post in 2014/15

9. Recommendation for an apprenticeship reserved for a Looked After Child (LAC)

- 9.1 The Communities Directorate is keen to reserve an apprenticeship for a young person under 19 who is a Looked After Child (LAC).
- 9.2 LAC applicant(s) would apply to the apprenticeship scheme in the normal way, albeit to a reserved place. This would mean that at least one LAC applicant will be recruited each year to an apprenticeship post (fixed term for one year).
- 9.3 The apprenticeship for a LAC applicant will be funded from a budget to be determined by the Head of Finance. This is a budget pressure. The post would then be offered out to services.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 The Council has successfully increased the number of young people employed as apprentices over the last two years. This report recommends that a target of employing 15 apprentices per year is set (five per directorate).
- 10.2 This report recommends that the practice of paying apprentices on the NMW for apprentices of £2.68 per hour is ended with effect from 1st April 2014 because this pay rate now fails to attract any good quality candidates as the economy picks up.
- 10.3 This report recommends that existing and future apprentices are paid on the age-related NMW. This is £3.72 per hour for under age 18 and £5.03 per hour for 18-20 year olds. The job description shown at Appendix B will apply for this rate of pay.
- 10.4 This report recommends that an apprenticeship post is reserved for a disabled young person as requested by the DES Board to be recruited in 2014. Public Health and Wellbeing will fund and recruit to this post in 2014.
- 10.5 This report recommends that an apprenticeship post is reserved for a LAC applicant as requested by the Communities Directorate. This post will be funded from a budget to be determined by the Head of Finance. This is a budget pressure

Appendices

Appendix A – EIA

Appendix B - template job description for NMW apprentice.

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: N/a

Officers Consulted: Corporate Board

Trade Union: Consulted – in favour of proposed changes.

Appendix A

EIA

Name of item being assessed:	Apprentices Update
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	n/a
Owner of item being assessed:	Robert O'Reilly
Name of assessor:	Robert O'Reilly
Date of assessment:	13/01/14

1. What are the main aims of the item? (What does the item try to achieve?)

To promote equalities for disabled young people.

2. What are the results of your research?

Note which groups may be affected by the item. Consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Disabled young people	Will be able to obtain a reserved apprenticeship at WBC. No adverse consequences.	Execuitve report

Further comments relating to the item:

No negative effects.

3. What actions will be taken to address any negative effects?

Action	Owner	By When	Outcome

4. What was the final outcome and why was this agreed? n/a

(Was the item adjusted, rewritten or unchanged? Refer to page 15 of *Meeting the Equality Duty in Policy and Decision Making* for more information.)

5. What arrangements have you put in place to monitor the impact of this decision? n/a

6. What date is the Equality Impact Assessment due for Review?
N/a

Name: Robert O'Reilly

Date: 13/01/14.

Apprentice Outline Job Description and Person Specification
For WBC corporate services Apprentice

JOB DESCRIPTION

Authority: West Berkshire Council	Service:
Post Reference No:	Location:
Job Title: Apprentice	Salary: National Minimum Wage

JOB PURPOSE

The purpose of this role is to enable Apprentices to complete on the job learning and get good experience of working within specific council services. This will enable them to complete their Apprenticeship whilst “Earning and Learning”.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The apprentice post is additional to the main staffing establishment of the service. The apprentice will assist the team in which he or she works by undertaking a variety of tasks under direct supervision, which will provide a range of opportunities for training and assessment against the vocational qualification standards. These tasks will include;

- Supporting the service in the administration processes required.
- Assisting Customers when required by the service.
- Using Word to prepare documents as required.
- Using Excel to prepare spreadsheets as required
- Using Databases to input information as directed.
- General office duties including, answering the phone, photocopying, and filing.

SERVICE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

This section is to be completed by Services with specific tasks that the Apprentice would undertake. Some examples to help you are below: Please add / delete as necessary.

HR – To administer the recruitment process and liaise with recruiting managers to arrange interviews.

Youth - To help organise activities for young people attending sessions at Adventure Dolphin

Libraries - To help members of the public locate specific items within the Library

Customer Services - To give telephone advice to members of the public on Council Services, for example Refuse Collections, Council Tax, and Planning issues.

ICT – Assisting Schools with technical computer issues.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

No previous knowledge or experience in the workplace is necessary

Apprentices who have not previously attained A-C English, Maths and ICT GCSE will receive support with Key Skills whilst completing their Apprenticeship.

Qualifications and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A good standard of education (GSCE English, Maths and ICT an advantage) or studying towards Key skills as part of the Apprenticeship.• Good communication skills• Good organisational skills• A basic understanding of Microsoft packages such as Word, Excel and Outlook.• Ability to use basic technology (e.g. photo-copier, computer and digital camera)
Work-related Personal Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enthusiastic and willing to use initiative• Keen to learn new skills• Keen to take on new responsibilities• Able to respect confidentiality• Flexible approach to tasks• Willing to work as part of a team• Willing to listen to and act on feedback about own performance