

Meeting of West Berkshire District Council

Tuesday, 4th May, 2021

Summons and Agenda



To: All Members of the Council

You are requested to attend a meeting of
WEST BERKSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
to be held via Zoom

on
Tuesday, 4th May, 2021
at **7.00 pm**

Sarah Clarke.

Sarah Clarke
Service Director – Strategy and Governance
West Berkshire District Council

Date of despatch of Agenda: Monday, 26 April 2021

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).

2. **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

The Chairman to report on functions attended since the last meeting and other matters of interest to Members.

3. **ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22 (C3994)**

To elect the Chairman for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

4. **APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2021/22 (C3995)**

To appoint the Vice-Chairman for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.



West Berkshire
C O U N C I L

Agenda - Council to be held on Tuesday, 4 May 2021 (continued)

5. MINUTES

The Chairman to sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 2 March 2021.

(Pages 7 - 32)

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To remind Members of the need to record the existence and nature of any personal, disclosable pecuniary or other registrable interests in items on the agenda, in accordance with the Members' [Code of Conduct](#).

7. APPOINTMENT OF THE EXECUTIVE BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE 2021/22 MUNICIPAL YEAR (C3996)

The Leader of the Council to announce the composition of the Executive for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

8. HEALTH SCRUTINY (C4008)

To consider a proposal to form a new Health Scrutiny Committee, reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission, which would be responsible for scrutiny of Public Health and NHS services in West Berkshire.

(Pages 33 - 50)

9. HEALTH SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS ACROSS THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, OXFORDSHIRE AND BERKSHIRE WEST INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM (C3933)

To consider the proposal to form a new, mandatory, joint committee with health scrutiny powers to consider matters affecting patient flows across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System geography.

(Pages 51 - 68)

10. APPOINTMENT OF AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES FOR THE 2021/22 MUNICIPAL YEAR (C3997)

To consider the appointment and allocation of seats on Committees for the next Municipal Year in accordance with the duty under Section 15 of the Local Government Housing Act 1989 and to agree the Council's Policy Framework for 2021/22 as set out in paragraph 5.20 of the report.

(Pages 69 - 82)

11. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2021/22 (C3993)

To consider and agree West Berkshire Council's nominations to the following Outside Bodies:

Agenda - Council to be held on Tuesday, 4 May 2021 (continued)

- Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
- Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel
- Local Government Association General Assembly

(Pages 83 - 88)

12. MONITORING OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE - 2020/21 (C3992)

To provide an update on local and national issues relating to ethical standards and to bring to the attention of Members any complaints or other problems within West Berkshire.

(Pages 89 - 100)

13. LICENSING COMMITTEE

The Council is asked to note that since the last meeting of the Council, the Licensing Committee has not met.

14. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Council is asked to note that since the last meeting of the Council, the Personnel Committee has not met.

15. GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Council is asked to note that since the last meeting of Council, the Governance and Ethics Committee met on 19 April 2021. Copies of the Minutes of this meeting can be obtained from Legal and Strategic Support or via the [Council's website](#).

16. DISTRICT PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Council is asked to note that since the last meeting of the Council, the District Planning Committee has not met.

17. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

The Council is asked to note that since the last meeting of the Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission met on 20 April 2021. Copies of the Minutes of this meeting can be obtained from Legal and Strategic Support or via the [Council's website](#).

18. JOINT PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The Council is asked to note that since the last meeting of the Council, the Joint Public Protection Committee met on 31 March 2021. Copies of the Minutes of this meeting can be obtained from Legal and Strategic Support or via the [Council's website](#).



19. **COUNCIL STRATEGY REFRESH 2021 (C4056)**

To approve the refresh of the Council Strategy.

(Pages 101 - 146)

20. **PLACE DIRECTORATE RESTRUCTURING COSTS (C4059)**

To seek authority for redundancy payments to be made that may result from the internal recruitment process to fill the new Service Director, Development & Regulation post identified within the Senior Management Review 2019.

(Pages 147 - 152)

21. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RECOMMENDATION: That members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items 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.

Part II

22. **PLACE DIRECTORATE RESTRUCTURING COSTS (C4059)**

(Paragraph 1 – information relating to an individual)

(Paragraph 2 – information identifying an individual)

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

(Paragraph 4 – information relating to terms proposed in negotiations in labour relation matters)

To seek authority for redundancy payments to be made that may result from the internal recruitment process to fill the new Service Director, Development & Regulation post identified within the Senior Management Review 2019.

(Pages 153 - 162)

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Stephen Chard on telephone (01635) 519462.



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DRAFT

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

COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 2 MARCH 2021

Councillors Present: Adrian Abbs, Steve Ardagh-Walter, Peter Argyle, Phil Barnett, Jeff Beck, Dennis Benneyworth, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Jeff Brooks, Jeff Cant, Hilary Cole, James Cole, Jeremy Cottam, Carlyne Culver, Lee Dillon, Lynne Doherty, Billy Drummond, Clive Hooker (Vice-Chairman), Nassar Hunt, Gareth Hurley, Owen Jeffery, Rick Jones, Alan Law, Tony Linden, Royce Longton, Ross Mackinnon, Alan Macro, Thomas Marino, David Marsh, Steve Masters, Geoff Mayes, Andy Moore, Graham Pask (Chairman), Erik Pattenden, Claire Rowles, Garth Simpson, Richard Somner, Joanne Stewart, Martha Vickers, Tony Vickers, Andrew Williamson, Keith Woodhams and Howard Woollaston

Also Present: Nick Carter (Chief Executive), Sarah Clarke (Service Director (Strategy and Governance)), Tess Ethelston (Group Executive (Cons)), Susan Halliwell (Executive Director - Place) and Joseph Holmes (Executive Director - Resources), Stephen Chard (Principal Policy Officer), Christine Elsasser (Democratic Services Officer) and Moira Fraser (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Andy Sharp

Councillor(s) Absent:

PART I

52. Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman announced that the number of events had been reduced this year due to the Covid pandemic but a few events had taken place via Zoom which included:

- Community Santa and Giving Tree – these events had been well supported.
- Annual Recognition Event – The Chairman said that was extremely proud of all the staff who had managed to keep services functioning during this difficult time. He specifically mentioned the Waste Services Team who had ensured that there was very little impact on waste collections during the year.
- Community Champion – The Chairman stated that this had been the best year for this award with over 90 people commended. All those people who had been nominated were winners in his view and he thanked all those who had helped out in their communities at this difficult time. The ceremony had been live streamed on YouTube so more people could see the event as it happened.

The Chairman also informed Members that the annual related party forms had been posted today. The forms would have written guidance attached to assist in completing the form which would relate to the period 1 April 2020 to the 31 March 2021 and need to be returned by the 12 April 2021.

53. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2020 were approved as a true and correct record and the Chairman gave his authority for his electronic signature to be attached to these Minutes.

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54. Declarations of Interest

The Monitoring Officer announced that in respect of items 17 and 18 (Capital Strategy and Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24 and Revenue Budget 2021/22): all Members had completed an Application for a Grant of a Dispensation in relation to “any beneficial interest in land within the Authority’s area.” The Monitoring Officer had previously granted the dispensation to allow all Members to speak and vote on this item.

There were also a number of personal interests declared in relation to agenda items and these were set out below and would be published on the Council’s website.

Councillor	Description
Abbs, Adrian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenham Parish Councillor • Trustee of Stroke Care Newbury & West Berkshire (Stroke Care get a grant from the Council and Councillor Abbs was appointed in a personal capacity)
Ardagh-Walter, Steve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thatcham Town Councillor • Member of the Kennet Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee (Council appointee) • Member of Henwick Worthy Joint Management Committee (Council appointee)
Argyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of Willink Joint Advisory Committee (Council appointee)
Beck, Jeff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBC’s Representative on the Board of Readibus • WBC’s Representative on the Board of Volunteer Centre West Berkshire • Trustee of the Corn Exchange Newbury Ltd • WBC appointed Member of the Henwick Worthy Joint Management Committee Board • WBC appointed to the Kennet Leisure Centre Committee
Benneyworth, Dennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Brooks, Jeff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Bridgman, Graham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stratfield Mortimer Parish Councillor • Investment in Abundance (Community Municipal Investment)
Culver, Carlyne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments in Abundance and had bought some of the WBC Community Municipal Investment bonds
Doherty, Lynne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in Abundance (Community Municipal Investment)
Hurley, Gareth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pangbourne Parish Councillor
Jeffery, Owen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thatcham Town Councillor • Substitute on Henwick Worthy Joint Management Committee (appointed by Thatcham Town Council) • Member of Kennet Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee (Thatcham Town Council appointment) • In receipt of a pension from the Royal Berks Pension fund

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Jones, Rick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purley on Thames Parish Councillor
Law, Alan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berkshire Pension Fund Advisory Panel (Council appointee)
Linden, Tony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Longton, Royce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burghfield Parish Councillor
Mackinnon, Ross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of Willink Joint Advisory Committee (Council appointee)
Marino, Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tilehurst Parish Councillor
Marsh, David	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments in Abundance and had bought some of the WBC Community Municipal Investment bonds
Masters, Steve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustee for the Donnington Hospital Trust (West Berkshire council Appointment) • Trustee of Eight Bells • Trustee Mobile Phone Museum
Rowles, Claire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustee on the Board of the Citizens Advice Bureau (Council appointed)
Simpson, Garth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Somner, Richard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holybrook Parish Councillor • Employed by The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
Vickers, Tony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenham Parish Councillor • Newbury Town Councillor • Investment in WBC Abundance bonds

55. **Petitions**

There were no petitions presented to the meeting.

56. **Public Questions**

There were no public questions received.

57. **Membership of Committees**

There had been no changes to the membership of Committees since the previous Council meeting.

58. **Motions from Previous Meetings**

Members were asked to note the responses to six Motions set out in the agenda which had been tabled at previous Council meetings.

As the motions had been discussed and responded to at either the Executive or via a Delegated Officer Decision it was not proposed to revisit the discussion on items (a) to (d) at this meeting.

Item (e) would be discussed as a separate agenda item and a response to item (f) had been included in the budget papers and could be discussed during that item.

Councillor Lee Dillon stated that in terms of the public being able to follow the documents it would have been useful to treat the Motions as had been the case with (e) which had been included on the agenda. He wanted to raise the issue that some of these Motion were lengthy and yet they had not been debated in the Chamber. Due to the referral process they had all been delegated to Part II meetings or meetings which were controlled by the Administration rather than the Council as a whole. He specifically referred to item (b) from Councillor Erik Pattenden in relation to the safer schools Motion. This had originally been tabled at the budget meeting in 2020 but it had taken until December 2020 for the Executive to respond to it and it was now being noted at Council. The Liberal Democrat group felt that the Council should be speedier in terms of a response and that debate should be had prior to Members making a decision.

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Councillor Martha Vickers referred to her Motion (f) which it was proposed would be responded to as part of the budget papers where it could be seen that the Motion had been rejected. On the breaking news today it was stated that the Government had actually accepted the content of the Motion and that they would be making the £20 uplift in Universal Credit permanent. She felt that it was a shame that this Council had not been part of that lobbying process. She felt that it was disrespectful to the residents of West Berkshire, to herself as an elected Councillor and it was not democratic.

Councillor Jeff Brooks agreed with the comments already made. He himself had submitted a Motion which had been referred to the Executive but he now noted that it had been taken as a Delegated Officer Decision on 6 January 2021 with no debate. When a Motion had been submitted, and due to a political reason, was passed down to Officers to determine with no further debate, it was a disgrace.

Councillor Erik Pattenden confirmed that Motion (b) was the Safer Schools Motion and he was also disappointed that it had taken a whole year for the Council to hear the response to it. He felt that there were serious issues with the democratic processes of the Council.

Councillor Adrian Abbs referred to Motion (c) and stated that this Motion had been brought forward through cross party support via a Conservative Member. It had taken six months before it was then taken to debate and it did not feel right.

Councillor Steve Masters agreed with the comments made by the Liberal Democrats. There seemed to a deficit in the democratic process and this needed to be looked at as a Council to ensure that members of the public had confidence in the system.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Motions had been dealt with on each occasion in accordance with the Council's Constitution which also reflected the legal framework and stipulated that certain decisions were by law reserved to the Executive. Therefore, if a Motion was submitted that was related to an Executive function then it had to go to the Executive for determination. The Constitution also permitted those who had submitted Motions to attend the Executive meeting to have that debate. This meant that further debate would not take place at the Council meeting. The Monitoring Officer therefore felt that there was a framework in place but the Constitution Review Task Group was currently reviewing the Constitution and the concerns which had been raised were being looked at through that group.

Councillor Martha Vickers highlighted her experience and the fact that no debate had taken place.

Councillor Steve Masters stated that it appeared to be very difficult to get a Motion discussed at full Council and it seemed that there was very little appetite for scrutiny and perhaps this was something that could be considered by the Constitution Review Task Group.

Councillor Jeff Brooks referred to his Motion which had been taken by a Delegated Officer Decision. He would like to know what the outcome of those discussions had been as he did not think that it had been published in the public domain. Sarah Clarke responded that the Delegated Officer Decision referred to the speed limit review and the CIL matter had not as yet been determined and would be going to the Executive.

59. **Licensing Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Licensing Committee had met on 8 February 2021.

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60. **Personnel Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Personnel Committee had met on 9 December 2020 and 12 February 2021.

61. **Governance and Ethics Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Governance and Ethics Committee had met on 1 February 2021.

62. **District Planning Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the District Planning Committee had met on 10 February 2021.

63. **Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee had met on 26 January 2021 and 9 February 2021.

64. **Joint Public Protection Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Joint Public Protection Committee had met on 15 December 2020.

65. **Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2021/22 (C3980)**

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 15) concerning the Treasury Risk Management at the Council which was conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition (the CIPFA Code) which required the Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfilled the Council's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code and set out the Council's proposed Investment and Borrowing Strategy for 2021/22.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Ross Mackinnon and seconded by Councillor Howard Woollaston:

That the Council:

“Agree and adopt the proposed Investment and Borrowing Strategy for 2021/22; and Agree and adopt the revised 2021 Property Investment Strategy”.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon stated that this strategy came in two parts – it dealt with investments and it also dealt with borrowing. The report laid out the approved deposit institutions for the Council's treasury investments and also set prudential limits for those investments. It recommended borrowing limits for the next three years and together with a longer term forecast for the Council's borrowing requirements. The Council's external borrowing was kept under regular and close review to ensure that it was manageable and sustainable.

Councillor Mackinnon stated that one of the other organisations which had enabled local authority bond issues was Abundance Investments who facilitated enabling investors, both inside and outside of the district, to invest directly in the Council's Environment Strategy. He was proud to have played a small part in such an innovative scheme.

Councillor Jeff Brooks agreed that there were good reasons to borrow for infrastructure etc. but he felt that the Council was overdoing it.

Councillor Lee Dillon felt that members of the public would be disconcerted to see the annual rent for 4 The Sector. It had a purchase price of £8m and with no annual rent as

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yet. Councillor Steve Masters understood that 4 The Sector had been let to a capacity of about 30% and he understood from a question he had asked previously that the Council would be able to manage about a year to 18 months without the income before it became a major issue. Perhaps it would have been better to invest in social housing whereby the Council would have been getting rent from much needed social tenants.

Councillor Erik Pattenden referred to paragraph 5.2 which stated that the impact of Coronavirus and Brexit would have a major influence on the Council's Treasury Management Strategy but he asked what the impact of Brexit had been on businesses and residents in West Berkshire since 1 January 2021 as the national press had had a huge amount of coverage of how it had impacted on some sectors.

Councillor Adrian Abbs stated that he would like to see an asset value against all of the commercial investment as commercial properties had not been increasing in value recently. He also noted that capital was being spent on software, hardware etc. which were generally a declining asset and he would therefore like to see the value of the assets against the initial investments.

Councillor Howard Woollaston pointed out that the debt costs in many cases would be covered by the income such as was the case with the Property Investment Portfolio which was creating an income of £700k a year. In relation to interest rates and whether they would be likely to increase he advised that a lot of the Council's borrowing had come through PWLB which was a fixed rate for 40 years and therefore interest rates would not go up.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon felt that it was necessary to look at the total borrowing figure in tandem with the percentage of the revenue budget that went towards repaying the borrowing for capital financing. The long term forecast for the Council's borrowing was for it to decline. In relation to 4 The Sector he was bound by commercial confidentiality at this stage. However, the benefit of having a geographically diverse portfolio of assets was that in the case of having a vacancy or two it would wash its face and the Council was fortunate in that it was generating a positive return.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

66. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2024/25 (C3981)

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 16) which set out the financial planning assumptions for future years and aligned these with the Council Strategy to ensure that the Council Strategy was delivered. The MTFs highlighted the overarching key issues facing the Council's finances as well as how there were many different scenarios and uncertainties that concerned the future revenue streams for the Council in the future.

The Council was able to commence the next four years of the MTFs from a strong financial base and this position and future projections were highlighted in the report. The full MTFs was set out in Appendix A.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Ross Mackinnon and seconded by Councillor Lynne Doherty:

That the Council:

"approves and adopts the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2024/25".

Councillor Mackinnon in introducing the report stated that the MTFs four year programme had been built to ensure that the Council had the financial resources to deliver the Council Strategy. A key element of financial planning was that the forecast included a number of assumptions and uncertainties around both income and expenditure. The Local Government settlement for 2021/22 was broadly similar to the

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previous year but there were uncertainties around a number of income elements going forward such as the Fair Funding review, Adult Social Care and the New Homes Bonus. There were also unknowns in terms of expenditure particularly in relation to demand led services such as Adult Social Care and Children's Services. With so many uncertainties any four year forecast was going to be wrong but it was a key element of effective financial planning. Based on the assumptions that had been made it would be necessary for the Council to bridge a funding gap of £13.2m over the next three years. These savings would have to be met by transformation, digitisation and commercialisation. However, the Council had an excellent track record of delivering required savings in recent years without any cuts to frontline services. The key point was that the Council needed to have adequate reserves in place to smooth what would undoubtedly be an irregular pattern of savings. If the authority did not do this exercise and it just budgeted on a one year basis it would be in a precarious position if unexpected events were to occur or required savings proved to be temporarily unachievable.

Councillor Jeff Brooks stated that he could remember a time when there was not MTFS and it had muddled along. It was a useful planning exercise but only if it was accurate or as accurate as possible and within fairly tight parameters. In that way it would be possible to review what it was said would be done against what had actually happened. It would have been useful therefore to see a paragraph included in the report of outcomes against the MTFS over the last three years.

Councillor Tony Vickers noted that when reading the papers it had become apparent that half of the income received was not in the control of the Council but it was dependent on the Government's long term strategy for local government. He queried when local government was going to get a proper settlement as the Council had a business rate system which was not fit for purpose. It was difficult for the public to understand the finances but he asked if the MTFS included an indication that the Government would sort out the long term financial strategy.

Councillor Lee Dillon noted that Councillor Mackinnon had stated that the budget had been set without cutting any frontline services but he referred to proposals to cut Planning Enforcement Officers which he would class as a frontline service. The report also stated that the Council's general reserve was forecast to be above the minimum level required by the s151 Officer and he therefore queried why it was proposed to hold onto more of the residents' money than what the s151 Officer indicated was financially prudent.

Councillor Graham Bridgman said that the MTFS was in a large part an accumulation of individual service or departmental budgets. He pointed out that there would always be fluctuations in individual budgets going forward over the years but that did not mean that there should be no financial planning. He was supportive of financial planning but agreed with Councillor Brooks to some extent that it was necessary to test what had happened against the plan and to learn lessons for the future.

Councillor Lynne Doherty stated that this time last year it would not have been possible to predict the horrendous year that lay ahead as Covid took hold. The Council had needed to respond to meet the needs of residents as a result of the pandemic. It had been a difficult year and it had highlighted why sound financial planning was so critical when it came to local government finance. The MTFS was a key document as it gave a clear message on the actions required to ensure the long term financial sustainability of the Council. It sat at the heart of good public financial management and that had never been more important than in the current year. She was sure that amendments would be put forward from the Opposition in relation to revenue and capital spend but these could not be considered in isolation and it would be necessary to consider the impact they

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would have on the future financial stability of the Council and on the MTFS. Any alteration to the budget would ultimately change the MTFS. Councillor Doherty echoed comments made by Councillor Tony Vickers in relation to the uncertainties still facing the Council as the impact of Covid-19 would be felt for a number of years and it would likely change how public services would be delivered in the long term. The Local Government Settlement announced in November 2020 was for one year only and there had been assurances from MCHLG that a longer term settlement was proposed in the forthcoming year. A report on the review of Business Rates would be published in the Autumn and there was currently an ongoing consultation with regards to a replacement for the New Homes Bonus. Whilst there was a desire to keep any Council Tax increase as low as possible there still remained uncertainty over the financial position of the Council for 2022/12. This risk had been taken into account and the Council Tax increase was considered to be at an acceptable level for the coming year.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon advised that the financial position that the Council was in at present was very different from that in the 1990's. The Conservative Administration supported good financial planning. He did not agree with the statement made by Councillor Vickers in relation to not being in control of the majority of the Council's finances. 75% of the Council's funding came from Council Tax and the Adult Social Care precept for which the Council was in control of the rates set. In terms of the level of reserves the report stated that this was the minimum recommended level of reserves - it was not the recommended level.

Councillor Lee Dillon referred to the point made in relation to the lack of an MTFS in the 1990's. This was a CIPFA guideline that required an MTFS and that had not been a requirement when the Lib Dems had been in power.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

67. **Capital Strategy and Programme 2021/22 - 2023/24 (C3982)**

The purpose of the report was to outline the Capital Strategy covering financial years 2021/22 – 2023/24 and the supported funding framework, having provided a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contributed to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Ross Mackinnon and seconded by Councillor Dominic Boeck:

That the Council:

- (a) approve the Capital Strategy and supporting Capital Programme for the period 2021/22-2023/24.
- (b) approve the supporting Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (appendix C) for the period 2021/22 – 2023/24.
- (c) approve the supporting Asset Management Strategy (appendix D).
- (d) approve the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy (appendix E) for the period 2021/22.
- (e) approve the proposed CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) Bids for inclusion in the Capital programme 2021/22 (appendix F).

Councillor Ross Mackinnon introduced the Capital Strategy and Programme for the next three years. The administration was proposing an investment in infrastructure of £123m over the three year period which would ensure that West Berkshire remained a great place to live, work, learn and to be healthy. This was particularly important given the past

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year which had been challenging for all and it would enable the community to build back better from those unprecedented challenges.

The Capital Programme provided substantial investment across the Council's six priorities as set out in the Council Strategy and he specifically highlighted the fact that £40m would be invested in the People Directorate, £36m of which would sit within Education Services to provide new schools for children as well as new facilities, extensions and refurbishments to existing schools. £12m of funding would be set aside for highway improvement schemes in order to keep West Berkshire residents and businesses moving smoothly when people returned to work. Improvements were also proposed for railway stations, cycle and walking path upgrades. £12.5m would be invested in initiatives linked to the Environment Strategy of which £1.6m of carbon reduction initiatives and £10.4m which would be focused on solar photovoltaic energy generation. £900k of capital funding would be used to introduce separate food waste collections across the district and £500k would be allocated directly to community groups from a pilot scheme to top slice and accelerate CIL payments to fund infrastructure improvements.

This Capital Programme would not just maintain existing services but it would invest in new schemes across all of the Council Strategy priorities. It was essential that the Capital Programme was sustainable and affordable and £53m of the three year programme was funded from external sources e.g. central government grants and s106/ CIL payments. Councillor Mackinnon stated that capital financing costs were only 9% of the revenue budget and that would remain so across the four year period of the MTFS.

AMENDMENT: Proposed by Councillor Jeff Brooks and seconded by Councillor Lee Dillon:

- Invest and open Faraday Road Football Ground so that it was available for Community Football until any re-provision came on stream - Cost £300,000;
- Funding to provide upgraded facilities at Thatcham Library – expanded reception and disabled toilet – Cost £30,000.

Councillor Brooks was supportive of the proposed Capital Programme but asked if the two items outlined above could be included.

Councillor Tony Vickers stated that he was not in favour of moving football out of the town centre although not necessarily on the existing site and the preferred option would be to keep it somewhere in central Newbury. In the interim it would be nice to see some football taking place in the town centre. The plans to relocate the facility to the Rugby Club, whilst it might provide a football facility, would not be a like for like replacement which the town deserved. He referred to the Hungerford Football Club ground which was a far better facility for a town that was only a fifth of the size of Newbury. The Liberal Democrats would like to see the London Road Industrial Estate redeveloped at zero carbon standards with a football facility somewhere in that area which would be a beacon for a multi-purpose mixed use area in the town centre. It should at least be no worse and perhaps be partially reinstated to what it was at the time that the lease on the Football Club ended.

Councillor Erik Pattenden referred to the amendment in relation to providing an upgraded reception area and disabled toilet for Thatcham Library. This would make a huge difference to library visitors as in normal times Thatcham Library would see more than 3,000 visitors a month. The Central Family Hub also ran weekly groups for the under-fives and adults. The building did have some disabled facilities but the nearest disabled toilet was in Thatcham Broadway.

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Councillor David Marsh was also speaking in support of the Liberal Democrat amendments. The amount proposed for the refurbishment of Thatcham Library was modest and was clearly justifiable. The Green Party were also supportive of the proposal in relation to the football ground as it complemented their amendment to the Capital Programme. It had been two and a half years since the decision was taken to close the ground which had been premature. A lot of children had played football on this ground in the past and there was no demand for another recreation ground which would be adjacent to an existing park. He urged Conservative back benchers to support the amendments rather than block voting against them.

Councillor Lynne Doherty referred to the amendment in relation to the refurbishment of Thatcham Library. Whilst it might be a good suggestion she confirmed that there was a complete library review planned for the coming financial year. Therefore to make any assumptions around the findings of that review would be premature. It should certainly feed into the review. In regards to the £300k for the reopening of the football pitch she did not consider that that was a sensible use of funding for a limited period of time. She reiterated that the Council remained committed to regeneration and redevelopment of the London Road Industrial Estate and it would not be prepared to take any action that might jeopardise those plans. The Council needed to maintain control of that asset for as long as and when the land was required for redevelopment subject to obtaining the necessary planning consent. She questioned the fact that there was now, or had been, demand for children's football in that area. She was therefore recommending refusal of the two amendments as there was still further work to be done.

Councillor Jeremy Cottam raised concerns that West Berkshire Council were not supporting Thatcham Town Council in regards to upgrading Thatcham Library. The library review could take years whereas the work to upgrade facilities could be done quickly and would benefit the disabled in the community to make it a much more pleasant place to go.

Councillor Lee Dillon noted that a review of the library service was to be undertaken but he referred to the distance that a disabled person would have to travel to use the toilet facilities in Thatcham Broadway. This proposal also involved having an external access point as well which would benefit the wider community. If it was proposed to wait for the review would that mean that there was potential for Thatcham to not have a library at all. If the library was to be retained there would be an expectation that the facility should include a disabled toilet. In relation to the London Road Industrial Estate Football Ground it would still cost money to create an open space and car park and the Council had been premature in releasing the land which had therefore robbed the town of a football club.

Councillor Jeff Brooks noted that it was likely that these two amendments would be voted down. The answer given was that a library review would be undertaken in the fullness of time but no immediate action would be taken. He stated that the Liberal Democrats would be abstaining on the vote for the substantive motion even though there would be some things within the Capital Programme which they would have been supportive of.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon agreed with the comments made by Councillor Doherty as she had given reasonable explanations for both amendments.

The Amendment was put to the meeting and duly **REFUSED**. It was noted that Councillor Rowles abstained from the vote due to technical difficulties.

AMENDMENT: Proposed by Councillor David Marsh and seconded by Councillor Carolyne Culver:

Page 90 Playing Pitch Action Plan

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Original text: "Provision to support the development of the PPS through additional facilities, including six 3G pitches as part of the PPS Delivery plan subject to business case development, including a suitable replacement for the Faraday Road Sports Ground."

Amendment: Delete "including a suitable replacement for the Faraday Road Sports Ground."

Councillor David Marsh stated that the Green Party were supportive of the Playing Pitch Strategy and the fact that the 3G pitches were long overdue across the whole district. The Green Party were not against the football pitches per se but were against relocating the football ground to Wash Common. There had been a flawed consultation exercise which did not seem to conform to the Government's consultation code at all. The facilities at the Rugby Club would not be a like for like replacement for the existing football ground and would not be popular with local residents. He had concerns about traffic and the impact of parking in the area. Councillor Marsh noted that a lot of the detail around the cost of the replacement football ground was in Part II and he felt that it would be a drain on Council taxpayers for years to come. The Council would have to pay rent for the Rugby Club when it did not need to as it already had an adequate site in Faraday Road which would cost less to run and had scope for expansion.

Councillor Steve Marsh concurred with the comments made by Councillor Marsh and added that this was an opportunity to put things right.

Councillor Tony Vickers stated that the Liberal Democrats were supportive of the amendment put forward by the Green Party. The proposals for a new sports ground appeared to be sketchy and badly thought out. There would be public debate on this at the Planning Committee and should it get planning permission he was sure that it would be called in by Sport England. This would mean that the decision would be taken out of the hands of West Berkshire. Any money that the Council had already spent on this or would do so in the future would be better spent on reinstating the current facilities in Faraday Road. The Liberal Democrats were supportive of further work being undertaken to do site investigations in the Faraday Road area but not necessarily on the current site.

Councillor Lynne Doherty disagreed that there was no suitable replacement site. The consultation was still ongoing and the Council was listening to the views of members of the public and key stakeholders. She therefore did not think it was right to support an amendment when the Council was in the middle of a consultation process. Again this was premature. She disagreed with the statement made by Councillor Masters in that there was no good reason to relocate the football ground. The reason that the London Road Industrial Estate regeneration should go ahead was to prioritise local jobs for local people and to support the local economy. This should come before the need for a football ground as the regeneration of this area would help the district to thrive into the future. The focus would be on the regeneration of that area and look for a suitable alternative site for the football ground on which consultation was currently taking place. She therefore stated that the Conservative Group would not be supporting the amendment.

Councillor Lee Dillon responded that the Liberal Democrat Group also supported jobs and businesses in the economy but it also supported sports, leisure and culture in a sustainable central location and therefore supported the amendment from the Green Party.

Councillor Carlyne Culver said that it was her understanding that the consultation on Monks Lane had now closed and she asked the Monitoring Officer to check whether that was the case. It sounded like a decision had already been made on this even though consultation had only recently taken place. The Council had not had a single debate on

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this issue and it was therefore an example of the democratic deficit and lack of unity. If there was to be unity there needed to be more respect for the opposition groups and having amendments accepted. There had been a lot of questions about Faraday Road at various Council meetings which demonstrated the level of feeling and need to seek clarity around this important issue. It did not seem sensible to look at renting another site when the Council had a site that it could use and on which there was no guarantee that planning permission would be granted due to the issue around flooding. Councillor Culver asked for a named vote to be taken on this item and this was agreed although Councillor Graham Bridgman made the point that the Leaders of each group had made a decision to take block votes in order to speed up the process. Councillor Culver agreed that she was happy to go with voting through the Group Leaders as long as the votes were recorded in the minutes.

Sarah Clarke clarified that the proposed amendment related to Faraday Road and the consultation related to the proposals at Monks Lane and the Newbury Rugby Club so there was a difference in terms of what was being proposed. The consultation had closed on 28 February 2021 and the Council was in the process of considering those responses. There was also a webinar scheduled for 15 March 2021 so there was ongoing dialogue with the community regarding the proposals for the sports ground at Newbury Rugby Club.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon concluded that the proposals from both the Liberal Democrat and Green Party were Newbury centric whereas the regeneration of the London Road Industrial Estate would be of benefit for the entire district.

FOR the Amendment:

Councillors: Carolyne Culver, David Marsh, Steve Masters (3)

AGAINST the Amendment:

Councillors: Steve Ardagh-Walter, Peter Argyle, Jeff Beck, Dennis Benneyworth, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Jeff Cant, Hilary Cole, James Cole, Lynne Doherty, Clive Hooker, Gareth Hurley, Rick Jones, Alan Law, Tony Linden, Ross Mackinnon, Tom Marino, Graham Pask, Claire Rowles, Garth Simpson, Richard Somner, Jo Stewart, Andy Williamson, Howard Woollaston (24)

ABSTAINED from voting on the Amendment:

Adrian Abbs, Phil Barnett, Jeff Brooks, Jeremy Cottam, Lee Dillon, Billy Drummond, Nassar Hunt, Owen Jeffery, Royce Longton, Alan Macro, Geoff Mayes, Andy Moore, Erik Pattenden, Martha Vickers, Tony Vickers, Keith Woodhams (16)

The Amendment was put to the meeting and duly **REFUSED**.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Ross Mackinnon and seconded by Councillor Dominic Boeck:

Councillor Adrian Abbs raised concerns that he could not see the justification for a lot of the IT spend within the Capital budget, particularly the £2m set aside for the Enterprise Resource Planning System.

A number of Members raised queries or highlighted specific schemes/projects which would have an impact in their area.

Councillor Alan Law stated that this was a good news report which was all about investing in the future - £123m over the next three years. Over the last 15 years or so the Council had invested an average of £40m every year on things like schools, Children's Services and infrastructure which included Superfast Broadband. West Berkshire had

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recently been ranked number two for happiness in the whole of the country and number four overall for health and wellbeing.

Councillor Lynne Doherty agreed that there would be so many projects within the Capital Strategy and Programme which would be beneficial to the residents of West Berkshire. Investment into three primary schools was most welcome and in particular the commitment for a new school in Shaw-cum-Donnington as the parish expanded to accommodate the new housing development in that area.

Councillor Lee Dillon confirmed that his group would be abstaining on the Capital Strategy and Programme. However, there were some good projects and investment contained within the programme. By abstaining it did not mean that the Liberal Democrats did not want to see the vast majority of these projects to go ahead it was due to the fact that their amendments had not been accepted.

Councillor Dominic Boeck supported this strategy and programme as it demonstrated the commitment to the Council's overall Council Strategy which included a priority to support everyone to reach their full potential. Over the next three years it was planned to spend a further £35.7m on the district's schools. This money would be spent on providing the basic need places for children as the population expanded and enhancing and ensuring that existing provision continued in the quality expected for children and young people.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon thanked the opposition as from the comments made it was good that many of the projects within the Capital Programme were supported. Councillor Mackinnon specifically mentioned the £2m for the Enterprise Resource Planning System raised by Councillor Abbs. It might not be necessary to spend that amount as the Council would go through the procurement process and would aim to achieve value for money. He pointed out that some projects in the programme would not have a revenue stream as it was not the intention of the Capital Programme was to make money.

FOR the Motion:

Councillors: Steve Ardagh-Walter, Peter Argyle, Jeff Beck, Dennis Benneyworth, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Jeff Cant, Hilary Cole, James Cole, Lynne Doherty, Clive Hooker, Gareth Hurley, Rick Jones, Alan Law, Tony Linden, Ross Mackinnon, Tom Marino, Graham Pask, Claire Rowles, Garth Simpson, Richard Somner, Jo Stewart, Andy Williamson, Howard Woollaston (24)

ABSTAINED from voting on the Motion:

Adrian Abbs, Phil Barnett, Jeff Brooks, Jeremy Cottam, Carlyne Culver, Lee Dillon, Billy Drummond, Nassar Hunt, Owen Jeffery, Royce Longton, Alan Macro, David Marsh, Steve Masters, Geoff Mayes, Andy Moore, Erik Pattenden, Martha Vickers, Tony Vickers, Keith Woodhams (19)

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

68. Revenue Budget 2021/22 (C3983)

(All Members had been granted a dispensation by the Monitoring Officer to speak and vote on this item).

(Councillor Claire Rowles declared a disclosable pecuniary interest or an other registrable interest in agenda item 18 by virtue of the fact that she had been appointed as a trustee Member on the Citizen's Advice Bureau. She would therefore be made an attendee for the duration of the item and would not vote or take part in the debate on the item).

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 18) concerning the 2021/22 Revenue Budget, which proposed a Council Tax requirement of £104.32m, requiring a Council Tax

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increase of 1.99%. The Council Tax increase would raise £2.04m. The Council was not proposing any use of the Adult Social Care precept and there would therefore not be any increase in the precept. The overall Council Tax increase was intended to balance the financial impact of the pandemic on residents, mitigating the financial pressures they faced, as well as the cost pressures that the Council faced.

The budget detailed the investment for the year ahead to deliver the Council Strategy and support core Council Services. This included investment in Adult Social Care, economic development and prevention work. The budget also allocated revenue funding to deliver the Capital Strategy (separate paper) that had a substantial amount of investment in infrastructure for the year ahead, including savings proposals, other income sources and £3.2m of support from Government for Covid-19 costs. The Council was proposing to support the budget with a £2.2m contribution from reserves; it was rare that the Council would use such a sizeable level of one-off support for the budget but the impact of the pandemic on the current year budget, allied to Government financial support, had led to an expected underspend in the current year that was being partially used to support the 2021/22 budget.

The report also proposed the Fees and Charges for 2020/21 as set out in Appendix F, the Parish Expenses as set out in Appendix G and recommended the level of General Reserves as set out in Appendix E.

Councillor Mackinnon introduced a minor alteration to the proposal for the revenue budget (recommendations at pages 123-125 of the agenda), and clarified that the recommendation at paragraph (10) was that Council: "Consider and reject the motion presented at the Council meeting of 3rd December 2020 regarding the Citizen's Advice Bureau."

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Ross Mackinnon and seconded by Councillor Lynne Doherty:

"That the Council:

- (1) approves the 2021-22 Council Tax requirement of £104.32 million, requiring a Council Tax increase of 1.99% with a 0% increase in the Council Tax Precept ring-fenced for adult social care;
- (2) the Fees and Charges are approved as set out in Appendix F and the appropriate statutory notices be placed where required;
- (3) the Parish Expenses of £6,410 are approved as set out in Appendix G;
- (4) provide a £150 reduction to Council Tax for claimants receiving Council Tax Reduction falling within a working age category during the 2021-22 financial year. Where the balance to pay for a working age claimant is less than £150, we will credit all the remaining liability through this hardship scheme. The remaining funding from the allocation of £838k will be utilised to support the Collection Fund and consideration of the further impact on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme as well as the overall Collection Fund;
- (5) it be noted that the following amounts for the year 2021-22 in accordance with regulations made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (by the Localism Act 2011):
 - (a) £65,343.65 being the amount calculated by the Council, (Item T) in accordance with regulation 31B of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011), as its council tax base for the year (the number of properties paying council tax);

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- (b) part of the Council's area as per Appendix K being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates;
- (6) calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2021-22 (excluding Parish precepts) is £104,315,255;
- (7) the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2021-22 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, amended by the Localism Act 2011:
 - (a) £345,178,680 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2), (a) to (f) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish councils;
 - (b) £236,356,619 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3), (a) to (d) of the Act;
 - (c) £108,822,061 being the amount by which the aggregate at 7(a) above, exceeds the aggregate at 7(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with the Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R);
 - (d) £1,665.38 being the amount at 7(c) above (Item R), all divided by 5(a) above (Item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the 'basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts)';
 - (e) £4,506,806 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per Appendix K);
 - (f) £1,596.41 being the amount at 7(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 7(e) above by the amount at 5(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special items relates;
- (8) it be noted that for the year 2021-22, Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley and The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Councils area as indicated in Appendix K;
- (9) the Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables in Appendix K as the amounts of Council Tax for 2021-22 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings;
- (10) consider and reject the motion presented at the Council meeting of 3rd December 2020 regarding the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon moved the Motion and set out three minor amendments which included updated figures in paragraph (7) of the recommendations, recommendation (10) to be altered to state that the Motion in relation to the Citizen's Advice Board be considered and rejected, and that the fees and charges for taxi and hackney carriage licences as set out in Appendix F be frozen as recommended by the Licensing Committee. All Group Leaders indicated that they were in agreement with the proposed amendments and it was confirmed that they had therefore been accepted.

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Councillor Mackinnon noted that Covid had resulted in a significant divergence from the budget in some services particularly within the People Directorate. He thanked Councillor Jeff Brooks for taking a constructive approach in recognising the unprecedented challenges facing the Council during the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission meetings where revenue spend was reviewed against the budget which had been set. The Council had received support from Central Government during the pandemic but there would be longer term impacts on future budgets. He expressed his thanks to the Revenues and Benefits Team who had done an excellent job in distributing business grants across the district. They had provided over £17m of support to businesses to sustain them through the pandemic.

Councillor Mackinnon referred to the Motion in respect of the Citizen's Advice Bureau which had budgetary implications as it was calling on funds to be invested and was also asking for MPs to lobby Central Government to campaign to meet various changes to the benefit system and financial support. The Prime Minister had that evening made an announcement that matters were currently under review in relation to Universal Credit and therefore it was not proposed to lobby MPs any further on that issue. In the current financial year the Council had provided £104k to the CAB and the Council had a service level agreement in place with them until March 2022 and for those reasons it was proposed that the Motion should be rejected.

In terms of the Council Tax level although he would like to keep it at the same level it cost the Council more to provide the same level of services to residents and as mentioned previously 75% of the Council's income came from Council Tax. This year the Council had decided not to take the 3% Adult Social Care precept unlike some other Councils and it was therefore proposing a Council Tax increase of 1.99%. Demand for Adult Social Care services had been lower this year due to the pandemic and it would likely remain at a lower level than originally forecast for a number of years before resuming an upwards trend. It was also the main driver of the £3.2m predicted underspend in the current year. It would therefore be wrong to impose an additional precept for Adult Social Care given the current situation. However, the Council was only in a position to do that because of the extensive financial support it had received from Central Government over the past year.

Councillor Mackinnon highlighted a number of areas where investment would be made over the coming year. The level of reserves would increase from £8m in the previous year to £9.35m in April 2021. This was a prudent level with all the continuing uncertainty of the impact from Covid. He felt that this budget struck the right balance between investing in services and infrastructure whilst keeping Council Tax rises to a minimum.

AMENDMENT: Proposed by Councillor Jeff Brooks and seconded by Councillor Lee Dillon:

1) People Directorate

A) Funding to allow Council Tax Relief for care leavers (on-going)

Cost £10,000

This will help eighteen to twenty one year old care leavers in West Berkshire to start to make their own way in the world by giving them relief from Council Tax.

B) Funding for instrument loan for Maestros to supply instruments to all Y3 pupils in West Berks (on-going)

Cost £30,000

Playing a musical instrument brings many benefits to young children, and for some, leads to a life-long passion for amateur or even professional performing

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arts. To nurture this we want every primary school child in West Berkshire to have the opportunity of learning to play a musical instrument.

- C) Freeze ASC personal fee increases for 2021/22 (on-going)

Cost £4,000

Many families have to contribute to the costs of relatives' care. The finances of many of those families are, or are likely to be, stretched by reduced incomes due to furlough, redundancies, reduced hours or less overtime. This amendment is to ease the financial pressure on these families.

- D) Funding for Corn Exchange Learning Centre education program to support their children's and adults learning program (one off)

Cost £20,000

This will help people across West Berkshire overcome the isolation of the COVID lockdowns of the last year and to reduce the barrier of cost, this will help support the people of West Berkshire to participate in art learning programs provided by the Corn Exchange Learning Centre.

- E) Community Support Fund – Arts and Culture (one off)

Cost £20,000

This will create a support fund for arts and culture sector within West Berkshire.

- F) Funding to provide relief for town and parish councils to cover contributions for library services (on-going)

Cost £100,000

This will reduce the requirement for parish councils to pay to maintain a service which is the statutory function of West Berkshire to maintain.

- G) Funding to provide Active Travel support for schools (on-going)

Cost £50,000 (officer)

To restore the School Travel Plans Officer post in the light of the increasing priority of Active Travel, linked to the public health, climate emergency and sustainable travel agendas.

- H) Funding for Berkshire Youth to allow the detached youth work in schools work to continue after funding from the PCC ends in March 2021 (on-going)

Cost £50,000

This will allow Berkshire Youth to continue to provide detached youth work in all schools in West Berkshire, by providing £50,000 to replace the funding they are losing from the TV PCC. Without this funding being replaced, school children in West Berkshire will no longer benefit from this youth work.

2) Place Directorate

- A) West Berkshire becoming its own Power company (invest to save)

Cost £100,000

By becoming a supplier, we are able to take advantage of the higher revenue and so more environmental projects become affordable whilst also contributing to the council's revenue stream and gives us options to encourage businesses with West Berkshire. This funding would provide for Feasibility studies

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to establish the business plan for major investment and return on that investment in future years.

- B) Develop larger Solar Power generation facilities to provide energy for Council use and to sell to consumers/industry (one off)

Cost £100,000

The current plan is only 3-4% of what is needed in West Berkshire and we are therefore proposing to enlarge current activity to have a chance of meeting the Council's carbon reduction targets on time.

- C) Introduce energy standard for all suppliers (carbon footprint) (taking into account their ability to do the work) - 2nd officer to help here (on-going)

Cost £50,000 (officer)

This will introduce a standard that can be built into tenders and RFPs that go to suppliers. Responses should then include details about critical elements that allow the Council to evaluate suppliers for their green credentials. This ensures suppliers have environmental concerns front and centre when responding to such opportunities.

- D) Power from water (rivers and canals) (Kennet, Dunn and Lambourn) Initial Projects run in conjunction with NTC as locations previously established plus (one off)

Cost £150,000

To undertake a Feasibility study and develop a Business Plan for future years with all costings; looking at micro hydro schemes across the Council that take only 6% of space compared to equivalent sized energy schemes using solar.

- E) Green hubs adjunct to community hub (consumer & business focus) 2nd additional officer to also help here plus some KPI's from other Officers.

Cost £50,000 (officer)

As expertise grows within the council this aims to embed the sharing of that expertise with consumers and business.

- F) Viable villages (investigation of what needs to change to make West Berks villages viable long term) 2nd additional officer to also help here.

Cost £40,000 (officer)

To work with every village within West Berkshire to understand what was needed to make their village viable in the longer term - in areas such as community mix, energy supplies, and housing.

- G) Remove the green bin charge for those in receipt of Council Tax benefits.

Cost £100,000

Roughly 5,500 homes. We assume an uptake of around one third of these households at a cost of £50 each, meaning a total cost of £92,000 but we allow more than this within this cost allocation (on-going).

- H) Create taxi recovery fund – so no license fee. (One off – one year)

Cost £40,000

To provide support to Taxi drivers so that we maintain an active rank.

- I) Do not delete Enforcement Officer as planned by Administration (Place D&P E4)

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Cost £30,000

Public perception that planning enforcement is extremely ineffective, risks undermining support for whole planning system. Instead of cutting a post, this would urgently review processes, work more closely with parish councils and boost resources.

- J) Reintroduce Planning letters to neighbours – 0.8 FTE plus postage costs (on-going)

Cost £40,000

This would form part of the effort to boost public confidence in the planning system. The Council should investigate use of case officer or parish councils for hand delivery of letters to save postage costs.

- K) Allow for more community speed reviews by increasing officers to carry out assessments 0.5 FTE (on-going)

Cost £25,000

Boost public confidence in highway safety and help encourage increases in Active Travel.

- L) Town Centre Refurbishment Plans – Thatcham, Theale, Hungerford

Cost £150,000 (additional to budget papers)

This will give our towns the opportunity to create a sense of 'place' within their centres, helping them to remain viable as shopping habits change.

3) Resource Directorate

- A) Green Bins – reduce charge to provide a £2 discount (becomes £48) for the lack of collection in January 2021 (one off)

Cost £46,000

This would reduce the green bin charge to £48 per year for next year.

Summary

The financial demand was modest and would lead to only a small revenue demand in servicing the increased borrowing requirement and which could be contained within existing budgets/reserves.

Councillor Jeff Brooks confirmed that he was speaking mainly to the package of amendments to the budget proposals that the Liberal Democrats had put forward. It proposed some additional spend which would improve Council services and the quality of those services to local residents. The level of money required was modest and affordable and comprised 21 additional lines of spend amounting to just under £600k of recurring revenue investment. He acknowledged that the current financial year had not been easy to manage and the forecast going forward would need to be prudent as the country came out of the pandemic. That was the reason why some of the amendments put forward in the previous year had not been brought forward again. The focus was on helping two groups who had been going through difficult times.

Councillor Brooks had had discussions around whether the amendments would be taken separately or in small blocks but this had not been accepted by the Leader who had stated that the amendments would be taken en bloc. So even if there was one proposal that might be acceptable it would fail as it would not be debated separately. Therefore the same budget process would be followed as in previous years which was disappointing. Councillor Brooks mentioned the proposal to adjust the green bin charge by reducing it to

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£48 for next year due to the cancellation of one collection of the green bin. It had been stated that it would not be cost effective to give a refund of just under £2 at the time. However, the Council had taken money from people without providing the service. Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter responded that due to unprecedented circumstances it had not been possible to collect the green bins for a short period. However, the Council had offered to collect extra bags of green waste for a short period after the suspension of the service.

Councillor Brooks noted that there was a sum of £150k for Town Centre Plans proposed in the budget but the Liberal Democrats would like to extend that to Theale, Hungerford and Lambourn and had therefore included a further £150k to support those rural areas rather than focusing on urban areas.

Councillor Brooks concluded that the Liberal Democrat amendment had put forward a range of budget proposals which were affordable and which would assist people who had been hardest hit by the pandemic. Some of the proposals would not be difficult to take on board but he felt that the current process was flawed.

Councillor Lynne Doherty responded that she was concerned that 21 individual amendments had been presented to the meeting that evening and although Councillor Brooks had stated that they were modest they did equate to £1.2m of additional revenue expenditure. The paper suggested that this could be taken from Reserves or from existing budgets but there was no mention of what could be cut out of the existing budget to make this possible. Councillor Doherty had mentioned earlier the importance of producing a fair and balanced budget within the MTFs that took into account future risks and none of that had been taken into account in the amendments. She agreed that there might be some potentially good ideas within the amendments but they were just ideas and would need to be considered alongside their feasibility and the fit within existing strategies. In respect of the proposal to retain the Enforcement Officer this had already been picked up and she confirmed that there would be no reduction in the number of Planning Enforcement Officers. However, in relation to the process it would be unreasonable to expect a decision to be made on what little information had been provided as they would need to be checked for feasibility. She had asked in the discussion on the substantial revenue proposal that the relevant Portfolio Holders highlight individual items that they felt might be worthy of further investigation. However, it would have been helpful if these budget proposals could have been worked on earlier in the year and submitted to the relevant areas to be considered. In respect of the voting arrangements it was not in her gift to make constitutional changes to the process and this would need to be decided by Council. She would be happy for the Constitution Review Task Group to look at that and bring forward alternative proposals.

The Chairman of the Council reminded Members that time was moving on and it would therefore be necessary to vote on the Motion to continue the meeting past 10.00pm. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 4.9.12 of the Constitution Councillor Graham Bridgman proposed that the meeting should continue past 10.00pm provided that all business could be conducted by 10.30pm. This was agreed.

Councillor David Marsh confirmed that he broadly supported the amendments put forward by Councillor Jeff Brooks apart from the unnecessary refund of the green bin charge. People had been allowed to put out additional waste on the following collection day and he had not received any complaints from local residents about this issue. He shared the concerns raised by Councillor Brooks about the process around the voting arrangements for the budget amendments and a compromise was offered but not accepted. However, it would be explored through the Constitution Review Task Group and hopefully a better process could be agreed for the following year. However, he did

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want to make the point that had the Council discussed and voted separately on each of the Liberal Democrat and Green Party amendments for both the Capital and Revenue

Councillor Tony Vickers stated that amendments I and J were designed to boost public confidence in the Planning system as it was not the right time to cut a post in Planning Enforcement. Although it was not a statutory function it was a factor in the low opinion many residents had in the planning system. The Chairman of the Council pointed out that this issue had already been addressed by the Leader in her earlier comments when she confirmed that the Planning Enforcement Officer post would not be deleted. Councillor Vickers apologised but asked if he could raise the point that there was a need to involve Parish Councils much more in the Planning system.

Councillor Alan Law raised a point of order. The comments made by Councillor Vickers were in respect of the Planning system and was nothing to do with the amendments to the budget. Councillor Vickers responded that he was referring to the amendment around the restoration of the neighbourhood letters which had been withdrawn. He also referred to public safety in respect of speed limit reviews and active travel support for schools as this was something that needed to be prioritised amongst young people.

Councillor Lee Dillon raised a point of order and asked what would happen if the Council did not get through the debate. Unless speaking rights were limited to one minute then it would not be possible to get through the agenda. Members had been advised of their speaking time limits but hardly anyone had breached the limit and yet time was rapidly running out. It did not seem fair that Members were being rushed through their careful deliberation because of an arbitrary time limit.

Councillor Alan Law also raised a point of order. He proposed that the question be put. This was seconded by Councillor Dominic Boeck. The Chairman of the Council noted that time was running out and it was necessary to set the budget that evening. Sarah Clarke outlined the process which would need to be followed in relation to the Closure Motion and asked the Leaders of each group how they wished to vote.

Councillor Lynne Doherty reluctantly agreed as it was necessary to agree a budget.

Councillor Lee Dillon did not agree as he felt that it was a travesty of debate and justice.

Councillor Carolyne Culver agreed with the comment made by Councillor Dillon.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Closure Motion had been carried and the meeting would now move to the close of debate provisions.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon confirmed that he had nothing further to add.

The Amendments were put to the vote and declared LOST.

Councillor Lee Dillon stated that he was not willing to take any further part in the meeting and was going to leave the Chamber. He urged his Party to leave with him as despite being democratically elected representatives of West Berkshire residents their voices were not being heard. Councillor Carolyne Culver confirmed that her Party would also be leaving the Chamber.

Green Party Amendment:

Investment

Page 145 D&P13 LRIE site investment

Amendment: Delete from budget

Reason: Further consultants' fees on the LRIE cannot be justified, especially as D&P13 earmarks a similar sum for Council Officers to support the project.

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Savings and Income Generation

Page 150 E20 Cashless Parking

Amendment: Delete from budget

Reason: The claimed savings simply do not add up. CEOs more than pay for themselves. Moreover, cashless parking machines do not “mean we need less CEOs” as they face ever increasing demands – for example, Safer Schools, pavement parking, cycle lanes, and other active travel schemes.

Green Party Investment Proposals

1) Berkshire Youth

Proposal: £37,000 grant

Reason: To provide a full-time youth worker to support young people, particularly those who have experienced loss, isolation, changes in parental employment or income and uncertainty about their future as a result of living through Covid-19, and to give them a voice in the community to engage in future youth opportunities.

2) Community United

Proposal: £35,000 grant

Reason: To cover staffing costs and enable this non-partisan organisation to concentrate on its key aims of bringing West Berkshire communities together, raising awareness and working to eliminate discrimination, promoting positive relationships between our diverse communities, advocating for equal opportunities for all in West Berkshire.

3) West Berkshire Foodbank

Proposal: £35,000 grant

Reason: To cover staffing costs and enable the Foodbank to concentrate on its role of helping to feed families in crisis, particularly those affected by Covid-19.

budgets it would have taken a very long time and it was hoped that a more productive way forward could be found for the future.

The Chairman of the Council noted that the amendment from the Green Party had not been debated and the Monitoring Officer confirmed that unless anyone else moved or seconded the amendment it would not be voted on.

Councillor Richard Somner confirmed that he was going to offer Members of the Opposition the opportunity to discuss those matters that related to transport and countryside through the Transport Advisory Group.

Councillor Rick Jones commended the strong financial management of the Council and the production of such a positive budget in the current extreme circumstances. The proposed budget was positive for his ward particularly around investment in the Council Strategy for community support engagement which helped his community’s resilience and in particular the partnership with the voluntary sector.

Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter welcomed the chance to build on progressing work on the Environment Strategy over the coming years.

Councillor Dominic Boeck confirmed that he would be happy to discuss youth worker services with the Opposition but there was a big shift in the way that abuse services had been funded and he was keen to undertake a review of how the Council could maintain strong links and support young people after the age of 18 where they became liable for Council Tax yet were unable to afford it. The Service would also be announcing exciting

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news in relation to the Holiday Activities Programme for children. The Government had provided funding but it was proposed to deliver the summer programme in partnership with schools and local organisations and he would ensure that the Corn Exchange had the opportunity to participate in the programme if they wished.

Councillor Graham Bridgman stated that it was disappointing that the Opposition parties had left the Chamber but he stressed the point that the Council was governed by the Constitution which limited the length of meetings to 10.30pm. At times it was necessary to cut debate in order to meet that deadline and the Council had an absolute legal obligation to set a budget. He stressed the point that the only way that the Council had been able to set a balanced budget with only a 1.99% Council Tax increase was because of the regrettable deaths of some residents which had had an impact on the Adult Social Care budget. It was not a position that he would have liked to be in. Councillor Lynne Doherty concurred with the comments made by Councillor Bridgman and she commended the budget which was about the recovery process from Covid and supporting residents through it.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 4.15.2 it was requisitioned that the voting on the Amendment be recorded. The names of those Members voting for, against and abstaining were read to the Council as follows:

FOR the Motion:

Councillors: Steve Ardagh-Walter, Peter Argyle, Jeff Beck, Dennis Benneyworth, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Jeff Cant, Hilary Cole, James Cole, Lynne Doherty, Clive Hooker, Gareth Hurley, Rick Jones, Alan Law, Tony Linden, Ross Mackinnon, Tom Marino, Graham Pask, Garth Simpson, Richard Somner, Jo Stewart, Andy Williamson, Howard Woollaston (23)

ABSTAINED:

Councillor Geoff Mayes (1).

69. Statutory Pay Policy 2021 (C3984)

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 19) concerning the approval of the Statutory Pay Policy Statement for publication from 1 April 2021.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Jo Stewart and seconded by Councillor Garth Simpson:

That the Council:

“approve the Statutory Pay Policy Statement for publication from 1 April 2021”.

Councillor Jo Stewart referred to the amendment to this item in respect of paragraph 3.1.23 and 3.1.24 of the policy. Exit Pay Cap Regulations 2020 had been revoked with effect from 12 February 2021 and paragraph 3.1.23 would therefore be deleted and paragraph 3.1.24 would be amended to state sums up to £99,999 as per the Statutory Pay Policy for 2020.

It was noted that this report had been reviewed through Corporate Board, Operations Board and Personnel Committee which was a cross party committee. This item had been debated and amendments had been made to the policy as a result of that discussion. One of the amendments related to the tightening up of the process around additional payments.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

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70. **Member Development Programme 2021/2022 (C3991)**

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 20) concerning the proposed Member Development Programme for 2021/22. The programme was considered and endorsed previously, by the Member Development Group on 19 January 2021 and at Corporate Board on 12 and 26 January 2021.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Jo Stewart and seconded by Councillor Clive Hooker:

That the Council:

“consider the proposed draft Member Development Programme and ensuing resource implications for approval of the Programme for the 2021 Municipal Year”.

Councillor Jo Stewart confirmed that the programme had been developed as part of the cross party Member Development Group and had been approved by Corporate Board. It was one of those programmes that was ever changing but it included some training sessions which were mandatory for Members. There needed to be some flexibility in order that it could adapt and include sessions as necessary. It was also proposed that £5,000 should be set aside from the Corporate Training budget to fund any external training required by Members.

Councillor Stewart commended the teams involved in delivering the training sessions during 2020 as they had had to make use of new technology to deliver the sessions. It was a testament to those members of staff who had risen to the challenge and had found a way to deliver the programme in difficult times.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

71. **Response to Proposed Fireworks Motion (C3972)**

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 21) concerning the response to the Proposed Fireworks Motion which had been submitted to Full Council on 10 September 2020 by Councillor Richard Somner.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Hilary Cole and seconded by Councillor Richard Somner:

That the Council:

“(1) note the report which was taken to the Licensing Committee on 8 February 2021 which considered the PPP response to the proposed motion;

(2) approve the recommendations of the Licensing Committee and agree the amended Motion;

(3) recommend a West Berkshire Fireworks Policy be presented to the next Licensing Committee for their approval.”

The Chairman of the Council proposed that due to a shortage of time this item should be deferred to the Council meeting on 8 July 2021. This proposal was moved and seconded by Councillors Hilary Cole and Richard Somner.

The amended Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

72. **Notices of Motion - Public Funds for Public Access**

The Council considered the under-mentioned Motion (Agenda item 22 refers) submitted in the name of Councillor Tony Vickers relating to Public Funds for Public Access.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Tony Vickers and seconded by Councillor Howard Woollaston.

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The Chairman noted that the mover of the Motion had left the meeting and it was therefore proposed that it would be deferred to the Council meeting on 8 July 2021.

The proposal to defer the Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

73. Members' Questions

A full transcription of the Member question and answer session is available from the following link: (link to pdf on website)

- (a) A question standing in the name of Councillor Adrian Abbs on the subject of carbon contribution would receive a written response from the Executive Member for Environment.
- (b) A question standing in the name of Councillor Martha Vickers on the subject of meeting the need of children for opportunities to play and socialise in the coming months would receive a written response from the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education.
- (c) A question standing in the name of Councillor Phil Barnett on the subject of the number of redundancies in the last five years would receive a written response from the Executive Member for Internal Governance.

A full transcription of the public and Member question and answer sessions are available from the following link: [Transcription of Q&As](#). (right click on link and 'Edit Hyperlink'. Insert URL to pdf on website in 'address' field)

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 10.30 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

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Health Scrutiny

Committee considering report:	Council
Date of Committee:	4 May 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Howard Woollaston
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	22 April 2021
Report Author:	Gordon Oliver
Forward Plan Ref:	C4008

1 Purpose of the Report

To consider a proposal to form a new Health Scrutiny Committee, reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission, which would be responsible for scrutiny of Public Health and NHS services in West Berkshire.

2 Recommendations

For Council to:

- (a) SUPPORT the proposal for a Health Scrutiny Committee, reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC), to undertake scrutiny of the planning, development and operation of Public Health and NHS services for the citizens of West Berkshire;
- (b) DELEGATE scrutiny of Public Health and NHS services in West Berkshire to the Health Scrutiny Committee;
- (c) APPROVE the terms of reference for the Health Scrutiny Committee as set out in Appendix B of this report; and
- (d) DELEGATE authority to the Service Director: Strategy and Governance in consultation with the Group Leaders to agree membership and terms of reference for an Independent Remuneration Panel to consider the need for a Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Committee.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>There would be an additional cost associated with elected members and officers attending meetings, and for additional officer support. A budget pressure has been identified.</p> <p>The work of the Health Scrutiny Committee will require support in terms of overall co-ordination, setting up and clerking of meetings, underpinning policy support and administrative arrangements.</p> <p>As this is a new Committee it is recommended that consideration be given to paying the Chairman of this Committee a Special Responsibility Allowance. It should be noted that Councils are required to convene an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) and seek its advice before they make any changes or amendments to their Members' Allowances Scheme. The Council must 'pay regard' to the Panel's recommendations before setting a new or amended Scheme. It is proposed that the membership and Terms of Reference of the IRP be agreed under delegated authority by the Service Director: Strategy and Governance in consultation with the Group Leaders and that they be asked to convene as soon as possible with a view to bring a proposal back to the July Council meeting.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>A 0.5 FTE Scrutiny Officer post would be required to coordinate meetings and provide policy support for the Health Scrutiny Committee and any associated task and finish groups. This has been identified as a budget pressure for 2021/22. There would also be a requirement for an officer to clerk the meetings and provide administrative support. It is envisaged that this would be delivered by the existing Democratic Services Team.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>The statutory requirements for the scrutiny of health services are set out in the National Health Service Act 2006 as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The relevant regulations are the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.</p> <p>As a unitary authority, West Berkshire Council has the power to review and scrutinise matters relating to the planning, development and operation of the health service for the benefit</p>

	<p>of its citizens, and can make recommendations to and require a response from NHS bodies.</p> <p>It also has the power to consider and respond to any consultation by an NHS body on a proposal that constitutes a substantial development or substantial variation in the provision of health services affecting patients within West Berkshire.</p> <p>The legislation enables full Council to delegate health scrutiny functions to a scrutiny committee or a sub-committee thereof.</p> <p>The proposed terms of reference would be consistent with the legal framework and the Council's Constitution.</p>			
Risk Management:	There are no significant risks associated with this proposal.			
Property:	There are no property implications associated with this proposal.			
Policy:	Officers are not aware of any policies at national or local levels that relate specifically to health scrutiny. However, the proposal is in line with Government guidance on Health Scrutiny.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			Scrutiny of Public Health and NHS services will help to identify and more effectively address current and future health inequalities within the district.

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B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The proposal will ultimately have a beneficial impact on the planning, development, operation and integration of health and care services, which will deliver benefits for all service users, including those with protected characteristics.
Environmental Impact:		X		The proposal will not result in any significant environmental impact.
Health Impact:	X			Scrutiny will help to improve the planning, development, operation and integration of health and care services, and in turn will improve health outcomes for local residents.
ICT Impact:		X		There are no ICT implications of delivering this new function.
Digital Services Impact:		X		Meetings of the Health Scrutiny Committee may be held remotely until such time as Coronavirus restrictions are relaxed and public meetings are permitted. This is in line with other council meetings.
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		This proposal is considered to be 'business as usual' with no particular implications for Council Strategy Priorities.
Core Business:		X		This proposal is considered to be 'business as usual' with no particular implications for core business.
Data Impact:		X		This proposal is considered to be 'business as usual' with no particular implications for data.

Consultation and Engagement:	<p>Councillor Lynne Doherty – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Councillor Graham Bridgman – Executive Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Councillor Alan Law – Chairman of OSMC</p> <p>Nick Carter – Chief Executive</p> <p>Joseph Holmes – Executive Director (Resources)</p> <p>Sarah Clarke – Service Director Strategy and Governance / Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Moira Fraser – Democratic and Electoral Services Manager</p> <p>Catalin Bogos – Performance, Research and Consultation Manager</p>
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4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 Responsibility for scrutiny of health services provided for the citizens of West Berkshire is currently allocated to OSMC. Given the major changes proposed to the structure of the NHS, major investments planned for local hospitals, and the increased importance of health matters following the Covid epidemic, additional capacity and expertise will be needed to respond to the predicted increase in health consultations and to enable more effective scrutiny of Public Health and NHS services.
- 4.2 This report sets out a proposal for a new Health Scrutiny Committee, reporting to OSMC, which would be responsible for undertaking scrutiny of the planning, development and operation of Public Health and NHS services for citizens of West Berkshire. The proposal does not affect scrutiny of the Council’s Social Care functions, which would remain with OSMC.
- 4.3 It is estimated that the Health Scrutiny Committee will require an additional 0.5 FTE Scrutiny Officer role to coordinate meetings and provide policy support, including for any associated task and finish groups. This has been identified as a budget pressure for the 2021/22 financial year. Administrative support would be provided from the existing Democratic Services Team.
- 4.4 As a matter of law, it is for Council to confer scrutiny powers on a committee, thus the delegation of scrutiny powers must be carried out at a meeting of full Council (and not, for example, by OSMC).

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 The primary aim of health scrutiny is to strengthen the voice of local people, ensuring that their needs and experiences are considered as an integral part of the planning,

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development and operation of health services and that those services are safe and effective in meeting local needs.

- 5.2 An important element of health scrutiny is responding to formal consultations on health matters. Health bodies are required to consult a local authority's Health Scrutiny Committee (or equivalently named committee in an upper-tier or unitary authority holding health scrutiny powers) about any proposals they have for a substantial development or variation in the provision of health services in their area. In assessing whether a change is 'substantial' the following must be taken into account:
- changes in the accessibility of services;
 - the impacts on the wider community and other services, including economic impact, transport and regeneration;
 - the number of patients affected;
 - the methods of service delivery.
- 5.3 Health scrutiny also has a strategic role in taking an overview of how well integration of health, public health and social care is working and in making recommendations about how it could be improved.
- 5.4 Additionally, health scrutiny has a legitimate role in: proactively seeking information about the performance of local health services and institutions; in challenging the information provided to it by commissioners and health service providers; and in testing this information by drawing on different sources of intelligence.
- 5.5 Health scrutiny is part of the accountability of the whole system and needs the involvement of all parts of the system. Engagement of the Public Health service, relevant NHS bodies and health service providers with health scrutiny must be a continuous process.
- 5.6 It should be noted that local authorities can choose whether or not to exercise their statutory powers in relation to scrutiny of NHS services. However, where local authorities choose not to respond to formal consultations on proposals for substantial variations to NHS services through their appointed health scrutiny committee, they may forfeit the right to engage with the health body on the proposal. They would also forfeit the right of referral to the Secretary of State in the event that they considered:
- The consultation had been inadequate in relation to the content or the amount of time allowed.
 - The NHS body had given inadequate reasons where it has not consulted for reasons of urgency relating to the safety or welfare of patients or staff.
 - A proposal would not be in the interests of the health service in its area.
- 5.7 The remainder of this report sets out a proposal for improving the health scrutiny process within West Berkshire.

Background

- 5.8 Health scrutiny powers and duties are set out in the National Health Service Act 2006 as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The relevant regulations are the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.
- 5.9 Under this legislation, upper tier and unitary authorities have the power to scrutinise and review any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service within their area.
- 5.10 Health scrutiny functions are conferred on the local authority, rather than any particular Scrutiny committee within the local authority. This gives local authorities flexibility and freedom over the way they discharge their health scrutiny functions.
- 5.11 The legislation enables full Council to delegate health scrutiny functions to:
- A Scrutiny Committee;
 - A Sub-Committee of a Scrutiny Committee;
 - Another local authority;
 - A Joint Scrutiny Committee appointed by two or more local authorities, or a Sub-Committee of such a Joint Committee.
- 5.12 Executive members may not be members of a Scrutiny Committee, Joint Scrutiny Committee, or any of their Sub-Committees. Also, local authorities may not delegate health scrutiny functions to an officer.
- 5.13 Within West Berkshire, OSMC currently has delegated responsibility for all of the Council's scrutiny functions. The Council Constitution does not mention health scrutiny specifically, but section 6.1.2 indicates that it has responsibility for the development and co-ordination of the Scrutiny of partnerships and external bodies. This includes scrutiny of local health services and their providers / commissioners.
- 5.14 OSMC meets four times per year with additional meetings arranged as and when necessary. It may also appoint task and finish groups to undertake detailed reviews on key topics between meetings. However, with such a wide remit, OSMC does not have the capacity to be able to undertake the full range of health scrutiny matters. Also, it is difficult for OSMC members to undertake in-depth scrutiny of health matters, since this requires specialist knowledge and expertise.

Recent Changes in the Health Landscape

- 5.15 The Health and Social Care White Paper¹ sets out proposals for changes to the structure of the NHS, putting Integrated Care Systems on a statutory footing and integrating Clinical Commissioning Groups at the system footprint.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-health-and-social-care-for-all/integration-and-innovation-working-together-to-improve-health-and-social-care-for-all-html-version>

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- 5.16 In addition, Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust and Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are both preparing proposals and supporting business cases for redevelopment of their existing hospitals, or even construction of brand new hospitals and will be going out to consultation in the coming months.
- 5.17 Furthermore, the importance of health matters has increased considerably as a result of the Covid pandemic and will remain a key focus as we enter the recovery phase. Therefore, additional capacity and expertise will be needed to respond to major NHS consultations and to enable more effective scrutiny of Public Health and NHS services.

Proposals

- 5.18 It is proposed that full Council delegates powers on the scrutiny of matters relating to the planning, development and operation of Public Health and NHS health services provided for the benefit of citizens in West Berkshire to a newly created Health Scrutiny Committee (HSC) reporting to OSMC.
- 5.19 The HSC would consult OSMC when setting its work programme and would report back on a quarterly basis to ensure that OSMC has effective oversight of its activities and to ensure that work streams are coordinated. The HSC would be able to set up task and finish groups to undertake in-depth scrutiny reviews.
- 5.20 Membership of the HSC would reflect the political balance of the Council and may include elected Members who are not OSMC members. It is proposed that five members be appointed to the HSC as this will ensure an element of resilience, helping to avoid the need to cancel meetings at short notice in the event that a Member is unable to attend or send a substitute.
- 5.21 West Berkshire Council's representation on any future Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees, where required to provide scrutiny of health services that are provided across local authority boundaries, would be drawn from the HSC.
- 5.22 It is also proposed that provision be made for up to two non-voting co-optees to be appointed to the HSC to provide particular health expertise to assist with a particular review.
- 5.23 The Committee shall meet in accordance with the timetable of meetings agreed annually by Full Council. Initially, it is proposed that the HSC should meet four times per year. However, extraordinary meetings may be convened at any time if it is considered necessary and appropriate to do so.
- 5.24 Members would be provided with training to ensure that they are familiar with local health structures and the particular requirements of health scrutiny.
- 5.25 The HSC Chairman would be responsible for regular liaison with representatives of the following in order to keep up to date with work streams, planned consultations and issues arising:
- Healthwatch West Berkshire;
 - Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group

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- Local NHS Foundation Trusts;
- The Chairman of West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board;
- The Director of Public Health for Berkshire West;
- Executive Director (People);
- Service Director for Communities and Wellbeing;
- Other organisations responsible for aspects of health and wellbeing of citizens of West Berkshire.

5.26 It is estimated that the HSC will require an additional 0.5 FTE Scrutiny Officer role to coordinate meetings and provide policy support. Funding for this post has been approved as part of the budget. Administrative support would be provided from the existing Democratic Services Team.

5.27 It should be noted that the work of the HSC may generate additional work for officers, particularly those in the Public Health Team, who have been made aware of the proposal.

5.28 A proposed Terms of Reference for the HSC is provided in Appendix B.

6 Other options considered

6.1 The following options for delivering the Council's health scrutiny functions were considered and rejected:

- (a) **OSMC to retain all health scrutiny functions ('do nothing' scenario)** – This option would not be as effective in discharging the Council's statutory responsibilities with respect to scrutiny of NHS services due to issues around capacity and expertise as discussed above.
- (b) **Health Scrutiny Committee to only scrutinise matters relating to the planning, development and operation of NHS services** – This would be less effective, due to the high levels of coordination and joint working that exist between Public Health and NHS services. .
- (c) **Full Council to take back health scrutiny functions** – This would be a cumbersome and resource-intensive method of health scrutiny, and the majority of Members do not have the requisite knowledge or expertise in health matters for this to be effective.

6.2 If Council decides to delegate to a health scrutiny committee, it could retain some functions itself.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Creation of the HSC would be a positive step. It would ensure that the Council is better placed to discharge its responsibilities with respect to scrutiny of public health services, and to exercise its powers with respect to scrutiny of NHS services. It would provide additional capacity and would allow Members to develop and apply the necessary knowledge and expertise in this specialist area, and to fully engage with health partners.

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7.2 It would also help to ensure that the needs of local citizens were properly considered in the planning, development and operation of local health services, and to ensure that health, public health and social care services are better coordinated.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment

8.2 Appendix B – Draft Terms of Reference

Background Papers:

[National Health Services Act \(2006\)](#)

[Health and Social Care Act \(2012\)](#)

[The Local Authority \(Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny\) Regulations 2013](#)

[Advice to local authorities on scrutinising health services, 27 June 2014, Department of Health and Social Care](#)

[Policy Paper - Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all](#)

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by the Overview and Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>

Wards affected: All

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Document Control

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Author:			
Owning Service			

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

What is the proposed decision that you are asking Council to make:	To delegate powers of scrutiny of matters relating to the planning, development and operation of Public Health and NHS services for patients in West Berkshire to the Health Scrutiny Committee reporting to OSMC.
Summary of relevant legislation:	The statutory requirements for the scrutiny of health services are set out in the National Health Service Act 2006 as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The relevant regulations are the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's priorities for improvement? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes • Support everyone to reach their full potential • Support businesses to start develop and thrive in West Berkshire • Develop local infrastructure including housing to support and grow the local economy Maintain a green district • Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships 	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Name of Budget Holder:	Sarah Clarke
Name of Service/Directorate:	Strategy & Governance / Resources
Name of assessor:	Gordon Oliver
Date of assessment:	21 December 2020
Version and release date (if applicable):	

Is this a ?		Is this policy, strategy, function or service ... ?	
Policy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New or proposed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Strategy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Function	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Is changing	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Service	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To ensure that the Council delivers its statutory responsibilities with respect to scrutiny of local health services.
Objectives:	To set up a Health Scrutiny Committee, reporting to OSMC which would be responsible for scrutiny of the planning, development and operation of Public Health and NHS services for patients in West Berkshire.
Outcomes:	Improvement of the planning, development and operation of local health services, ensuring they are tailored to the particular needs of the local population.
Benefits:	More efficient, effective and coordinated health services that improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of citizens and reduce health inequalities.

(2) Which groups might be affected and how? Is it positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this?		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	Positive	The Committee may undertake scrutiny of specialist health services provided to children and young people, or to older people
Disability	Positive	The Committee may undertake scrutiny of specialist health services provided to people with physical, sensory or learning difficulties.

Health Scrutiny

Gender Reassignment	Positive	The Committee may undertake scrutiny of specialist health services provided to people undergoing gender reassignment
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact	There are no specific health implications for this group
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive	The Committee may undertake scrutiny of fertility, ante-natal, maternity services, and post-natal care
Race	Positive	The Committee may undertake scrutiny of how effectively the health system is addressing inequalities affecting people from particular ethnic minorities
Religion or Belief	No impact	There are no specific health implications for this group
Sex	Positive	The Committee may undertake scrutiny of specialist health services provided for men or women, and how effectively the health system is addressing inequalities between men and women
Sexual Orientation	No impact	There are no specific health implications for this group
Further Comments:		

(3) Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee will seek to reduce health inequalities.	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee will seek to improve the experience for health service users.	

(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqIA Stage 2 required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Owner of EqIA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqIA Stage Two:	

Name: Gordon Oliver

Date: 21 December 2020

Draft Terms of Reference

Overview

The role of this Committee is to undertake scrutiny of the planning, development and operation of Public Health and NHS services for citizens of West Berkshire, in accordance with the National Health Service Act 2006 (as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012) and the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.

Scrutiny of Social Care services within West Berkshire shall remain with the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC), and the Health Scrutiny Committee will report to OSMC.

Functions of the Committee

1. To review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of Public Health and NHS services for citizens of West Berkshire, and in doing so to ensure that services are safe and effective in improving health and wellbeing of local citizens and reducing health inequalities.
2. To proactively seek information about the quality of local Public Health and NHS services, and about the performance of the commissioners and providers of these services, and also to test information provided by commissioners and providers by drawing on different sources of intelligence.
3. To consider and respond to consultations by relevant NHS bodies or health service providers, on proposals that both parties agree constitute a substantial development or substantial variation in the provision of health services for citizens of West Berkshire, using the powers set out in the relevant legislation and referring to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Health.
4. To develop and maintain a joint protocol about how the Health Scrutiny Committee and responsible NHS bodies and health service providers will reach a view as to whether or not a proposal constitutes a “substantial development” or “substantial variation”.
5. To require the relevant NHS body or health service provider to provide information about the proposal under consideration and its impacts on patients in West Berkshire, and where appropriate to require the attendance of a representative of NHS body or health service provider before the Committee to answer such questions as appear to it to be necessary for the discharge of its function in connection with the consultation.
6. Where there is a disagreement between the Committee and the relevant NHS body or health service provider, which cannot be resolved after reasonable practicable steps and the Committee believes that:
 - (a) the proposed substantial variation or development would not be in the interests of the citizens of West Berkshire; or

Health Scrutiny

- (b) the arrangements put in place by the relevant NHS body or health service provider for consultation have not been adequate in relation to content or time allowed; or
- (c) the reasons given for not consulting by the relevant NHS body or health service provider are not adequate;

the Committee may determine whether to refer the matter to the Secretary of State for Health, in accordance with the relevant legislation and any government guidance, and taking account of any protocol agreed between the Committee and the NHS body or health service provider.

7. To liaise with Healthwatch West Berkshire (or its contractors) in relation to the health care element of their work programme, and to consider and respond to referrals from Healthwatch West Berkshire in relation to the planning, provision and operation of health services in the area.
8. To set up task and finish groups to undertake in-depth scrutiny reviews in relation to the above services on behalf of the Committee.
9. To consider and approve reports, including recommendations, prepared following in-depth reviews undertaken by task and finish groups, for submission to the relevant NHS organisation or other decision maker. Such reports and recommendations to include:
 - (a) an explanation of the matter reviewed or scrutinised;
 - (b) a summary of the evidence considered;
 - (c) a list of participants involved in the review or scrutiny; and
 - (d) an explanation of any recommendations on the matter reviewed or scrutinised.
10. To report on a quarterly basis to OSMC on progress against the work programme and any recommendations it makes.
11. In undertaking the above, the Health Scrutiny Committee should seek opportunities to engage with and represent local people, and engage them in the health scrutiny process.

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings of the Health Scrutiny Committee are to be held in public as a matter of course, unless discussing items that are considered to be sensitive, in which case these may be considered as Part II items.

The Committee shall meet in accordance with the timetable of meetings agreed annually by Full Council.

Extraordinary meetings may be convened with the agreement of the Chairman to deal with specific, urgent matters.

Health Scrutiny

Informal meetings, such as site visits, and meetings of task and finish groups may be organised as required.

Membership

There will be 5 Members of the Health Scrutiny Committee, which will reflect the political balance of the council. These cannot be Members of the Executive.

Up to two non-voting co-optees can be appointed to the Health Scrutiny Committee to provide particular health expertise to assist with a particular review.

Quorum

The quorum for the Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee shall be 4 voting members.

Joint Health Scrutiny Committees

Where a joint health scrutiny committee is set up to undertake scrutiny of health issues across local authority boundaries, West Berkshire Council's membership of that joint committee will be drawn from the Members of the Health Scrutiny Committee.

Health Scrutiny Arrangements across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System

Committee considering report:	Council
Date of Committee:	4 May 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Howard Woollaston
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	22 April 2021
Report Author:	Gordon Oliver
Forward Plan Ref:	C3933

1 Purpose of the Report

To consider the proposal to form a new, mandatory, joint committee with health scrutiny powers to consider matters affecting patient flows across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System geography.

2 Recommendations

Council is asked to:

- (a) SUPPORT the proposal for a joint health overview and scrutiny committee to consider health issues at the NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS) level;
- (b) DELEGATE scrutiny of health issues at the BOB ICS level to the joint health overview and scrutiny committee; and
- (c) APPROVE the terms of reference for the joint health overview and scrutiny committee as set out in Appendix B of this report.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	There would be a small additional cost associated with elected members and officers attending meetings and from officers providing administrative support. These would be met from existing budgets. It is not possible to quantify this additional

Health Scrutiny Arrangements across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System

	<p>expenditure, since meetings will only be convened as they are needed, but the frequency of meetings is anticipated to be low (at least two meetings per year).</p> <p>The work of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will require support in terms of overall co-ordination, setting up and clerking of meetings, underpinning policy support and administrative arrangements.</p> <p>It is proposed that administrative support will be undertaken by the host authority, which would rotate with the chairman every two years.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>There are no significant implications, since the number of additional meetings is expected to be low (at least two meetings per year), with administrative support requirements shared amongst the constituent local authorities. It is envisaged that administrative support for the additional meetings would be provided by the Democratic Services Team.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>The statutory powers and duties relating to the scrutiny of health services are set out in the National Health Service Act 2006 as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The relevant regulations are the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 (“the Regulations”).</p> <p>It is proposed that the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would operate formally as a mandatory joint committee, i.e. where the councils have been required under Regulation 30 (5) to appoint a joint committee for the purposes of the specified consultation on a substantial development or variation in services.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>There are no significant risks associated with this proposal.</p>
<p>Property:</p>	<p>There are no property implications associated with this proposal.</p>
<p>Policy:</p>	<p>Officers are not aware of any policies at national or local levels that relate specifically to health scrutiny. However, the proposal is in line with Government guidance on Local Authority Health Scrutiny, which suggests that there are likely to be occasions where a discretionary joint committee is the best way of</p>

Health Scrutiny Arrangements across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System

	considering how the needs of a local population that happens to cross council boundaries are being met.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			Scrutiny of healthcare services at the ICS level will help to identify and more effectively address current and future health inequalities.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The proposal will ultimately have a beneficial impact on the planning, development, operation and integration of health and care services across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West, which will deliver benefits for all service users, including those with protected characteristics.
Environmental Impact:		X		The proposal will not result in any significant environmental impact.
Health Impact:	X			Health scrutiny will help to improve the planning, development, operation and integration of health and care services, and in turn will improve health outcomes for local residents.
ICT Impact:		X		There are no ICT implications of delivering this new function.
Digital Services Impact:		X		Meetings of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee may be held remotely until such time as Coronavirus restrictions are relaxed and public meetings are

				permitted. This is in line with other council meetings.
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		This proposal is considered to be 'business as usual' with no particular implications for Council Strategy Priorities.
Core Business:		X		This proposal is considered to be 'business as usual' with no particular implications for core business.
Data Impact:		X		This proposal is considered to be 'business as usual' with no particular implications for data.
Consultation and Engagement:	<p>Councillor Lynne Doherty – Leader of the Council</p> <p>Councillor Graham Bridgman – Portfolio Holder: Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>Councillor Alan Law – Chairman of West Berkshire Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission</p> <p>Councillor Howard Woollaston – Portfolio Holder: Internal Governance</p> <p>Nick Carter – Chief Executive</p> <p>Joseph Holmes – Executive Director (Resources)</p> <p>Sarah Clarke – Service Director Strategy and Governance / Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Catalin Bogos – Performance, Research and Consultation Manager</p>			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 Health bodies have a legislative duty to consult a local authority's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or equivalent committee in an upper-tier or unitary holding health scrutiny powers) about any proposals they have for a substantial development or variation in the provision of health services in their area. When these substantial developments or variations affect a geographical area that covers more than one local authority, the affected local authorities must appoint a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) for the purposes of the consultation.

- 4.2 In response to the development of an Integrated Care System (ICS) across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) footprint, a joint health overview and scrutiny committee is needed to consider proposed changes affecting the patient-flow geography at the BOB level. This includes the authorities of Buckinghamshire Council, Oxfordshire County Council, West Berkshire Council, Reading Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council.
- 4.3 This report sets out proposals for the new JHOSC, which will require each of the affected local authorities to delegate health scrutiny powers on services provided at the ICS level to the JHOSC and to agree the Terms of Reference. Legally, the Executive cannot make decisions in relation to scrutiny matters, so the decision must be made by full Council.
- 4.4 It should be noted that Wokingham Borough Council has indicated that they will be unable to agree the terms of reference until after the May 2021 elections. If they request changes to the terms of reference, then an amended version will need to be brought back to full Council for approval.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 Health and care services are provided at different levels and a three-tiered model is used to describe this:
- (a) **System:** An ICS typically covers a population of 1–3 million people. Key functions include setting and leading overall strategy, managing collective resources and performance, identifying and sharing best practice to reduce unwarranted variations in care, and leading changes that benefit from working at a larger scale such as digital, estates and workforce transformation. West Berkshire is part of the BOB ICS, which covers a population of 1.8 million, and currently has three Integrated Care Partnerships, three Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), six NHS Trusts, and 175 GP surgeries.
 - (b) **Place:** a town or district within an ICS, usually consistent with a local authority borough / district, typically covering a population of 250–500,000. This is where the majority of changes to clinical services will be designed and delivered, and where population health management will be used to target interventions to particular groups. The Berkshire West Place comprises Reading Borough, West Berkshire District and Wokingham Borough, covering a population of around 500,000, under the umbrella of the Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership. Although each of the three local authorities has their own Health and Wellbeing Board and Overview and Scrutiny function, they are working closely to develop a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
 - (c) **Neighbourhood:** a small area, typically covering a population of 30–50,000 where groups of GPs and community-based services work together to deliver co-ordinated, proactive care and support, particularly for groups and individuals with the most complex needs. Primary care networks (PCNs) and multidisciplinary community teams form at this level. Fourteen PCNs have been established in Berkshire West, of which four are in West Berkshire.

- 5.2 In addition, a fourth **Locality** tier operates below the Place tier within Berkshire West. These Localities coincide with the individual local authorities of Reading Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council and reflect the geography of their Health and Wellbeing Boards and Public Health, Adult Services and Children's Services functions. Joint working with Health Services also takes place at this level, e.g. through Locality Integration Boards.
- 5.3 Health scrutiny primarily takes place at the Place / Locality level. Within West Berkshire, health scrutiny is undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC), although there is a proposal to delegate powers to a new Health Scrutiny Committee, which is the subject of a separate paper. Currently, no scrutiny takes place at the System level.
- 5.4 Local authority health scrutiny committees have powers to:
- Review and scrutinise matters relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health service in the area, including the finances of local health services.
 - Require local NHS bodies to provide information about the planning, provision and operation of health services in the area.
 - Require employees of local NHS bodies to attend committee meetings to answer questions.
 - Make reports and recommendations to local NHS bodies and expect a response within 28 days.
 - Refer proposals for substantial changes to NHS services to the Secretary of State for decision if: the committee believes the consultation has been inadequate; there were inadequate reasons for not consulting; or if the proposals would not be in the interests of the local health service.
- 5.5 Health bodies have a legislative duty to consult a local authority's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or equivalent committee in an upper-tier or unitary authority holding health scrutiny powers) about any proposals they have for a substantial development or variation in the provision of health services in their area. When these substantial developments or variations affect a geographical area that covers more than one local authority, the affected local authorities must appoint a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) for the purposes of the consultation.
- 5.6 Since the creation of the BOB Sustainability Transformation Plan in 2015, the health scrutiny Chairmen from across the footprint have met, informally and on an ad hoc basis, with key health partners. The last meeting took place in Buckinghamshire on 15 November 2019. It was at this meeting, where the proposal to set-up a joint health scrutiny committee was first requested by the ICS.
- 5.7 The proposal is for ICS activities to be scrutinised by a newly created Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. All other health scrutiny would remain with individual local authorities through their existing health scrutiny arrangements. The ICS leaders have identified that they anticipate 80%

of activity to remain with local Health Scrutiny Committees, with 20% at the BOB Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee level.

Background

5.8 Discussions have taken place with officers across the BOB footprint to consider the governance issues associated with setting-up a new joint health overview and scrutiny committee. In These discussions were informed by advice from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) who endorsed the need for a joint health scrutiny committee and saw it as a key component of the work of the ICS, they indicated that:

- Setting up a joint health scrutiny committee for the ICS should be seen as a necessity;
- Elected Members from across the ICS need to have oversight of what is being planned at system level (at an early stage) and health bodies would gain a greater awareness of the political impact of their proposed decisions;
- The BOB ICS is a vanguard and at the forefront of ICS development and therefore this joint committee should be viewed as a positive;
- There is no existing function for scrutinising and holding to account the ICS so a joint committee should be viewed as an opportunity to strengthen and add value to the existing local scrutiny arrangements.

5.9 Also, it should be noted that the Health and Social Care White Paper¹ sets out proposals for changes to the structure of the NHS, putting Integrated Care Systems on a statutory footing and integrating Clinical Commissioning Groups at the system footprint.

Proposal

5.10 Members are asked to support the proposed arrangements for the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in this report, and in doing so approve the delegation of health scrutiny powers of the BOB ICS to the BOB Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.11 A draft Terms of Reference document has been developed and is attached to this paper in Appendix B.

5.12 The following paragraphs set out the key principles on which the proposal for the Joint Committee has been developed.

Defining the work of the Joint Committee

5.13 The definitions of System, Place, Locality and Neighbourhood as set out above have been incorporated into the draft Terms of Reference. A protocol toolkit will also be developed to ensure work is considered at the most appropriate level of scrutiny. This process will require early dialogue between ICS Leads and the Members of the JHOSC. All constituent authorities will be notified of the outcome of those discussions. The toolkit

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-health-and-social-care-for-all/integration-and-innovation-working-together-to-improve-health-and-social-care-for-all-html-version>

will help to ensure that local health scrutiny arrangements retain their integrity and primacy.

Membership of the Committee

- 5.14 It is proposed that appointments to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would have regard to the relative proportion of the BOB patient flow for each of the constituent local authorities. This is in line with the legislative framework of health scrutiny.
- 5.15 The proposal is for a Committee of 19 Members (7 Members for Oxfordshire, 6 Members for Buckinghamshire and 6 Members for Berkshire West – 2 from each of the three unitary authorities). In the absence of patient flow figures, this calculation has been based on population figures. Each local authority will be able to appoint substitute Members.
- 5.16 It is also proposed that co-opted (non-voting) members may be temporarily appointed to the JHOSC or to a Task and Finish Group to bring specialist knowledge onto the committee to inform specific work streams or agenda items.

Referral powers to the Secretary of State

- 5.17 Buckinghamshire is keen that the power of referral on System related activities remains with the BOB Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny committee. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny agrees with this approach.
- 5.18 Oxfordshire's JHOSC requested at its meeting in June 2020 that the power of referral be retained by Oxfordshire. The advice received from the CfGS is that disaggregating the power of referral for the BOB JHOSC could result in five separate referrals on the same issue. It would also fracture the unified voice of five authorities created by a BOB JHOSC. To ensure that Oxfordshire (or any other local authority / health scrutiny committee) can independently refer a matter to the Secretary of State if the BOB JHOSC chooses not to, Oxfordshire has asked for the draft Terms of Reference to contain a "Notwithstanding clause". This allows member authorities the right to refer an issue to the Department of Health if the BOB JHOSC chose not to.

Election of Chairman and Host Authority

- 5.19 It is proposed that the Chairman would be elected by the JHOSC for a two year term. It is proposed that the role of host authority would be undertaken by the chairing authority for the same period.
- 5.20 West Berkshire Council proposed that hosting of the committee meetings be undertaken by one local authority on a permanent basis, with associated administrative support and costs re-charged to the other authorities involved, depending upon their proportionate membership on the Committee. However, this suggestion was not supported by the other local authorities.

Frequency of meetings

5.21 The new Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would only be convened as necessary, with at least two meetings per year.

Terms of Reference

5.22 The Terms of Reference have been circulated to each authority for discussion with Members and Officers and has been taken through the relevant overview and scrutiny committee of each local authority prior to reports going to their respective Councils. The Terms of Reference are contained within Appendix B of this report.

5.23 It should be noted that Wokingham Borough Council has indicated that they will be unable to agree the terms of reference until after the May 2021 elections. If they request changes to the terms of reference, then an amended version will need to be brought back to full Council for approval.

6 Other options considered

6.1 Within the current legislation and health system structure, there are no viable alternatives to establishing a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West area to address matters affecting the patient flows across the entire Integrated Care System.

6.2 Options have been considered around the composition of the JHOSC, for example, a smaller committee with three members from Buckinghamshire, four from Oxfordshire, and one member from each of the three Berkshire West authorities. However, it was felt that numbers should be increased such that there were at least two members from each local authority.

7 Conclusion

7.1 The creation of a JHOSC would be a positive step. It would ensure that West Berkshire Council and the other local authorities across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West were able discharge their legal responsibilities when consulted by the ICS on substantial developments or variations in services. It would also help to ensure that the needs of local citizens are properly considered in the planning, development and operation of local health services at the BOB ICS level.

7.2 The establishment of the BOB JHOSC requires all relevant local authorities (as outlined in this paper) to agree the Terms of Reference, as such, they are subject to agreement by those authorities through their respective Councils.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment

8.2 Appendix B – Draft Terms of Reference

Background Papers:

[National Health Services Act \(2006\)](#)

[Health and Social Care Act \(2012\)](#)

[The Local Authority \(Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny\) Regulations 2013](#)

[Advice to local authorities on scrutinising health services, 27 June 2014, Department of Health and Social Care](#)

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 Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

Wards affected: All wards

Officer details:

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Document Control

Document Ref:		Date Created:	
Version:		Date Modified:	
Author:			
Owning Service			

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

<p>What is the proposed decision that you are asking Council to make:</p>	<p>To delegate powers of scrutiny of matters relating to the planning, development and operation of health services affecting patient flows across the entire Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System area to a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>
<p>Summary of relevant legislation:</p>	<p>The statutory requirements for the scrutiny of health services are set out in the National Health Service Act 2006 as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The relevant regulations are the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 (“the Regulations”).</p>
<p>Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council’s priorities for improvement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes • Support everyone to reach their full potential • Support businesses to start develop and thrive in West Berkshire • Develop local infrastructure including housing to support and grow the local economy Maintain a green district • Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships 	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Name of Budget Holder:</p>	<p>Sarah Clarke</p>
<p>Name of Service/Directorate:</p>	<p>Strategy & Governance / Resources</p>
<p>Name of assessor:</p>	<p>Gordon Oliver</p>
<p>Date of assessment:</p>	<p>02 December 2020</p>
<p>Version and release date (if applicable):</p>	<p></p>

Health Scrutiny Arrangements across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System

Is this a ?		Is this policy, strategy, function or service ... ?	
Policy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New or proposed	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Strategy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Function	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Is changing	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Service	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims:	To ensure that the Council delivers its statutory responsibilities with respect to scrutiny of health services provided across local authority boundaries.
Objectives:	To set up a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West, which would be responsible for scrutiny of health services provided by the Integrated Care System.
Outcomes:	Improvement of the planning, development and operation of health services, ensuring they are tailored to the particular needs of the local population.
Benefits:	More efficient, effective and coordinated health services that improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of citizens and reduce health inequalities.

(2) Which groups might be affected and how? Is it positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this?

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	Positive	The Joint Committee may undertake scrutiny of specialist health services provided to children and young people, or to older people
Disability	Positive	The Joint Committee may undertake scrutiny of specialist health services provided to people with physical, sensory or learning difficulties.

Health Scrutiny Arrangements across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System

Gender Reassignment	Positive	The Joint Committee may undertake scrutiny of specialist health services provided to people undergoing gender reassignment
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No impact	There are no specific health implications for this group
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive	The Joint Committee may undertake scrutiny of specialist fertility and maternity services.
Race	Positive	The Committee may undertake scrutiny of how effectively the health system is addressing inequalities affecting people from particular ethnic minorities
Religion or Belief	No impact	There are no specific health implications for this group
Sex	Positive	The Committee may undertake scrutiny of specialist health services provided for men or women, and how effectively the health system is addressing inequalities between men and women
Sexual Orientation	No impact	There are no specific health implications for this group
Further Comments:		

(3) Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee will seek to reduce health inequalities.	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee will seek to improve the experience for health service users.	

(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqIA Stage 2 required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Owner of EqIA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqIA Stage Two:	

Name: Gordon Oliver

Date: 02 December 2020

Please now forward this completed form to Pamela Voss, Equality and Diversity Officer (pamela.voss@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC website.

Appendix B

Draft Terms of Reference

Purpose

1. Health Services are required to consult a local authority's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee about any proposals they have for a substantial development or variation in the provision of health services in their area. When these substantial developments or variations affect a geographical area that covers more than one local authority (according to patient flow), the local authorities are required to appoint a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) for the purposes of the consultation.
2. The NHS Long-Term Plan (published at the beginning of 2019) sets out the vision and ambition for the NHS for the next 10 years. It states - "Every Integrated Care System will need streamlined commissioning arrangements to enable a single set of commissioning decisions at system level." The purpose of the JHOSC would be to hold to account and challenge these commissioning decisions at system level. This function would be new and a different part of local health scrutiny arrangements. The powers and duties of health scrutiny would remain unchanged at Place, Locality and Neighbourhood level (see definitions below). The creation of a JHOSC to scrutinise system level decisions would strengthen existing scrutiny arrangements.
3. These terms of reference set out the arrangements for Buckinghamshire Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Reading Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, and Wokingham Borough Council, to operate a JHOSC in line with the provisions set out in legislation and guidance and to allow it to operate as a mandatory committee.

Terms of Reference

4. The new JHOSC will operate formally as a mandatory joint committee i.e. where the councils have been required under Regulation 30 (5) Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 to appoint a joint committee for the purposes of providing independent scrutiny to activities delivered at system level (as detailed below) by the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System.
5. The Kings Fund published a report in April 2020 "Integrated Care Systems explained: making sense of systems, places and neighbourhoods", which says that NHS England and NHS Improvement has adopted the terminology used in some systems to describe a three tiered model – System, Place and Neighbourhood:
 - System - typically covering a population of 1–3 million people. Key functions include setting and leading overall strategy, managing collective resources and performance, identifying and sharing best practice to reduce unwarranted variations in care, and leading changes that benefit from working at a larger scale such as digital, estates and workforce transformation.

Health Scrutiny Arrangements across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System

- Place – a town or district within an ICS, typically covering a population of 250,000-500,000. This is where the majority of changes to clinical services will be designed and delivered and where population health management will be used to target intervention to particular groups. At this level, providers may work together to join up their services through alliances and more formal contractual arrangements.
 - Neighbourhood – a small area, typically covering a population of 30,000-50,000 where groups of GPs and community-based services work together to deliver co-ordinated, pro-active care and support, particularly for groups and individuals with the most complex needs. Primary Care Networks and multi-disciplinary community teams form at this level.
6. In addition, a fourth Locality tier operates below the 'Place' tier, but only within Berkshire West. These Localities coincide with the individual local authorities of Reading Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council and reflect the geography of their Health and Wellbeing Boards and Public Health, Adult Services and Children's Services functions. Joint working with Health Services also takes place at this level, e.g. through Locality Integration Boards.
 7. Activities at Place, Locality and Neighbourhood levels would be scrutinised by the relevant local authority through their existing health scrutiny arrangements.
 8. The purpose of the mandatory JHOSC across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Reading, West Berkshire, Wokingham is to:
 - (a) make comments on the proposal consulted on
 - (b) require the provision of information about the proposal
 - (c) gather evidence from key stakeholders, including members of the public
 - (d) require the member or employee of the relevant health service to attend before it to answer questions in connection with the consultation.
 - (e) Refer to the Secretary of State only on where it is not satisfied that:
 - consultation on any proposal for a substantial change or development has been adequate in relation to content or time allowed (NB. The referral power in these contexts only relates to the consultation with the local authorities, and not consultation with other stakeholders)
 - the proposal would not be in the interests of the health service in the area
 - a decision has been taken without consultation and it is not satisfied that the reasons given for not carrying out consultation are adequate.
 9. Notwithstanding point (e) above, Member authorities have the right to refer an issue to the Department of Health if the joint health scrutiny committee does not collectively agree to refer an issue.

Health Scrutiny Arrangements across the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System

10. With the exception of those matters referred to in paragraph [3] above responsibility for all other health scrutiny functions and activities remain with the respective local authority Health Scrutiny Committees.
11. The process for determining the appropriate level of scrutiny – ie. System or Place/Locality/Neighbourhood will be in accordance with an agreed toolkit which will set out the process for initiating early dialogue between ICS Leads and the Members of the JHOSC. All constituent authorities will be notified of the outcome of those discussions.
12. No matter to be discussed by the Committee shall be considered to be confidential or exempt without the agreement of all Councils and subject to the requirements of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Governance

13. Meetings of the JHOSC will be conducted under the Standing Orders of the Local Authority hosting and providing democratic services support and subject to these terms of reference.

Frequency of meetings

14. The JHOSC will meet at least twice a year with the Integrated Care System Leads to ensure oversight of key priorities and deliverables at system level.

Host authority

15. The JHOSC would be hosted by one of the named authorities. The role of host authority would be undertaken by the chairing authority for the same time period [24 months].

Membership

16. Membership of the JHOSC will be appointed by Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Reading, West Berkshire, Wokingham that have responsibility for discharging health scrutiny functions.
17. Appointments to the JHOSC have regard to the proportion of patient flow. The Joint Committee will therefore have 19 members, consisting of 6 from Buckinghamshire, 7 from Oxfordshire, 2 from Reading, 2 from West Berkshire, 2 from Wokingham.
18. Appointments by each authority to the JHOSC will reflect the political balance of that authority.
19. The quorum for meetings will be 6 voting members, comprising at least one member from each authority. Member substitutes from each authority will be accepted.
20. The JHOSC shall also reserve the right to consider the appointment of additional temporary co-opted members in order to bring specialist knowledge onto the committee to inform specific work streams or agenda items. Any co-opted member appointed will not have a vote.

21. The five Healthwatch organisations shall be recognised as key stakeholders and a standing item will be included on the JHOSC agenda to allow the organisations to report back on patient and public views from across the ICS.

Chairman & Vice Chairman

22. The Chairman of the JHOSC shall be drawn from the members of it and will normally be filled by the member whose authority is hosting the Committee for a period of 24 months.
23. The Vice-Chairman of the JHOSC shall be drawn from members on the Committee and elected every 24 months.

Task & Finish Groups

24. The Committee may appoint such Working Groups of their members as they may determine to undertake and report back to the Committee on specified investigations or reviews as set out in the work programme. Appointments to such Working Groups will be made by the Committee, ensuring political and geographical balance as far as possible. Such panels will exist for a fixed period, on the expiry of which they shall cease to exist.

Committee support

25. The work of the JHOSC will require support in terms of overall coordination, setting up and clerking of meetings and underpinning policy support and administrative arrangements.
26. Meetings of the committee are to be arranged and held by the host authority.
27. Should a press statement or press release need to be made by the JHOSC, this will be approved all authorities before being signed off by the Chairman.

Appointment of and Allocation of Seats on Committees for the 2021/22 Municipal Year

Committee considering report:	Council
Date of Committee:	4 May 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Lynne Doherty
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	15 April 2021
Report Author:	Sarah Clarke
Forward Plan Ref:	C3997

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To consider the appointment and allocation of seats on Committees for the next Municipal Year in accordance with the duty under section 15 of the Local Government Housing Act 1989.
- 1.2 To agree the Council’s Policy Framework for 2021/22 as set out in paragraph 5.20 of the report.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Council notes that under paragraph 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, notice has been received that the Members set out in paragraph 5.1 are to be regarded as Members of the Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Green Party Groups respectively.
- 2.2 That the Council agrees to the appointment of the various Committees and to the number of places on each as set out in paragraph 5.4 (Table A).
- 2.3 That the Council agrees to the allocation of seats to the Political Groups in accordance with section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1989 as set out in paragraph 5.12 of the report (Table B).
- 2.4 That the number of substitutes on Committees and Commissions be as set out in paragraph 5.15 (Table C).
- 2.5 That, in respect of the Area Planning Committees, a substitute Member must represent a ward within that Committee’s area, and in respect of the District Planning Committee, they must be a Member of the same Area Planning Committee as the Member they are substituting for.

Appointment of and Allocation of Seats on Committees for the 2021/22 Municipal Year

- 2.6 That the Council approves the appointment of Members to the Committees as set out in Appendix A and notes the appointments set out in Appendix B which are in accordance with the wishes of the Political Groups.
- 2.7 That the Council, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 as amended, agrees that the Council's Policy Framework for 2021/22 be as set out in paragraph 5.20 of this report, and that any necessary amendments be made to the Council's Constitution.
- 2.8 That the Council notes that other plans, policies and strategies requiring approval which are not included in the approved Policy Framework and which are not otherwise reserved by law to Council, will be the responsibility of the Council's Executive in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.
- 2.9 That the Council notes that Paragraph 2.6.5 of Article 6 of the Constitution, will be amended to reflect any changes made to the Executive Portfolios by the Leader of the Council and announced at the Executive meeting on 25 March 2021 or at the Annual Council meeting.
- 2.10 That the appointment of two non-voting co-opted Parish/Town Councillors be made to the Governance and Ethics Committee as detailed in Appendix A.
- 2.11 To re-appoint three Independent Persons (standards) namely Lindsey Appleton, James Rees and Mike Wall and to appoint an Independent Person (Audit) to focus on the risk and audit functions of the Governance and Ethics Committee.
- 2.12 To note the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board as set out in Appendix A.
- 2.13 That authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make any changes required to the Constitution as a result of the changes to the number of Members of the Council and following the appointments to Committees.
- 2.14 It is recommended that Council approve the creation of a Safer Streets Champion (as noted in Appendix B) in order to:
- work with our communities to understand their concerns and receive suggestions for how we want to address street harassment;
 - work in partnership with Thames Valley Police to explore a potential bid for Safer Streets Fund funding;
 - work closely with the Public Protection Partnership, Thames Valley Police, Town Centre managers and others to challenge and eradicate street harassment in our district;
 - seek to develop better public awareness of what constitutes street harassment and unacceptable behaviours; and
 - work with our three West Berkshire MPs to seek further powers for the Police to be able to take appropriate action where street harassment is witnessed or reported.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary			
Financial:	<p>Members Allowances will be met from within existing budgets and will be in accordance with the proposals agreed at the 3 December 2020 Council meeting.</p> <p>A further Independent Remuneration Panel will be required to consider whether a special responsibility allowance should also be paid to the Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Committee.</p>			
Human Resource:	None			
Legal:	The allocation of seats to the Political Groups is in accordance with section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1989 and related regulations mentioned in the report			
Risk Management:	None			
Property:	None			
Policy:	The appointments and allocations will be made in accordance with the Council's statutory obligations. The Council's Policy making framework is updated annually			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
<p>A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?</p>		x		

B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
Environmental Impact:		x		
Health Impact:		x		
ICT Impact:		x		
Digital Services Impact:		x		
Council Strategy Priorities:		x		
Core Business:		x		
Data Impact:		x		
Consultation and Engagement:	The political groups have been consulted on aspects of this report.			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The Council is required to appoint Committees and other Member bodies that are not part of the Executive. Membership of the Council’s Committees is agreed annually at the May Council meeting.
- 4.2 This report sets out the Membership of the Political Groups, the proposed size and Membership of the Committees as well as the number of substitutes to be appointed for each of the bodies. It also sets out the 2021/22 Policy Framework.
- 4.3 Appointments to the Executive are a matter reserved to the Leader of Council, and are not therefore not included in this report.

5 Supporting Information

Political Groups

- 5.1 In accordance with Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the under-mentioned Members have given notice of their wish to be regarded as Members of the Political Groups set out below.

Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Green Party
Ardagh-Walter, Steve	Abbs, Adrian	Culver, Carolyne
Argyle, Peter	Barnett, Phil	Marsh, David
Beck, Jeff	Brooks, Jeff	Masters, Steve
Benneyworth, Dennis	Cottam, Jeremy	
Boeck, Dominic	Dillon, Lee	
Bridgman, Graham	Drummond, Billy	
Cant, Jeff	Hunt, Nassar	
Cole, Hilary	Jeffery, Owen	
Cole, James	Longton, Royce	
Doherty, Lynne	Macro, Alan	
Hooker, Clive	Mayes, Geoff	
Hurley, Gareth	Moore, Andy	
Jones, Rick	Pattenden, Erik	
Law, Alan	Vickers, Martha	
Linden, Tony	Vickers, Tony	
Mackinnon, Ross	Woodhams, Keith	
Marino, Tom		
Pask, Graham		
Rowles, Claire		
Simpson, Garth		
Somner, Richard		
Stewart, Joanne		
Williamson, Andrew		
Woollaston, Howard		

- 5.2 It is proposed at recommendation 2.1, that the Council notes that under Paragraph 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, notice has been received that the Members set out in Paragraph 5.1 are to be regarded as Members of the Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Green Party Groups respectively

Appointment of Committees

- 5.3 In accordance with Paragraph 4.2.2 of the Constitution, the Council is required to appoint Committees and other Member bodies that are not part of the Executive or its sub-committees.
- 5.4 It is proposed that Council appoint the Committees (as set out in Table A) with the number of places shown for each.

Table A

Body	Number of Seats
Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission	9
Licensing Committee	12
District Planning Committee	11 <i>(five Members of the Eastern Area Planning Committee and five Members of the Western Area Planning Committee as well as the Portfolio Holder for Planning)</i>
Eastern Area Planning Committee	9
Western Area Planning Committee	9
Personnel Committee	5
Appeals Panel	12
Governance and Ethics Committee	9 <i>(two co-opted, non-voting Parish Councillors and an Independent Person (Audit) will also be appointed to this Committee)</i>
Joint Public Protection Committee	2 <i>(An Executive Member and a Council appointee)</i>
Health Scrutiny Committee	5 <i>(Will additionally include two non-voting co-optees)</i>
Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2
Total	85

Appointment of and Allocation of Seats on Committees for the 2021/22 Municipal Year

- 5.5 The Health and Wellbeing Board is subject to its own Membership requirements and is therefore not included in the above table. The boundaries for the Eastern and Western Area Planning Committees are set out in Appendix C.
- 5.6 It is proposed that 12 Members be appointed to the Licensing Committee and the Appeals Panel, to ensure that there is a sufficient pool of Members trained and available to undertake the work of these Committees which frequently sit as a Sub-Committee or Panel.
- 5.7 It is recommended (at 2.2) that the Council agrees to the appointment of the various Committees and to the number of places on each as set out in paragraph 2.2 (Table A).
- 5.8 It is recommended (at paragraph 2.13) that authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer to make any changes required to the Constitution as a result of the changes to the number of Members of the Council and following the appointments to Committees.

Allocation of Seats

- 5.9 The political balance of the Council currently stands as follows:

	Number of Members No.	Political Composition %
Conservative Group	24	55.81% (56%)
Liberal Democrat Group	16	37.21% (37%)
Green Party Group	3	6.97% (7%)
	43	100.00%

- 5.10 In allocating seats on Committees, the Council must give effect to the requirements for political balance on Committees as prescribed by section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. These requirements apply only to voting members of the Committee.
- 5.11 This section creates a sequential test that must be adhered to when allocating seats to the Committees of Council, which provides as follows:
- (1) Not all seats on any Committee are to be allocated to the same political group;
 - (2) The majority of seats on any Committee must be allocated to the majority Group;
 - (3) Subject to the satisfaction of the above statutory criteria, the total number of seats on ordinary Committees must be allocated to political groups in the same proportion as their representation on the Council;
 - (4) Subject to all the above, the number of seats on each Committee must be the same proportion as the political group's representation on full Council;
- 5.12 Having regard to the above, it is recommended that the seats on Committees should be allocated as set out in Table B below.

Appointment of and Allocation of Seats on Committees for the 2021/22 Municipal Year

Table B				
Committee	Total Number of Seats	Conservative Group	Liberal Democrat Group	Green Party
Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission	9	5	3	1
Health Scrutiny Committee	5	3	2	0
Licensing Committee	12	7	4	1
District Planning Committee	11	6	4	1
Eastern Area Planning Committee	9	5	4	0
Western Area Planning Committee	9	5	3	1
Personnel Committee	5	3	2	0
Appeals Panel	12	7	5	0
Governance and Ethics Committee	9	5	3	1
Joint Public Protection Committee	2	2	0	0
Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	2	2	0	0
Total	85	50	30	5

5.13 It is recommended (at 2.3) that the Council agrees to the allocation of seats to the Political Groups in accordance with section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1989 as set out in paragraph 5.12 (Table B) above. It is also recommended that the Monitoring Officer be given delegated powers to make any changes required to the Constitution arising out of this recommendation.

Substitutes

5.14 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Council is required to determine the number of substitute Members that may be appointed in respect of each Committee.

5.15 The number of substitutes for each Committee is as follows:

Table C	
Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission	Up to 3 per Political Group
Health Scrutiny Committee	Up to 2 per Political Group on the Committee
Area Planning Committees	Up to 3 per Political Group
District Planning Committee	Up to 4 per Political Group – 2 from the Eastern Area of the District and 2 from the Western Area of the District
Licensing Committee	No substitutes permitted
Personnel Committee	Up to 2 per Political Group on the Committee
Appeals Panel	No substitutes permitted
Governance and Ethics Committee	Up to 2 per Political Group

5.16 That, in respect of the Area Planning Committees, a substitute Member must represent a ward within that Committee's area, and in respect of the District Planning Committee, they must be a Member of the same Area Planning Committee as the Member they are substituting for.

5.17 It is proposed that the number of substitutes on Committees and Commissions be approved as set out in paragraph 5.15 (Table C).

Appointment to Committees

5.18 Appendix A is a list of Committees and the nominations from each Political Group.

5.19 It is proposed that the Council approves the appointment of Members to the Committees as set out in Appendix A and notes the appointments set out in Appendix B which are in accordance with the wishes of the Political Groups.

Planning and Policy Framework

5.20 It is recommended that, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 as amended, the proposed Policy Framework for 2021/22 (Policies etc reserved to Council) contains the Policies, Plans and Strategies set out below, and that any necessary amendments be made to the Council's Constitution:

- Council Strategy;
- Local Transport Plan;
- Licensing Policy;
- Gambling Policy;
- Plans and strategies which together comprise the Development Plan;
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- Statutory Pay Policy Statement;
- Property Investment Strategy.

5.21 Other plans, policies and strategies requiring approval which are not included in the approved Policy Framework and which are not otherwise reserved by law to Council, will be the responsibility of the Council's Executive in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

Executive

5.22 Council are asked to note that paragraph 2.6.5 of Article 6 of the Constitution, will be amended to reflect any changes made to the Executive Portfolios by the Leader of the Council and announced at the Executive meeting on 25 March or at the Annual Council meeting.

Governance and Ethics Committee

5.23 In addition to the elected Members who will be appointed on a proportional basis to the Governance and Ethics Committee, it is recommended that two co-opted non-voting Parish/Town Councillors also be appointed. In addition two substitute (and also non-voting) Parish/Town Councillors will also be appointed to provide continuity.

5.24 It is also proposed that the Advisory Panel and three Independent Persons be retained.

5.25 Following the Redmond Review, it is also recommended that the Council appoint an Independent Person (Audit) to focus on the risk and audit functions of the Governance and Ethics Committee. Details of this appointment will be considered at a future Council meeting following the conclusion of an external selection process to identify a suitable candidate.

5.26 It is recommended that Council appoint as non-voting co-opted Parish/Town Councillors to the Governance and Ethics Committee the parish council representatives, and the substitute parish council representatives as detailed in Appendix A.

5.27 It is also proposed that Council re-appoint three Independent Persons namely Lindsey Appleton, James Rees and Mike Wall.

Health and Wellbeing Board

- 5.28 The Health and Wellbeing Board is created under the relevant provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. A number of regulations linked to Committees have been dis-applied in relation to this Committee such as the proportionality rules and rules pertaining to voting.
- 5.29 The membership of the Board is set out in Appendix A and a number of the Board Members have nominated a named substitute as set out in that Appendix.
- 5.30 Council is asked to note the membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board as set out in Appendix A.

6 Proposals

- 6.1 As detailed in this report, in accordance with Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, 24 Members wish to be regarded as members of the Conservative Group, 16 Members wish to be regarded as members of the Liberal Democrat Group and 3 Members wish to be regarded as members of the Green Party Group.
- 6.2 Members, and where appropriate substitutes, will be appointed to 10 Committees totalling 85 seats. In this case 50 of these seats will be allocated to Conservative Members, 30 to Liberal Democrat Members and 5 to Green Party Members. The Health and Wellbeing Board is not included in these appointments as it is subject to its own membership requirements.
- 6.3 It is proposed that the appointments to Committees are made in accordance with the wishes of the Political Groups and as fully set out in the recommendations and related Appendices.
- 6.4 The Council will appoint two Parish/Town Councillors to the Governance and Ethics Committee, three Independent Persons (Standards) and one Independent Person (Audit). Two substitute Parish/ Town Councillors will be appointed to the Governance and Ethics Committee.

7 Other options considered

- 7.1 None as the Council is required to consider and review membership of committees on an annual basis.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 Members are asked to agree the appointment of and allocation of seats on the Committees for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.
- 8.2 Members are asked to agree the Council's Policy Framework for 2021/22 as set out in Paragraph 5.20.

9 Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix A – Membership of Committees 2021/2022 (to follow)
- 9.2 Appendix B - Task Group and Panel Memberships 2021/22 (to follow)
- 9.3 Appendix C – Wards covering each Planning Committee

Background Papers:

None

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 Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

Wards affected: All

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Document Control

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Owning Service			

Change History

Appointment of and Allocation of Seats on Committees for the 2021/22 Municipal Year

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			

Appendix C – Wards covering each Planning Committee

Wards within the Western Planning Area	Wards within the Eastern Planning Area
Lambourn	Basildon
Downlands	Pangbourne
Ridgeway	Bucklebury
Hungerford and Kintbury	Bradfield
Chieveley and Cold Ash	Aldermaston
Newbury Speen	Burghfield and Mortimer
Newbury Central	Theale
Newbury Wash Common	Tilehurst and Purley
Newbury Clay Hill	Tilehurst Birch Copse
Newbury Greenham	Tilehurst South and Holybrook
	Thatcham West
	Thatcham North East
	Thatcham Colthrop and Crookham
	Thatcham Central

Appointments to Outside Bodies 2021/22

Committee considering report:	Council
Date of Committee:	4 May 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Lynne Doherty
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	15 April 2021
Report Author:	Sarah Clarke
Forward Plan Ref:	C3993

1 Purpose of the Report

West Berkshire Council must make annual nominations to the following outside bodies:

- Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
- Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel
- Local Government Association General Assembly

2 Recommendations

2.1 Council is requested to approve the appointments in accordance with Appendix A of Member representatives to the following outside bodies:

- Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
- Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel

2.2 Council is asked to note the appointments as detailed in Appendix A of Member representatives to the:

- Local Government Association General Assembly

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	West Berkshire Council Members are not paid to attend Outside Body meetings but any costs associated with meeting attendance will be met from within existing Members

	Allowances budget, where the Outside Body does not pay these costs			
Human Resource:	None			
Legal:	The Council is required to appoint members to certain bodies, such as the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel.			
Risk Management:	None			
Property:	None			
Policy:	Where appropriate, appointments will be made in accordance with Part 13 Appendix J (Protocol for Council Representation on Outside Bodies) of the Council's Constitution			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
Environmental Impact:		x		

Health Impact:		x		
ICT Impact:		x		
Digital Services Impact:		x		
Council Strategy Priorities:		x		
Core Business:		x		
Data Impact:		x		
Consultation and Engagement:	Local Government Association, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel Scrutiny Officer			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The Council is required to appoint representatives to a range of Outside Bodies. The majority of these appointments were made via an Individual Decision in June 2019 and were aligned to the Council’s electoral cycle, and are not therefore anticipated to change until 2023.
- 4.2 Nominations to the three Outside Bodies, Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel and Local Government Association General Assembly are required annually. Appointments, where appropriate, will be made in accordance with Appendix J to Part 13 of the Constitution (Protocol for Council Representatives on Outside Bodies).

5 Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

- 5.1 Members are responsible for setting the Fire and Rescue Service operating budget and determining how the service is run. Meetings of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority take place in the evenings, on a quarterly basis, and previously these have taken place at the authority’s Headquarters in Calcot, Reading. It should be noted that a Member appointed to the Fire Authority is expected to attend all Fire Authority meetings and to serve on at least one committee or working party.
- 5.2 Appointments to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority are made on a proportionality basis based on the electoral roll. The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service have informed the Council that they require four Member appointments from West Berkshire Council. Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the Council is required

to allocate seats on the Fire Authority reflecting the political balance of the whole Council.

- 5.3 The Council's representatives in 2020/21 were Councillors Dennis Benneyworth, Jeff Brooks, Tony Linden and Garth Simpson.

6 Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel

- 6.1 The Panel comprises 18 elected members (one from each Authority) and two co-optees. Appointments of elected Members to the Panel are made in accordance with each Authority's own procedures, with a view to ensuring that the 'balanced appointment objective' is met, so far as is reasonable practicable.

- 6.2 The balanced appointment objective requires that the Panel should (when taken together):

- Represent all parts of the police area;
- Represent the political make-up of the Authorities;
- Have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the Panel to discharge its functions effectively.

- 6.3 A Member shall be appointed annually to the Panel to hold office matching the Municipal Year, subject to the following provisos that he/she:

Shall cease to be a Member of the Panel if he/she ceases to be a member of:

- The Authority;
- The political group in the Authority when the appointment to hold office was made.

- 6.4 The Council's representative in 2020/21 was Councillor Claire Rowles.

7 Local Government Association General Assembly

- 7.1 The Local Government Association is a politically-led, cross-party organisation that works on behalf of councils to ensure that local government has a voice with national government. It aims to influence and set the political agenda on issues relevant to councils in order to deliver local solutions.

- 7.2 The General Assembly acts as the 'parliament' of local government, with authorities in LGA membership entitled to have a minimum of one representative. It meets each summer at the LGA's Annual Conference. Membership is reviewed annually.

- 7.3 Four places are available to West Berkshire Council. There is no requirement that the Council allocate seats to the General Assembly in a politically balanced manner. However, the Local Government Association encourages authorities entitled to three or four representatives on the General Assembly to allocate one of those positions to the Opposition Group Leader.

- 7.4 The Council's representatives in 2020/21 were Councillors Lynne Doherty, Graham Bridgman, Dominic Boeck and Lee Dillon.

8 Other options considered

Not to appoint representatives which is not recommended for the reasons detailed in the report.

9 Conclusion

That the Council should agree and note that the appointments to the organisations set out in this report be made in accordance with Appendix A.

10 Appendices

10.1 Appendix A – Proposed Appointments to Outside Bodies (to follow)

Background Papers:

None

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>

Wards affected: All

Officer details:

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Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – 2020/21

Committee considering report:	Council on 4 May 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Howard Woollaston
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	8 April 2021
Report Author:	Sarah Clarke
Forward Plan Ref:	C3992

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an update on local and national issues relating to ethical standards and to bring to the attention of Members any complaints or other problems within West Berkshire.
- 1.2 To present the Annual Governance and Ethics Report to Full Council.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are requested to note the content of the report.
- 2.2 The report to be circulated to all Parish/Town Councils in the District for information.

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	There are no financial issues arising from this report. However the costs associated with external investigations may lead to a budget pressure.
Human Resource:	There are no personnel issues associated with this report.
Legal:	There are no legal issues arising from this report. The matters covered by this report are generally requirements of the Local Government Act 2000 in so far as appropriate and the Localism Act 2011 and its supporting regulations.
Risk Management:	The benefits of this process are the maintenance of the Council's credibility and good governance by a high standard of ethical behaviour. The threats are the loss of credibility of the Council if standards fall. Adherence to the requirements of the Code of Conduct also reduce the risk of the Council's decisions being subject to legal challenge.
Property:	There are no property issues associated with this report.

Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – 2020/21

Policy:	Revised policy and changes to processes adopted at Council in May 2012 and reviewed in December 2013 and September 2016.		
	Positive	Neutral	Negative
			Commentary
Equalities Impact:			
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X	
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X	
Environmental Impact:		X	
Health Impact:		X	
ICT or Digital Services Impact:		X	
Council Strategy Priorities or Business as Usual:		X	Business as usual.
Data Impact:		X	.
Consultation and Engagement:	Finance & Governance Group		

4. Executive Summary

- 4.1 This report is the Monitoring Officer's annual report for the Governance and Ethics Committee, which will be presented to Full Council at the Annual meeting. The report will also be circulated to all Town and Parish Councils.
- 4.2 The key findings identified in the report are:
- (a) Standards of ethical conduct across the district remain good.
 - (b) The number of gifts and hospitality declared was significantly reduced during 2020/21, but this is likely to reflect the fact that the country has spent a significant part of the previous 12 months operating with restrictions imposed in response to the Covid 19 pandemic.

5. Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 The Localism Act 2011 was enacted on 15th November 2011 and it made fundamental changes to the system of regulation of the standards of conduct for elected and co-opted members of Councils and Parish Councils.
- 5.2 In order to ensure that the process was working effectively locally it was agreed that the Monitoring Officer would produce an annual report which would be presented to the Governance and Ethics Committee. The report would set out the number and nature of complaints received and inform Members of any other activity that was taking place around the Code of Conduct regime. It would also provide a means of updating the Committee on the progress of investigations.
- 5.3 It was also agreed that the report would be presented to Full Council at the Annual meeting and that it would be circulated to all Town and Parish Councils.

Background

Governance Arrangements

- 5.4 During the Municipal Year 2020/21 the Governance and Ethics Committee was comprised of eleven members (nine District Councillors appointed on a proportional basis and two co-opted non-voting Parish/Town Councillors). The membership for 2021/22 will be agreed at the Annual Council meeting.
- 5.5 The Monitoring Officer is authorised to appoint three Independent Persons who are used on a rotational basis on the Initial Assessment Panel and Advisory Panel. The Advisory Panel comprised ten Members: two from the Conservative Party, two from the Liberal Democrat party, two from the Green Party, two parish/town councillors and two independent persons. The membership for 2021/22 will be agreed at the Annual Council meeting.
- 5.6 A revised Code of Conduct was adopted in September 2016. The Code and Governance arrangements are supported by a number of documents including:
- Terms of Reference for the Governance and Ethics Committee and Advisory Panel;
 - Gifts and Hospitality Protocol;

Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – 2020/21

- Complaints procedures for breaches of the Code of Conduct;
- Dispensations procedure;
- Social Media Protocol.

Independent Persons

- 5.7 Under Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council has a duty to ensure that it has appointed at least one Independent Person who is consulted before it makes a decision on an allegation it has determined to investigate. It was agreed at the Full Council meeting on the 27 September 2012 that the Independent Person may be consulted directly either by the person who has made the complaint or the person the complaint has been made about. Three Independent Persons have therefore been appointed in order to ensure that a conflict situation does not arise.
- 5.8 A person is not considered to be "independent" if:-
- (i) They are or have been, within the last five years, an elected or co-opted Member or officer of the Council or of any Parish Councils within this area. This also applies to committees or sub-committees of the various Councils.
 - (ii) They are a relative or close friend of a current elected, or co-opted, Member or officer of the Council or any Parish Council within its area, or any elected or co-opted member of any committee or sub-committee.
 - (iii) The definition of relative includes the candidate's spouse, civil partner, grandparent, child etc.
- 5.9 In addition The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 require provisions to be made relating to the potential dismissal or disciplining of the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer or Section 151 Officer. A panel needs to be set up to advise on matters relating to the dismissal of these Officers. The Act requires at least two Independent Persons who have been appointed under section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 to be appointed to the panel. The role of the Independent Persons therefore includes the requirement of this legislation.
- 5.10 James Rees, Mike Wall and Lindsey Appleton were appointed as the Council's Independent Persons for the 2020/21 Municipal Year. All three Independent Persons have agreed to remain as Independent Persons for the 2021/22 Municipal Year.
- 5.11 The Council is asked to recognise the significant contribution of the Independent Persons and thank them for their ongoing contributions.

Governance and Ethics Committee

- 5.12 The overall purpose of the Governance and Ethics Committee is to provide effective challenge across the Council and independent assurance on the risk management and governance framework and associated internal control environment to members and the public, independently of the Executive. The Governance and Ethics Committee is also responsible for receiving the annual Audit Letter and for signing off the Council's final accounts.
- 5.13 The Committee is also charged with promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct throughout the Council. They promote, educate and support Councillors (both

Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – 2020/21

District and Parish) in following the highest standards of conduct and ensuring that those standards are fully owned locally. The roles and functions of the Governance and Ethics Committee are set out in the Constitution (Part 2 Articles of the Constitution).

5.14 At the conclusion of 2020/21 the Governance and Ethics Committee comprised the following Members:

Conservative Group (5 Members)	Jeff Beck (Chairman), Rick Jones, Tony Linden, Tom Marino, Claire Rowles
Conservative Substitutes (2 Members)	James Cole, Garth Simpson
Liberal Democrat Group (3 Members)	Jeremy Cottam (Vice-Chairman), Geoff Mayes, Andy Moore
Liberal Democrat Substitutes (2 Members)	Adrian Abbs, Owen Jeffery
Green Party Group (1 Member)	David Marsh
Green Party Substitutes (2 Members)	Carolyn Culver, Steve Masters

5.15 The Governance and Ethics Committee has a special responsibility regarding the 56 Town and Parish Councils within the District. It is responsible for ensuring that high standards of conduct are met within the parishes and that all Parish and Town Councillors are aware of their responsibilities under their Codes of Conduct.

5.16 The District Councillors are therefore supported on the Governance and Ethics Committee by two co-opted Parish Councillors who are appointed in a non-voting capacity. Two substitute non-voting parish councillors are also appointed to this Committee. During 2020/21 the Governance and Ethics Committee included the following Parish Councillors:

- Barry Dickens (co-opted non-voting Parish Councillor)
- Jane Langford (co-opted non-voting Parish Councillor)
- Lourdes Cottam (substitute co-opted non-voting Parish Councillor)
- Roger Hunneman (substitute co-opted non-voting Parish Councillor)

5.17 The Council is asked to recognise the contribution of the Parish Councillors and thank them for their contributions.

Advisory Panel

5.18 The Advisory Panel is responsible for dealing with complaints where evidence of a breach of the Code has been investigated by an independent investigator. The Advisory Panel considers the investigators report. The views of the Advisory Panel are reported to the Governance and Ethics Committee, which makes the formal decision in respect of any allegations which have been investigated where it is considered that a breach of the relevant code of conduct has occurred.

Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – 2020/21

5.19 The District Councillors on the Advisory Panel were representatives of all three political groups within the Council and are not appointed in accordance with the proportionality rules. During 2020/21 the Advisory Panel comprised the following District Councillors:

Conservative Group (2 Members)	Dennis Benneyworth, Alan Law
Liberal Democrats (2 Members)	Phil Barnett, Lee Dillon
Green Party Group (2 Members)	Carolyne Culver, Steve Masters

5.20 During the 2020/21 Municipal Year the following Parish Councillors were appointed to the Advisory Panel:

- Tony Renouf
- Simon Pike
- Elizabeth O' Keefe
- David Southgate

5.21 The Council is asked to thank the Parish Councillors for agreeing to be members of the Panel albeit that it has not had to meet during the 2020/21 financial year.

The Monitoring Officer

5.22 The Monitoring Officer is a statutory post and in West Berkshire rests with the Service Director Strategy & Governance. The Monitoring Officer (Sarah Clarke) in 2020/21 was supported by three deputies (Leigh Hogan, Shiraz Sheikh and Moira Fraser). The Monitoring Officer has a key role in promoting and maintaining standards of conduct. The Monitoring Officer also has a statutory responsibility to establish and maintain a register of interests for members and co-opted members of the authority. The Monitoring Officer acts as legal adviser to the Governance and Ethics Committee and Advisory Panel.

5.23 The Committee for Standards in Public Life wrote, via the LGA, to local authorities requesting a progress report against the 15 best practice recommendations regarding local government Ethical Standards, which highlighted that West Berkshire Council already complies with most of the recommendations. There were some areas where the Council will need to review existing processes and procedures, which will be considered by the Constitution Review Task Group at the relevant time. The areas for review include matters such as the recommendation that Members be required to comply with formal standards investigations, and a recommendation that the Code of Conduct be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Work of the Committee 2020 – 2021

5.24 During the 2020/21 Municipal Year the work undertaken by the Committee has to date included:

- Consideration of the monitoring cycle for both internal and external audit.
- The Committee Considered Reports from Internal Audit on the work being undertaken by the Team.
- The Committee considered a report into the findings of a review of the effectiveness of the Governance and Ethics Committee and an action plan was

Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – 2020/21

developed to meet the recommendations of the review. An updated Terms of Reference for the Committee was agreed, which will be considered by Council.

- The Constitution Review Task Group has continued to meet. This project was delayed due to Covid, but regular meetings are again taking place and progress is being made.

5.25 The Monitoring Officer, under delegated authority, granted a dispensation to all West Berkshire Councillors in 2019 to speak and vote on any items pertaining to Council Tax. This dispensation will remain in place until May 2023. No other dispensations were requested during the past year.

Register of Interests

5.26 Following the election in May 2019 all elected Members of West Berkshire Council completed and submitted their Register of Interest forms. These forms have been published on the Council's website. District Councillors are reminded to review their interests on a regular basis and to notify the Democratic Services Manager of any amendments.

5.27 Parish Councils are reminded via their Clerks to complete and return Declarations of Interest forms to the Monitoring Officer in order that compliance with the Localism Act 2011 is maintained.

Local Assessment of Complaints

5.28 Quarter 1 – 2020/21

During this period eight complaints were received and processed by the Monitoring Officer. Five of these complaints (NDC1/20, NDC2/20, NDC3/20, NDC4/20 and NDC6/20) pertained to District Councillors. Following the initial assessment it was agreed that no further action should be taken on any of the complaints. There were three complaints (NPC2/20, NPC3/20 and NPC4/20) submitted about parish councillors. The complainants had all requested that their identity remain confidential. These requests were assessed and anonymity was not granted. The complainants therefore decided that they would withdraw their complaints.

5.29 Quarter 2 – 2020/21

During this period twelve complaints were received by the Monitoring Officer. There was one complaint about a District Councillor (NDC5/20) which the Panel determined required no further action. Eleven complaints were received about parish councillors. Complaints NPC6/20 and NPC11/20 were both withdrawn by the complainant before being considered by the Panel. No further action was taken on complaints NPC5/20, NPC8/20, NPC10/20, NPC12/20, NPC13/20, NPC14/20 and NPC15/20. The Panel determined that in the cases of NPC7/20 and NPC9/20 a potential breach of the relevant Code of Conduct might have occurred and that the relevant councillors should be asked to undertake training to address the issues arising from the complaint.

5.30 Quarter 3 - 2020/21

Six complaints were received during the third quarter of 2020/21. In respect of the complaint against a district councillor (NDC7/20) the complainant decided after making the complaint that they did not wish to pursue the complaint. No further action was

Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – 2020/21

taken on the five complaints (NPC16/20, NPC17/20, NPC18/20, NPC19/20 and NPC20/20) about parish councillors.

5.31 Quarter 4 - 2020/21

Seven complaints have been received in the final quarter of the year. Five of these complaints pertained to District Councillors and two pertained to Parish Councillors. No further action was taken in respect of complaints NDC8/20, NDC9/20 and NDC10/20. Complaints NDC11/20, NPC21/20 and NPC22/20 are due to be considered in April. The complainant in respect of NDC12/20 had requested that their identity be kept confidential. As anonymity was not granted this complaint has been withdrawn

Year on Year Comparison of Complaints

5.32 Table 1 – The Number of District and Parish Council Complaints received 2016/17 – 2020/21

Table 1	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
District Councillors	0	1	1	9	12
Parish Councillors	3	15	20	5	21
Co-Optees	0	0	1	0	0
Total	3	16	22	14	33

5.33 The number of complaints in 2020/21 represents a significant increase in the number of complaints, although it must be noted that 16 of these were connected to the same issues at a single Parish Council.

5.34 Table 2 - Action Taken on Complaints received 2016/17 to 2020/21.

	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
Withdrawn/not progressed	0	2	4	2	7
No Further Action	1	13	14	7	21
Other Action	1	0	2	2	2
Investigation	1	1	2	0	0
Outcome Awaited	0	0	0	3	3
Total	3	16	22	14	33

Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – 2020/21

- 5.35 Table 2 shows that, in respect of the complaints received to date during 2020/21 which have been assessed, in the majority of cases the complaint was either withdrawn or no further action was taken. To date, no complaints have been referred for investigation this Municipal Year. Two cases were resolved by some other form of action or informal resolution, which is the same as the previous year.
- 5.36 There has been an increase in requests for anonymity received over the past year. The process by which the Council will consider requests for confidentiality by complainants is set out in the Procedure for the Local Determination of Allegations at Appendix E of Part 13 of the Constitution. This makes clear that anonymity will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Learning Points Arising from Complaints

- 5.37 There has been a significant increase in the number of complaints in the past year. However, it is of note in that context that 21 resulted in no further action, 2 resulted in 'other' action, and it is important to note that to date, none of those which have been considered have been referred for investigation.
- 5.38 The other actions related to a request for training, and that the Monitoring Officer write to the Leaders regarding Social Media Use. Those e-mails were issued on the 17th March 2021.
- 5.39 Member Development Sessions have taken place remotely during the past year, and the programme for the next year will incorporate social media training.

Gifts and Hospitality

- 5.40 The Gifts and Hospitality Protocol is incorporated into the Members Code of Conduct and is set out in Appendix H to Part 13 of the Constitution (Codes and Protocols).
- 5.41 Officers are also subject to restrictions on those Gifts and Hospitality that are deemed to be acceptable under the Officers' Code of Conduct, which is set out in Part 13 of the Constitution. Like Members, Officers are required to declare gifts or hospitality received.
- 5.42 The intention of the rules governing Gifts and Hospitality is to ensure that the Council can demonstrate that no undue influence has been applied or could be said to have been applied by any service user, supplier or anyone else dealing with the Council and its stewardship of public funds. The rules therefore set out the obligations imposed on Members and Officers to declare relevant gifts and hospitality which have been offered to or received by them.
- 5.43 It should be noted that in addition to the risk that there could be a perception of impropriety, the acceptance of a gift or hospitality could amount to an offence under the Bribery Act 2010.
- 5.44 The Bribery Act 2010 creates a number of offences where a gift or other benefit is given or offered, which may amount to an offence of bribing another person, and/or of being bribed. Therefore, if Members or Officers are offered a 'gift' or other benefit by a third party, this could amount to an offence not just by the person offering the gift, but also by the Member or Officer concerned and by the Council. It is important to note that offences under this legislation can be committed by a person offering a gift or reward, even if the gift is not accepted.

Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – 2020/21

- 5.45 In view of the above, it is very important that both Officers and Members understand the potentially serious implications of accepting gifts when it is not appropriate to do so.
- 5.46 During 2020/21, the Council secured a number of external training sessions for senior officers, which included training on the Bribery Act.
- 5.47 There were no declarations of hospitality received by Members during the year 2020/21. This is no doubt reflective of the fact that we have been operating remotely for the majority of the past year.
- 5.48 There was also a significant reduction in the number of gifts / hospitality declared by officers with 28 declarations made during 2020/21, which is a reduction from 72 in the previous year.
- 5.49 The number of gifts or hospitality received by each directorate, and the number refused can be summarised as follows:

Directorate	Number of Declarations	Number refused
People	11	6
Place	13	4
Resources	4	2

6. Proposals

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report.
- 6.2 It is proposed that this report also be circulated to all Town and Parish Councils for information.

7. Other options considered

- 7.1 Not to produce the report. There is no legal obligation to produce this report, so not doing so would be an option. However, it is considered that an annual report provides a good overview of work being undertaken, and may assist in identifying any significant problems or developing trends. This overview is also helpful in ensuring full transparency regarding complaints. Not producing this report is therefore not recommended as an option.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 Despite the significant rise in the number of complaints over the past year, it is considered that Members in West Berkshire continue to maintain high standards of ethical conduct, which is to be applauded. It is of note that to date, no complaints have been referred for investigation during 2020/21.
- 8.2 The number of Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality has decreased significantly, which is no doubt reflective of the restrictions imposed in response to Covid 19. The recommendation that the register of Gifts and Hospitality be published on a quarterly

Monitoring Officer's Annual Report to the Governance and Ethics Committee – 2020/21

basis will no doubt assist to highlight the need to declare such matters on a regular and consistent manner.

- 8.3 Despite the challenges of the past year, the Governance and Ethics Committee has continued to operate and support the operation of key governance functions across the Council.

9. Appendices

None

Background Papers:

None

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

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



Wards affected: All

Officer details:

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West Berkshire 2019-2023 Council Strategy: Refresh 2021

Committee considering report:	Council
Date of Committee:	04 May 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Lynne Doherty
Date Head of Service agreed report: <i>(for Corporate Board)</i>	31/03/2021
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	12 April 2021
Report Author:	Catalin Bogos
Forward Plan Ref:	C4056

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To present the refreshed Council Strategy 2019 - 2023 for consideration and approval by the Council. The refreshed document articulates the progress that has been made and introduces new or updated projects to support the delivery of the Council's core business and priorities for improvement.
- 1.2 The refreshed Council Strategy reflects the changes in the social, economic and environmental context. It builds on the enhanced strategic framework developed during the first two years of the Strategy (e.g. the Environment Strategy, the Economic Development Strategy, the Communication and Engagement Strategy and the Recovery and Renewal Strategy).
- 1.3 This Strategy is the Council's overarching strategic document that sets out the priorities for improvement over the lifetime of the strategy and reaffirms our commitment to continue the delivery of the core services that people in West Berkshire need and value.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the refreshed Council Strategy covering the period 2021 – 2023, set out in Appendix B.
- 2.2 To note that the Council Strategy reflects the updated Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal Strategy.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary			
Financial:	<p>The proposed work programme associated with the projects listed in the refreshed Council Strategy is funded within the MTFS.</p> <p>This Paper does not ask the Council to approve any financial allocation.</p>			
Human Resource:	<p>The Council is not being asked to approve any recruitment of additional staff through this Paper.</p>			
Legal:	<p>None.</p>			
Risk Management:	<p>Risks relating to the commitments included in the Council Strategy and the associated delivery plan targets are managed through the Council's risk management framework.</p>			
Property:	<p>None.</p>			
Policy:	<p>The Council Strategy forms part of the Council's approved Policy Framework. This refresh of the Council Strategy is informed by: the progress made since the Strategy had been approved in 2019; an assessment of change in national and local context; and the other strategies and plans approved in the last two years, including the Recovery and Renewal Strategy.</p>			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				

<p>A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?</p>	✓			<p>No adverse impact is expected.</p> <p>The Strategy includes a specific priority and commitments to support everyone to reach their potential.</p>
<p>B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?</p>	✓			<p>The Council Strategy aims to achieve a positive benefit to certain protected groups such as the elderly, disabled and children, particularly those from more challenging socio-economic backgrounds.</p> <p>The activities to deliver the strategy will be provided within the existing policy framework and will be provided by the individual service areas. The services will consider the measures and the impact of implementing the specific actions and conduct specific Equality Impact Assessments when required.</p>
<p>Environmental Impact:</p>	✓			<p>The Strategy is expected to have a positive impact on the environment as it prioritises maintaining West Berkshire as a green district.</p>
<p>Health Impact:</p>	✓			<p>The Strategy includes a number of commitments which aim to have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents.</p>
<p>ICT Impact:</p>	✓			<p>The Strategy aims to support access to services through ICT and digital solutions.</p>
<p>Digital Services Impact:</p>	✓			<p>The Strategy aims to support access to services through ICT and digital solutions.</p>
<p>Council Strategy Priorities:</p>	✓			<p>The Strategy confirms that the priorities established in 2019 remain relevant and refreshes the commitments which will ensure their delivery.</p>

Core Business:	✓			The Strategy confirms the commitment to continue strong performance relating to the core business of the Council.
Data Impact:	✓			The Strategy includes a commitment to make better use of data.
Consultation and Engagement:	<p>The Council considered, at their annual meeting on the 21st May 2019, the feedback received following public consultation on the aims and priorities for improvement that are included/maintained into the updated Council Strategy 2019 – 2023.</p> <p>The feedback received from the Covid-19 Residents’ Survey (June 2020) has informed the refresh of the Strategy.</p> <p>As the delivery of the Council Strategy has progressed, a number of more specific strategies were produced and approved, following consultation and engagement with our residents. This informed the refresh of the Council Strategy.</p>			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 In May 2019, the Council approved a new four year Council Strategy, which contained specific priorities for improvement. The Council Strategy was subjected to public consultation.
- 4.2 Halfway through the lifecycle of the Council Strategy, a refresh is conducted to ensure that the priorities and commitments remain relevant. This includes an assessment of the progress made in delivering the priorities for improvement and the commitments initially agreed, consideration of the changing national and local context and of any feedback we have received from residents.
- 4.3 The two most significant changes in context are the Council declaring a Climate emergency in July 2019 and the Coronavirus Pandemic. The former was a natural evolution of the Council’s identification of needs and our plans, including prioritising the environment in the Council Strategy and detailing further our response in the Environment Strategy and associated delivery plans. The latter has impacted the entire world including over 200 residents in West Berkshire who tragically lost their lives, whilst others were presented with new health and wellbeing challenges. The Council worked with residents, community groups and partners to respond and minimise the effects of the Covid-19 crisis and to recover to pre-pandemic level (see Council Strategy Appendix 2. Covid-19: Supporting Our Communities). A Recovery Strategy was agreed by the Executive in June 2020. The refreshed Recovery and Renewal Strategy, which addressed in more detail the response to Covid-19, has informed the refresh of the Council Strategy and is due for approval in May 2021.

4.4 In terms of the broader economic, social and environmental context, West Berkshire remains in a relatively stronger position compared to other areas in the country and because of this, the District has been more resilient in response to the pandemic.

4.5 Council's employees, working together with residents, our communities and partner organisations, have ensured strong performance in delivery of the core business, whilst responding to Covid-19. The refreshed Council Strategy continues the focus on these core businesses for the next two years:

- Protecting our children
- Supporting education
- Ensuring the wellbeing of older people and vulnerable adults
- Maintaining our roads
- Collecting your bins and keeping the streets clean
- Providing benefits
- Collecting Council Tax and Business rates
- Planning and housing
- Culture, leisure and libraries
- Economic Development

4.6 Good progress has been made in delivering the priorities for improvement and the associated commitments. This continued during the last year with some minor delays, whilst some of our workforce has been re-deployed to support residents, communities and business during Covid-19. Many of the commitments relating to the priorities for improvement included the approval of more detailed plans (e.g. the Environment Strategy, Housing Strategy, Early Help Strategy and Economic Development Strategy). The work to produce such specific strategies involved public engagement and consultation. The aims, priorities and objectives from these more specific strategies are reflected in this Council Strategy Refresh. They informed the updating of the Council Strategy commitments. However, as these developments were planned in the Council Strategy approved in 2019, the priorities for improvement remain relevant and are maintained for 2021 – 2023:

- Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes
- Support everyone to reach their full potential
- Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire
- Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy
- Maintain a green district
- Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships

4.7 The attached Strategy provides the details about the plans for 2021 – 2023 to maintain the direction, set out two years ago, but adapting to the new context.

5 Supporting Information

The updated Council Strategy provides details about the commitments agreed initially, the progress made in the first two years of the Strategy, key details of change in context and commitments for the period ending March 2023 and is set out in Appendix B.

6 Other options considered

None.

7 Conclusion

The refreshed Council Strategy clearly articulates the progress that has been made in delivering the activities that support the Council's priorities for improvement and core business. The refreshed Council Strategy also proposes new projects and initiatives in support of the Council's priorities for improvement for the final two years of the Strategy, including strong links with the strategic framework already agreed and in particular with the updated Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal Strategy.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment

8.2 Appendix B – West Berkshire 2019-2023 Council Strategy: Refresh 2021

- Council Strategy Appendix 1. Council Strategy Delivery Plan

- Council Strategy Appendix 2. Covid-19: Supporting Our Communities

Background Papers:

Previous Council Strategy.

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>

Wards affected: All Wards

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Document Control

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Author:	Catalin Bogos		
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Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1	04/05/2021	Version approved by the Council	
2			

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:	Approve the refresh of the Council Strategy 2019 - 2023
Summary of relevant legislation:	n/a
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's priorities for improvement? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes • Support everyone to reach their full potential • Support businesses to start develop and thrive in West Berkshire • Develop local infrastructure including housing to support and grow the local economy Maintain a green district • Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships 	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Name of Budget Holder:	Catalin Bogos
Name of Service/Directorate:	Strategy and Governance Department
Name of assessor:	Catalin Bogos
Date of assessment:	30 March 2021
Version and release date (if applicable):	

Is this a ?		Is this policy, strategy, function or service ... ?	
Policy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New or proposed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Strategy	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Function	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Is changing	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Service	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	The aim of the Strategy is to set out the aims and priorities for improvement that will be the focus of the council over the four years period ending 2023.

Objectives:	The Council Strategy is the highest level plan produced to set the strategic direction of the council for medium term and to inform more detailed planning at department and individual level.
Outcomes:	<p>The outcomes detailed in the strategy refer to improvements in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes • Support everyone to reach their full potential • Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire • Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy • Maintain a green district • Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships
Benefits:	<p>The primary beneficiaries are the residents and businesses in West Berkshire by being informed of the areas the Council will focus on to improve the services they receive.</p> <p>Council officers and partner organisations will be able to detail their plans based on the strategic direction set by the Council Strategy.</p>

(2) Which groups might be affected and how? Is it positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this?		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	The expected effect is that areas that require the most improvement receive the necessary focus of activity and resources.	Council Strategy 2015-2019 Responses to the consultation on the Council Strategy 2015-2019, Covid-19 Residents Survey and other consultations on strategies developed since 2019.
Disability		
Gender Reassignment		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Race		
Religion or Belief		
Sex		
Sexual Orientation		

Further Comments:
<p>There will be a positive benefit to certain protected groups such as the elderly, disabled, children particularly those from more challenging socio economic backgrounds.</p> <p>The activities to deliver the strategy will be provided within the existing policy framework and will be provided by the individual service areas. The services will consider the measures and the impact of implementing the specific actions and conduct specific Equality Impact Assessments when required.</p>

(3) Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Strategy is specifically focused on addressing inequality not contributing to it.	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No adverse impact is expected.	

(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqIA Stage 2 required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Owner of EqIA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqIA Stage Two:	

Name: Catalin Bogos

Date: 30/03/2021

Please now forward this completed form to Pamela Voss, Equality and Diversity Officer (pamela.voss@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC website.

Council Strategy 2019 – 2023
Refreshed May 2021

Building on our strengths



Working together to make West
Berkshire an even greater place
in which to live, work and learn



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Foreword



Nick Carter
Chief Executive



Lynne Doherty
Leader of the Council

Welcome to our refreshed Council Strategy for 2021 – 2023. In 2019 we published a new Council Strategy covering the period 2019 – 2023, which included the Council’s contribution towards the delivery of the Vision 2036, through our core business services and six priorities for improvement.

We have reached the halfway point in delivering on the commitments we made when we first published this strategy, so now is the right time to refresh it- based on the progress we have made and changes to the context in which the Council operates- to ensure it is still relevant.

Despite international, national, regional and local efforts, the coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on the District. It is sobering to reflect on the 226 lives tragically lost to Covid-19 (by 4 March 2021) and on its impact on the health and wellbeing of many others. We are grateful to our residents, community groups and organisations, Councillors and our employees, for everything they have done to minimise the negative impact.

Our strong local economy, the natural environment and the resilience of our residents, are all factors that helped ensure that the impact of the pandemic in West Berkshire, was not as significant as in other parts of the country.

During the first two years of the Council Strategy, our focus was on maintaining the strong performance of our core services. It is credit to our workforce, partner organisations and residents that, over the last year, we all adapted new ways of working and ensured continuity of service delivery, even if not provided in the traditional ways, and maintained a high standard of service.

Good progress has been made towards delivering on the commitments we set out in the original strategy with improvements made under each priority. Examples of outcomes achieved to date include: supporting an increased number of vulnerable children, young people and adults earlier- before they reach crisis point or, when necessary, ensuring that safeguarding services achieve the outcomes they expect; building two new schools; supporting over 300 start-ups and businesses seeking to grow; investing in infrastructure to maintain traffic flow; meeting our commitment to build much needed homes and finding ways to generate renewable energy.

Successful engagement and good communication with residents contributed to these successes. Reassuringly, the majority of the respondents to our Residents Survey (June 2020) reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with how West Berkshire Council runs its services and the Council’s performance in relation to managing the local response to Covid-19.

This refreshed strategy builds on our achievements to date, considers new challenges and opportunities that have emerged during the last two years and sets out our commitments for the next two years, in order that we may continue to work together to make West Berkshire an even greater place to live, work and learn.

Our District



In 2019 West Berkshire had an estimated population of **158,450**. By 2036 we expect this to have decreased by 1%.



In 2019, for every resident aged 16-64, there were on average **1.2 jobs** in West Berkshire. This is higher than in South East and Great Britain.



A vibrant economy with **8,800 businesses**, an increase of **15.6%** since 2010.



Healthy life expectancy at birth at 69.4 years for females and 67.8 for males are **higher** than the England average (2016-18). Similarly, life expectancy at birth, at 85.2 for females and 81.9 for males is higher than the national average.



Access to Heathrow Airport in less than **60 minutes** and good connectivity North to South (A34) and East to West (M4).



West Berkshire covers an area of **272 square miles** which is over half of the geographical area of the county of Berkshire. Nearly three quarters of West Berkshire is classified as part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The total number of households (in 2021) was **66,000** and this is expected to increase by 6% by 2043. Households will become smaller, with the number of one person households estimated to increase by 21.9% by 2043.



151 Children in Care and more than **530** children in need supported (Mar 2018), both below England averages (as a rate per 10,000 children).

West Berkshire has **51 Sites** of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which are of national importance for animal and plant life.



84.4% of 16 to 64 year olds are economically active (people that are not retired, a student, a carer or unemployed). This is higher than the South East and Great Britain averages. (Sep 2020)



Highly qualified workforce, **65.7%** of 16 – 64 year olds living in the area qualified at level NVQ3 and above or general education equivalent. Better than than South East (62.1%) and Great Britain (58.5%). (Dec 2019).



At 17.13 the rate of violent crime per 1,000 population, is significantly **lower** than that of Thames Valley Police (22.96) and England and Wales (30) (2019/20).

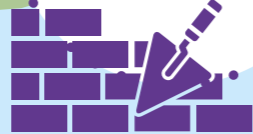


The District has **27.7 miles** of motorway, **81.6 miles** of A roads and **770.7 miles** of minor roads (2020).



1,652 older people and vulnerable adults accessing long term support (Feb 2021)

Since 2006/07 an average of **504 new homes** have been built each year (up to 2018/19)



West Berkshire has **1,900 listed buildings, 90 scheduled monuments, 53 conservation areas, 36 locally listed heritage assets, 14 registered parks and gardens and 1 registered battlefield** – all these heritage assets contribute to the sense of place of the District

Building on our strengths – strategic framework

The key components of our Council Strategy are illustrated in the diagram below. They include the six priorities for improvement (which are interdependent and grouped into four broad themes) and the core business areas (which provide reassurance that the strongly performing services that are needed and valued by our residents continue to be delivered at high standards).

In 2019, we set out the six priorities for improvement for the four-year lifetime of the Council Strategy. These are the first steps of a longer journey to deliver the West Berkshire Vision 2036. The priorities have been defined in consultation with our residents and based on an analysis of trends describing the needs, aspirations and ambitions of people living, working or visiting West Berkshire. The six priorities are to:

- Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes
- Support everyone to reach their full potential
- Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire
- Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy
- Maintain a green district
- Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships

At the halfway point of the Council Strategy delivery we reassessed both, the changes to the social, economic and environmental context, and the progress made in delivering the priorities for improvement and concluded that they remain relevant for the last two years of the Strategy.

In terms of social, environmental and economic contextual changes, the most significant factors are the Council declaring a climate emergency in July 2019 and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Socially, more than 200 residents have tragically lost their lives and other people's health and wellbeing has been impacted long-term. In particular, issues of isolation, mental health and emotional wellbeing, and disruption to children's education due to the closure of schools, are areas of greatest need. Based on national research, the 'inequality gap' is likely to have grown. On the other hand, the ways in which individuals, community groups and organisations came together and engaged to respond to local needs, is something we treasure and intend to harness going forward. Communication and engagement, including through digital channels, have increased and improved the ways we interact with residents and local organisations.

Environmentally, declaring a climate emergency was a natural evolution of the Council's identification of needs and our plans, including prioritising the environment in the Council Strategy and detailing further our response in the Environment Strategy and associated delivery plans. The need to reduce carbon emissions, strengthen the District's resilience to flooding, warmer weather and droughts, and to increase awareness that everyone needs to play their part in protecting the environment, are highlighted in the Environment Strategy. During the pandemic there has been an increase in the amount of household waste produced, but traffic levels and the associated emissions have reduced. A number of active travel schemes and activities have been progressed.

Economically, West Berkshire has not been as impacted as elsewhere. The sectors that were significantly affected include hospitality, leisure, wholesale and retail, young people, women and people from minority ethnic groups are more likely to work in those industries. Employees and businesses have been supported to minimise the impact of the pandemic.

Changes in work patterns with more people working from home means that consideration needs to be given to the use of business properties, but also the role of our town centres. The economic sectors forecasted to grow in the District are less impacted by the pandemic and job density and other economic indicators remain at healthy levels.

Despite the challenging context, the Council continued the delivery of its core business. Working with residents, community groups, organisations and businesses, and finding alternative ways to deliver services in response to such challenges, meant that service continuity to a high standard has been maintained.

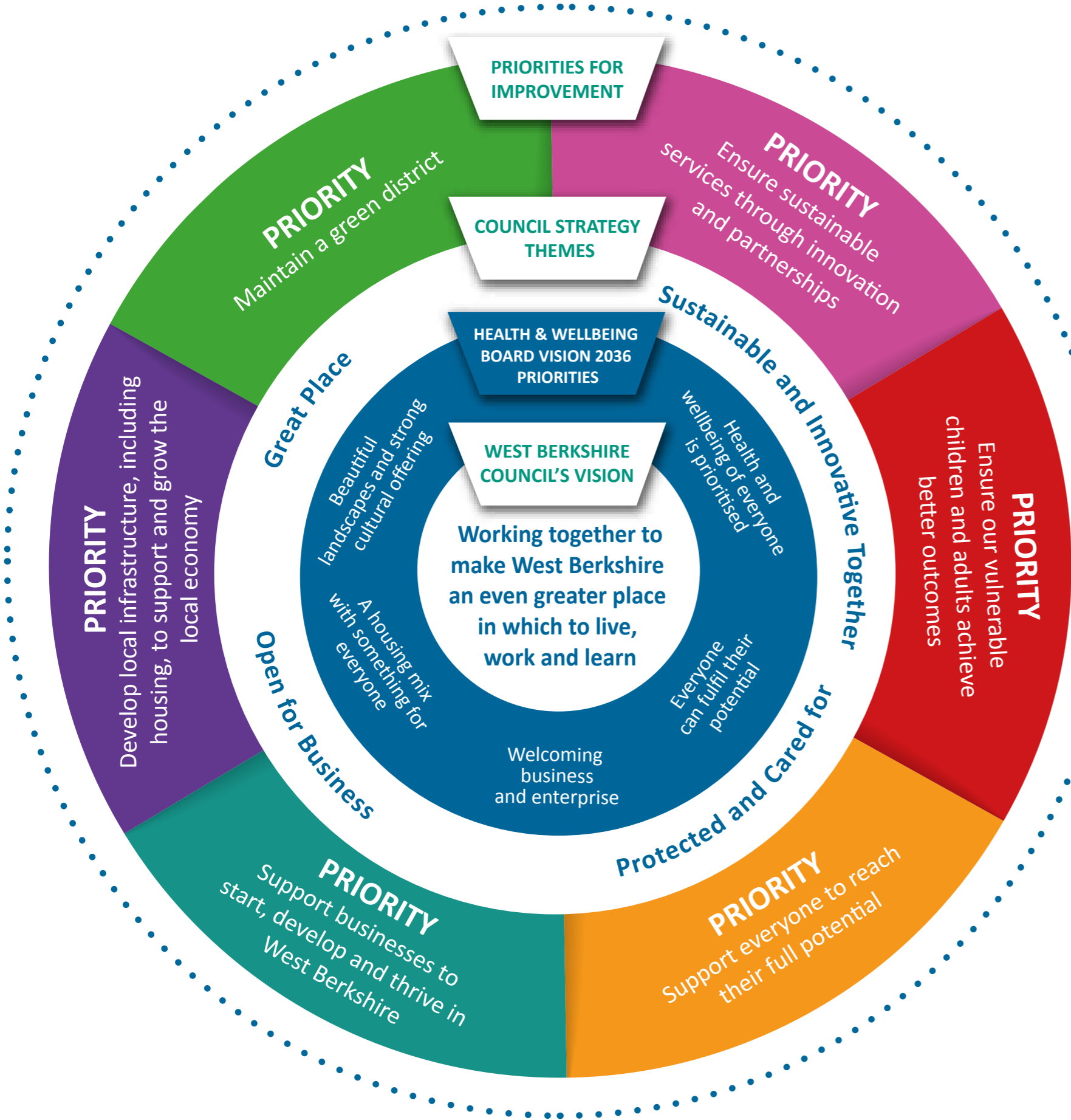
In addition, good progress has been made in delivering the priorities for improvement and associated commitments. The details are included in our quarterly performance management reports but key achievements are presented in the relevant sections of this strategy. The delivery of the agreed commitments included a further strengthening of our strategic framework. In producing a number of more specific plans, such as the Environment Strategy, the Economic Development Strategy, Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy, Housing Strategy and Workforce Strategy, we have conducted additional engagement with residents, communities and organisations in West Berkshire.

This more specific engagement and the progress made to date, together with our more detailed plans included in the Recovery and Renewal Strategy, confirmed that our priorities for improvement, set two years ago, remain highly relevant and are retained for the remaining two years of the current strategic planning cycle. Details on the commitments we are working to deliver are presented in the next sections of this strategy.

"Environmentally, declaring a climate emergency was a natural evolution of the Council's identification of needs and our plans, including prioritising the environment in the Council Strategy and detailing further our response in the Environment Strategy and associated delivery plans."



West Berkshire Council Strategy 2019-2023



Core Business Areas

The Council provides over 700 mandatory, core services which it believes are essential for the communities of West Berkshire. These include:

- Protecting our children
- Supporting education
- Ensuring the wellbeing of older people and vulnerable adults
- Maintaining our roads
- Collecting your bins and keeping the streets clean
- Providing benefits
- Collecting Council Tax and Business Rates
- Planning and housing
- Culture, leisure and libraries
- Economic development

Overarching Values

Integrity

'we act with integrity ensuring all decisions are lawful, transparent and impartial'

Customer focused

'we listen to our customers and do our best for them'

Fairness

'we will always treat everyone fairly'

Core Business

Throughout the lockdown, the Council ensured continuity of the core services that are needed and valued by residents. In many areas a high standard of service delivery has been maintained.

Protecting our children

Achievements:

- ✓ The Council has continued to deliver a Children and Family service rated as 'Good' at the last Ofsted inspection.
- ✓ During the last two years the Council, responded to over 10,000 enquiries and managed over 3,000 referrals of children at risk of neglect and abuse. Arrangements for stronger joint working between the Council's teams and with partner organisations are ensuring cases are identified and supported.
- ✓ Statutory assessments and visits are conducted in a timely manner, using technology when it was appropriate and safe to do so.

Supporting education

Achievements:

- ✓ Latest available data shows that over 95% of our schools are rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.
- ✓ During 2019 and 2020, a total of 3,650 primary (reception) and 4,383 secondary (Year 7) school place offers were made.
- ✓ Over 98% of applications for primary and secondary school places received one of their top three preferences.
- ✓ West Berkshire is currently in the top 20% of local authorities in England for the high proportion of 16-17 year olds in education, employment and training.

Ensuring the wellbeing of older people and vulnerable adults

Achievements:

- ✓ In the last two years Adult Social Care service has responded to over 6,000 new requests for support.
- ✓ At any point in time in during the last two years, ASC has supported, on average 1,650 vulnerable adults and older people with long term services, and managed over 1,000 adult safeguarding enquiries.
- ✓ Completed timely financial assessments for a high proportion of cases (in some quarters for 100% of cases).
- ✓ 4 out of 5 Adult Social Care services were rated 'Good' or higher, with regards to safety, by the Care Quality Commission. Improvements have been made to the fifth service but no new inspections have taken place to provide a change of rating.

Maintaining our roads

Achievements:

- ✓ West Berkshire is in top quartile nationally in terms of the high quality of our road network.
- ✓ Over 99% of works to permanently repair potholes and the edge of roads have been completed in a timely manner.

Collecting your bins and keeping the streets clean

Achievements:

- ✓ During lockdown, the kerbside collection service continued to operate. Currently we provide a good level of recycling, composting and reusing, as a proportion of the waste collected. We have reduced the percentage of waste landfilled to a level that is well below the maximum threshold set.
- ✓ An overall rating of 'Good' has been maintained in terms of an acceptable level of litter, detritus and graffiti.

Providing benefits

- ✓ Good performance continues to be achieved with timely decisions on new or changes to Housing Benefits Claims.

Collecting Council Tax and Business Rates

- ✓ The Council has a strong record in terms of the quick and efficient collection of Council Tax and Business Rates. However, the decision was made to allow more flexibility in 2020/21 in order to support residents and businesses who were struggling financially due to the many challenges brought about by Covid-19. Arrangements are in place to mitigate the financial impact of this action.
- ✓ Our Business Rates team has put in place processes to promptly distribute government grants to support local businesses and manage a Council Tax Hardship fund.

Planning and housing

- ✓ The determination of planning applications in a timely manner has improved considerably over the last two years, exceeding national averages.
- ✓ Significant improvements have been achieved for the timeliness of assessing Common Housing Register applications. Higher targets have been set and achieved for homelessness prevention and relief duties, resulting in secure accommodation.

Culture, leisure and libraries

- ✓ The usually high number of visits to our eight libraries and Mobile Library reduced during 2020/21 due to lockdown restrictions. However, during last year, 39,000 customers (of whom 14,000 were under 18) accessed the library services. The Mobile Library and At Home service (taking books to the elderly and housebound) continued throughout. Libraries also launched the new 'Order & Collect' services, a successful programme of online events including story time, the online Summer Reading Challenge and local history talks.
- ✓ West Berkshire Museum has a collection of 50,000 objects spanning 500,000 years of human history in the District. The staff and volunteers opened the museum to the public between lockdowns and developed a programme of online history talks and family activities as well as a new online "virtual museum" tour <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=zR5tX1baZBx&hl=1>
- ✓ Shaw House stayed open for Registration Services (births, marriages and deaths) and were able to stage some family events in the gardens during the summer between lockdowns.

Economic development

- ✓ Good engagement with the top local employers helped to ensure that they remain in the District.
- ✓ In addition to distributing government grants to support eligible businesses and self-employed residents, support and advice has been provided to businesses and town centre groups to enable them to reopen safely when lockdown measures are eased.

"Throughout the lockdown, the Council ensured continuity of the core services that are needed and valued by residents"



Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes



1.1 The original commitments included in the Council Strategy 2019 – 2023

Support children, young people and vulnerable adults at an earlier stage, ensuring they are safe, through **prevention** and early intervention services.

Improve **outcomes** for our looked after children and other vulnerable children and adults.

Ensure **better outcomes** for social care users and improved satisfaction.

Safeguard against **new and emerging risks**.

Support more vulnerable young adults into **employment**.

1.2 How we have done 2019-2021

• **Prevention** - We have worked with our partner organisations and strengthened the preventative approach to support vulnerable children, young people and adults.

We have adopted an Early Help Strategy and are supporting families through the Early Response Hub. Alongside this, we have embedded initiatives such as the Family Safeguarding Model and the Troubled Families Programme. As a result, children are supported within their families so that fewer of them require the more intensive interventions, such as child protection plans or entering care.

Vulnerable adults and older people have been supported through the Adult Social Care preventative service to ensure they remain as independent as possible and have access to the services that they need. Those leaving hospital were successfully supported based on reablement and rehabilitation interventions, preventing re-admissions. This area has been impacted on in the last few months by Covid-19, and will require re-focusing during the next two years.

Excellent progress has been made in supporting rough sleepers and preventing individuals or families from becoming homeless or instances of repeat homeless. This will move to our core business set of objectives.

• **Better outcomes and improved satisfaction** - Children in care have achieved good outcomes in terms of stable placements and education outcomes supported by the virtual school. There have been fewer repeat child protection plans and repeat referrals to the service, compared to previous years. Where necessary young people engage well with the drug diversion scheme, and both first time entrants to Youth Justice and re-offending numbers remain low. Adult Social Care service users provided positive feedback about the outcomes they continued to achieve.

Some outcomes for children in care (school attendance and exclusions, health and dental checks) were impacted by Covid-19 restrictions and are prioritised as part of this strategy.

• **Safeguarding against new/emerging risks** - Keeping vulnerable children and adults safe is another outcome delivered by closer working with our partner organisations and ensuring safeguarding enquiries achieve service users' expectations. Our safeguarding teams have adapted their approach and used latest research and learning to ensure service continuity, despite challenges presented by Covid-19.

• **Employment and education for vulnerable young adults** – We have increased support for our care leavers (19-24) and more of them are now in employment and education. Our work to enrol disadvantaged young people into apprenticeship training has been hindered by the pandemic.

1.3 What has happened since 2019

• The fact that some services and activities that vulnerable children access have been temporarily closed or are being delivered in alternative ways, has led to new challenges in both identifying and supporting vulnerable children at the earliest possible point in time. In response, children's safeguarding arrangements have managed to maintain standards through better screening and enhanced joint working between professionals from different services.





b) Renew the focus on improving outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and adults – The intervention of statutory services, working with vulnerable children and young people, will deliver long lasting results that prevent the need for them to return to the social care system. Whilst they are receiving services, improvements will be made to ensure they benefit of stable care placements, reduce their school absences and exclusions and achieve better educational and health outcomes. For vulnerable adults, we will ensure that services provided are appropriately reviewed to support them to be as independent as possible. This includes prompt discharging from hospital and reinstating the hospital pathways based on reablement support. Adults and older people that are victims of abuse, will continue to be appropriately involved to achieve their desired outcomes following statutory enquires.

c) Support more vulnerable young adults into employment – Define a strategic approach to support vulnerable adults into employment and expand opportunities for care leavers to access education employment and training. As restrictions are lifted, we will increase the number of apprenticeships being accessed, especially by care leavers, those with disabilities and people from ethnic minority communities.



- The demand for Adult Social Care, in particular for care homes (residential beds), has reduced significantly.
- Employment opportunities for vulnerable young adults have been impacted on because services are having to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. This has presented additional challenges with regard to supporting apprenticeships for disadvantaged young people, particularly while employees are working remotely.

1.4 What we are going to focus on going forward:

a) Continue to support vulnerable residents at an earlier stage – This remains an important commitment that will ensure a continuation of the work with our partner organisations. We are revising the Prevention Strategy to encompass a wider range of services and to further reduce the need for vulnerable children to reach a point where they rely on support from statutory services. For vulnerable adults and older people this includes solutions to ensure they are as independent as possible and have access to services to enable this.

Priority



Support everyone to reach their full potential

2.1 The original commitments included in the Council Strategy 2019 – 2023:

- Improve the **health and wellbeing** of our residents through appropriate interventions and policies
- Help people to help themselves** and others
- Support everyone in their **learning journey** to achieve their best

2.2 How we have done 2019-2021

- **Health and Wellbeing** - West Berkshire is among the top five councils in the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) Health Index, in terms of the overall health of the population. The Council adapted new ways of working to ensure that all decisions made consider the implications on our residents' health.

Residents' health and wellbeing have been supported by setting up the Community Support Hub in partnership with Greenham Trust and Volunteer Centre West Berkshire, helping schools to re-open safely following lockdown restrictions, providing community testing facilities and Covid Marshals, distributing the Covid Winter Grant for those affected financially by the pandemic, providing advice and guidance including information on addressing domestic abuse, and setting up a mental health help line. Some Public Health and community resilience activities have been rescheduled.

Even before the start of the coronavirus pandemic, we improved the arrangements with partner organisations on the Health and Wellbeing Board for preventing and addressing mental health issues.

Work progressed to adopt an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Strategy aiming to build resilience and help to prevent the impact of ACE being passed onto the next generation. This should contribute to a reduction of demand on public services improved mental and physical health and socio-economic benefits.

- **Help people to help themselves** – The work with individuals and groups of volunteers in response to Covid-19, built on existing strong working relationships with our communities and took the approach to a completely new level. Whilst it was not possible to maintain the usual involvement of volunteers in our cultural services, the Council, together with Volunteer Centre West Berkshire and Greenham Trust, worked with 90 community and volunteer groups, with 3,000 volunteers in total, supporting vulnerable residents to access food and medicines and organising activities to support mental health and wellbeing in the wider community.



At the same time, some of the strategic improvement actions continued. The Council adopted a Community Wellbeing Model with befrienders supporting residents to self-care and lead independent lives. A Communications and Engagement Strategy was approved, setting out our objectives and key principles for engagement, including with seldom heard groups, to ensure we meet the needs of those we serve.

Support and guidance was provided to communities working together to produce neighbourhood development plans and operating a community-led planning approach to enable people to shape the future of the areas they live in. New devolution deals with Parish and Town Councils, community forums and other groups, continue to be agreed in order to increase the sustainability of local services.

- **Support learning journeys** – Based on the latest available data, good education attainment results have been achieved at the earlier stages of education, including for disadvantaged pupils in primary schools. Results at the Early Years Foundation Stage compare favourably with other local authorities in England. Better results are required at secondary stage, for the overall cohort of pupils and for those eligible for free school meals. Relevant concerns have been escalated to the Regional Schools Commissioner.

In response to the pandemic's challenges, schools and pupils have been supported through a number of initiatives (e.g. laptops for pupils, Covid-19 risk assessments etc.) so that education for children and young people could continue, via remote learning, when necessary, whilst accommodating vulnerable pupils and key workers' children in school.

A continuation of investment in education (including the opening of two new schools - Highwood Copse and Theale Primary) ensured that pupils got a place in their preferred school and had a good environment in which to learn.

Our rate of young people not in education, employment and training (NEETs) is third best (lowest) in the country.

2.3 What has happened since 2019

- The District has not been immune to the tragic effects of the coronavirus pandemic but the loss of lives and the rate of infections locally, were amongst the lowest in the country. The resilience of the residents and local economy are factors that contributed to this, together with the Council's prompt response to Covid-19.

- Education attainment data for 2019/20 academic year is not available as exams and tests were suspended nationally, due to Covid-19. National research suggests that the closure of schools had an impact on pupils' academic development and on their mental health and wellbeing. Gaps between the most disadvantaged pupils and their peers are likely to increase. This is an area that requires more understanding at local level, and recovery intervention.

- Restrictions and the prioritisation of Covid-19 response meant that some health improvement activities (e.g. health checks, antenatal visits, participation in sports and leisure activities) could not be progressed in the usual way. The medium and longer-term impact of this is yet to be determined.

2.4 What we are going to focus on going forward:

- a) Support everyone in their learning journey to achieve their best** – This commitment will be delivered through the implementation of emerging national policies and local solutions so that support to our schools continues, but is adapted to address the consequences of Covid-19 lockdowns. Activities will include direct support programmes for children and their families, stronger coordination of services

in order to address the barriers to learning for disadvantaged children, and assistance to schools and other education providers. Young people and adults will be supported to participate in education, employment, training or life-long learning.

- b) Improve the health and wellbeing of our residents** – The Council will contribute to producing a Health and Wellbeing Strategy with partner organisations across the region and deliver services to address identified needs. This includes a refocus on the antenatal visits and poor health prevention activities, including health checks to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. Supporting participation in sports and leisure activities will aim to increase the level of physical activity in West Berkshire. A particular focus will be to address health inequalities.

- c) Improve mental health and wellbeing** – We have added this as a separate commitment in response to the negative impacts of Covid-19 on employment, and the effect of lockdown measures on residents from all age groups. We will work with our Health and Wellbeing Board partner organisations to implement the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health Plan. The plan includes activities to better define the needs, to coordinate and to supplement the interventions in response to these needs. It aims to positively impact on lowering suicide rates and levels of self-harm, on supporting people with mental illness, improving the broader quality of life and self-reported wellbeing.

- d) Enable residents and communities to help themselves and others** – The resilience of our communities made a significant difference in the way we responded to the Covid-19 crisis. We will build on this and implement a community wellbeing model to support individuals to self-care and to lead independent lives, and further strengthen our local communities. We will implement ways to increase engagement with our residents and, in particular, with geographical groups or communities of need and those that are disadvantaged. We will continue our support to enable communities to have more control on decisions that impact them, through Neighbourhood Development Plans and Parish Plans.



Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire

3.1 The original commitments included in the Council Strategy 2019 – 2023:

Improve the help and guidance for start-ups and existing small businesses to grow, including facilitation of access to business incubators or similar resources and initiatives.

Ensure our planning policies enable start-up and growth of business in the district.

Provide incentives and opportunities to **enable businesses to grow**.

3.2 How we have done 2019-2021

• **Improve help and guidance for start-ups and business growth** - We have ensured that business start-ups and small and medium companies wanting to expand, received support from Berkshire Business Support Hub. We promoted the District’s economic priorities by expanding business links at events and through projects. During the last year, the Council has promptly distributed a range of grants to over 1,100 businesses to ease the financial pressure on them during the pandemic. This includes grants to support nurseries, childminders and other early-years providers, to ensure they will still be in business once demand for places, currently suppressed by Covid-19, reverts to the usual levels. In addition, advice and support has been provided on how to operate safely in the new environment.

• **Planning policies enable business growth –** Arrangements have been made to ensure that the needs of business are given full consideration in the non-residential planning process. Work has stated to explore the future uses of Newbury Town Centre. A study has been completed to support the development of the Local Plan, to identify the land required for new businesses and housing need in the District.

• **Incentives and opportunities to enable businesses to grow –** We have produced an Economic Development Strategy which details the approach to support business growth in the District. We invested in the emerging, private sector-led, Newbury West Berkshire Economic Development Company to enhance business support, but have changed to an in-house support offer, when the company ceased operations due to its external funding being impacted by Covid-19. In addition events have taken place to support businesses to attract the talent and skills that they require. Over 70 apprenticeship placements have been achieved through the Kick Start scheme. Some initiatives to support the horse racing industry and a careers fair, are on hold due to Covid-19.

3.3 What has happened since 2019

• The strong economy in West Berkshire seems less impacted by Covid-19 compared to other parts of the country. The most significant impact has been in hospitality, leisure, wholesale and retail.

• The support required by local businesses completely changed during the pandemic. Advice and support to re-open in a Covid19 secure way, support with distribution of grants from central government and flexibility regarding the payment of Business Rates are some examples of the support that was required.

• Changes brought about by Covid-19, including working from home, particularly by tech companies, increased the vulnerability of town centres.

• Work progressed under other priorities of this strategy, contribute to make the District more attractive and supportive for business start-ups and development. These include investment in infrastructure, particularly digital infrastructure, transport and housing, skills development and availability in West Berkshire, and making the most of our environment in a sustainable way.

3.4 What we are going to focus on going forward:

a. Continue to provide help and guidance for start-ups and existing small businesses to grow, including facilitation of access to business incubators or similar resources and initiatives – Even more than before, West Berkshire remains Open for Business.

We will welcome start-up and business growth initiatives in the District, which forms part of the Thames Valley Turbo Economy, the strongest regional economy outside of London. We will provide advice and guidance and facilitate businesses’ access to the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership’s Business Growth Hub. We will actively engage with or organise projects and events, in order to expand business links and promote the district’s economic priorities, and the support available to businesses.



b. As part of refreshing the Local Plan, we will strengthen policies to support economic development – This commitment contributes to the long-term economic development in West Berkshire. We will ensure that the planning framework for the District delivers a cohesive and sustainable development, which gives consideration to the evolving needs of the business sector.

c. Provide incentives and support for viable businesses in the District, to help areas of hardship – The immediate future will see a continuation of support for businesses to recover, but also to benefit of the opportunities from Covid-19 impact. Adult social care market is one of the areas of focus.

The Council will facilitate events to attract the talent and skills required by local businesses and host webinars and forums to maintain the communication and engagement with the sector.

The implementation of the Procurement Strategy, embedding social value in procurement and the Inward Investment Strategy, will provide more incentives for the business sector in West Berkshire.

d. Support town centres to recover from the impact of Covid-19 and adapt to any changes as a result of more working from home - This commitment is linked primarily with our recovery agenda, but highly relevant for our Council Strategy as the pandemic had a catalytic effect on an existing trend of changing town centres locally and nationally.

We will provide a strategic approach to how our town centres will change by producing Town Centre Master Plans, starting with Newbury and Thatcham, and securing resources for master planning for our other towns.

e. Implement a new policy on Social Value to generate greater positive economic, environmental and social outcomes - In line with the 2012 Public Services (Social Value) Act we are going to implement this new policy for the public contracts the Council commissions. This will allow social value considerations to be embedded in our procurement and to place social value at the heart of our procurement practice.

"The strong economy in West Berkshire seems less impacted by Covid-19 compared to other parts of the country. The most significant impact has been in hospitality, leisure, wholesale and retail."



Priority

Develop local infrastructure, including housing to support and grow the local economy

4.1 The original commitments included in the Council Strategy 2019 – 2023:

Develop an **Integrated Infrastructure Plan** to deliver regeneration, housing, flood prevention and alleviation schemes, and travel and transport infrastructure

Further **develop digital infrastructure** and information assets in the District

Enhance the **arts, culture and leisure offering** of the District

4.2 How we have done 2019-2021

• **Integrated Infrastructure Plan** – Infrastructure development progressed well. In particular, the statutory stages of producing the Local Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan are being completed according to the schedule.

Good progress has been made to deliver solutions for keeping the traffic moving efficiently and safely, such as an intelligent systems for traffic management (the A4 Thatcham Intelligent Transport Journey Time Measurement System). This contributes to reduce CO2 and other traffic related emissions.

Progress has been made to deliver new houses needed in the District. Over 609 additional homes have been completed, including 216 affordable homes. We have adopted a new Housing Strategy.

We have completed a number of flood alleviation schemes which provide protection to an additional 607 properties in the District, achieving the objective set for the four years of the Council Strategy.

• **Develop digital infrastructure** – Enhanced access to digital communications to premises in West Berkshire.

Superfast Broadband has been made available to over 72,000 properties in the District.

A strong digital infrastructure ensured an increased resilience in responding to Covid-19 challenges, including by supporting residents to work from home and pupils to continue education remotely.

Progress has been made to install more wireless connectivity infrastructure (Long Range Wide Area Networks) to support the emerging 'Internet of Things' devices and services.

• **Enhance the arts, culture and leisure offering**– We have developed a new Cultural Heritage Strategy, and a Leisure Strategy by engaging with key partners and with residents in the District. We set out in more detail our plans for offering access to a broader range of leisure facilities

(some refurbished) and services, and to increase accessibility to cultural activities for residents that otherwise would not be able to participate.

4.3 What has happened since 2019

- Working from home is predicted to continue and commuting journeys to reduce post Covid-19.
- Traffic volumes have reduced and support has been provided by the Council to enable active travel alternatives.
- The medium-term impact of Covid-19 on the public transport is not clear.
- Digital connectivity is essential to support new ways of working and for the establishment of new businesses. 99% of the premises in Berkshire are able to access Superfast Broadband. Continuing to invest in a world-class digital infrastructure in Berkshire is key to ensuring that it maintains its current strong social and economic position.
- The culture, art and leisure sectors have been significantly impacted by Covid-19.

4.4 What we are going to focus on going forward:

a. Develop an Integrated Infrastructure Plan to deliver regeneration, housing, flood prevention and alleviation schemes, and travel and transport infrastructure – We will complete the necessary work to produce and approve a new Local Plan and



Infrastructure Delivery Plan. In the meantime, we will continue the delivery of regeneration projects and approval of housing development, including affordable housing.

Focus on maintaining the traffic flow in the District will ensure appropriate development and maintenance of our road network, in line with housing growth, and using intelligent traffic management systems to monitor traffic and to minimise the impact on the environment.

In order to further mitigate the risk of damage to properties as a result of flooding, we will develop additional flood alleviation and prevention schemes and apply for funding to DEFRA in order to secure resources for their implementation. We will continue to work together with our professional partners and local Flood Forums to address the needs of residents who have experienced or are at risk of flooding.

b. Increase the terrestrial and mobile digital connectivity - The need for technology and infrastructure to enable remote working, learning and interacting became even more evident during the Covid-19 pandemic.

As the District already achieved excellent coverage in terms of access to Superfast Broadband, the focus over the next few years will be how we approach the next stage of connectivity development. This will include access to Full Fibre (fibre-to-premises technology), the extension of 4G mobile network coverage so that it is accessible everywhere in the District, and initiating the development of 5G network.

c. Enhance the arts, culture and leisure offering – The new Cultural Heritage Strategy introduced a focus on developing partnership working with key players in the sector. It aims to support local cultural organisations through inward investment (e.g. working together to secure external resources), producing and promoting cultural projects that engage residents and attract visitors. It will enhance the accessibility of cultural and heritage activities for different groups of residents and deliver actions to protect and promote our unique cultural history, heritage and environment.

"Progress has been made to deliver new houses needed in the District. Over 609 additional homes have been completed, including 216 affordable homes."





Maintain a green district

5.1 The original commitments included in the Council Strategy 2019 – 2023:

- Develop more **sustainable transport solutions** which protect the environment
- Promote and improve **cycle ways** in the District
- Develop opportunities and expertise to take advantage of the **production, storage and utilisation of green energy**
- Minimise the impact on the environment** in delivering services such as the use assistive technologies in social care

5.2 How we have done 2019-2021

- **Sustainable transport solutions** - Progress has been made to strengthen the strategic framework by adopting the Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan, and working towards the adoption of a new Local Transport Plan by July 2022.

In Thatcham, we have installed sensors to monitor air quality, in preparation for installing digital, signposting infrastructure to suggest alternative, faster and less polluting routes. We are converting the Council’s fleet to ultra-low emission vehicles.

We are resolving legal and technical issues to be able to further expand the network of electric vehicle charging points across the District and install them in all the Council’s public car parks.

- **Promote and improve cycle ways** - Improvements have been made by extending the cycle ways in the District. The Council completed the Thatcham section of the new National Cycle Route- NCN 422 Sustrans route, delivered two kilometres of additional cycle routes, and produced a cycling and walking infrastructure Plan for Newbury and Thatcham. In addition, measures have been implemented to support active travel.

Residents have been invited to collaborate with the Council to design more active travel schemes to enhance safety, the environment and air quality.



- **Production, storage and utilisation of green energy** - Energy is generated from renewable sources following the installation of solar panels across all Council estate pilot sites. A robust programme, based on feasibility and prioritisation of additional sites, is progressing.

Feasibility work has been completed for installing 2 megawatts of solar photovoltaic (PV) to generate energy from a new solar farm.

- **Minimise the impact on the environment in delivering services** – Successes in this area include the uptake of telecare in Adult Social Care contributing to a reduced need for long-term services, enabling people to continue to live safely in their communities, where possible, and localising the delivery of care services to minimise travel. We are making further improvements for the recycling of household waste by completing feasibility plans for separate food-waste collection. Arrangements are in place to ensure that all decisions made by the Council are informed by an assessment of their impact on the environment.

Plans to invest in measures to naturally capture and reduce carbon dioxide (large scale afforestation and natural regeneration in rural areas, urban tree planting etc.) are being progressed

5.3 What has happened since 2019

- The Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019.
- The Environment Strategy sets a target of achieving carbon neutrality in West Berkshire, by 2030. A detailed Environment Strategy Delivery Plan has been approved.
- Half of the respondents to the residents’ survey (June 2020) reported that they are planning to walk and cycle more than in the previous year. Lockdown measures created the opportunity for the initiation and implementation of more active travel measures.
- In November 2020 the Prime Minister set out his ambitious ten point plan for a green industrial revolution

5.4 What we are going to focus on going forward:

a. Continue to develop more sustainable transport solutions to protect the environment

– The Council will support the expansion of the electric vehicle charging points network, installing charging points in all Council owned public car parks. We will continue to replace the Council's existing vehicles with a fleet of ultra-low emission vehicles.

Installation of sensors to monitor CO2 levels, in real time, together with variable traffic signs, will enable an intelligent transport system to suggest the best routes, in order to improve traffic flow and air quality.

b. Develop and implement infrastructure to encourage active travel

– Measures to expand the walking and cycling routes in the District will continue. The developments will be coordinated through a new Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan. Cycle storage facilities and cycle hubs will be provided to enable more active travel. Work with public transport operators will focus on recovering from the impact of Covid-19 with an aim to increase passenger numbers.

c. Expand the production, storage and utilisation of renewable energy

– The success of the pilot project to install solar panels, influenced the decision to continue to expand their use across the Council's estate and other areas in the District. We will progress with the installation of additional solar photo-voltaic panels, as part of a new solar farm.

d. Minimise the impact on the environment when delivering our services

– Consideration will be given regarding sources of energy used by the Council to deliver services, and to possible changes to ensure that the electricity used is from renewable sources. The offsetting of some of the CO2 produced will be achieved by investing in solutions to naturally capture and reduce carbon dioxide, such as urban tree planning and rural afforestation.

To further increase the amount of household waste that is recycled, composted, reused and recovered, we will implemented a separate food waste collection component to our waste management service.

"The Council will support the expansion of the electric vehicle charging points network, installing them in all Council public car parks."



Priority

Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships

6.1 The original commitments included in the Council Strategy 2019 – 2023:

Expand our work with partner organisations and communities to improve services for local residents

Increase the **sustainability** of our business models by expanding on the initiatives to **generate income** for supporting vital Council's services

Implement a Workforce strategy which supports **leadership development, recruitment and retention and employee wellbeing**

Use data to better understand our services' beneficiaries to improve the way we interact with them and the services we provide

6.2 How we have done 2019-2021

- **Expand partnership working** – Transformed the ways in which residents access health and social care services by formalising plans for partnership working at regional level (Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership). At local level, we have agreed a Primary Care Network plan with local Clinical Commissioning Groups to ensure residents receive better services as a result of multi-disciplinary teams of professionals working together (GP practices, community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services) and joint commissioning of services.

Community engagement conducted with our statutory partners and community and voluntary organisations, has focused on practical activities to respond to Covid-19.

- **Increase sustainability by expanding on the initiatives to generate income** – the Council detailed its approach to generate income in a Strategic Position Statement on Commercialisation. Areas where the Council can develop a commercial approach have been identified and prioritised as part of this statement. Investments made by the Council generate an annual income of approximately £1million.

A Community Municipal Investment (CMI) Bond, the first initiative in the UK that allows residents to invest in local renewable energy projects, has been implemented.

- **Leadership development, recruitment and retention, and employee wellbeing** – Solutions to support employees' wellbeing have been brought forward and implemented to address challenges presented by Covid-19. The development of a leadership programme for managers, is being progressed.

Actions to position the Council as an 'employer of choice' ensured an employee turnover rate below the maximum threshold.

- **Better understand the beneficiaries of our services to ensure improved services** – Strategic action has been taken to ensure a coordinated approach on how the Council communicates, consults and engages with the local communities. It is built on learnings from the excellent interaction between the Council, its partner organisations, residents and community groups, whilst responding to the Coronavirus pandemic. A residents' survey took place in June 2020 to capture their views and inform the Recovery Strategy and other plans.

A review of the Council's services identified new ways of working which are being progressed through the Transformation Programme.

Solutions have been implemented- increasing opportunities for residents to interact directly with Councillors and officers, including live YouTube and Facebook events, and by broadcasting Council and other Committee meetings.



6.3 What has happened since 2019

- The social and economic resilience of the District meant that the impact of Covid-19 was reduced, compared to other regions in the country. However, the pandemic highlighted the need to target inequalities.

- The response to Covid-19 made partnership working between the Council, public and private sector organisations, residents and community groups an essential requirement in order to ensure residents received the support they needed.

- Government initiatives have been implemented locally to support residents, self-employed professionals and businesses, by making available and distributing a number of grants to mitigate the effects of the pandemic.

- Working from home is impacting on the ability to deliver face to face training and learning sessions, but online alternatives are emerging.

- Digitisation of services has accelerated as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.

- A review of the 2036 Vision is required and amendments made to reflect the latest changes and the changes and the progress made to date.

6.4 What we are going to focus on going forward:

- a) **Expand our work with partner organisations and communities to improve services for local residents and to tackle inequalities** – We are committed to contribute- alongside our statutory, voluntary and community organisations- to deliver the priorities of our Vision 2036. Together with partner organisations from the Berkshire West region, we are defining the outcomes and delivery solutions for improving the health and wellbeing of our residents as part of a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. At local level we will produce a community engagement framework. We will work to strengthen our relationship with all Town and Parish Councils in West Berkshire.

- b) **Continue the implementation of the Workforce Strategy which supports staff engagement leadership development, recruitment, retention and employee wellbeing** – The continuation of service delivery whilst responding to Covid-19 has demonstrated the resilience and dedication of our employees. We will continue with the delivery of our Workforce Strategy to ensure support is available for front line staff and for those in managerial roles.

- c) **Expand on the initiatives to generate income for supporting vital Council services** – We will continue the schemes already put in place to generate new funding streams for supporting the delivery of the Council's services and will look at solutions to identify and implement new ones. We will encourage our staff to suggest new ideas and take forward those that are viable- in terms of service improvement, increased efficiencies and/ or generating income. We will review the Council's assets to ensure they are used in the most effective way.

- d) **Enhance communication and engagement with our residents to develop a better understanding of their needs** – The three main work strands that we will implement include: better communication, including using social media and increasing our success rate in reaching the seldom heard groups, better consultation aiming to obtain more representative feedback from all sub-groups of residents living in the District and better engagement with our communities and individuals, building on the excellent work that took place during the pandemic.

- e) **Expand the accessibility of our services through digital means** – As digital interactions have developed exponentially, using remote working and digital communication software, there is a greater incentive than ever to develop digital alternatives to enable residents to access our services.



Appendix 1 – Council Strategy Delivery Plan

Priority 1. Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes

Commitments	Actions	Outcomes
Continue to support vulnerable residents at an earlier stage.	Work with partner organisations to review and fully implement the Prevention Strategy.	Expand the availability and take up of services and opportunities available within the community to support vulnerable children and adults in a way which reduces the need to access statutory services.
	Support vulnerable adults through the Three Conversations Model at the preventative level.	Ensure Adult Social Care clients are as independent as possible and have access to the services they need.
Renew the focus on improving outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and vulnerable adults.	Work with children and families that benefit from our statutory social services to ensure long lasting results.	Those children and young people who require interventions are safeguarded and prepared for adulthood.
	Provide better services for Children in Care.	Our reduced cohort of Children in Care with more complex needs will have more stable placements, reduced school absences and better educational and health outcomes.
	Increase the proportion of clients who receive an annual review or contract.	Ensure appropriate levels and type of support is provided to Adult Social Care users who are eligible for services under the Care Act. Service users report that services they have accessed made them feel safe and secure.
	Refocus work with our health partners to ensure that our interventions for those leaving hospital are based on reablement and rehabilitation.	Reduced delays in the transfer of care from hospital (DTCO) Ensure that people do not need to be readmitted following hospital discharge.

Support more vulnerable young adults into employment.	Adopt a strategic framework to improve the employment opportunities of vulnerable people in the District.	Increased employment rate for vulnerable young people.
	Increase support for our care leavers.	A greater proportion of our care leavers are in employment, education or training.
	Increase to 114 a year the number of apprenticeships within the Council including placements for vulnerable young adults.	Increase the number of apprenticeships being assessed, especially by care leavers, those with disabilities and from ethnic minority communities.

Priority 2. Support everyone to reach their full potential

Commitments	Actions	Outcomes
Support everyone in their learning journey to achieve their best.	Support schools to improve education attainment, this will include addressing the impact of Covid-19.	Improve the local authority ranking of educational attainment at all key stages.
	Continue with our investment of over £69 million in school places across the District.	Ensure that all children have access to a local school place, with at least 95% of the children in the District accessing one of their top three preferred schools.
	Implementation of the Disadvantaged Strategy.	Improve the education attainment of pupils in the disadvantaged cohort.
	Support engagement in education, employment or training and life-long learning.	Maintain low levels of NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training). Increase take up of life-long learning by people from areas of low participation in education, areas of deprivation and those who are unemployed.
Improve the health and wellbeing of our residents	Deliver public health programmes that have been delayed or interrupted by Covid-19 (e.g. health checks, national measurement programme, antenatal visits, smoking cessation).	Reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. Reduce the prevalence of overweight and obese people. Encourage smoking cessation.
	Support participation in sports and leisure activities	Increase the level of physical activity in West Berkshire (to at least 30 minutes of exercise a week). Prevent increase in obesity prevalence.

Improve mental health and wellbeing	Work with our Health and Wellbeing Board of partner organisations to implement the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health Plan.	Positively impact on lowering suicide rates and levels of self-harm. Positively impact on providing support for people with mental illnesses and the quality of life and self-reported wellbeing.
	Implement a new Community Wellbeing model.	Support individuals to self-care, lead independent lives and strengthen our local communities.
	Help communities who wish to complete a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).	Increase the number of NDP groups active in West Berkshire to manage their developments in their areas.
Enable residents and communities to help themselves and others	More communities are supported to produce or refresh Parish Plans and develop other community plans.	Residents have the opportunity to express their views and influence how they want their community to develop.
	Ensure that mechanisms are put in place to effectively engage vulnerable and hard to reach groups.	Hard to reach groups feel that they are being listened to.
	Provide support and encourage community engagement through volunteering.	Volunteering opportunities in the District are maximised.
	Develop an Advocacy Service for Diverse Ethnic Communities.	Increase the engagement with residents from Diverse Ethnic Communities in West Berkshire

Priority 3. Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire

Commitments	Actions	Outcomes
Continue to provide help and guidance for start-ups and existing small businesses to grow.	More business start-up and small and medium companies are referred each year to Berkshire Business Growth Hub.	Business start-up and small and medium companies receive support from Berkshire Business Growth Hub.
	Increase the number of economic development events and projects delivered each year.	Expand business links, promote the District's economic priorities and the support available for businesses.
As part of refreshing the Local Plan, strengthen policies to support economic development.	Complete an Employment Land Study.	Allocate any identified employment land need through the Local Plan Review.
	Consult Economic Development Service on ever non-residential planning application.	Ensure the needs of businesses are given full consideration in the non-residential planning process.
Provide incentives and support for viable businesses in the District, to help areas of hardship.	Support the social care market to recover and grow.	Social care market growth sustains the changing care and support needs of our residents.
	Showcase at events the employment opportunities available in the District.	Support businesses to attract the talent and skills that they require.
	Implement our procurement strategy. Hold supplier forums to support local SMEs to bid for WBC procurement.	The new Procurement Strategy promotes and supports local businesses to bid for council procurement.
	Support rural businesses to diversify. Support the Lambourn h	Rural estates are supported to diversify. Further 'greening' of the farming infrastructure such as solar panels.
	Hold quarterly webinars to inform businesses of our work.	Economic sector players interact with a business friendly Council and benefit from the support that they receive.

Support town centres to recover from the Covid-19 impact and adapt to any changes as a result of more working from home.	Deliver Newbury Town Centre Master Plan with a focus on economic development. Complete the Thatcham Master Plan.	Improve the public realm and the green spaces available to residents. Supporting the evolving needs of the businesses located in the District.
	Implement a new policy on Social Value to generate greater positive economic, environmental and social outcomes.	Develop the policy and implement it primarily by using the proxy values as identified in the National Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMS) Framework
		Generate greater positive economic, environmental and social outcomes for West Berkshire from the public contracts the Council commissions.

Priority 4. Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy

Commitments	Actions	Outcomes
Develop an Integrated Infrastructure Plan to deliver regeneration, housing, flood prevention and alleviation schemes, and travel and transport infrastructure.	Grant planning permission for at least 2,200 additional houses (of which 500 will be affordable housing) and associated infrastructure.	Completion of additional residential units including affordable houses. Local Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan produced and approved.
	Develop and maintain our road network to accommodate the housing growth (in the context of the climate emergency declaration) by investing at least £39m between 2019-2023 in transport and infrastructure.	There is no deterioration in congestion levels in urban areas as a result of developments in line with the current housing delivery plan. This will be measured using journey time information on key strategic routes in the Districts' urban centres.
	Deliver the Newbury Train Station improvements project	Improvements to Newbury Train Station.
	Develop flood alleviation schemes and apply for funding	Plans agreed for future flood alleviation schemes
Further develop digital infrastructure and information assets in the District	Extend the connectivity of premises in West Berkshire to Full-Fibre.	Enhance access to digital communications (Fibre-to-Premises) in West Berkshire.
	Facilitate the building of more wireless connectivity infrastructure.	Support the emerging Internet of Things devices and services.
	Work with Thames Valley Berkshire, local Enterprise Partnership and with lead communication technology companies to investigate the viability of Newbury becoming a 5G test bed initiative.	Secure a 5G test bed initiative in West Berkshire and ensure Newbury becomes a 5G town by 2022. receive.

Enhance the arts, culture and leisure offering of the District	Refurbish the leisure centres in Newbury, Thatcham and Hungerford to provide new and upgraded facilities with a broader range of leisure services.	Residents can access refurbished facilities with a broader range of leisure services available.
	Ensure that our sports and leisure facilities comply with a higher accessibility accreditation level.	Increase the accessibility of our sports and leisure facilities for our residents.
	Implement the West Berkshire Cultural Heritage Strategy to improve access for all and promote health and wellbeing.	Identify and deliver projects which support the 6 strategic themes in the strategy to improve the arts, culture and the local heritage.
	Conduct a Review of the Libraries Service	Identify improvements to the service to ensure it meets community needs.

Priority 5. Maintain a green district

Commitments	Actions	Outcomes
Continue the development of more sustainable transport solutions which protect the environment.	Deliver the actions as identified within the Council's ULEV Strategy, to include: Installation of electric vehicle charge points and ensure 25% of the Council's fleet uses ULEV by 2022.	20% of the parking bays in all council public car parks have access to an active charging point. A wider network of charging points is available across the District. Council vehicle fleet is renewed with ultra-low emission vehicles.
	Install the necessary infrastructure to be able to suggest alternative routes by using intelligent transport systems and real time air quality information.	Improve traffic flow and air quality.
Develop and implement infrastructure to encourage active travel.	Work with public transport operators to increase the use of public transport.	Increased numbers of passengers on public transport.
	Production of a Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan for West Berkshire.	Improved cycle ways and walking routes.
	Delivery of 100% of the proposed primary cycle route and 50% of the proposed secondary cycle route, for Newbury and Thatcham, as set out in the Local Transport Plan.	Improved cycle ways in the District.
	Ensure sufficient cycle storage capacity at primary and secondary schools in the District.	Increase cycle storage capacity at all secondary schools. Increase covered and secure cycle storage available at all primary schools.
	Install a network of permanent automatic active travel monitoring sites at key locations on the cycling and walking primary network.	Digital infrastructure is available for monitoring active travel.

Expand the production, storage and utilisation of renewable energy.	Expand the use of solar panels across the Council's estate and beyond (community groups and businesses).	Generate energy from renewable sources.
	Submit planning permission for a 75 acre solar farm at Grazeley.	Generate energy from renewable sources.
	Install 2 megawatts of solar PV to generate energy from a new solar farm (photovoltaic power station).	Generate energy from renewable sources.
Minimise the impact on the environment when delivering our services.	Work with stakeholders and central energy contract electricity suppliers to ensure that the Council's electricity supply is from confirmed 'green' / renewable sources.	100% of the Council's electricity supply comes from renewable sources.
	Invest in measures to naturally capture and reduce carbon dioxide. Undertake a scheme of urban tree planting.	Urban tree planting has taken place and the impact is recorded quantitatively such as percentage increase in canopy cover per area.
	Research accredited carbon offsetting schemes for potential Council participation.	Carbon offsetting options are identified.
	Review the municipal waste collection regime in the District.	Improve levels of the household waste recycled, composted, reused and recovered.

Priority 6. Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships

Commitments	Actions	Outcomes
Expand our work with partner organisations and communities to improve services for local residents and tackle inequalities.	Support the Health and Wellbeing Board to refresh the Vision 2036.	Progress is made with the implementation of West Berkshire Vision 2036.
	Agree health and wellbeing priorities and the approach to deliver them by working together with partner organisations at regional level.	Produce and approve a joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy with our partner organisations in Berkshire West.
	Develop a Community Engagement Framework with our statutory partners and community and voluntary sector organisations.	A framework for community engagement agreed.
	To conduct a review of current activity to develop an understanding of best practice and options for improvement, and to prepare a joint report with Parish & Town Councils.	Evidence, obtained through surveys and feedback, of an increasingly positive and productive relationship with Town and Parish Councils.
Continue the implementation of the Workforce Strategy which supports staff engagement, leadership development, recruitment, retention, and employee wellbeing.	Position the Council as an 'employer of choice'.	Maintain an appropriate level of turnover and increase the proportion of posts advertised, by the Council, that are filled first time.
	Managers participate in a new leadership programme.	Leadership programme supports the leadership competency framework and the enhancement of coaching skills.
	Use positive action, as permitted under the Equality Act, to attract people from under-represented groups into the organisation and into higher graded positions.	Ensure that we have an even more inclusive and diverse workforce.

Expand on the initiatives to generate income for supporting vital Council services.	Review all of the Council's assets through an asset challenge process.	Establish future use, maintenance and disposal requirements of assets across the Council's estate.
	Approve a Corporate Landlord Strategy	Implement a Corporate Landlord model
	To introduce a new scheme for generating staff suggestions to replace Lions Lair scheme.	Staff suggestions are identified and, where viable, implemented to deliver service improvements, savings and/or income generation.
Enhance communication and engagement with our residents to develop a better understanding of their needs.	Social media content is expanded to assist in helping to engage seldom heard groups.	Increased engagement with target groups.
	Deliver a representative residents survey.	Residents' survey results are representative for the entire District.
	Maintaining signposting and connections to community support functions.	Residents are signposted to community support functions, and positive feedback is received from them.
Expand the accessibility of our services through digital means.	Continue to pursue an approach based on 'digital by default'.	Residents have increased options to access the services offered by the Council through digital means.

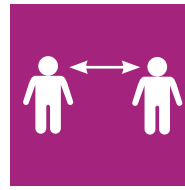


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Covid-19: Supporting Our Communities



Introduction

It's true to say that this really has been a year like no other for our communities, and for the Council.

We're incredibly proud of the way local people have responded to the pandemic. Over the past year we've seen communities rally around to look after one another, and an outpouring of support for frontline services, particularly the NHS, and other caring professions. It is a long list but we extend our gratitude to the NHS, carers, community groups and all the key workers who have played their part supporting our communities so admirably over the past year.

At the Council we're proud to have played our part responding to the pandemic. From helping to coordinate the community response, supporting local businesses, to working with schools in delivering online learning, we've been busy working to support you. Every one of our teams has been affected and each has risen to the challenge magnificently.

Over the next few pages you can read more about some of our activities and achievements. As we look ahead with optimism for the coming months we wanted to reflect on just how much has been achieved by the Council and our communities, and tell you a little more about our longer-term plans for recovery.

West Berkshire is a superb place and its communities equally so. The future looks brighter now, and as we move forward we have every confidence that the district will bounce back and continue to be a great place to live, work and learn.



Nick Carter
Chief Executive



Cllr Lynne Doherty
Leader of West Berkshire Council

Key Achievements



Community Support Hub established to support vulnerable residents



100% schools offered remote learning to pupils



Four community testing sites in operation

83% staff working remotely to continue service delivery



Created and adopted new strategies for the future, including our Environment Strategy



More than £40m paid in business grants

41,000 residents receiving weekly Covid e-bulletin



More than 70 meetings streamed live, and viewed 14,000 times

Community Response



4,574 calls to the
Community
Support Hub

Community
Support Hub
created to support
community
groups, and
the most
vulnerable



Four
community
testing sites
in operation

£371,000
paid from
Winter Grant
Scheme

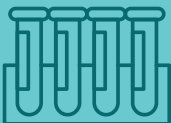


Supported the local
foodbank by coordinating
volunteers and deliveries



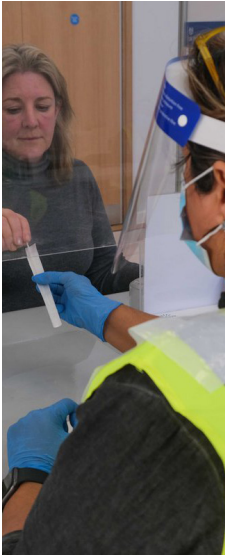
91 staff
volunteering in
Community
Support Hub

3,721
applications
for COVID
Winter Grant



6,000 people tested at
Community Testing Sites

Community Response



£200,000 for mental health support



479 residents contacted by Local Contract Tracing service



Transported key workers & children of key workers to school



1,323 applications for Test and Trace Support Payments



Self-isolation packs created

90+ community groups work with Community Support Hub



£292,000 spent on Free School Meal vouchers

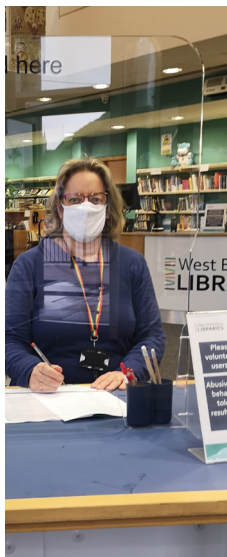


3000+ volunteers supporting the community response

Supporting Residents



151,000 recycling centre visits booked online



104,000 items borrowed from libraries – and new Order and Collect service launched

Supported 43 care homes offering support, advice and infection control training



900 doorstep deliveries by library staff



Library services moved online – including storytimes, book groups and code club

500 young people directed to mental health support services



2,000 laptops delivered to families who need them



280 gifts for vulnerable residents in Christmas Giving appeal

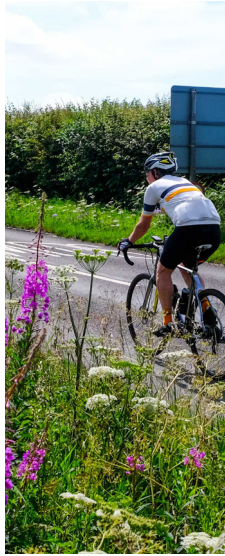


Schools provided lessons for key worker and special needs children on site

Supporting Residents



Holiday Activities
and Food
Programme run at
15 schools



£495,000 for community
groups to deliver
local projects

£1m raised through
climate change bonds



£619,000 for Active
Travel Schemes



Community Champion
Awards recognise
14 groups and 32
individuals

£253,000 to support
rough sleepers

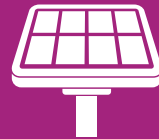


Two new schools
completed in
Theale and
Newbury



£1.7m awarded to
bring full fibre to
schools

Plans for
£10m solar farm
announced



£302,000 in financial relief to
local bus operators for concessionary
fares reimbursement

Supporting Business



£40m of business grants processed

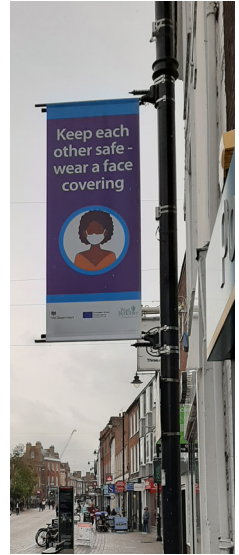
£4.25m Closed Business Lockdown Payments



20 temporary pavement licences issued



£6.8m Local Restriction Support Grant



47 grants totalling £94,000 paid under Christmas Support Payment

£1.9m Additional Restrictions Grants distributed



New town centre signage to support social distancing

Processed furlough scheme payments

Business rate holidays granted

Business support provided including information packs, webinars and virtual drop-in surgeries



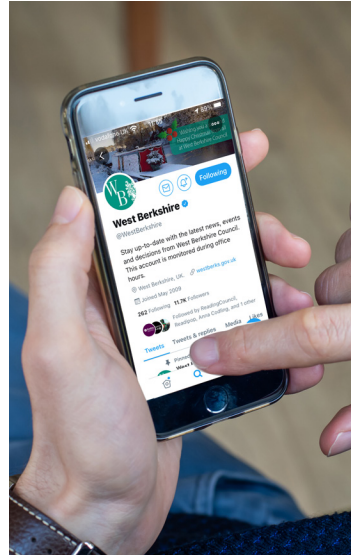
Road closures in Newbury supporting social distancing during summer 2020

Communications & Engagement

2m views
of Council
tweets



More than
9,000,000 website
page views



3m
copies of
e-newsletter
delivered



205 Zoom
webinars
held with
3,533
participants



Four #AskLynne
Facebook Live
residents briefings
with the Leader

Information
leaflets sent
70,000 homes



121
consultation
and
engagement
activities



National
campaigns
shared locally



Local Outbreak Engagement
Board met regularly



Ensuring the district recovers from the effects of Covid-19 is a priority for the Council, and has been for some time. Last summer we began planning for life after the pandemic to ensure West Berkshire is able to renew itself after a turbulent year, and remains a great place to live, work and learn.

The response to Covid-19 has shown that our communities are tightknit, resilient and determined to help one another during times of crisis. The collective response to the pandemic was fantastic, and we want to build on this community spirit as we recover.

However, we also recognise that coronavirus has also had an adverse impact and that some residents have been more affected than others. We want to support the district in bouncing back and in particular to tackle any health, economic and learning inequalities which have been caused by the pandemic.

Vision

To recover three of the core elements that make West Berkshire a great place to live; health, education and the economy, and to ensure a renewed and enhanced focus on our community, environment and engagement. Our Strategy is for everyone but in particular those most affected, now, and into the future by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

On the opposite page you can see the seven areas we will focus on in the coming months to support the district in recovering from the pandemic.

An updated Recovery and Renewal Strategy will be published on our website soon, and will provide more information about what we will deliver on each of our priority areas.

You can also receive updates on our progress direct to your inbox by signing up to our residents' newsletters at www.westberks.gov.uk/SignUp



To help the district recover from Covid-19 we will focus on the following seven areas for renewal:

1

Recovering West Berkshire's health and social wellbeing to ensure we remain one of the healthiest places in the country, whilst at the same time doing more to address health inequalities.

2

Ensuring economic recovery and renewal, with a focus on those who have lost their jobs, notably the young, women and the disadvantaged; supporting those sectors most impacted by Covid-19; and ensuring we continue the journey of repurposing our Town Centres for the future.

3

Supporting our children and young people and our schools with a focus on the most vulnerable.

4

Taking the opportunity to work with our local communities to accelerate the delivery of our environmental objectives.

5

Enhancing our communications and community engagement.

6

Improving our customers' experience of us with an enhanced efficiency and openness in how we work and share information.

7

Seizing the positives from the pandemic but not forgetting those we have lost; those whose lives will be forever changed; and those who have supported our local communities during the pandemic, including our own staff.

Keeping In Touch



We're proud to be part of the local community, and to be delivering services which will make our district a better place today, tomorrow and in the years to come. Keep in touch with us to find out about the work we are doing in communities across West Berkshire.

Newsletters

Our e-newsletters give you our latest news, events and decisions direct to your inbox. As well as our weekly Residents Bulletin, you can also sign up for specific newsletters about our libraries, waste and recycling and business – and more!

Subscribe at www.westberks.gov.uk/SignUp

Social Media

Follow us on social media:



Over the past year we have achieved a lot, but we couldn't have done this alone. We want to thank all the partners who worked with us during the coronavirus pandemic, and helped support the residents and businesses of West Berkshire.

Place Directorate restructuring costs

Committee considering report:	Council
Date of Committee:	4 May 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Hilary Cole
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	7 April 2021
Report Author:	Susan Halliwell
Forward Plan Ref:	C4059

1 Purpose of the Report

This report seeks the authority for redundancy payments to be made that may result from the internal recruitment process to fill the new Service Director, Development & Regulation post identified within the Senior Management Review 2019.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 Council is asked to authorise the redundancy payments detailed within this report and included in the Part II paper.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	<p>The breakdown of the total estimated cost of potential redundancies as calculated at 31 August 2021 in Appendix 1, and totals £285,870. The costs will be met through the Council's restructuring reserve, and will be cost neutral in line with the proposals set out in the Senior Management Review 2019.</p> <p>Employees who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) will automatically be paid their pension (with no reduction and no enhancement in the amount due) if they are aged 55 or over on the date that their employment ends due to redundancy.</p> <p>The figures presented at the 'worst case' scenario and assumes that none of the employees can be redeployed into alternative employment within the Council.</p>

Place Directorate restructuring costs

Human Resource:	There are human resource implications associated with this report and the recruitment process is being implemented in accordance with the Council's Organisational Change Policy.			
Legal:	Under the Council's Constitution the power to issue notice to an employee to cease employment by reason of redundancy sits in this circumstance with the Executive Director. However the power to authorise any associated redundancy payment (and early retirement costs where appropriate) rests with the Full Council due to the possible costs involved.			
Risk Management:	None.			
Property:	There are no property implications arising from this report.			
Policy:	As noted above the recruitment into the Service Director post and subsequent implications are being conducted in accordance with the Council's Organisational Change Policy.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
Environmental Impact:		X		

Place Directorate restructuring costs

Health Impact:		X		
ICT Impact:		X		
Digital Services Impact:		X		
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		
Core Business:		X		
Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	The introduction of the Service Director, Development & Regulation post was included in the extensive Senior Management Review consultation that took place in Spring 2019, and further consultation in the summer of 2020. The implementation of the new post was put on hold in the autumn of 2020 until the new Executive Director (Place) was appointed in January 2021.			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 West Berkshire Council undertook a Senior Management Review in 2019 that proposed the establishment of the Place Directorate, including the creation of an Executive Director (Place) and two Service Director posts. In the summer of 2020 a further consultation took place on the establishment of two Service Director posts reflecting the two new departments Environment and Development & Regulation. The establishment of these two departments will enable the Council to be in a strong position to take advantage of the significant opportunities West Berkshire has in shaping our communities both now and in the future, enabling it to grow whilst protecting and enhancing its natural assets.
- 4.2 The recruitment into the Service Director, Environment was completed in 1 April 2020, but the recruitment process for the Service Director, Development & Regulation was paused in autumn 2020 until the appointment of the new Executive Director (Place). This appointment has now taken place and the Council has restarted the recruitment process to fill the vacant Service Director post with a view to the new Development & Regulation department being established by 1 September 2021. The appointment into this post will support the Council in ensuring it has the correct leadership and capabilities within the Directorate to delivery on the Council's ambitions.
- 4.3 Once the internal recruitment process has been completed for the Service Director role, the Head of Planning & Development and Head of Public Protection posts will be

Place Directorate restructuring costs

deleted from the organisational structure. As a consequence there may be redundancy costs the Council will incur if the members of staff cannot be redeployed. This paper seeks approval to authorise those redundancy payments should the need arise.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the potential redundancies that may occur by 31 August 2021, as a result of the recruitment into the Service Director, Development & Regulation post and to seek approval from Full Council to make the redundancy (and if appropriate, retirement) payments associated with the possible staffing changes.
- 5.2 The information contained within this report has been sourced from information held by HR, Finance and Payroll.
- 5.3 The information presented is the maximum possible cost to the Council, which may reduce if redeployment opportunities arise in the Directorate or in the Council as a whole between now and 31 August 2021. It should also be noted that the proposal is cost neutral in line with the agreed Senior Management Review 2019.

Background

- 5.4 West Berkshire Council undertook a Senior Management Review in 2019 that proposed the establishment of the Place directorate, including the creation of an Executive Director (Place) and two Service Director posts. In the summer of 2020 a further consultation took place on the establishment of two Service Director posts for two new departments, Environment and Development & Regulation. The establishment of these two departments reflect the significant opportunities West Berkshire has in shaping our communities both now and in the future, enabling it to grow whilst protecting and enhancing its natural assets.
- 5.5 The recruitment into the Service Director, Environment was completed in 1 April 2020, but the recruitment process for the Service Director, Development & Regulation was paused in autumn 2020 until the appointment of the new Executive Director (Place). This appointment has now taken place and the Council has restarted the recruitment process to fill the vacant Service Director post with a view to the new Development & Regulation department being established by 1 September 2021.
- 5.6 The internal recruitment process has been started on the 15 March 2021. Once this process is complete the Head of Planning & Development and Head of Public Protection posts will be deleted from the Council's establishment. Whilst the Council may incur redundancy and pension costs, the end result will be cost neutral in any event.

Proposal

- 5.7 It is proposed that the estimated total financial payments detailed in the Part II report are approved totalling a maximum of £285,870. The cost of which will come from the Council's restructuring reserve, but will be overall cost neutral as a consequence of deleting two posts.

Place Directorate restructuring costs

Redundancy Process

- 5.8 The internal process is currently underway so it is not possible at this stage to be completely accurate on total costs, therefore the highest potential redundancy costs have been set out in the Part II report. The actual cost could be reduced if redeployment is possible to other posts within the Directorate or Council as a whole. This would reduce the need for any redundancy payment.
- 5.9 Officers who are placed at risk of redundancy will be offered support to identify suitable alternative employment.

6 Other options considered

- 6.1 The Council has a number of significant place shaping opportunities in the short and medium term including:
- a) Shaping and delivering growth through West Berkshire's new Local Plan, supporting the transition to zero carbon growth
 - b) Responding to the transformational changes proposed to the planning system through Government's Planning for the Future White Paper
 - c) Ensuring West Berkshire's economy rebounds from the COVID-19 pandemic and incentivising inward investment
 - d) Accelerating the delivery of affordable housing, in particular progressing the option of establishing a Housing Company
 - e) Developing new, refreshed shared services for Public Protection, seeking to identify new opportunities that benefit local residents and businesses.
- 6.2 The establishment of the Development & Regulation department and recruitment into the Service Director, Development & Regulation post will provide the leadership and drive the Council needs to respond to these opportunities and set West Berkshire in a strong position for good place making.
- 6.3 Consideration was given to not proceeding with the implementation of the Service Director post. This option was ruled out as there was a clear business need to ensure that the new Department could function efficiently and effectively to respond to the opportunities detailed in para. 6.1.
- 6.4 Consideration was also given to delaying the implementation of the Service Director post. This option was not considered viable due to the need to ensure that the new Department can respond to the opportunities detailed in para. 6.1 in a timely manner, and to ensure the services are functioning efficiently and effectively. These aspects coupled with the need to meet current business need (even more so now in light of the impact and learnings following Covid-19) would mean delaying the implementation could leave the Council exposed.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The Council has a significant opportunity to lead on the place shaping agenda for West Berkshire, ensuring it recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic whilst aligning with the Council's priorities of supporting economic growth, addressing climate change and planning our communities of the future. As a result it is paramount to implement the

Place Directorate restructuring costs

final stages of the Senior Management Review by recruiting into the Service Director, Development & Regulation post to ensure the Council has the correct leadership and capability to deliver on the Council's ambitions.

Background Papers:

None

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No: X

- 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 Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

Wards affected: N/A

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Agenda Item 22.

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