

Notice of Meeting

Executive

Thursday 26 May 2016 at 5.00pm

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

Date of despatch of Agenda: Wednesday 18 May 2016

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Democratic Services Team on (01635) 519462

e-mail: executivecycle@westberks.gov.uk

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



Agenda - Executive to be held on Thursday, 26 May 2016 (continued)

To:	Executive Members
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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**
To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 April 2016. 5 - 8
- 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.

Items as timetabled in the Forward Plan

Pages

- 6. Scrutiny Review into Car Parking (EX3106)**
(CSP: MEC, SLE2, MEC1) 9 - 32
Purpose: To respond to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) in respect of various parking issues, as set out in the report to the OSMC dated 5 January 2016 that is at Appendix D, and to seek approval to proceed accordingly.



7. **Building Control Shared Service (EX3063)** 33 - 92
(CSP: SLE, MEC, MEC1)

Purpose: Following an in-principle decision earlier in the year work has been underway to look at the feasibility of a shared Building Control Service formed by the merger of the current service with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham Borough Council. This work has concluded that not only would such a service be feasible but given prevailing market conditions it will also be desirable. The report sets out the reasons for this.

8. **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.
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(a) **Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Libraries submitted by Councillor Alan Macro**
"What is the status with regard to the required branch library needs assessments?"

(b) **Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Parish Councils submitted by Councillor Alan Macro**
"What is West Berkshire Council doing to improve its relationships with parish councils?"

9. **Exclusion of Press and Public**
RECOMMENDATION: That members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item as it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information of the description contained in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 specified in brackets in the heading of each item. [Rule 8.10.4 of the Constitution refers.](#)
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Part II

Items not timetabled in the Forward Plan

10. **John O'Gaunt School - Academy Conversion and Retention of Land (Urgent Item)** 93 - 100
(Paragraph 3 - information relating to financial/business affairs of a particular person)

(CSP: BEC, BEC1, BEC2)

Purpose: To agree the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.

Andy Day
Head of Strategic Support

West Berkshire Council Strategy Aims and Priorities

Council Strategy Aims:

- BEC** – Better educated communities
- SLE** – A stronger local economy
- P&S** – Protect and support those who need it
- HQL** – Maintain a high quality of life within our communities
- MEC** – Become an even more effective Council

Council Strategy Priorities:

- BEC1** – Improve educational attainment
- BEC2** – Close the educational attainment gap
- SLE1** – Enable the completion of more affordable housing
- SLE2** – Deliver or enable key infrastructure improvements in relation to roads, rail, flood prevention, regeneration and the digital economy
- P&S1** – Good at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- HQL1** – Support communities to do more to help themselves
- MEC1** – Become an even more effective Council

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



DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

EXECUTIVE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 21 APRIL 2016

Councillors Present: Dominic Boeck, Hilary Cole, Roger Croft, Lynne Doherty, Marcus Franks, Graham Jones and Garth Simpson

Also Present: John Ashworth (Corporate Director - Environment), Martin Dunscombe (Communications Manager), Mark Edwards (Head of Highways and Transport), David Holling (Head of Legal Services), Robert O'Reilly (Head of Human Resources), Rachael Wardell (Corporate Director - Communities), Robert Alexander (Conservative Group Executive), Councillor Jeanette Clifford, Councillor Lee Dillon, Moira Fraser (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager) and Jo Reeves (Policy Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Nick Carter, Councillor James Fredrickson and Councillor Alan Law

PART I

76. Minutes

The Minutes of the two meetings held on 24 March 2016 were approved as true and correct records and signed by the Leader.

The Leader, on behalf of the Council, wished Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II a very happy 90th birthday.

77. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

78. Public Questions

A full transcription of the public and Member question and answer sessions are available from the following link: [Transcription of Q&As](#).

- (a) **Question submitted by Mr Gary Puffett to Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, Equality, Community Safety, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Waste and Customer Services**

A question standing in the name of Mr Gary Puffett on the subject of whether the Council was responsible for providing welfare facilities for licensed taxi drivers operating from taxi ranks in the Wharf or any other part of the district was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Housing, Countryside, Community Culture and Leisure Services.

- (b) **Question submitted by Mr Gary Puffett to Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing and Devolution**

A question standing in the name of Mr Gary Puffett on the subject of whether an impact assessment had been undertaken to establish if there would be any detrimental affect on public health due to the closure of all public toilets within Newbury was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Housing, Countryside, Community Culture and Leisure Services.

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(c) **Question submitted by Mr Gary Puffett to Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, Equality, Community Safety, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Waste and Customer Services**

A question standing in the name of Mr Gary Puffett on the subject of what the Council intended to do with the redundant public conveniences was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Housing, Countryside, Community Culture and Leisure Services.

79. Petitions

There were no petitions presented to the Executive.

80. Better Care Fund 2016/17 (EX3109)

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 6) which provided an update on the Better Care Fund which sought agreement to the West Berkshire Locality Plan for 2016/17. The Better Care Fund (BCF) was a government initiative established to fast track integration with Health and Social Care. 2015/16 had been the first year of implementation and all Councils and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) had had to agree a plan and then obtain approval from their Health and Wellbeing Boards. West Berkshire's BCF had been agreed at the meeting the previous week.

Councillor Hilary Cole explained that the initiative was originally announced as a one year programme, and consequently there was some uncertainty about its existence in future years. The recent Spending Review had confirmed that the BCF would continue into 2016/17 and that the allocations would be slightly higher as the national pot had been increased by 1.9%.

The total funding for West Berkshire Locality Better Care fund had been confirmed at just over £10.6m. This sum included a £4.367m revenue contribution to maintain the provision of social services and £1.4m of capital funding to provide adaptations for vulnerable people.

The CCG and Local Authority had agreed a plan that would allow for the continuation of projects including the Joint Care Provider Scheme, seven day week services and maintain the existing capacity within the re-ablement service. It would also allow for the support of the West of Berkshire projects. This work would continue to help support improvements pertaining to Delayed Transfers of Care and reduce Non-elective admissions which were key objectives of the Better Care Fund.

Councillor Marcus Franks commended the work that had been undertaken to date to reduce Delayed Transfers of Care. He welcomed the ongoing funding for this important area of work. The relationship between the CCGs and the Local Authority was good and he therefore looked forward to even better results in the second year of this scheme.

Councillor Graham Jones also noted the good working relationship between the Local Authority and the other partners on the Health and Wellbeing Board. He also thanked Councillor Mollie Lock for her input. He noted that there was cross party support for closer working relationships between Healthcare, Social Care and primary and secondary care providers in respect of this important piece of work.

RESOLVED that the West Berkshire Locality Plan for 2016/17 be agreed.

Reason for the decision: To agree the West Berkshire Locality Plan for 2016/17.

Other options considered: None.

81. Members' Questions

A full transcription of the public and Member question and answer sessions are available from the following link: [Transcription of Q&As](#).

- (a) **Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, Equality, Community Safety, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Waste and Customer Services submitted by Councillor Billy Drummond**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Billy Drummond on the subject of the progress being made with discussions with partners for taking over CCTV services was asked by Councillor Lee Dillon and answered by the Portfolio Holder for Partnerships, Equality, Community Safety, Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Waste and Customer Services.

- (b) **Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Education, Property and Broadband submitted by Councillor Mollie Lock**

This question had been withdrawn by Councillor Mollie Lock following the publication of the agenda for the meeting.

- (c) **Question to be answered by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Housing, Countryside, Community Culture & Leisure Services submitted by Councillor Lee Dillon**

A question standing in the name of Councillor Lee Dillon on the subject of whether the contract for the detailed needs assessment for the Library Service had been awarded, if so its timescales, and whether affected communities would be consulted by the Council, was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care, Housing, Countryside, Community Culture and Leisure Services.

82. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the under-mentioned items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as contained in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 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 8.10.4 of the Constitution also refers.

83. Staffing Implications Associated with Additional Savings Put Forward to Deliver the 2016/17 Revenue Budget: Approval to Pay Redundancy Payments (EX3094)

(Paragraph 1 – information relating to an individual)

(Paragraph 2 – information identifying an individual)

The Executive considered an exempt report (Agenda Item 9) which sought approval to make the redundancy payments associated with the additional staffing savings put forward following the Government's Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2015.

RESOLVED that the recommendations in the exempt report be agreed.

Reason for the decision: as detailed in the exempt report.

Other options considered: as detailed in the exempt report.

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84. Award of 2016-2023 Highways, Bridges and Street Lighting Term Maintenance Contract (EX3105)

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

The Executive considered an exempt report (Agenda Item 10) which informed Members of progress made in securing a new long term highway maintenance contract and sought agreement to award the 2016-2023 Highways, Bridges and Street Lighting Term Maintenance Contract to the successful bidder in accordance with the Tender Assessment Report.

RESOLVED that the recommendations in the exempt report be agreed.

Reason for the decision: as detailed in the exempt report.

Other options considered: as detailed in the exempt report.

(The meeting commenced at 5.00pm and closed at 5.21pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

Scrutiny Review into Car Parking

Committee considering report:	Executive on 26 May 2016
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Garth Simpson
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	2 March 2016
Report Author:	Mark Cole
Forward Plan Ref:	EX3106

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To respond to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) in respect of various parking issues as set out in the report to its meeting on 5 January 2016 and to seek approval to proceed accordingly.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To note and approve the recommendations of the OSMC and the responses of the Highways and Transport Service as detailed in Appendix C to this report.

3. Implications

- 3.1 **Financial:** None associated with this report although there will be when the terms of reference for a study into recent growth trends and current and future demand for car parking in Newbury have been identified and the study is commissioned.
- 3.2 **Policy:** None arising from this report.
- 3.3 **Personnel:** None arising from this report.
- 3.4 **Legal:** None arising from this report.
- 3.5 **Risk Management:** None arising from this report.
- 3.6 **Property:** None arising from this report.
- 3.7 **Other:** Not applicable.

4. Other options considered

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5. Executive Summary

- 5.1 At its meeting on 15 September 2015, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) agreed to conduct a review into car parking in West Berkshire. The review was undertaken by a cross-party task group, working with Council Officers from the Environment Directorate. The members of the working group were Councillors Lee Dillon, James Frederickson (until his appointment to the Executive), Mike Johnston and Rick Jones. Councillor Johnston was elected as the Chairman. The terms of reference for the Task Group are set out in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The task group concluded its review on 6 December 2015 and made nine recommendations which were endorsed by the OSMC at its meeting on 5 January 2016.
- 5.3 In summary, these recommendations were as follows:
- Develop a district parking plan
 - Develop an integrated transport plan with Reading BC
 - Consider extending the 'Ticketer' system
 - Widen consultation for Residents Parking Schemes
 - Ensure Residents Parking Schemes are cost neutral
 - Consider the extension of access to off-street car parking to augment capacity in Residents Parking Schemes
 - Evaluate the introduction of virtual residents parking permits
 - Commission a parking demand/capacity study for Newbury
 - Assess effectiveness of on-street parking payment methods

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Highways and Transport Service welcomes the outcome of the review undertaken by the OSMC and will work through the recommendations as set out in the OSMC report of 5 January 2016 at Appendix D but more specifically in the Response Template at Appendix C if approved by the Executive.
- 6.2 The Executive is requested to consider and approve these recommendations and the responses to them from the Highways and Transport Service.

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix A – Scrutiny Review into Car Parking – Supporting Information
- 7.2 Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 7.3 Appendix C – Response Template to the OSMC Review into Car Parking
- 7.4 Appendix D – Scrutiny Review into Car Parking – OSMC report of 5 January 2016

Scrutiny Review into Car Parking – Supporting Information

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 At its meeting of 15 September 2015, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) agreed to conduct a review into car parking in West Berkshire. The review was undertaken by a cross-party task group, working with Council officers from the Environment Directorate. The members of the working group were Councillors Lee Dillon, James Fredrickson (until his appointment to the Executive), Mike Johnston and Rick Jones. Councillor Johnston was elected as the Chairman.
- 1.2 The task group concluded its review on 6 December 2015 and made nine recommendations which were endorsed by the OSMC at its meeting on 5 January 2016.

2. Supporting Information

- 2.1 The Terms of Reference for the task group were to conduct a review into car parking in West Berkshire, and in particular to seek an understanding of:

- The current policies for residents' of on-street and off-street parking;
- The effect (including usage, revenue generation, congestion and displacement) of the parking policies in isolation;
- The interrelationship between the policies and their cumulative effect;
- The future plans for car parking provision;
- The method and effectiveness of parking policy communication to the public;

and to then report to the OSMC and subsequently the Executive with recommendations as appropriate.

- 2.2 The task group considered all aspects of car parking including:

- Background and context of the Council's duties, powers, strategies and aims;
- Resident's schemes;
- Off-street parking;
- On-street parking.

- 2.3 Thirty two findings were identified as part of this process and the task group concluded that:

- Overall each individual aspect of the Council's involvement in car parking is being managed adequately;

- There is scope for a higher and more strategic view to be taken, incorporating each aspect of car parking (on-street, off-street and residential) into a holistic plan. The development of such an integrated plan, tied to articulated outcomes, should enable the public to be better able to understand what the Council is aiming to achieve;
- There are a number of, smaller scale, recommendations that should improve specific aspects of the Council's planning and operations but overall there is confidence in the political oversight and day to day application of the planning and operational management of car parking.

2.4 As stated in 1.2 above the task group identified nine recommendations.

2.5 The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the task group are set out in detail in the report to the OSMC meeting on 5 January 2016 that can be found at Appendix D.

3. Options for Consideration

3.1 These are as identified in the OSMC report of 5 January 2016 that can be found at Appendix D but are more specifically set out in the Response Template at Appendix C.

4. Proposals

4.1 See the Response Template to the OSMC Review of Car Parking at Appendix C to this report.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The Executive is requested to consider the recommendations and responses from the Highways and Transport Service set out in the Response Template at Appendix C and to grant approval to proceed accordingly.

6. Consultation and Engagement

6.1 Not applicable.

Background Papers:

None as all relevant papers are appended to this report.

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

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

Wards affected:

All wards.

Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aim:

MEC – Become an even more effective Council

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

SLE2 – Deliver or enable key infrastructure improvements in relation to roads, rail, flood prevention, regeneration and the digital economy

MEC1 – Become an even more effective Council

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy aim and priorities by developing a parking plan to ensure that all aspects of the planning, implementation, development and operation of on-street, off-street and residential parking in the district is managed holistically.

Officer details:

Name: Mark Cole
Job Title: Traffic Services Manager
Tel No: 01635 519210
E-mail Address: mark.cole@westberks.gov.uk

Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity.

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Name of policy, strategy or function:	Scrutiny Review into Car Parking
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	N/A
Owner of item being assessed:	Mark Cole
Name of assessor:	Mark Edwards
Date of assessment:	1 March 2016

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	No	New or proposed	Yes
Strategy	No	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes
Function	Yes	Is changing	Yes
Service	Yes		

1. What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy, strategy function or service and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To consider the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) review into car parking.
Objectives:	To respond to the recommendations of the OSMC.
Outcomes:	Ensure that a higher and more strategic view to is taken, incorporating each aspect of car parking.
Benefits:	Development of an integrated plan, tied to articulated outcomes, which should enable the public to be better able to understand what the Council is aiming to achieve. Improve specific aspects of the Council's planning and operations.

<p>2. Note which groups may be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.</p> <p>(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race,</p>

Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
All groups making use of the Council's on-street, off-street and residential parking encompassing all of the strands.	No particular group should be disadvantaged.	OSMC recommendations delivered with no evidence of disadvantage to any specific group.
Further Comments relating to the item:		

3. Result	
Are there any aspects of the policy, strategy, function or service, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer: All service users needs will be considered.	
Will the policy, strategy, function or service have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer: The impact of all proposals arising out of the OSMC recommendations on all service users will be taken into consideration.	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template.

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	No
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	Mark Edwards
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	
Stage Two not required:	Not required

Name: Mark Edwards

Date: 1 March 2016

Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, the Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) for publication on the WBC website.

Appendix C

Response to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Review into Car Parking

It is recommended that the Executive Member for Transport should:

<p>Recommendation (1)</p>	<p>Working through both the Head of Highways and Transport and the Head of Planning and Countryside, develop a parking plan to ensure that all aspects of the planning, implementation, development and operation of on-street, off-street and residential parking in the district is managed holistically. The plan should include, but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an assessment of the needs of all likely stakeholders, including residents, shoppers, visitors and commuters (and the extent to which ‘transport hubs’ should be developed and operated); • how the identified needs will be met; • how that outcome will be achieved; • the ongoing measurement and reporting of key performance information to ensure that the stated aims of the plan are being achieved; • a communications plan; • how complimentary strategies (eg signage, public transport) can be used to offset demand.
<p>Service response</p>	<p>The Council has a duty to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) which sets the framework for the delivery of all aspects of transport and travel for West Berkshire. The local Transport Plan provides the framework for 8 existing strategies one of which is the existing “Parking Strategy”. The current plan (the 3rd) 2006 – 2026 is due to be refreshed in line with the new Local Plan and the parking strategy should be refreshed as part of that process. As part of this refresh of the LTP the “Passenger Transport Strategy” will also be refreshed. As well as the overarching strategies, there are 15 existing key policies and policy LTP K11 covers Parking. This policy is supported by policies LTP P1 – Town Centre Parking, LTP P2 – Residential Parking, LTP P3 – Parking Standards (new development) and LTP P4 – Enforcement. Similarly policy LTP K9 covers Passenger Transport and this policy is supported by LTP PT1 – Bus Services, LTP PT2 – Community & Voluntary Transport, LTP PT3 – Rail, LTP PT4 – Taxis & Private Hire, LTP PT5 – Info, promotion and ticketing, LTP PT 6 – Infrastructure & Interchange and LTP PT7 – Park & Ride. All of these policies will be reviewed as part of this refresh process.</p>
<p>Action to be taken</p>	<p>A detailed work programme to be drafted and agreed with the Portfolio holder for Transport and over seen by the Transport</p>

	Policy Task Group.
Target deadline	April 2019
Evidence of achievement	Production of the 4 th Local Transport Plan.
Lead Officer	Bryan Lyttle and Transport Policy Team supported by the Transport Services and Traffic Services teams

Recommendation (2)	To further embed transport planning co-operation with Reading Borough Council and through the Head of Planning and Countryside, consider the preparation and development of an integrated transport plan (to include all aspects of car parking) in the east of the district.
Service response	There is already a Transport Vision for the Eastern Area contained within the LTP (separate visions are included for each of the four spatial areas identified in the Core Strategy). Reading BC was consulted on the draft plan and separate cross-boundary meetings with Reading officers are held to discuss any cross-boundary issues. They have also been contacted in the development of the supporting strategies as they have been developed.
Action to be taken	To be included as part of the refresh to the Local Transport Plan.
Target deadline	April 2019
Evidence of achievement	Production of the 4 th Local Transport Plan.
Lead Officer	Bryan Lyttle

Recommendation (3)	Through the Head of Highways and Transport, consider extending the capability and coverage of the 'Ticketer' system used by certain operators of Council-contracted bus services to allow the generation of reports that can help show where traffic congestion affects local roads and causes delays to contracted local bus services using those roads.
Service response	The Transport Services Team is in discussions with Hungerford-based Corvia Limited, supplier of the 'Ticketer' smart ticketing system which was successfully introduced in April 2014, to introduce an extra module, under the existing call-off contract, that will allow live tracking and production of reports to help identify where delay hotspots affect tendered bus services.
Action to be taken	Introduce the Schedule Adherence module to the existing Ticketer installation.

Target deadline	End of April 2016
Evidence of achievement	Schedule adherence module added to existing Ticketer installation.
Lead Officer	Peter Walker

Recommendation (4)	Through the Head of Highways and Transport, ensure that the views of those in streets neighbouring proposed residential parking schemes are obtained in addition to those directly affected by proposals.
Service response	It is not practical to seek the views of neighbouring residents when introducing residents parking schemes in response to problems that have been identified by residents in the roads where the problems are occurring. We only proceed with a residents parking scheme if there is a consensus in favour of doing so and there are problems that must be addressed. There have been many occasions when we have tried to anticipate the knock on effects of a scheme in neighbouring streets and introduce some restrictions in these neighbouring streets at the same time but the residents concerned invariably reject this approach because they see it as an inconvenience and because they can't see a problem in their streets at that point in time. When the residents parking scheme is introduced we undertake ongoing monitoring of the effects and if difficulties do occur in neighbouring streets we then take appropriate steps to deal with these. At this point the residents in the neighbouring streets are usually supportive of what we need to do or are requesting that we take steps to address their problems. It is nonetheless the case that notices are placed on site in the streets where residents parking schemes are proposed for three weeks and advertisements are placed in the local newspapers. Consequently residents from neighbouring streets do have an opportunity to make representations when new residents parking schemes are proposed and these are taken into consideration before final decisions are taken.
Action to be taken	Continue with the current process that we adopt.
Target deadline	Not applicable.
Evidence of achievement	Not applicable.
Lead Officer	Mark Cole

Recommendation (5)	Through the Head of Highways and Transport, ensure that residential parking schemes are revenue cost-neutral (or better) to the Council after no more than 3 years operation.
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Service response	We are happy to work towards achieving a position where the income from sales of residents' permits and residents' visitor permits for residents parking schemes is self financing over a three year period. The income from these permits is already recorded on spreadsheets within the Parking team. In the future we will also record the costs of introducing the schemes on spreadsheets within the Traffic Management team so that the cost and income for each scheme can be checked every three years. It should be stressed however that these schemes are not introduced in order to generate a profit but to address parking problems in the streets concerned.
Action to be taken	Record the costs of new residents parking schemes on spreadsheets in the Traffic Management team.
Target deadline	Commence recording the costs from 1 April 2016
Evidence of achievement	The spreadsheets will be available and the incomes from schemes will be able to be demonstrated to be cost neutral or better three years after introduction.
Lead Officer	Mark Cole

Recommendation (6)	To ensure that there is sufficient parking for residents close to their own homes, through the Head of Highways and Transport, consider where necessary the extension of access to off-street parking to augment capacity in residential schemes. This may be particularly relevant for those planned residential developments with limited on-street and off-street spaces.
Service response	Overnight use of West Street car park and Pelican Lane car park is already permitted for residents from nearby residents parking zones that have insufficient parking capacity so this practise is already established in principle. Extending this to other residents would be possible if required but this should only be when really necessary and not just available to all residents of all zones. The Highways and Transport Service needs to retain discretion on when it is appropriate to offer this extension of use of its car parks based on the needs of specific groups of residents. Customers using our car parks between 6pm and 8am currently have to pay a £1 evening charge every time they park so allowing residents to park in the car parks during these hours for the small annual residents parking permit charge of £25 that currently applies would be extremely low compared to the £365 it would cost to pay to park every evening. The Council is intending to increase the charges to £30 and £2 respectively, which would result in an even larger differential cost of £30 verses £730. It may therefore be necessary to introduce a more appropriate charge for residents' permits for those residents who are permitted to use our car parks. This would be a matter for consideration by members. The use of the two multi-storey car parks, Northbrook and Kennet Centre, and Northcroft Lane

	<p>West car park between 6pm and 8am will not be possible because these car parks are locked overnight. It will not be possible for residents to have access to our car parks during the day because the capacity is required for use by visitors, shoppers, workers and season ticket holders. Residents wishing to park during the day will need to pay the same charges as all other users.</p> <p>Residential Parking for New Development is a proposed Development Management Policy that forms a part of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document that is going out for examination in public and will be scrutinised by an independent inspector. It is expected that this process should be concluded by November 2016. This documentation, which has been approved by Full Council, indicates that residential development resulting in an intensification of dwellings within an existing Residential Parking Zone will need to accommodate its parking needs within its site. The residents of the new development will not be eligible for a residents parking permit under the Residents Parking Scheme. Consequently it will not be appropriate for residents of new developments that come forward in the future to be permitted to have access to off-street spaces.</p>
Action to be taken	Continue to treat matters of insufficient capacity in certain streets or zones on the specific circumstances of each case. If the situation changes significantly going forward and large numbers of residents require use of the Council's car parks consideration will need to be given to the charging levels for this benefit and members approval sought if the charges need to be revised.
Target deadline	Not applicable.
Evidence of achievement	Good management of parking capacity in residential parking streets and zones.
Lead Officer	Mark Cole

Recommendation (7)	Through the Head of Highways and Transport, carefully evaluate the impact on operational efficiency of the introduction of paperless residential parking permits. If necessary strong consideration should be given to the introduction of technologies such as hand-held or body mounted Automated Number Plate Recognition systems for CEO's to reduce or eliminate the requirement for time-consuming data entry.
Service response	We are already in the process of going over to a paperless system for residents parking permits and residents visitor permits using our notice processing contractor. The process will commence at renewal of the Pangbourne residents permits on 1 June 2016 and will be introduced at the various renewal dates for other areas of the district until completion by 31 March 2017.

	<p>It is intended that paperless residents' visitor permits will be available for all areas by the end of June 2016. The current paper system is fairly resource hungry and going paperless will ease this situation. However it should be noted that this will not create any spare capacity within the Parking team because a parking officer will be lost from the team in 2016/17 as part of the Council's budget savings proposals. The operational efficiency of this change to paperless permits will nonetheless be carefully monitored as recommended. Paper applications will still be available for those members of the public who do not want to use the electronic paperless system.</p> <p>At present we only issue some 1,200 residents permits and some 12,000 residents' visitor permits per annum. At this low level it is not considered cost effective to invest in hand-held or body mounted Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems. There are also issues with misreads from these devices but they will no doubt become more reliable in the future as technology improves. The CEO's already have hand held computers for processing parking restrictions that have a fairly long lifespan and inputting data is not particularly onerous at this stage. However consideration will certainly be given to ANPR devices as the existing equipment comes towards the end of its useful operational life and if the numbers of transactions increase significantly.</p>
Action to be taken	Ongoing evaluation of the impact on operational efficiency of going over to paperless residential permits will be carefully monitored. The full impact will only be able to be identified when the new system has been fully operational for all areas of the district for a full financial year at the end of March 2018.
Target deadline	31 March 2018 for impact on operational efficiency. No date at this time for technologies such as ANPR.
Evidence of achievement	Improved efficiency in processing of permits and reduced printing costs of paper permits.
Lead Officer	Martyn Baker

Recommendation (8)	Through the Head of Highways and Transport, commission a study to further understand the recent growth trends, and current and future demand for car parking in Newbury. The Terms of Reference for the study should expressly include the identification of ways to increase both the capacity (initially) and (subsequently), the occupancy of on-street and off-street schemes and the use of complimentary strategies to mitigate demand.
Service response	The Newbury Parking Study was commissioned by the Council and the report produced by WSP was published in May 2013. The study looked at whether future supply of parking in the town

	<p>centre will be sufficient to meet demand and whether it is located at suitable locations. The conclusion was that as we move towards 2026, in the daytime, overall demand for parking is generally matched by supply although net spare spaces amount to less than 5% of total supply. However spatial analysis indicates that the locations of spare spaces will not be matched by demand, with a substantial number of people having to travel up to 2km to find spaces. In the evening, demand is heavily dependent on events taking place. On evenings with heavy demand, the most convenient car parks may be full causing people to use spare capacity elsewhere in the town. This may not be as attractive, potentially reducing the appeal of coming to Newbury for evening entertainment. There are a number of options that will need to be considered to plan for adequate provision for parking in Newbury town centre in the future (by 2026). These include: opportunities to increase parking stock; improved access and signage to car parks with spare capacity; bus priority measures on key corridors; personalised travel planning at new and existing developments; workplace travel planning; and improved cycle routes and parking facilities. There is not a capacity issue that needs to be resolved now but as indicated above there will be as we move towards 2026. Consequently it will be necessary to commission a further study to review and refresh the 2013 WSP report and obtain answers to the options identified. This recommendation is therefore welcomed, but it will be necessary to identify a funding source before this can be commissioned. It is not an urgent action but we do need to start the refresh process in time to obtain answers so that we can plan the way forward.</p>
Action to be taken	Commission a study to review and refresh the 2013 Newbury Parking Study.
Target deadline	Completion of study by April 2018
Evidence of achievement	Publication of an updated report identifying actions and timescales for their implementation.
Lead Officer	Bryan Lyttle and Mark Cole

Recommendation (9)	Through the Head of Highways and Transport, assess the effectiveness and take-up of the payment methods by which on-street parking is paid for. The use of a mobile telephone application should also be considered.
Service response	In all on-street pay to park locations a pay by mobile phone service is already available by registering a credit or debit card for dial up payments. Payment by text is also available and the service provider offers a smartphone application that may be downloaded by the customer. Details of payment options are shown on the Council's website and on the service provider's website. There are some locations where it is not economically

	viable to provide pay and display machines and at these locations the pay by phone service is the only payment option. Assessment of sales records show that there is a strong take up of pay by phone parking at most on-street locations.
Action to be taken	Not applicable.
Target deadline	Not applicable.
Evidence of achievement	Records already show strong sales using the mobile phone service..
Lead Officer	Mark Cole

Appendix D

Title of Report:	Scrutiny review into car parking	Item x
Report to be considered by:	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission	
Date of Meeting:	5 January 2016	

Purpose of Report: To outline the results of the review into car parking in the district.

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 15 September 2015, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) agreed to conduct a review into car parking in West Berkshire.
- 1.2 This report provides the findings and recommendations arising from the review and provides detail on its Terms of Reference and methodology.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 The Terms of Reference for the task group were to conduct a review into car parking in West Berkshire, and in particular to seek an understanding of
- The current policies for residents', on-street and off-street parking;
 - The effect (including on usage, revenue generation, congestion, displacement) of the parking policies in isolation;
 - The interrelationship between the policies and their cumulative effect;
 - The future plans for car parking provision;
 - The method and effectiveness of parking policy communication to the public;

and to then report to the OSMC and subsequently 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 from the Environment Directorate. The members of the working group were Councillors Lee Dillon, James Fredrickson (until his appointment to the Executive), Mike Johnston and Rick Jones. Councillor Johnston was elected as the Chairman.
- 3.2 The task group held the meetings outlined in the table below.

Meeting date	Meeting focus
Tuesday 27 October 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Election of the Chairman• Agreement of the scope and Terms of Reference• Briefing on<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Legal duties and powers○ Parking Strategy○ Parking policy framework○ Performance measurement○ Operating costs and income generation• Agreement of the review activity and schedule

<p>Tuesday 10 November 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking schemes in operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Locations ○ Rationale and purpose ○ Scheme establishment process ○ Method of operation • Assessment of effectiveness • Future plans • Communications strategy
<p>Monday 6 December 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulation of the recommendations

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. Findings

Background and Context

- 1) The Council’s duties and powers for the civil enforcement of parking arise from Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and come from the requirement for it to secure ‘the expeditious movement of traffic’ on road networks. The Council’s current Parking Policies are set out in its Local Transport Plan 2011-2026.
- 2) Car parking forms part of the Council’s Clear Streets Strategy, which aims to make best use of the highway. The Council, through the Strategy, aims to
 - Eliminate dangerous and inconsiderate parking on yellow lines.
 - Keep main roads clear of illegally parked vehicles.
 - Keep the roads clear for emergency services vehicles.
 - Relieve congestion by keeping unauthorised vehicles out of pedestrianised areas, bus stops, taxi ranks and disabled parking spaces.
 - Ensure that only vehicles with a valid permit are parked in the Residents’ Parking Zones.
- 3) The aims of the Strategy are achieved through the use of regulated on-street parking, off-street parking (car parks) and residents’ schemes. Compliance with the terms of schemes and other traffic regulation is carried out by 15 Full Time Equivalent Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs), who are employed by the Council and have been in place since April 2009. The Council operates in accordance with the DfT guidance ‘Operational Guidance to Local Authorities – Parking Policy and Enforcement’.
- 4) Transport policy is developed by a team in the Planning and Countryside service, whilst transport operations (including car parking), is the responsibility of the Highways and Transport service. There is close co-ordination and co-operation between the policy and operations teams, which the task group was pleased to note are under the unified direction of a single Executive Member.

- 5) Although there is a close working relationship between the policy teams in West Berkshire and Reading councils, there is scope for greater co-operation, particularly in ensuring that local transport plans are integrated, especially in the east of the district.
- 6) The types and numbers of parking offences are reported on annually and trends are analysed in order that improvements to existing schemes can be made, however performance against the specific aims of the Clear Streets Strategy is not measured. The Annual Report is published on the Council's website.
- 7) Bus punctuality and complaints, for example from the public or refuse crews, which inform assessments of traffic flow, are used as a proxy for assessment of the effectiveness of traffic parking arrangements outside of the Council's managed schemes.
- 8) The realisation of income from car parking – effectively a revenue generation target – forms part of the Highways Service annual budget. All income must be spent on highway maintenance, road safety and traffic management. Net annual income from parking is as shown below
 - Parking fines c£220k
 - Misuse of bus lanes c£60k
 - Parking charges (ticket sales, season tickets, resident permits etc) c£1.6m
- 9) CEOs issue around 8,000 penalty charge notices per year. Individual officers do not work to targets or quotas.

Residents' Schemes

- 10) Fifteen residential parking schemes, introduced and operating on common principles, are in place in Hungerford, Lambourn, Pangbourne, Theale, Thatcham, and, the majority, in Newbury. These cover 98 roads across the district, for which 1,078 permits have been issued.
- 11) Residential parking schemes were (and are) introduced in response to residents' complaints that they have been unable to park close to their properties and where they have few opportunities to park off street. Prior to their introduction, all residents in (but not around) the proposed scheme are consulted for their views, with the decision on whether to introduce them being dependent upon majority support. They are administered as 'zones' within which individual roads, or parts thereof, are then subject to the enforceable restrictions imposed by Traffic Orders. Ward Councillors are kept informed throughout the process.
- 12) The impact of on-street parking schemes is reviewed 1 year after implementation to ensure that their aims have been achieved and that there are no unintended consequences. The assessment of a scheme's effectiveness and the extent to which it has satisfied residents is assessed through the monitoring of enquiries and complaints.
- 13) The introduction of schemes can cause 'displacement' of parking to other areas and some schemes have been extended beyond their original boundaries to address this unintended consequence.

- 14) Schemes are considered to be 'relatively' costly to introduce although this is in part off-set by revenues from the annual charge of £25 per permit. There is also a small income from the visitor parking permits, with 12,640 being issued to residents in 2013/14.
- 15) Some residents' parking space is made available for wider day time use by allowing between 1 and 4 hours free parking to the general public.
- 16) In Newbury residents' parking schemes have been extended to incorporate access to off-street parking during the evening parking charge period (from 6pm to 8am the next day) when demand for on-street parking exceeds supply. The long-term viability of such use will need to be assessed given the trends in development and loss of surface level parking, for example in the Market Street car park which will be lost to the new development.
- 17) It is the Council's intention to replace the existing residents' and visitors' paper permits with 'virtual' (or electronic) permits during 2016. In order that effective enforcement can be carried out, remote access to the permit database will be provided. It is not yet clear whether this change will allow the use of scanning technology, for example Automatic Number Plate Recognition, to ensure that the use of virtual permits does not create unintended operational inefficiencies for CEO's.
- 18) The provision of parking spaces is incorporated into the wider town planning policies, with the Residential Parking Policy setting out the parking requirements for new developments. This ranges from 0.75 parking spaces for a one-bedroomed flat through to 3 parking spaces for houses of 4 bedrooms or more. The spaces may be either within the curtilage of the property or in car parking areas within the overall site.
- 19) The Residential Parking Policy also expressly states that development resulting in an intensification of dwellings within an existing Residential Parking Zone will need to accommodate its parking needs within its site. The residents of the new development would not be eligible for a residents' parking permit under the Residents' Parking Scheme. Conversion of office buildings to flats, could also create a significant demand that will not be provided for.
- 20) The Task Group was concerned to learn that only 60% of the properties in the proposed Market Street development would have allocated parking.

Off-Street Parking

- 21) The Council operates 28 car parks, the majority of which are in Newbury, which provide for 2,134 general use and 95 disabled spaces. A number of tariffs operate, with car parks being priced to promote the maximum usage. More than 500 season tickets were purchased in 2013/14, the last year for which figures are available.
- 22) A study, commissioned by the Council and conducted in 2013 by the company WSP, gives a projection that demand for off-street parking in Newbury is set to increase to such an extent that by 2025 there will be a shortfall in provision. It is the Council's aspiration to increase supply before this point, although it is not clear from

where the supply will be found and the costs are presently unknown. Given the significant changes resulting from unanticipated developments (for example office to housing conversions), new forecasts for residential developments (although offset to some degree off-set by the retention of The Wharf), officers in the Highways service are of the view that a further study to assess the impact of recent developments, current usage, future demand and potential supply would be of benefit.

- 23) A bid by Great Western Railway (to Network Rail) for infrastructure improvements around Newbury train station includes provision for an additional level on the proposed multi-storey car park at the Market Street development.
- 24) The use of the Variable Message Signs, which indicate where in Newbury off-street car parking spaces are available, have helped to increase occupancy and usage. The use of season tickets at the Northbrook multi-storey has increased usage but the capacity exists for it to be increased further still.
- 25) There is a recognised demand for additional parking in Thatcham.
- 26) It is anticipated that there will be a redevelopment of the Kennet Centre in the 10 years to 2025 which will present an opportunity for the provision of additional car parking capacity, required to meet the projected demand. Separately, the Council has a lease on the Kennet Centre car park until 2112.
- 27) The feasibility of operating a park and ride scheme in Newbury has been examined twice in recent years by the Transport Policy Task Group. Both studies have concluded that such a scheme could only operate if it were to be subsidised by the Council and is not therefore a preferred option.

On-Street Parking

- 28) The Council applies charges for on-street parking in 17 locations in Newbury and Hungerford, introduced in two phases. There are 114 spaces on Hungerford High Street which are subject to pay and display restrictions and 312 spaces around Newbury which are subject to on-street charging restrictions (142 of these are Pay by Phone only). The effect of these schemes will be assessed after one year of operation.
- 29) Although the principle of paying to park is broadly accepted – if not entirely welcomed – by the public, take up and utilisation is dependent on charges that are carefully set and which have their effect monitored. Although not measured, it is expected that the introduction of fees for on-street parking causes some drivers to change their parking habits.
- 30) An increase in the number of locations that are subject to on-street parking charges would appear to present an opportunity for the Council to generate additional revenue.
- 31) On street parking can be paid for in cash or by mobile phone.

- 32) Officers in the Highways and Transport Service are of the view that the Council's Parking Policies could be developed further and more widely communicated to the public to promote understanding of the Council's position.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 Overall the task group has formed the view that each individual aspect of the Council's involvement in car parking is being managed adequately.
- 6.2 There is however scope for a higher and more strategic view to be taken, incorporating each aspect of car parking – on-street, off-street and residential – into a holistic plan. The development of such an integrated plan, tied to articulated outcomes, should enable the public to better able to understand what the Council is aiming to achieve.
- 6.3 There are also a number of, smaller scale, recommendations that should improve specific aspects of the Council's planning and operations but overall the task group has confidence in the political oversight and day to day application of the planning and operational management of car parking.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Executive Member for Transport should:

- (1) Working through both the Head of Highways and Transport and the Head of Planning and Countryside, develop a parking plan to ensure that all aspects of the planning, implementation, development and operation of on-street, off-street and residential parking in the district is managed holistically. The plan should include, but not be limited to,
- an assessment of the needs of all likely stakeholders, including residents, shoppers, visitors and commuters (and the extent to which 'transport hubs' should be developed and operated)
 - how the identified needs will be met;
 - how that outcome will be achieved
 - the ongoing measurement and reporting of key performance information to ensure that the stated aims of the plan are being achieved
 - a communications plan;
 - how complimentary strategies (e.g., signage, public transport) can be used to offset demand;
- (2) To further embed transport planning co-operation with Reading Borough Council, through the Head of Planning and Countryside, consider the preparation and development of an integrated transport plan (to include all aspects of car parking) in the east of the district;
- (3) Through the Head of Highways and Transport, consider extending the capability and coverage of the 'Ticketer' system used by certain operators of Council-contracted bus services, to allow the generation of reports that can help show where traffic congestion affects local roads, and causes delays to contracted local bus services using those roads;

- (4) Through the Head of Highways and Transport, ensure that the views of those in streets neighbouring proposed residential parking schemes are obtained, in addition to those directly affected by proposals;
- (5) Through the Head of Highways and Transport, ensure that residential parking schemes are revenue cost-neutral (or better) to the Council after no more than 3 years operation;
- (6) To ensure that there is sufficient parking for residents close to their own homes, through the Head of Highways and Transport, consider where necessary the extension of access to off-street parking to augment capacity in residential schemes. This may be particularly relevant for those planned residential developments with limited on-street and off-street spaces;
- (7) Through the Head of Highways and Transport, carefully evaluate the impact on operational efficiency of the introduction of paperless residential parking permits. If necessary, strong consideration should be given to the introduction of technologies, such as hand-held or body mounted Automated Number Plate Recognition systems for CEOs, to reduce or eliminate the requirement for time-consuming data entry;
- (8) Through the Head of Highways and Transport, commission a study to further understand the recent growth trends, current and future demand for car parking in Newbury. The Terms of Reference for the study should expressly include the identification of ways to increase both the capacity (initially) and (subsequently) the occupancy of on-street and off-street schemes and the use of complimentary strategies to mitigate demand.
- (9) Through the Head of Highways and Transport, assess the effectiveness and take-up of the payment methods by which on-street parking is paid for. The use of a mobile telephone application should also be considered.

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.

Building Control Shared Service

Committee considering report:	Executive on 26 May 2016
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Marcus Franks
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	7 April 2016
Report Author:	Sean Murphy
Forward Plan Ref:	EX3063

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 Following an in-principle decision earlier in the year work has been underway to look at the feasibility of a shared Building Control Service formed by the merger of the current service with Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead and Wokingham Borough Council.
- 1.2 This work has concluded that not only would such a service be feasible but given prevailing market conditions it will also be desirable. The supporting information sets out the reasons for this.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive resolves
 - (1) To support the proposed shared Building Control Service with Wokingham Borough Council as lead authority as set out in the report.
 - (2) to agree to the discharge of function relating to the building control service by Wokingham Borough Council under the provisions of Section 101 Local Government Act 1972, Section 9EA the Local Government Act 2000 and Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012
 - (3) to delegate to Head of Culture & Environmental Protection authority (in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and Portfolio Member) to conclude negotiations and enter into triparty shared services agreement with Wokingham Council (as a lead Authority) and Royal Borough Windsor & Maidenhead for the provision of discharge of building control services.

3. Implications

- 3.1 **Financial:** Around 85% of the building control budget operates through a traded account which is legally required to break even on a three year rolling cycle. Fees for consideration of Building Regulation applications are set to cover 88% of surveyor costs and 80% of management and support costs as well as internal re-charges such as IT, HR, Finance etc. There are then a range of non fee-earning statutory functions which are funded from the general revenue account. These primarily relate to control of demolitions and unsafe buildings and structures. It is proposed to transfer both work streams into the shared service as one

compliments the other both on a financial and operational level.

Nationally the established split between fee and non fee earning is 80/20. By driving efficiencies we ensured that we are below the 20% figure. It is because of this efficiency that has already been derived that there is effectively no scope for saving at this time. The shared service will continue to pay the existing support service re-charge costs to West Berkshire Council. This will ensure there are no losses incurred to the Council. The rationale for the shared service is primarily around longer terms resilience and marketability. The full draft business plan incorporating the final business case is set out in Appendix C.

3.2 **Policy:** There are no implications

3.3 **Personnel:** All employees employed in the provision of a Building Control Consultancy service on 30th June 2016 will transfer to Wokingham Borough Council under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006. There are currently 8 employees in scope. TUPE preserves the continuity of employment and terms and conditions of those employees who are transferred to a new employer when a relevant transfer takes place. These employees will automatically become employees of Wokingham Borough Council on the same terms and conditions and are entitled to protection under the legislation.

3.4 **Legal:**

- 1) The triparty agreement between the Council, the lead authority (Wokingham Borough Council) and Royal Borough Windsor & Maidenhead would need to be completed. This is currently in negotiations. It should be noted that the each party jointly shares the risk including redundancies and failure of the service provision as is axiomatic of a joint arrangement.
- 2) In order to minimise this risk a robust governance arrangement would need to be agreed and enshrined in the triparty agreement.
- 3) The arrangement for the discharge of function is made under the provisions of Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 9EA of the Local Government Act 2000 and Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

3.5 **Risk Management:** There is a significant risk to the service if the proposal does not proceed. Recruitment has proved difficult and the service is currently carrying two Principal Surveyor vacancies which despite a number of attempts have not been filled. These are currently covered by agency surveyors whose costs are significantly higher than employed surveyors. It is only the fact that the Building Control Manager post has been vacant for 9 months than this difference in cost has been covered without having to raise fees and further damaging the competitiveness of the Service. Not replacing the Manager with at least a team leader is not sustainable longer term if the service is to move forward.

The ever present danger of raising fees is that management and support costs become and increasingly higher proportion of the service costs as work is lost to the private sector.

In terms of risk associated with the delivery of the shared service a significant amount of work has been carried out on the business case and it is the view of the project Board that this can be managed within the service with reduced

management overhead and the benefits of a larger service able to market, compete and attract staff or follow a 'grow your own policy'

- 3.6 **Property:** It is anticipated that staff numbers based the former West Berkshire Service will continue to be based at Market Street for the foreseeable future. This will be re-charged to the new shared service.
- 3.7 **Governance:** The Governance arrangements are set out in the Business Plan. These will consist of a Shared Service Board on which the relevant Executive Member for each participant authority will sit. This Board will receive and consider business plans, performance and finance reports and recommend to the partner authorities any change to strategic direction.

4. Other options considered

- 4.1 There are a range of options that have been considered including keeping the service in-house, creating a stand alone or mutualised service or sharing with a greater number of authorities.

The option of keeping the service in-house is not favoured for the reasons set out in 3.5 above. If this decision was taken a team leader or manager role would be required which would add to the cost of the service requiring a fee increase and damaging competitiveness. It would still remain a relatively small service and would not easily allow for the development of a marketing function and without salary review is likely to result in long term agency overheads as the prospect of recruiting remains low.

In the medium term an arms length service delivery model is considered favourable. This would allow for operation on a much more commercial basis and could deliver returns for partner authorities. However it is felt that this is best achieved in two stages. This being stage one. In due course it will be something that the Shared Service Board will consider and if it is felt appropriate will make recommendations to the relevant Executive bodies of each authority for consideration. Any future change in this direction would require further Executive approval.

As set out in the background papers the addition of a further LA service or LA services is something that could also be considered in due course once the current proposal is established.

5. Executive Summary

- 5.1 A change to the delivery model will need delegation of the Council for its existing Building Control functions to Wokingham Borough Council. Oversight will be via a Joint Delivery Board where West Berkshire Council will be represented by the relevant Executive Member.
- 5.2 These are challenging times for LA Building Control Services. It is for this reason that some 100 arrangements of this nature already exist around the Country. This issues and options have been considered by the Project Board supported by HR, Legal, Finance and ICT subgroups. The Board has concluded that the entering into a shared service arrangement represents the best way forward for all the reasons set out in this report and supporting papers.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 That the entering into a five year shared service agreement based on the business case set out in Appendix C and supporting papers presents that best option for the future delivery of the Building Control functions by West Berkshire Council.

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix A - Supporting Information
- 7.2 Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 7.3 Appendix C – Business Plan incorporating the Business Case

Building Control Shared Service – Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 Prior to 1985 Local Authority Building Control Services had full and sole responsibility for granting approvals under the prevailing building control provisions. The purpose of which was to ensure buildings were constructed in a safe and compliant manner.
- 1.2 From 1985 the provisions of the Building Act 1984 permitted the private sector i.e. those designated as 'Approved Inspectors' (AI) to undertake this work in competition with local authorities. Initially this was the provision of building control on new build houses and later commercial and industrial premises. The result of these changes was a significant amount of competition for Local Authority Building Control Services with most commercial and much the new build being lost to the AI regime. As a result of the 2008 recession AI's have made moves into the market dealing with works on existing domestic properties. This had formally been seen as less lucrative.
- 1.3 There are number of important factors that impact the competitive ability of the local authority service
 - (1) Local Authorities are required to publish their building control fees – the private sector is not
 - (2) Local authorities must accept any valid application within its district – the private sector may pick and choose the work they engage with, hence there is less interest from them in the alterations to domestic premises area as it is generally less lucrative.
 - (3) A local authority may only compete for work within its district – the private sector may work anywhere.
- 1.4 Nevertheless the local authority still has a statutory obligation to provide a Building Control Service. The Service now functions under two broad headings of chargeable and statutory although in reality all its work has a basis in law and it at all times remains the enforcement body. The chargeable work consists of fee paying applications for consents under Building Regulations - often referred to as Building Control Consultancy. This is the part of the service that competes with AI's. The second area of work – often referred to as the 'statutory functions' are funded from general revenue and consist primarily of dealing with reports of dangerous structures, demolitions and notifications from AI's of works they are certifying. The former in effect ensures that we have a core group of surveyors and infrastructure to provide the latter. – enforcement for both work controlled by LA and that controlled by private sector
- 1.5 Unlike the approved Inspector regime Local Authority building control consultancy services have to be cost neutral over any given three year cycle whilst trying to

compete with those operating in a commercial environment and able to make profits. This means that all internal re-charges have to be built in to the final fee basis.

- 1.6 Another challenge faced by LA services is recruitment and retention. This is caused primarily by the competition from the private sector in a market where there is a significant shortage of Building Control Surveyors and consequently wage competition has tended to mean that LA services have struggled to recruit. This has been compounded by a lack of investment in a 'grow your own' policy to improve the position as well as not having sufficiently 'flexible' salary structures to compete. In West Berkshire this has meant the Council has carried two vacancies out of five field staff at significant additional costs in agency fees. To give some idea of scale, almost the entire salary saving of the Building Control Manager vacancy has been spent on the additional cost of employing agency staff.
- 1.7 The loss of the Building Control Manager to a neighbouring authority in July 2015 has however given an opportunity to consider a new model of delivery under a four authority Shared Service provision.

2. Supporting Information

- 2.1 In April 2015 Wokingham Borough Council entered into a shared building control service with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Shared service's for Building Control exist all over the country and, driven by market forces, are fast becoming the norm.
- 2.2 An opportunity has now arisen for us to join the Wokingham / RBWM shared service. This would create a new service covering a population of some 470K with all the potential that that would present.
- 2.3 The case for a shared service is strong and the potential for service development stronger still. The major benefits include: the ability to carry out effective marketing of the service; better recruitment and retention through enhanced career opportunities; lack of borders and consequently cross border competition; the ability to develop areas of expertise and the scope for training of new staff and development of existing staff. All of these allow the service to compete. However the key competitive gain is the reduction in management and other overheads which allows in turn for a more competitive pricing structure. Any perceived loss of accountability can be maintained through a robust governance structure and contractual position which can also be used to ensure the Council maintains expertise and control
- 2.4 The case for remaining as a stand alone unit is relatively weak. It means higher overheads and consequentially a lost competitive position. The possibility of an improved recruitment position, whilst not guaranteed under a shared service, is significantly weakened and where this fails the ability to train new surveyors is also weakened because of the low staff numbers unable to dedicate time to this.
- 2.5 As can be seen from the Business Case the proposed 3-way shared service would not cost West Berkshire Council any more than the existing service and in the initial period of five years existing re-charges would still be maintained. Longer term these will be reduced as costs transfer to Wokingham and economies of scale lead to reduce overheads.

- 2.6 In terms of day-to-day delivery it is anticipated that the new 3-way service would continue to have a local base in the Council offices in Newbury and the associated costs would be met under the shared service re-charge arrangements. This would maintain a point of contact in the West of the County and lessen the impact on current staff whilst leaving them of part of a larger more resilient organisation.

3. Options for Consideration

- 3.1 West Berkshire Council is currently engaged as host in two successful shared services with Wokingham Borough Council; Trading Standards and Environmental Health managed through an effective joint governance.
- 3.2 There are a number of options that could be considered. Firstly there is the option of staying as a stand alone service. This is not seen as desirable for all the reasons set out above. This would also involve the need to look at how we deal with the existing recruitment and retention issues as the current agency spend is unsustainable without putting up the fees and damaging competitiveness. If we were not to replace the manager like-for-like then a different model could be considered that may reduce some overhead but it would still not deal with some of the other issues that the service faces.
- 3.3 Finally there is the option of considering alternative delivery models such as a staff mutual through a company structure. However given the immediacy of the challenge and the fact that any such model is likely, if developed, to need to be based on a larger unit this is an option more appropriate to a Shared Service Governance Board to put forward for consideration by the member authorities in due course.

4. Proposals

Contract

- 4.1 It is proposed that with effect from the 1st July 2016 West Berkshire Council enters into a 3-way Shared Building Control service with Wokingham Borough Council, and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, hosted by Wokingham Borough Council.
- 4.2 The initial term of the arrangement will be for 5 years with one year's notice to be given to terminate. The governance will be through a Joint Service Board which will consist of Member representation from each authority party to the agreement.
- 4.3 It is proposed that the existing staff employed within the West Berkshire Council Building Control Consultancy will transfer under the provisions of the regulatory framework set out in the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). This equates to 2 FTE Team Leaders, 3 FTE Building Control Surveyors and 2.2 FTE Technical Support Staff. The 2 FTE vacant Surveyors posts would be deleted (as these will need to be recreated by Wokingham) along with the Building Control Manager post.
- 4.4 In terms of governance the Executive Member in whose remit Building Control falls will have a place on the Joint Service Board. The delegated and contract responsibilities for West Berkshire will remain with the Head of Culture and Environmental Protection as set out in the Scheme of Delegation.

Discharge of function

4.5 Under the provisions of Section 101 Local Government Act 1972 local authorities can make arrangements for another local authority to discharge functions which are not the responsibility of the executive. Under the provisions of Section 9EA of Local Government Act 2000 and Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012:-

- enable arrangements to be made for the discharge of functions, which are the responsibility of a local authority executive, by another local authority or an executive of another local authority (Regulation 5)
- makes provision in connection with the discharge of functions jointly by two or more authorities where any of those functions are the responsibility of an executive of a local authority (Regulation 9)
- provides for variation of such arrangements where the function in question ceases to be an executive function. (Regulation 10)

5. Conclusion

5.1 The Officer recommendation is that the proposal for a shared service represents the best option in the circumstances for protecting and allowing the Building Control service to develop. The proposal is at worst cost neutral and will result in no diminution of the Service. In some areas such as the ability to respond out of hours to reports of dangerous structures and the development of areas of expertise the Service will be enhanced.

6. Consultation and Engagement

6.1 The staff within the Building Control Service have been consulted and updated throughout the period that the project has been developed. A number of working groups have been set up to oversee the feasibility stage and to assist in building the business case. These include legal services, ICT, HR and Finance. All of their comments are reflected in this report.

6.2 The officers in the West Berkshire Building Control Service have a clear understanding of the need to develop the Service in this direction and are generally supportive. Any questions arising are being dealt with as part of the TUPE consultation process. The Trade Unions views have been inputted into the TUPE process that will be finalised should the proposals be agreed.

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: X No:

Wards affected:

All

Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aims:

X SLE – A stronger local economy

X MEC – Become an even more effective Council

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

X MEC1 – Become an even more effective Council

Officer details:

Name: Sean Murphy
Job Title: Trading Standards and Building Control Manager
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Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity.

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Name of policy, strategy or function:	Shared Building Control Service
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	
Owner of item being assessed:	Steve Broughton
Name of assessor:	Sean Murphy
Date of assessment:	

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	No	New or proposed	/No
Strategy	No	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes
Function	Yes	Is changing	Yes
Service	Yes		

1. What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy, strategy function or service and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To develop a more robust and effective Building Control Service by sharing the service with three other local authorities.
Objectives:	To provide sustainability of the service and improve its effectiveness
Outcomes:	
Benefits:	A strong and effective high quality service.

2. Note which groups may be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively 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	What might be the effect?	Information to support this

Affected		
Further Comments relating to the item:		
None		

3. Result	
Are there any aspects of the policy, strategy, function or service, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
Will the policy, strategy, function or service have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	No
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered ‘yes’ to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two 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:

Date:

Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, the Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) for publication on the WBC website.

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**BUILDING CONTROL SOLUTIONS
SHARED SERVICE
BUSINESS PLAN
2016/17**



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**



**THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
WINDSOR AND
MAIDENHEAD**



**West Berkshire
COUNCIL**

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1.0 Background

1.1 Introduction

The Building Control system in England exists to ensure buildings are designed and constructed in accordance with the Building Regulations and associated legislation. It ensures building works comply with technical construction standards contained within the national Building Regulations, through the approval of submitted drawings and the inspection of building works on site.

Building Control is a statutory service to be provided by all local authorities to enforce the Building Regulations within their area. Only the local authority has the obligation to take enforcement action over non-compliance with Building Regulations, and this cannot be delegated to a private sector provider. As a statutory service, it remains a core function or competence of an authority's responsibilities; irrespective of the method of service delivery adopted.

It is a legal requirement for anyone undertaking a building project needing Building Regulation approval, to seek permission before commencing it. This is known by the submission and approval of a Building Regulations application and is a separate process to planning permission. Regardless of size, use or type of project, anyone receiving/needing approval has the choice of approximately 180 private sector providers, an Approved Inspector (AI); or the public sector, through the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) service. Whilst an AI may choose who they work for and how much they charge, the local authority must deal with any and all applications at cost only; even if the service is outsourced. Building Control was the first competitive local government service and, to date; still remains unique, as the only regulatory function exposed to full market competition from private sector providers.

Local Authorities, on occasion, have to exercise their powers and resort to litigation to enforce the regulations to protect the public. They are the only body who can do so, even on projects controlled by Approved Inspectors. Local Authority Building Control surveyors try to adopt a more collaborative approach, play a more active role in the design process, giving advice to designers and builders at the earliest stage to avoid flawed design concepts and intervening when they see potential contraventions, ensuring compliance through guidance and negotiation. This importantly provides a far more cost effective and customer friendly way of achieving compliance.

Building Control plays a key role in protecting homeowners and the public. There are numerous cases where homeowners' properties have been blighted by substandard design and construction and there are also many cases where neighbouring properties have also been undermined.

In addition to the 'fee-earning' Building Control service (checking plans and overseeing construction work), the Local Authority Building Control service also provides other significant life safety functions for the Local Authority by responding to and managing dangerous structures. These can include:

- Advising the fire service on matters relating to the structural safety of the building
- Dealing with structural damage resulting from e.g. vehicular impact or storm damage
- Buildings and structures affected by floods.

The Building Control shared service assists in the achievement of their partners respective corporate objectives and priorities. These are often based around ensuring strong sustainable communities which are vibrant and supported by well-designed development; through their core responsibilities for building inspections, enforcement, some licencing and dangerous structure legislation.

2.0 Context

2.1 Risks, Issues, Benefits and Opportunities facing the Building Control Shared Service.

There are a number of challenges, risks, benefits and opportunities for the local authority shared Building Control service; that are relevant to all of the partner local authorities, the shared service and to the customer/resident as follows:-

Issues

Financial constraints	Public sector Building Control faces increasing pressure from private sector Approved Inspectors both in terms of competition for market share and staff resources.
Staffing	Local Authorities are finding it more difficult to hold onto their best staff who are able to earn higher salaries by transferring to the private sector or other Local Authorities, creating pressure elsewhere in the public sector. Reducing budgets, limiting staff development and restricting income generation opportunities will have a negative effect on the resource available to the service. The Local Authority Building Control service has thrived in a competitive environment for over twenty years but an ageing workforce and recent changes in market activity are putting added stress on the service.
Commercial skill and Marketing	Local government Building Control services competing in a competitive private sector market do not always have the commercial skills or marketing resources to effectively compete in this arena, which may affect future sustainability. If resources are stretched, there is often little appetite to invest time and effort into what is sometimes viewed as unproductive marketing/business development work, which will result in more pressure on a stretched resource.
Responsiveness to change	The inability to respond quickly to changes and a reactive often bureaucratic local government culture is a disadvantage in a commercial world where speed of response is often critical.
Commercial versus Regulatory	The majority of work undertaken by Building Control departments is of a commercial nature. The Local Authority is paid by professional clients and householders, to advise on and certify compliance with the Building Regulations. This requires them to vet plans and inspect work on site throughout the construction process. In addition there are other aspects of Building Control work which are not funded by an applicant: these

	include protecting the public from dangerous structures, assisting the emergency services with building related incidents, safety at sports grounds, safety at public events, control of demolitions and increasing workload of keeping all property related notifications such as the Competent Person Scheme and Initial Notices in a retrievable format
Customer/citizen delivery	Building Control provides a number of public and consumer protection activities which could be put in jeopardy by reductions in resources and skills to deliver the work

Risks, Benefits and Opportunities

Risks	Benefits and opportunities
Reduction in income – failure to maintain or increase market share will reduce income opportunities leaving Local Authorities still being required to provide non-fee earning services and an increased allocation of overhead costs. Financial analysis typically considers current income levels, compared with alternative options; however, this does not take account of market trends. Projected income levels need to be considered	Self-financing – The Building Control service is different to many Local Authority services because it is largely self-financing through charging for its building regulation services
Sustainability – Public Sector Building Control faces increasing pressure from private sector Approved Inspectors both in terms of competition for market share and staff resources. Failure to move and adapt with changing markets creates risks to market share, recruitment and as a result the provision of future delivery	Sector competitiveness – Building Control is in the unique position of being the only regulatory service which is open to private sector competition. Whilst competition impelled some Councils to improve their customer focus, Local Authorities still retain approximately 70 % of the market, which would indicate a good level of customer satisfaction
Lack of investment – Inability to inject investment and industry expertise into the service to drive improvements, efficiencies, innovation and additional revenue potential	Customer satisfaction – Local Authorities provide a good service which is valued by its customers. Although exposed to competition for almost 30 years, Local Authorities retain an average of 70% market share
Reputation – If the private sector becomes a dominant provider of services in the region, the authority	Fee Earning – In the vast majority of cases most Local Authorities want to maximise their “Fee earning” work, to

<p>will have less control overall on service and quality of building work in the locality but will still retain responsibility for enforcement and non-fee earning elements of the service</p>	<p>help lower their overheads and ultimately reduce any cost burden on the Local Authority. As such, investment in marketing the service is vital, especially to attract good repeat clients, who ultimately are more profitable for the Local Authority from a commercial perspective. Any marketing costs incurred are a legitimate part of the cost of service provision and can be recovered through fees</p>
<p>Safety – The competitive nature of the Building Control service has put pressure on pricing and consequently on the level of service and oversight of works in progress</p>	<p>Innovation and Improvement – increasing financial pressures and customer expectations are encouraging councils to look at innovation and alternative options for delivery of their services, to make efficiencies and improvements in delivery.</p>
<p>Encroachment – if neighbouring authorities are providing ‘poor’ services there is the potential for private sector competitors to increase market share not only in the territory of that Local Authority but also by expanding into neighbouring areas</p>	<p>Economic cycles – In times of economic growth, the demand for Building Control services will rise. With the right model there are opportunities not only to maintain/grow market share, but to also ensure that it is best placed to take advantage in the increased demand. The cost of change is likely to be lower at times of high demand, and limited staff resources.</p>
<p>Economic cycles – In times of economic downturn, the demand for Building Control services will decrease. The ability of the service to offset the cost to providing the service for local authority partners will reduce</p>	<p>Additional services – Opportunities exist for well-resourced Local Authorities to provide additional profitable fee earning services (not covered by the charges regulations) which can reduce the cost of delivering non-fee earning work or even provide a surplus</p>
	<p>Looking to alternative delivery – Central Government funding cutbacks is forcing Councils to evaluate the options for delivery of their services. The shared service model is an opportunity for Building Control services to work together to compete effectively against private sector providers and provide additional</p>

	services with income generation potential
	Cost reductions – although most Local Authorities are running much leaner services, there are likely to be opportunities to reduce costs through merging services with other Local Authorities, taking advantage of the resulting economies of scale and adoption of agile working practices

3.0 The Building Control Requirement

3.1 Scope and Functions

The Building Control shared service delivers two complimentary services that impact on the health and safety of people living, learning, working or visiting the area.

- The building regulation service which consists mainly of checking building plans, the inspection of building works in progress and appropriate enforcement to ensure all relevant building work complies with the building regulations.
- A public protection service which includes both inspections and information, for example; dangerous structures, demolitions, unauthorised works, competent person schemes and the initial notices register.

Statutory obligations

Building Control services are generally provided under the following powers:

1. The Building Act 1984
2. The Public Health Acts 1936 and 1961
3. Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982
4. Town and Country Planning Act 1990
5. The Building Regulations 2010
6. The Building (Approved Inspectors etc.) Regulations 2010
7. The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010
8. The Local Government Act 2003

The building control services within each local authority team are broadly aligned in terms of the scope of services offered by them. Wokingham is also responsible for the administration of scaffolding licenses.

The scope and range of services and activities which would be broadly delivered by the Building Control shared service include the following. A full list is contained in **(Appendix 1)**:-

:

- Registration of full plans submissions
- Full plans checking
- Processing building notice applications
- Processing regularisation applications
- Site inspections

- Issuing completion certificates
- Enforcement
- Land charge enquiries
- Scaffolding licenses
- Inspecting dangerous structures
- Responding to demolition notices
- Administration of initial notices
- Consultation and provision of information

The Building Regulation function, as provided by a local authority, must charge to recover the cost of providing the service. Within legislative restrictions, it may re-invest a small surplus into service improvements, but it is not permitted to make a surplus and use it within general funds. An efficient and effective Building Control service will help to minimise the possibility or likelihood that the authority will have to subsidise it from general funds.

4.0 Background to Building Control Solutions

4.1 Establishing Building Control Solutions

In order to address the challenges and maximise the opportunities addressed above, in April 2015; Building Control Solutions was set up as a shared service on behalf of two authorities (Wokingham Borough Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead).

The current economic climate and a competition from the private sector for staff and work and increased technical demands, increasing resilience through partnership is a key driver, along with delivering efficiencies and improving customer service. Building control consultancy services have become increasingly competitive with significant growth in the number of private sector companies offering building control plan assessment and inspection services. The future resilience of the two local authority building control services was a key consideration in the decision to move towards a shared service delivery model.

Nationally, standalone local authority building control services teams are struggling to maintain a staffing level that provides the specialist skills and knowledge required to deliver a high quality, customer focussed service. This is becoming increasingly difficult as experienced building control surveyors retire or leave local authority building control to join approved inspectors (private building control bodies). In response, authorities have often decided to join forces with others to create a critical mass, target efficiencies, and actively seek to maximise income generating opportunities.

Building Control Solutions was founded on the extensive knowledge, experience, integrity and professionalism of the existing two Building Control teams; to deliver a first class service to a population of over 300,000 covering some 136 square miles within Berkshire.

The current service is of good quality and generally well regarded by service users. This quality derives from the experience, professional competence and in depth knowledge of the current teams who exhibit a genuine motivation to provide a high quality customer focussed service. The staff providing this service across all three authorities, will TUPE transfer to Wokingham Borough Council; ensuring that their skills and abilities are retained.

4.2 Extension of the shared service

The shared service between Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM) was expanded in July 2016 to include West Berkshire Council (WBDC). The three way shared service agreement has been set up under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972. Wokingham Borough Council hosts the shared Building Control service on behalf of all three authorities who delegate their decision-making functions to the shared service. This extended agreement runs for a five year period until July 2021.

The expanded service offers a sustainable opportunity to strengthen and improve the building control service and sets out clear, specific and realistic measures by which participating authorities may achieve significant, recurring, long term efficiency gains. It also tackles the issue of lack of capacity in certain areas (for all authorities) by creating a critical mass of capacity, coupled with management arrangements that will enable resources to be deployed effectively and efficiently; and the adoption of better practices and processes.

Another advantage of the three way shared service is that it will begin to address the issue of recruitment and retention in local authority building control services by creating an organisation that offers greater opportunities for career progression through a career grade for Building Control Surveyors. The configuration of the new service also accommodates local authorities' desire for flexibility in the delivery of additional services and other potential fee earning opportunities.

The business case for the establishment of the three way building control shared service is contained in **Appendix 2**. It sets out the financial position/modelling of the three way model, and the benefits and risks of the model.

4.3 Working arrangements for the shared service

All staff working within the shared service have been TUPE transferred to WBC, who hosts the shared service. Initially, the WBC and RBWM team continue to operate from WBC's existing offices at Shute End. The existing offices at WBDC are retained for their current staff to continue to operate from. All support services (e.g. HR, Finance, legal etc.) to the shared service are provided by the host authority WBC.

Initially, the structure of the existing teams has not changed (Figures 1 and 2 in [Appendix 3](#)); and continue to operate on an administrative area basis. This has been organised around existing local authority administrative boundaries. However, over time it is expected that the structure of the shared service will need to develop and change operationally ([see Section 5 - Priorities and objectives for the shared service](#)). This will develop as the service's processes and practices are integrated between area offices, responding to the need for operational efficiencies and also to deliver an improved IT infrastructure. (See objectives below).

4.4 Governance

The service agreement ensures that all parties share the risk and the benefits from the collective use of resources. The Building Control Shared Service Joint Board made up of the elected portfolio holder and another LA elected representative from each of the three authorities. A full summary of the responsibilities of the Board is set out in [Appendix 4](#). This will meet annually to oversee the operation of the shared service and to review the following:

- [Standards of service delivery and performance](#). These are set out in [Appendix 5](#)
- Fee income and costs (on a true cost delivery basis)
- Treatment of trading surpluses or deficits
- Action plan for business growth and development

An annual report will be issued by the shared service and published on the Council's website. This report will set out the matters discussed and agreed by the Building Control Shared Service Joint Board in respect of the matters set out above.

To address operational matters and to enable oversight of the three way shared service by all parties, the Building Control Panel, made up of a representative officer of each of the partner authorities and the Building Control Operational and Commercial Manager will meet on a quarterly basis. The role and responsibilities of the Panel are set out in [Appendix 6](#).

There are a number of factors which will affect the delivery and development of the shared service that are outside of Council control. These include the economy, statutory changes, and the level of competition and the availability of trained and experienced staff. The Board will therefore need to adopt a flexible approach to enable it to adapt and address the relevant challenges facing the shared service over time, dependent upon the conditions which it faces. However, any significant proposed changes to the fundamental

principles or operation of the shared service or the contract will be referred to the partner authorities' relevant decision making body for consideration.

5.0 2016/17 Objectives and Priorities for the Building Control Shared Service

5.1 SWOT analysis

There are three main objectives of the expanded shared service which have been set for the first operational year for the service. These are set out below and an action plan has been prepared to achieve these objectives (Appendix 7). However, it is not expected that these objectives will be fully achieved within this timescale. Work will continue to achieve these objectives during operational years two and three of the shared service:-

- Improve recruitment and retention of staff
- Adoption and improved efficiency of processes and practices
- New business development

The drivers for change relate to securing a robust and sustainable service which is able to operate in an increasingly competitive environment. This is not a case justified solely by cost savings and efficiencies within the service, but it is recognised that any case for change must at least demonstrate that the investment necessary will be financed from achieved gains in efficiency and savings. In addition, the scale of the existing individual services lacks the capacity and resilience to deal with seasonal peaks in demand, sickness or the loss of staff.

The provision of a generic service across the three areas also removes unnecessary duplication in the management structure, as well as management processes, e.g. planning, service development and innovation, staff scheduling, training, specialism's, and the underlying systems / business applications.

A review of the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities affecting the service has been undertaken. The results from this SWOT analysis, has helped to inform both the priorities and objectives for the service and the content of its Action Plan for 2016/17.

SWOT analysis for Building Control Solutions –

Potential Strengths	Potential Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expert technical & regulatory knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small team - Resource issues• Resilience of service

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local & site knowledge • Approachability / friendly team • Provide free advice • Design team approach • Offer a same day inspection service • Develop and maintain good relationships with customers • Fire Expertise • Being Public Sector - Trusted • Operates for the public good • Access to Records • Being part of the council (e.g. Planning Intelligence) • Contacts inside Local Authority & Public services (e.g. coordinated approach) • Being part of LABC • Awards • Level of service and value for money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ageing Staff Profile / Succession Planning • Being part of the Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ They don't understand competition ➤ Tarrred by others' poor performance ➤ Calls routed via customer services • Poor IT systems • Lack of IT support • Part Time team – Lack continuity • Lack of consistency between Local Authorities • Poor performance of other LABCs • Some culture issues – poor customer service from some surveyors • Little commercial / business development expertise • Losing staff to competitors – inflexible pay structures • Disheartened poor team morale
<p style="text-align: center;">Potential Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic upturn • Increase in construction activity • Build team resource to offer 	<p style="text-align: center;">Potential Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased competition from AI's • Possible competition from other Local Authorities • Losing more staff to

<p>additional services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer pre-application design advice • Increase marketing & business development • Make better use of client information • Build personal relationships • Target key market segments • Establish major/special project team • Market fire risk assessments • Offer additional services to Local Authorities 	<p>competitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential loss of commercial work • Financial cuts within the Local Authority • ‘Race to the bottom’ pricing structure • Building Control is an invisible service • Lack of support from Local Authority • Can’t operate commercially <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stopped from talking to clients ➤ Can’t pay market rates ➤ Little commercial understanding in Local Authorities • Ageing team profile • Few trainees
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5.2 Staffing

Recruitment

The organisational structure charts (Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix 3) reflect the following developments; the current RBWM/WBC service structure and the arrangements on the date of commencement of the shared service between RBWM/WBC and WBDC. This largely reflects the existing staffing structures within the three authorities; prior to their joining the shared service. Prior to the shared service, each authority had a number of vacancies across their own service; with all finding it increasing difficulty to recruit and retain suitably qualified permanent staff. WBDC does not have a manager in place; WBC has appointed a manager to oversee the whole operation of the shared

service. Therefore, the shared service arrangement has already realised cost savings from the vacant manager post.

The shared service arrangement would naturally need to reflect current workload and income levels but also need to remain self-financing, widen income streams and plan for future business development. The Building Control Operational and Commercial Manager post provides leadership and delivery of the shared service. In addition, oversees day to day management and the future strategic development of the shared service; and will be responsible for delivering the service, in line with the objectives set out below and to implement the Action Plan (Appendix 7) during 2016/17. This will enable these objectives to be achieved. Below the shared service manager are a number of team managers, who are responsible for the operational running of their respective teams within the service.

Vacant surveyor posts (five FTE) will need to be recruited to; and this is the first target for the three way shared service. A number of these posts are currently covered by agency surveyors employed on short term contracts. These are considerably more expensive to maintain than employing permanent staff. Appointing to these posts on a permanent basis would therefore be more cost efficient and resilient. These vacancies are placing pressure on the existing permanent staff within the authority.

It is vital, that the shared service prioritises competitive recruitment and retention packages; to ensure that the service can achieve the other objectives set out below. This will be informed by both benchmarking the service with other local government organisations and the private sector in order to offer competitive packages to staff. This may have implications for the costs that have been assumed in the financial model (Section Six) for the three way shared service.

Retention – opportunities for training, development and specialisms

The age profile of council building control teams highlight major issues of service continuity. The aging demographic of technical staff and current shortage of qualified surveyors are putting increased pressure on local authority building control services, who find it difficult to match the remuneration packages on offer in the private sector. Building control is not immune to the financial pressures affecting councils and numbers of staff have reduced in line with re-structuring and workload decline. When considering a potential structure, consideration must be given to succession planning, work profile (predominantly domestic) and cost of delivering the service. Fully qualified and experienced surveyors are needed, however, a

number of aspects of the role do not warrant such levels of expertise and therefore consideration should be given to graduate/assistant/trainee levels within the structure.

Developing new Building Control staff through apprenticeships and graduate trainees will be an important part of service development; addressing succession issues that the industry, and particularly local government is currently suffering from. Nationally, there is a lack of staff joining the profession. The ability to employ and effectively support trainees, when considering the current age profile of the profession, the ability to 'grow your own' is therefore seen as an imperative.

It will also give each council access to a greater breadth and depth of specialist/professional/technical expertise and capacity and increase the opportunity for staff development, by allowing staff to work across a broader range of areas, or to become more specialised as appropriate. In addition, there is a need to develop and train staff in specialism's that meets the specific needs of customers i.e. fire risk assessors, Standard Assessment Procedure assessors and acoustic testing.

5.3 Rationalisation and Integration of processes and practices

Whilst there is relative consistency across all partner organisations in respect of the role and activities of their individual building control services, there are inevitable operational and administrative differences. In order to achieve the efficiencies within the financial model, to allow the cost of the service to reduce to each local authority, and to make it more competitive with the private sector, it is essential that processes and practices are reviewed and adapted to ensure that they remain efficient and consistent across the whole shared service.

The shared service will prevent the need for duplication across the three authorities e.g. guidance notes, procedures, scheme of charges etc. It will improve and standardise processes. Business processes will undergo rigorous analysis and streamlining leading to improved and standardised operations, efficiencies and alignment of best practice.

Some authorities are currently more efficient than others in their operational processes and procedures. This is largely dependent upon their respective investment in IT (see below). The joining together of three local authority services allows for the adoption of best practice between the authorities and

the opportunity to undertake a lean process review to improve efficiency and effectiveness. However, the resource needed to undertake this lean review together with the day to day operational needs of the service, especially in light of the staff vacancies identified above; is considerable and will take considerable investment in both time and financial resource (see IT below). However, this remains an important objective of the shared service to ensure that it is able to develop its future business, increase its efficiency and improve competitiveness within the current and future market place.

5.4 IT integration

Whilst, there are two database management systems in use between the three authority partners, there are also inevitable differences in the operational use and approach between each of these systems. WBC uses Civica; whilst, RBWM and WBDC use the IDOX database management system. In order to achieve the standardising of practices and practices necessary to help improve business efficiency, it will require a single IT operating system to be developed across the whole shared service.

Any integration and investment in a single IT database and information system is critical to the future operational and business efficiency of the service, along with ensuring customer satisfaction when helping with enquiries. However, there will be significant costs and time involved in an archive data transfer, irrespective of the choice of system. This will require financial investment and IT technical and administrative support from WBC as host. It is anticipated that any trading account surplus could be re-invested back to help fund this further development work; but this will be dependent upon the future financial success of the shared service.

It is not expected that the existing IT systems and their respective databases could be fully integrated into a single system within the first financial year of the service operating. This is due to the costs and resources required to implement such a single system. However, it is considered that there are other operational improvements that IT could help facilitate the shared service within; during its first financial year of operation. This could include adopting more efficient working practices and assisting with business development opportunities.

Working across two geographical office locations, could limit the achievement of full integration between working processes and practices. This could also inhibit the development and achievement of a common shared service culture. However, further investment in mobile IT devices could help to facilitate some

development in common practices and improved efficiencies. Some of the partners already have facilities for mobile working; these could be adopted and rolled out across the whole of the shared service with some financial investment. Other improvements and efficiencies which can facilitate effective working and to improve customer experience; can be achieved through targeted IT investment.

5.5 Website integration/development and on-line services

A professional and customer friendly web site is vital to improve service delivery including digital services along with being useful for marketing and promotional purposes. Three separate websites would not assist customers to find information easily and quickly in a single location. Developing an integrated website, using best practice from all three services, is therefore of importance to simplify customer access to services. This website should include online access to as many services as possible, including payment integration, a single process for online submissions and guidance material.

Digital delivery is the way forward for local government, in response to this, a comprehensive number of online forms are already available at West Berkshire, along with integration with payment systems, where relevant; these offer a range of services including the facility to; request building control documents, charge quotes, book site inspections, make building notice applications for electrical and replacement windows, demolition applications, need general help and assistance, enquire about the need to make a Building Regulation application, give website feedback and report a dangerous structure. These on-line forms cover a range of enquiries and service requests which offer 24/7 access to the service and help to encourage channel shift from telephone contact. This offers an opportunity to improve the existing WBC website; which will offer; self-help services to existing customers attract potential customers and also generate more business for the service.

However, these activities will require support from the WBC IT service and some financial investment. It is expected that this can be partially achieved within the first financial year and that the service can procure some additional support to help facilitate this. Again, this will have an impact on the financial model and any surplus within the trading account at the end of the financial year.

5.6 The competitive marketplace

What sets Building Control apart from other Local Authority services is that it operates in competition with private sector providers. The cost to an Authority of running its Building Control service is diluted by maintaining a high market share. Conversely if market share is lost to private sector providers, the Authority bears a greater proportion of the overhead costs. Perversely, losing a project to a competitor, not only results in the loss of income to the Authority but it then incurs the additional cost of registering and administration of the Initial Notice (IN) submitted by their competitor for which they do not receive a fee.

Intensive competition is also causing a downward movement in the fees being charged between competing private sector Building Control services, potentially reducing the level of service being offered to customers. This issue is currently affecting many Local Authority Building Control (LABC) services across the country. In order to set and maintain competitive charges, a Local Authority Building Control service must remain efficient by continually scrutinising and minimising its operating costs, maintaining effective service delivery to customers and continuously improve quality to fight back against its competitors. In addition, it must seek to widen its income streams by offering additional services to attract and retain customers; whilst balancing this with customer expectation.

As a result, it is a priority for the building control shared service to devote sufficient resources to effectively market and promote the service, to minimise any further reduction in market share and stabilise and increase their future income levels. On its own this is difficult to achieve, each partner authority must also take responsibility to facilitate this. In particular, this is essential to focus on the homeowner; who as the client is often unaware of decisions being made on their behalf, by their agent or builder. This choice is often made to the benefit of the agent or builder's contractual relationship rather than their client's.

Early intervention is therefore important, for example, at West Berkshire; written correspondence including a specific fee quotation is provided, to the homeowner on receipt of any planning application. This allows the homeowner to compare, early on, any alternative quote that they may receive, through their agent or builder. Furthermore, targeted literature has been developed to highlight specific service benefits to individual customer groups i.e. homeowners, agents and builders. This would be useful to utilise across the partnership. Following receipt of the planning application, a telephone call is made, to the homeowner, to provide an enhanced service by offering early

support and advice and also assistance with making an online application. This also helps to raise awareness of other services which may be available to the homeowner.

At West Berkshire again, the planning lists are targeted with service introduction approaches made; however, this is often on a case by case basis rather than a coordinated approach. In addition, potential leads can be passed to national partners, for example; Noise.co.uk, who have specialist acoustic knowledge that can complement the building control service and thus give the potential to secure applications. The issue of business development and marketing is also a cultural shift from “traditional” building control and one that is not universally adopted by team members.

5.7 Business development

One important issue, already identified within all three teams, is the affect that increased competition is having on both workload and income levels. A business development role would be an important benefit that could be included within any support team resource, which would help to encourage and secure business; in both the domestic and commercial market sectors, increase Partner Authority income levels and widen income streams. It will be important to diversify the future role of the building control service into ‘added value’ services; thus increasing potential income. A greater critical mass with a bigger team will create this opportunity for business development and achieve a resultant increase in market share.

A larger and more sustainable shared service has the ability to develop the skills of its existing staff and also widen opportunities for specialisms. The increased efficiencies identified above, will allow the service to become more competitive and help it to attract new business opportunities. Improved operational efficiencies and effectiveness will also both help to retain existing and attract new customers to the service. In order to maximise this potential benefit, the service must market itself to attract business; a goal which individual small local authority building control services have not had the capacity to undertake effectively to date. As business grows, other aspects of the service and its competitiveness and ability to attract staff will also improve and develop.

A consultancy operation may also be developed and resourced, which can offer additional discretionary services including; energy, fire risk and access audits; together with SAP, EPC and SBEM calculations, as well as acoustic testing. This may be offered to both the internal and external marketplace.

Further development of the internal market may also help to deliver a wider range of services to the partner authorities. Not only will this allow for the delivery of high quality, value for money services to our partners; but also help to develop opportunities for additional skills within existing staff.

Continuous business improvement is essential to maintain and develop business in a competitive environment. A Quality Management System (QMS) is a formalised system that documents the structure, responsibilities and procedures required to achieve effective quality management, improve efficiency and control costs; whilst helping it to serve as a business improvement tool. It also ensures that services meet or exceed existing customer demands, whilst acting as a marketing tool when tendering for proposed projects. Building Control Solutions has recently sought and achieved the extension of scope of its existing Quality Management System to ISO: 9001:2008 to cover both authorities. It is intended that this will be further extended to include the operational processes and procedures of WBDC.

5.8 Branding

Combining three separate services into a shared service arrangement requires a clear and recognisable branding scheme to be developed. This is in order that existing customers are not confused, and can also easily identify it and are presented with a professional image. Work has been carried out to present “Building Control Solutions” as the new name for the service; along with an agreed logo. This will be used for marketing and promotional purposes. It is extremely important for the new service to have a separate identity from its participating authorities, in order for all staff to feel they are ‘pulling together’ for a single entity. The creation of a new dynamic brand will help to attract new business and foster a sense of belonging and commitment amongst staff.

6.0 Future opportunities/aspirations

All three partner local authorities face further major financial challenges and continuing local government funding reductions, making it ever more important to reshape and redesign our services; to improve service effectiveness, efficiency and to release potential savings to contribute towards each Council's financial target.

Whilst this business plan focuses on the pulling together of an initial shared arrangement between the three authorities, the longer term aspiration is to continue to grow the shared service. In addition to moves to fully integrate business operations over time (unifying IT platforms and potential single site working), and marketing of the shared service offering to compete more closely with the private providers to win a bigger market share, there could be other opportunities to include additional partners including local authorities. A larger and more established service can also be offered to other local authorities outside of Berkshire, looking for a solution to their own building control requirements.

6.1 Strategic and operational benefits

Below is a summary of the benefits of a larger Building Control Service:-

Strategic benefits

Benefit	Measure
Ensure continuity of service and improve the quality of service to residents through a strengthened team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer Satisfaction
Ensure a service that is competitive with the private sector but retain the local presence, accountability and expertise that residents expect of their building control service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased activity• Higher market share
Increased opportunity and capability to bid for and win additional business i.e. contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased activity• Higher market share
Enable the development of a full range of ancillary value-added services to meet the needs of residents and businesses, and which benefit the Councils as new sources of (non-ring fenced) income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New services
Modest financial savings from combining and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget monitoring

sharing resource in the short-term	
Further efficiency savings from moves towards greater systems and operational integration in the medium-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget monitoring • MTFP
Longer term opportunity to use alternative vehicles to deliver a bigger shared service and to return greater benefits back to partnering authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New models • New Agreements
Creation of the opportunity to work more closely in other areas of shared services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth in shared services

Operational benefits

Benefit	Measure
Increased resilience – all three councils have relatively lean teams, the capacity of which are being severely affected by competition from the private sector providers (Accredited Inspectors) in terms of recruitment and retention.	Improved performance KPIs. Less temporary staff.
Potential to increase the level of skill-set available to each organisation – sharing of technical skills and 'bigger picture' thinking.	Scope of Building Control work or projects completed.
Availability of specialist skills across all authorities, leading to increased efficiency through the potential for one Building Control Surveyor / specialist to complete the same work at all 4 authorities	Scope of Building Control work or projects completed. Sharing of specialists.
Sharing of Building Control best practice so surveyors are better placed to provide advice to clients prior to issues arising.	Appraisals – monitoring of officer skills. Client Satisfaction with level /type of service.
Increased potential for cross working with other regulatory services to develop a more joined up approach (e.g. compliance and enforcement).	Improved performance KPIs.
Greater scope to create a structure that will give career development opportunities to staff and which will help make the service more attractive for staff recruitment and improve staff retention.	Lower staff turnover. Less use of agency staff.

6.2 An Alternative Model of Service Delivery

In addition to growing the shared service model, the service will consider opportunities for an alternative vehicle to maximise income and ensure that this can be used directly benefit the partner local authorities. Options for consideration include outsourcing, transferring the service to a commercial trading company, mutual or social enterprise. Further investigation will be required into the advantages and disadvantages of these alternative models once the three way shared service is up and running.

7.0 Summary

LABC faces a number of challenges to retain a robust and sustainable service which is able to operate in an increasingly open competitive environment. Over recent years, this has influenced decreasing workloads and staff recruitment issues for all of the partner authorities. There are a number of challenges, risks, benefits and opportunities for the shared service which have been identified and considered in the formation and setting out of the service's objectives and priorities, these have informed the content of its Action Plan for service delivery during 2016/17.

The main focus within year 1 is to address staffing issues through the recruitment and retention of staff. In addition, work will be undertaken to review the service's operational processes and procedures with the help of IT; to help realise further efficiencies and improve its competitiveness. Further, marketing will be undertaken to help enable the business to grow, develop and expand into other areas. During the year, further work will be undertaken to investigate the possibility for adopting an alternative future model of delivery for the service.

The setting up of a three way shared service will place the partner local authorities to secure the future success of their Building Control teams to serve their customers and address the challenges faced. This approach will also help to maximize the opportunities available to the local authority building control service.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - The Building Control Requirement

BC Service requirement (Functions)

The service activities fall within three main areas.

Statutory fee earning work

This is regulated by the Building (Local Authority) Charges Regulations 2010 and includes:-

- Pre-application advice service.
- Receipt / validation and registration of Full Plans, Building Notice and Regularisation applications.
- Vetting applications, undertaking statutory consultations, seeking additional information and checking amendments.
- Undertaking structural / fire and other engineering checks as required.
- Accepting, rejecting or approving applications.
- Undertaking site inspections and the issue of completion certificates on satisfactory completion of the work.
- Reversion applications – where work being undertaken under the supervision of an Approved Inspector reverts back to the local authority.

Statutory non-fee earning work

These are statutory functions which a Council has to provide and fund even if the service is outsourced.

These include:-

- Building Control enforcement – taking formal enforcement action for contraventions of the Building Regulations
- Investigating reports of unauthorised works
- Approved Inspector legislation – Registration of Initial Notices, Final Certificates
- Applications involving works undertaken for disabled people
- Control of demolition work
- Taking action in respect of incidents involving reported dangerous structures
- Competent Person Scheme administration
- General enquiries from the public

Building Control is charged with maintaining records of all building works carried out within the Local Authority area, which is made available to prospective buyers of properties via land charges searches; to assure them that works have been carried out in accordance with the Building Regulations. They do this, not only for work they have directly supervised; but they are also required to keep records in a retrievable manner for works undertaken by Approved Inspectors and Competent Person Schemes. This work forms part of the service's 'non-fee earning' functions.

Other Building Control functions – non fee earning

These include:-

- Local land charge responses and search enquiries from solicitors
- Advice to other local authority services and councillors
- Involvement in corporate initiatives and reports
- Surveying and inspection work to assist other Council services e.g. Housing, Education, Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Property and Planning
- Liaison with Planning Officers and Planning Enforcement team

Appendix 2 - Three Way Shared Service Business Case

Assumptions

- The new shared service will undertake the same level of building control activity across the three authorities as currently (to maintain market share)
- No activity growth assumed to give the most prudent position for the business case. In reality, it is expected that the shared service will compete more proactively to win new business
- The proposed shared service structure to be able to service the same activity with some reduction in overall headcount through sharing of management and administration roles, and through non-recruitment of existing vacancies
- Chargeable and non-chargeable costs of running the shared service to be split by rolling three year average weighted activity drivers
- Treatment of overheads:
 - The underlying overheads of the combined shared service is targeted to reduce by 25% by year three into the arrangement compared to starting overheads currently being charged to individual services
 - This reduction will be shared by the non-hosting authorities, with an effective 34% reduction in each authority by year three to reflect the reduction in non-hosts' required support for the shared service
 - The expected overhead reduction is less in the early years to recognise that it may take a bit of time to eliminate or reassign overheads within each authority
- Non-chargeable costs:
 - from the shared service will be charged proportionately between authorities on the split of non-chargeable activity each year
 - An annual adjustment will be made each year to redistribute and equalise any one-off year one benefits between the parties
- The shared service will have three transactions to make with each authority each year:
 1. Charge underlying allocated share of non-chargeable costs of running the service
 2. Charge or credit the adjustment to redistribute/equalise year one benefits
 3. Credit agreed overhead allowance for each authority
- Start-up costs to be shared equally by all parties
- No anticipated redundancy costs as there are currently vacancies in most establishments.

Financial analysis

Activity as a driver

Projected (and future actual) costs and benefits in the shared service will be driven by three year average weighted activity data:

Activity Split	Wokingham	RBWM	West Berks	Total
Chargeable	85%	83%	81%	83%
Non Chargeable	15%	17%	19%	17%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Non Chargeable share by Authority	32%	34%	34%	100%
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Allowable overheads

The shared service is expected to reduce its combined overheads by 25% within the first three years of operation. Each authority will be assigned a reducing overhead 'allowance' by the shared service to ensure all parties work towards eliminating overheads within each authority as a result of the economies of sharing.

O/H Allowance	Wokingham*	RBWM	West Berks	Total
Current O/H	151,977	150,000	90,522	392,499
2016/17	151,977	137,194	82,794	371,965
2017/18	151,977	119,266	71,975	343,218
2018/19	151,977	98,777	59,610	310,364

* Underlying overheads for WBC. WBC will also get £19k additional overheads to cover extra costs of hosting.

Share of non-chargeable costs

Shared service non-chargeable costs compared to current starting point, with benefits 'equalised' between the parties based on weighted activity:

	Current 2015/16	2016/17	Benefit Year 1	2017/18	Benefit Year 2	2018/19	Benefit Year 3
Wokingham	107,000	107,307	307	108,963	1,656	106,991	(1,973)
RBWM	107,000	107,307	307	109,054	1,747	106,973	(2,081)
West Berks	81,944	82,252	307	84,028	1,777	81,912	(2,116)
	295,944	296,866	922	302,046	5,180	295,876	(6,169)

General Fund Impact on each Authority

The net benefit for each authority's General Fund is the total of the equalised non-chargeable cost reduction plus any under or over achievement in each authority's action to reduce its own overhead target for each year. Assuming each authority does deliver annual reductions to their own overheads down to their respective overhead allowances, the net cost/(benefit) to their General Funds will be:

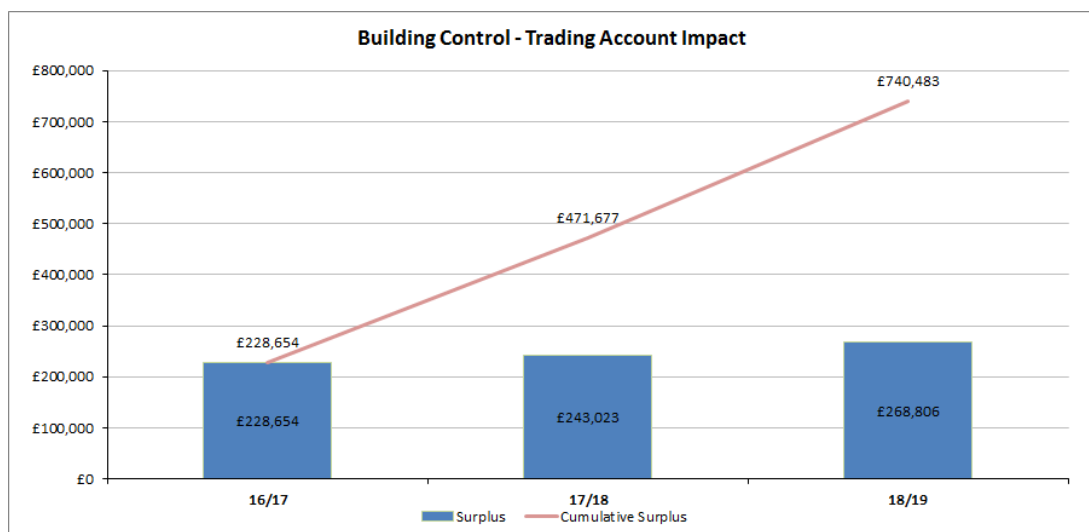
Net GF Benefit	Wokingham	RBWM	West Berks	Total
2016/17	307	307	307	922
2017/18	1,656	1,747	1,777	5,180
2018/19	(1,973)	(2,081)	(2,116)	(6,169)
3 Year Benefit	(9)	(27)	(32)	(68)

For the expanded three way shared service, it is therefore expected that there will be very limited savings to be achieved in phase 1 upon implementation. The position will essentially be cost neutral for the General Fund (being 17% of the shared service).

The real benefit to the Council's financial position in Phase 1 is the development of the business to allow it to retain an in-house service at a reduced cost relative to having to 'buy-in' the service from an external provider.

Trading Account impact

It is projected that the Trading Account will have a surplus of £740k by the end of year 3, which the shared service will hold on behalf of all three authorities. As this is ring-fenced, it cannot be distributed to the authorities.



However, reinvestment of some of the surplus will enable the shared service to grow and move towards an alternative model of delivery more quickly and effectively, and this will provide the real opportunity for the service to benefit the Council and its partners financially in the medium to longer term. Also, this surplus will allow the Council to legitimately reimburse itself for the project costs associated with business growth and development and setting up any further delivery model.

Note: all financial year figures above are calculated on a full 12 month year. If the shared service starts part way through the year, the impact will be reduced proportionately.

Sensitivity and limitations

The financial analysis in 6.2 should be interpreted with some care and may be subject to considerable sensitivity; should the underlying assumptions show any major variation:

- As nearly all services currently have vacancies and have struggled to recruit to fill these, it may be unrealistic to expect to compete with the private sector to fill vacancies in the new shared service at current WBC salary levels.
- The shared service will possibly have to offer pay higher up the salary level than assumed, recruiting at the top end of salary grades and offering appropriate market supplements where necessary. This will reduce the gross savings and the potential contributions back to the General Fund identified in 6.2.
- The financials also assume no growth in market share over time. As one of the objectives of the shared service is to be more competitive in the commercial market to build a more resilient service, the Trading Account ring-fenced surplus will have to be reinvested in the service or passed back to customers in terms of lower fees for building control services. Being more competitive in this way should actually improve market share over time and increase business that the service undertakes, making it necessary to also re-invest the remaining gross savings back in the Building Control service to grow the team's capacity and develop new services to meet the demand.

Key benefits/disadvantages of 3 way shared service proposal

Key benefits of proposal	Key disadvantages / risks
Increased resilience across the 3 Building Control teams. This is seen as the biggest benefit of the shared service.	Potential major short term disruptions to service during the transition period due to a number of key vacancies already in the

	establishments and the possibility that existing staff may also leave (income protection for a year only under TUPE, staff not wanting to relocate, etc.).
Increase efficiency of service - benefit accrued from adopting best practice from all teams, enabling greater specialism, and through the more versatile and flexible deployment of staff.	These benefits may be lessened where different systems are used and until they can be unified onto a single platform.
Reduced costs will result in a reduction of cost to the organisation.	Albeit, only 17% of the total saving will be a direct benefit.
Trading account projected to be in surplus by £740,483 over the first 3 years.	Unable to distribute any of the Trading Account surplus back to partners in short term, but Phase 3 of the project will explore the merits of adopting alternative vehicles for the shared service which may allow some of the surplus to be returned.

Appendix 3 – Service Structure

Figure One – Two way organisational structure (WBC and RBWM)

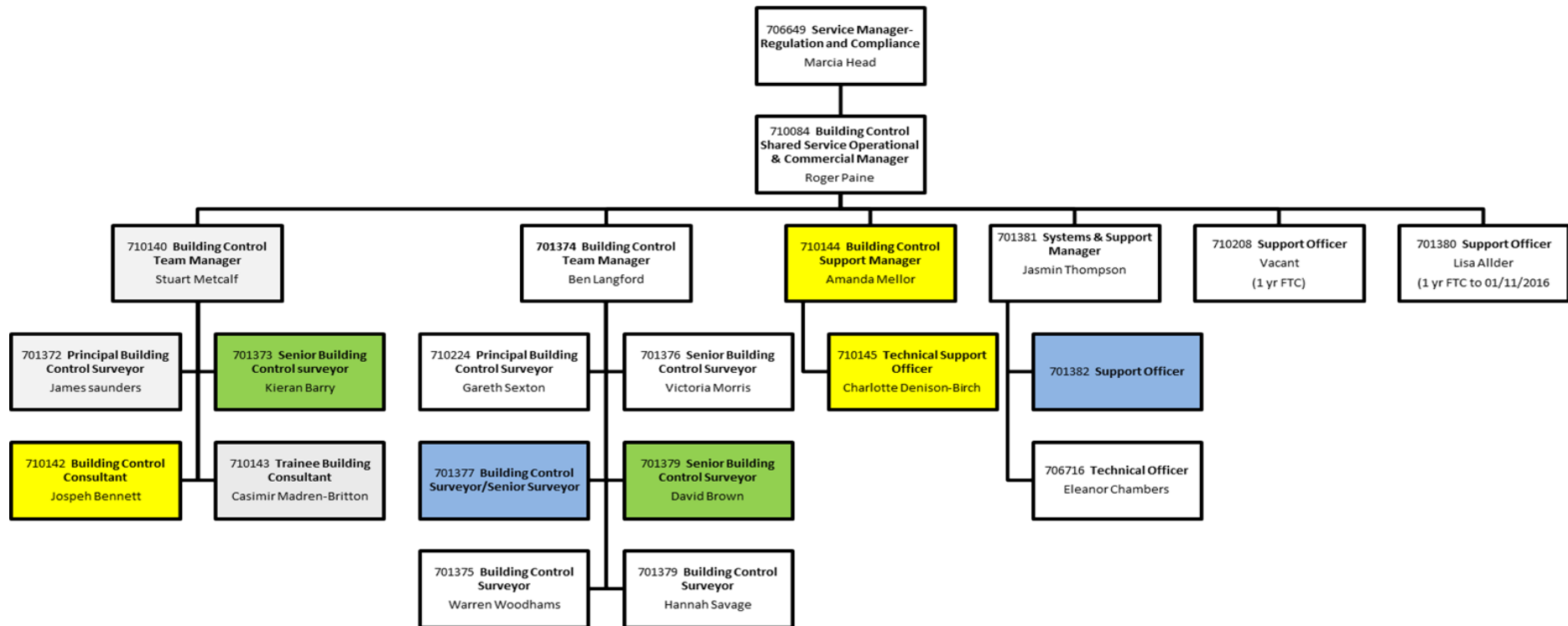
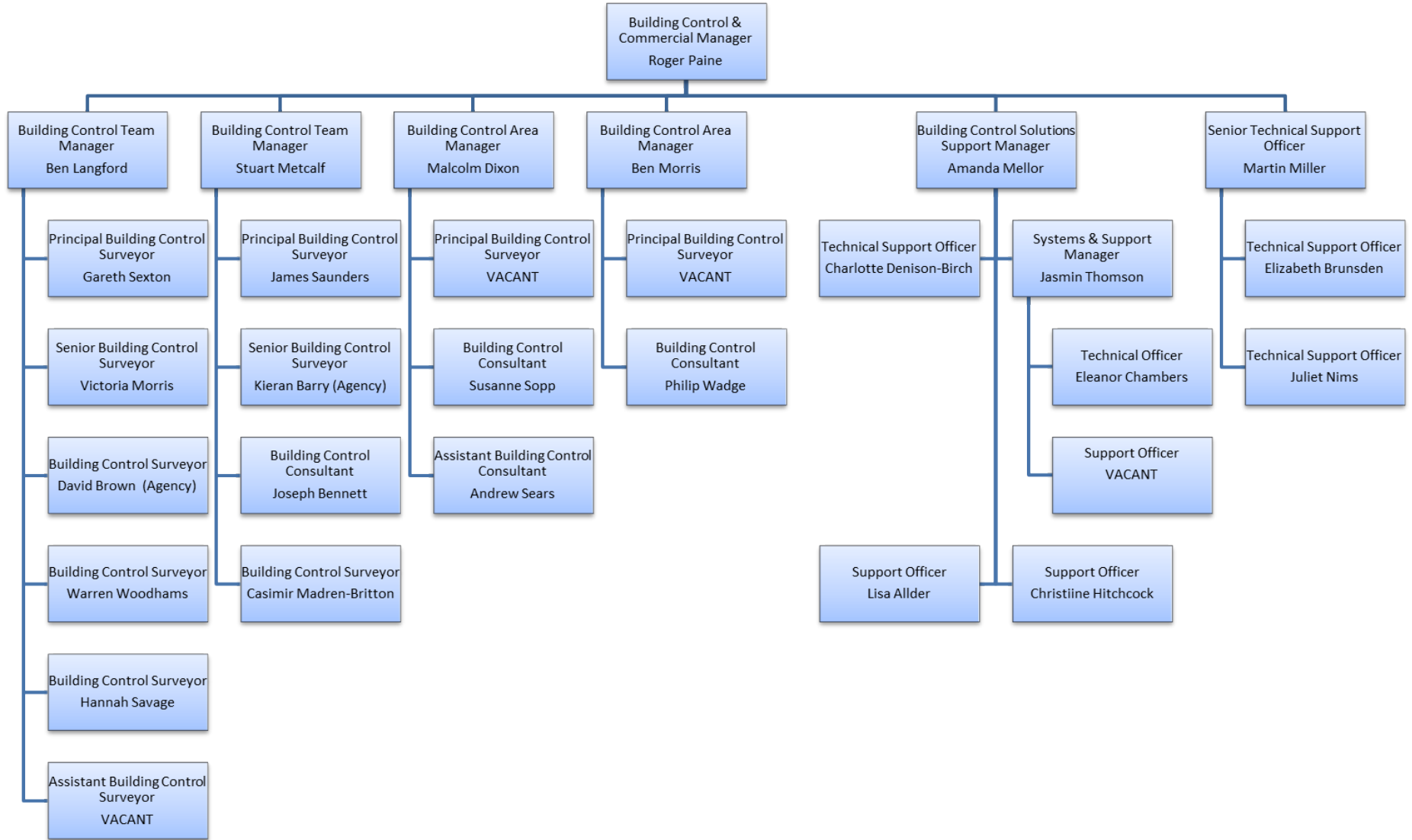


Figure Two – Three way organisational structure (WBC, RBWM and WBDC)



Appendix 4- Responsibilities of the Building Control Board

Board members (from each authority party to this agreement) :

- Executive Member and additional member as nominated by partner authority

The Board will review and agree, as appropriate, the following:

- Fees and charges
- Endorse the Building Control Business Plan
- Endorse the Building Control budget for approval through each Council's committees
- Work levels for the following financial year
- Strategic objectives for the shared service
- Key priorities for the shared service for the next financial year - action plan
- Agree variations to indexation applied to the payment for non-chargeable services
- The resulting provisional annual charges to each of the Parties
- An annual report which will be available for consideration through the overview and scrutiny arrangements in each participating authority
- Year-end adjustments from the preceding year
- Any aspects of these joint arrangements which require consideration and review
- The commercial position including the levels of fees charged to third party clients and the forecast level of income to the Service
- Any commercial or operational risks to the Service and the mitigation being taken to accommodate those risks
- The cost of non-chargeable services
- Key Performance Indicators

Appendix 5 – Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators		
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retaining a self-financing Building Control Service • Percentage of market share retained by the local authority building control service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Domestic (based on number of applications) ▪ House builders (based on the number of dwellings) ▪ Commercial (based on the number of non-residential applications) 	
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register and acknowledge all submitted applications within 3 working days of receipt • Percentage of Building Control Full Plans applications examined within 15 working days of receipt • Issue a decision notice within the relevant statutory time period • Percentage of site inspections carried out on the same day of request • Issue a completion certificate within 5 working days of satisfactory inspection on site and receipt of any necessary services certificates • Issue a Demolition Counter Notice within five working days of receipt of a Notice of Intention to Demolish • Percentage of dangerous structure incidents visited on same day of report (within 24 hours) 	<p style="text-align: right;">75%</p> <p style="text-align: right;">70%</p> <p style="text-align: right;">100%</p> <p style="text-align: right;">80%</p> <p style="text-align: right;">85%</p> <p style="text-align: right;">100%</p> <p style="text-align: right;">100%</p>

Customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of customers expressing their overall satisfaction with the service provided Percentage of Building Regulation applications received on-line 	<p>90%</p> <p>30%</p>
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Appendix 6 – Role of the Review Panel

Panel members (from each authority party to this agreement):

- Client officer and /or Deputy client officer of each partner local authority and the Building Control Commercial and Operational Manager

The Panel will monitor and review as appropriate, the following:

- Fees and Charges
- Agree variations to indexation applied to the payment for non-chargeable services
- Work levels and activity
- Fee income against forecast
- Progress against priorities and action plan
- Any commercial or operational risks to the Service and the mitigation being taken to accommodate those risks.
- Progress against Key Performance Indicators

Appendix 7 – 2016/17 Action Plan for Building Control Solutions

3 Way Shared Building Control Service - Action Plan 2016/17

v2.0 04/03/2016

Activity	Est Start Date	Est Finish Date	Responsible*	RAG	Status	Comment
Develop an IT Implementation Strategy for Building Control Solutions			WBC IT service	GREEN	Not complete	Meeting with IT on 8th March 2016 to start to develop strategy
Review operational needs and requirements for a single IT database management system within the Building Control Solutions team			WBC IT service	GREEN	Not complete	As item 1 above
Review existing IT systems and agree to unify data management systems by implementing a single business IT platform across all four authorities. This will incorporate a public access module and a workload and performance management information module			WBC IT service	GREEN	Not complete	Redesigned/engineered processes supported by standard business applications could deliver efficiencies in the future service.
Develop a data migration strategy to intergrate four individual datasets into a single IT database and information system accessible through one business platform by all Building Control Solutions staff. This is critical to ensure the future operational and business efficiency of the service, along with ensuring			WBC IT service	GREEN	Not complete	As item 1. This is critical to enable the service to work efficiently and efficiently as a single business unit.

customer satisfaction when helping with enquiries						
Develop a ERDMS strategy to integrate data/images from 4 authorities into a single electronic document management system accessible by all Building Control Solution staff			WBC IT service	GREEN	Not complete	As item 1 above
Develop an electronic 'on receipt' application scanning service			WBC IT service	GREEN	Not complete	As item 1 above
Determine both the hardware and software required to ensure Technical/Professional staff are able to effectively access all back office functions and any information whilst on site			WBC IT service	GREEN	Not complete	As item 1 above
Implement a single mobile working IT platform to fully utilise use of mobile working technologies. This will allow surveyors real time on site access to review and update the database management system, produce on site correspondence for customers and to also view application information/images. The introduction of mobile working will allow for much greater flexibility in the surveyors inspection service. Over the next year surveyors will be able to see their daily workload on their tablet at the			WBC IT service	GREEN	Not complete	As item 1 above

beginning of the day, go directly to site from home, view plans electronically and maintain their site inspection records updating the back office system in 'real time'. This will reduce staff time on site, enable greater numbers of inspections to be carried out and deal with enquiries including dangerous structures, demolitions and unauthorised works at the point of origin.						
Undertake a lean review of the existing processes and systems within each individual Building Control service to improve working practises. Business processes will undergo rigorous analysis and streamlining leading to improved and standardised operations, efficiencies and alignment of best practice			CL	GREEN	Not complete	Head of Service to implement
Develop a suite of service on-line forms incorporating payment integration where relevant to improve 24/7 access to BC services and improve customer self-help			WBC IT service	GREEN	Not complete	As item 1 above
Develop and launch a micro website for Building Control Solutions			WBC IT service	GREEN	Not complete	As item 1 above
Continue to develop a single series of homeowner customer guides for the service			RP/AM/BL/SM	GREEN	Not complete	Work currently progressing during 2016
Develop a single series of small builder guides for			RP/AM/BL/SM	GREEN	Not complete	Work currently progressing during 2016

the service						
Develop a Building Control Solutions Customer Panel made up of primary customer groups to provide feedback and assistance with regard to future service developments and initiatives			RP/AM/BL/SM	GREEN	Not complete	Work will commence once recruitment to Business Development Manager and Officer posts are undertaken in new structure
Develop a marketing strategy to further build upon the Building Control Solutions brand. This will target both retaining existing and attracting potential customers; by maximising internal markets, offering additional services, seeking further fee earning opportunities and where possible increasing market share. This will also foster a sense of belonging and commitment amongst staff. This will require a clear and recognisable branding scheme to be developed, that creates an identity for the service, projects a professional image and is one which customers recognise			RP/AM	GREEN	Not complete	Work will commence once recruitment to Business Development Manager and Officer posts are undertaken in new structure
Review service performance framework and develop a single monthly management review report for workload and performance within the service			RP/AM	GREEN	Not complete	Customer Charter implemented. Work progressing on single management review report for Spring 2016 completion
Develop and implement recruitment campaign for vacant surveying posts within the team			RP/BL/SM	GREEN	Not complete	Recruitment process for remaining vacant RBWM/WBC posts being undertaken

Investigate and develop a mobile phone application for booking site inspections			WBC IT Service	GREEN	Not complete	As item 1 above
Surveyors to move to a full remote access capability to work from home			WBC IT Service	GREEN	Not complete	As item 1 above
All processes, procedures, standards and ways of working standardised on 'best practice' to ensure consistent approach and experience of the customer. Opportunity to re-engineer processes during the standardisation and documentation to secure efficient, lean, service			CL/RP/AM/BL/SM	GREEN	Not complete	Continuous business improvement and development is essential to maintain and develop the business in a competitive environment. All processes within the three authorities will be reviewed in line with Wokingham's and streamlined to deliver an effective, efficient and consistent service
Review and integrate WBDC and RBC processes and procedures into the service's existing ISO:9001 QA system to maintain accreditation			RP/AM/BL/SM	GREEN	Not complete	To be implemented during 2016 as services approach need for re-accreditation
Undertake a review of existing dangerous structure out of hours duty officer services provided to individual partner authorities			CL/MH/RP	GREEN	Not complete	Review being undertaken with regard to RBWM service and future issues for WBDC and RBC
Review operational requirements for those elements of the service locally based and identify those elements of the service which will benefit from co-location and centralisation			AM/BL/SM	GREEN	Not complete	As item 28 below
Undertake a review of the existing service's management and administration bases in order to continue to maintain an effective Building			RP/BL/SM	GREEN	Not complete	Review and submit report to Partnership Board meeting

Control service						
Review the service's existing partner clients within the LABC Partner Authority Scheme and consider opportunities to build further relationships and increase income from potential customers			BL/SM	GREEN	Not complete	Pending review by Business Development Officer - new post to be recruited to within new structure
Review existing contracts and procedures for obtaining structural engineering services with a view to undertaking a re-tendering process for a single contract for the service			RP/BL/SM	GREEN	Not complete	Tender process to be followed

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Agenda Item 10.

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