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Executive

Thursday, 10th February, 2022 at 5.00 pm

in the 2nd Floor Meeting Area, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury

Note: This meeting can be streamed live here: https://www.westberks.gov.uk/executivelive
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Date of despatch of Agenda: Wednesday, 2 February 2022

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Sadie Owen (Principal Democratic Services Officer) on 01635 519052
e-mail: sadie.owen1@westberks.gov.uk

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

West Berkshire COUNCIL

To:	Councillors Lynne Doherty (Chairman), Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Richard Somner, Joanne Stewart and Howard Woollaston

Agenda

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1.	**Apologies for Absence** To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting.	5 - 6
2.	**Minutes** To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 16 December 2021.	7 - 14
3.	**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.	15 - 16
4.	**Public Questions** Members of the Executive to answer questions submitted by members of the public in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution.	17 - 18
5.	**Petitions** Councillors or Members of the public may present any petition which they have received. These will normally be referred to the appropriate Committee without discussion.	19 - 20

Items as timetabled in the Forward Plan

		Page(s)
6.	**West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-23 (EX4143)** Purpose: The Strategy has been produced specifically to meet the Council's obligations under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and will align with the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020-23 until both documents are combined in 2023/24.	21 - 50

7. **Newbury Town Centre Masterplan (EX4166)** 51 - 174

Purpose:

The report summarises the Newbury Town Centre Masterplan and Vision commissioned by the Council in 2020 and developed by a consultant team led by Hemingway in collaboration with residents, businesses and stakeholders.

The report outlines the next steps and potential risks associated with the delivery of the Masterplan by the Council in partnership with key stakeholders and seeks endorsement for taking the Masterplan forward.

8. **West Berkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (EX4142)** 175 - 270

Purpose:

To seek approval of the West Berkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022-2027.

9. **Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2022-23 (C4124)** 271 - 296

Purpose:

The report seeks to consolidate the investments and borrowing strategy for the year ahead by detailing how and where the Council will invest and borrow in the forthcoming year, within a particular framework. The strategy is monitored throughout the year, with a mid-year report going to the Government and Ethics Committee as well as an annual report being presented to Members.

10. **Medium Term Financial Strategy (C4125)** 297 - 314

Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to set out the financial planning assumptions for future years and align these with the Council Strategy to ensure that Council Strategy will be delivered. The MTFS highlights the overarching key issues facing the Council's finances as well as how there are many different scenarios and uncertainty concerning the future revenue streams for the Council in the future.

11. **Capital Strategy, Financial Years 2022/23 to 2026/7 (C4126)** 315 - 346

Purpose:

The report outlines the Capital Strategy covering financial years 2022/23 – 2026/7 and the supporting funding framework, providing a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

12. **Revenue Budget 2022-23 (C4127)** 347 - 446

Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to consider and recommend to Council the 2022-23 Revenue Budget, which proposes a Council Tax requirement of £110.1m, requiring a Council Tax increase of 1% and an Adult Social Care precept of 3%.The Council Tax will raise £1.1m and the precept will raise a further £3.2m. At 4%, the budget is balanced, after using £5m of reserves that have been specifically set aside. The overall Council Tax increase is intended to balance the financial impact of the pandemic on residents, mitigating the financial pressures they face, as well as the cost pressures that the Council faces.

The report also proposes the Fees and Charges for 2022-23 as set out in Appendix F and the Parish Expenses as set out in Appendix G and recommends the level of General Reserves as set out in Appendix E.

13. **2021/22 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter Three (EX4016)** 447 - 466

14. **Members' Questions** 467 - 468

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

Sarah Clarke
Service Director: Strategy and Governance

West Berkshire Council Strategy Priorities
Council Strategy Priorities: **PC1: Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes** **PC2: Support everyone to reach their full potential** **OFB1: Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire** **GP1: Develop local infrastructure to support and grow the local economy** **GP2: Maintain a green district** **SIT1: Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships**

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Sadie Owen on telephone (01635) 519052.

Executive – 10 February 2022

Item 1 – Apologies for absence

Verbal Item

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DRAFT

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

EXECUTIVE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

THURSDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2021

Members of the Executive present: Councillor Graham Bridgman, Councillor Hilary Cole, Councillor Lynne Doherty, Councillor Ross Mackinnon and Councillor Howard Woollaston

Also in attendance was: Councillor Jeff Brooks

Councillors present remotely: Councillor Adrian Abbs, Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter, Councillor James Cole, Councillor Carolyne Culver, Councillor Jeremy Cottam, Councillor Lee Dillon, Councillor Alan Macro, Councillor David Marsh, Councillor Steve Masters, Councillor Erik Pattenden and Councillor Tony Vickers

Also Present: Nigel Lynn (Chief Executive), Joseph Holmes (Executive Director – Resources), Andy Sharp (Executive Director – People) Shiraz Sheikh (Service Lead – Legal and Democratic), Sadie Owen (Principal Democratic Services Officer) and Jake Thurman (Group Executive)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Dominic Boeck, Councillor Richard Somner and Councillor Joanne Stewart

PART I

53. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Leader.

54. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

55. Public Questions

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

A) A question standing in the name of Mr Steve Webb on the subject of the footway along the A340 between Tidmarsh and Pangbourne was answered by the Leader of the Council on behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside.
B) A question standing in the name of Ms Alison May on the subject of the future of Windmill Court was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Transformation.
C) A question standing in the name of Mr Gareth Beard on the subject of electric vehicles was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
D) A question standing in the name of Mr Gareth Beard on the subject of waste and incinerators was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
E) A question standing in the name of Mr Nigel Foot on the subject of the West Berkshire Council's role as lead Local Flood Authority was answered the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture.

Further to the general questions from members of the public there were a number of questions answered by the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture relating to Agenda Item 6. A full transcription of the public and Member question and answer session are available from the following link: Transcription of Q&As.

- A question standing in the name of Mr Paul Morgan.
- A question standing in the name of Mr John Gotelee.
- A question standing in the name of Mr Vaughan Miller.
- A question standing in the name of Mr Lee McDougall.
- A question standing in the name of Mr John Gotelee.
- A question standing in the name of Mr Alan Pearce
- A question standing in the name of Mr Paul Morgan.
- A question standing in the name of Mr Vaughan Miller.

56. Petitions

There were no petitions presented to the Executive.

57. Award of Contract to Build Newbury Sports Hub (EX 4149)

The Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture introduced the report (Agenda item 6).

In response to a query, the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture stated that officers could perceive no logical grounds for legal challenge of the scheme.

In response to a suggestion to delay the scheme it was clarified that the Hellenic League in which Newbury Football Club played, had agreed that a pitch would be required for July 2022.

In response to a query regarding Sport England's requirement for a replacement grass pitch at the rugby club, it was clarified that current costings for such a pitch were less than £100,000, but that there may also be a requirement for some additional facilities.

Members made the following comments and observations:

- Concerns were expressed at the scheme's perceived low contingency fund of £100,000, bearing in mind the proposed cost of £3.351M;
- Concerns were expressed that there had been insufficient opportunity for member debate of the proposal; and
- Concerns were expressed at the legitimacy of a planning decision made in connection with the proposal at the Western Area Planning meeting the preceding evening.

In seconding the report recommendations the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development commented that it was important to note that Newbury Football Club were in full support of the plan.

RESOLVED that:

1a) The contract for the provision of development management services (which includes construction) be awarded to Alliance Leisure Management Services.

b) Authority be delegated to the Service Lead Legal & Democratic Services to finalise the terms of the agreement and to make any necessary drafting or other amendments as permitted under the framework agreement which are necessary to reach final agreement, but do not materially affect the intent and substance of the agreement.

2) The allocation of £3.351m to complete the development of Newbury Sports Hub and thereby achieve the delivery of the number one priority in Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) be approved.

3) Agreement be granted that any additional costs arising in relation to planning conditions be approved as per the Council's Constitution which may require further Executive approval if over £250,000. Otherwise the Executive Director of Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Finance and Economic Development can approve.

4) In light of the increased capital cost for the Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) the increase of the annual Sinking Fund allocation from £25,000 to £35,000 per annum be approved, in order to ensure sufficient funds are available to preplace the pitch surface at the end of its projected 10 year lifecycle.

Other options considered: The Council can select not to progress any further with the development. However, selecting this option will mean that the significant under-supply of artificial pitches remains and no alternative replacement exists for the Faraday Road Stadium. This will further delay the redevelopment of the London Road Industrial Estate (LRIE).

58. 4 The Sector - New Lease (EX 4157)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development introduced the report (Agenda item 7), and welcomed the lease which would lead to whole building occupancy.

In response to a member's query relating to differing terminology as to whether the proposed tenant 'may' or 'would' like to extend the lease in 5 years' time, it was stated that it was always better to err on the side of prudency when predicting a company's future intentions.

Recommendations (Vote to be taken in Part 2):

To grant the lease on the remaining parts of the property know as 4 The Sector Newbury on the terms outlined in the report provided that the:

a) Head of Finance and Property, in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Finance and Property will have delegated authority for the form of lease and associated agreements; and
b) Service Lead for Legal and Democratic Services shall have the delegated authority to enter into the lease and associated agreements in this connection.

Other options considered: To decline the proposed lease and continue to market the vacant property on the basis of letting the space at a higher rent in the future and with an Open Market Review at the end of year 5. Officers considered leaving the building part vacant was too high a risk to the council. The office market is challenging at present

given the fall-out from Covid and so it is difficult to predict how long the building would remain partially vacant.

To dispose of the freehold, removing the property from the portfolio. This option is available but the council will find itself in a similar situation to the previous vendor in needing to offer incentive through escrow rent repayments of a reduced value. The market has also been impacted since the purchase in 2018 by both Brexit and more recently Covid 19.

59. Capital Financial Performance Report Quarter Two 2021/22 (EX 4015)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development introduced the report (Agenda item 8).

In response to a query as to when the report had been written and whether it took into account any potential impact from Omicron, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development commented that it had been written in mid-November and it was hoped that there would not be a significant impact at Q3.

The Portfolio Holder agreed to take under consideration, a suggestion to report to the Executive on a monthly basis with a snapshot on any capital performance developments.

In seconding the recommendations, the Deputy Leader cautioned and reminded all members that the report related to Q2 figures and so, as with all financial reporting, was already out of date at the point of review.

RESOLVED that:

1) The proposed re-profiling of £3m of future expenditure from 2021/22 into financial year 2022/23 be approved;
2) The additional expenditure budget request of £159k in support of the Four Houses Corner project be agreed;
3) The additional expense budget request of £13.5k in support of the Public Protection Partnership new One System Implementation project be agreed; and
4) The additional expenditure budget request of £200k in support of the Newbury Lido project be agreed.

Other options considered: None

60. 2021/22 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter Two (EX 4014)

The Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture introduced the report (Agenda item 9).

It was agreed that there was a need for accurate forecasting and reporting throughout the year, but also acknowledged that there were still unpredictable events that may affect future figures.

It was explained that the lower than modelled occupancy in council owned care homes was due to clients being discharged from hospital earlier with needs that were often too high for the provision available leading to external placements.

In response to a query relating to the table on page 124 of the agenda pack (Adult Social Care annualised client numbers for long term services), it was agreed that the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care would respond directly to explain the cause of the large jump in client numbers between March and June 2021.

Assurances were provided that there were ongoing efforts to recruit permanent staff where possible to the ICT function.

In seconding the recommendations, the Deputy Leader praised the work of officers amidst the difficulties that had arisen throughout the Covid pandemic.

RESOLVED to: Note

1) The year-end forecast £0.3m underspend, after taking account of provision that was made in reserves for specific risks at the time of budget setting. Without this provision, the forecast would be an over spend of £0.9m. If the over spend remains at year end and if the reserves were utilised, the resulting £0.3m under spend would be returned to reserves; and
2) The ongoing impact Covid will have on the 2021/22 budget as the Council sees increased demand for some services, but continues to be supported by external funding.

Other options considered: None

61. 2021/22 Performance Report Quarter Two (EX 4001)

In introducing the report (Agenda item 10), the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture congratulated officers on the number of positive indicators.

In response to a query from the Deputy Leader, it was agreed that in relation to the table displayed on p140 of the agenda pack, the figure suggested for 'Number of Covid-19 Targeted Community Testing Assisted tests given' would be discussed with officers. It was suggested that a specific number was not appropriate for the KPI, but should instead relate proportionally to the number of Covid-19 cases within the area.

Disappointment was expressed at the lack of timely update reports. In response, the Deputy Leader accepted an element of the criticism and acknowledged that progress had been made since the Q2 position which potentially should have been reported, however emphasised that the report reflected data compiled for Q2 and so needed to be viewed in that light.

Disappointment was expressed that neither the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education, nor Planning, Transport and Countryside were present at the meeting, given the number of Red RAG ratings attributed to their respective portfolio KPIs.

In seconding the recommendations, the Leader of the Council called for recognition that whilst reporting on the standard KPIs, there would always be additional untargeted influences requiring response. In particular, the lack of data relating to education attainment outcomes for 2019/20 in the light of exams not having taken place due to Covid 19 was highlighted.

The Leader of the Council commented on the positive economic development element of the report which evidenced a strong resilience and local economy and thanked officers for their work in obtaining such good indicators.

RESOLVED to: Note

The progress made in delivering the Council Strategy Delivery Plan 2019-2023, a maintained strong performance for the core business areas, good results for the majority of the measures relating to the council's priorities for improvement, and remedial actions taken where performance is below target.

Other options considered: None

62. Members' Question(s)

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

A) A question standing in the name of Councillor Alan Macro on the subject of free parking for volunteers at the Kennet centre vaccination centre was answered by the Leader of the Council.
B) A question standing in the name of Councillor Adrian Abbs on the subject of opening EAG meeting to the public was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture.
C) A question standing in the name of Councillor Tony Vickers on the subject of Sandleford ward was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture.
D) A question standing in the name of Councillor Jeff Brooks on the subject of succession planning was answered by the Leader of the Council.
E) A question standing in the name of Councillor Alan Macro on the subject of the Adult Social Care reform White Paper was answered by the Deputy Leader on behalf of the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care.
F) A question standing in the name of Councillor Erik Pattenden relating to the Sports Hub was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture.
G) A question standing in the name of Councillor James Cole relating to the installation of ground source heating at Chestnut Walk was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Transformation.

63. Exclusion of Press and Public

64.

RESOLVED that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the under-mentioned item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as contained in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006. Rule 8.10.4 of the Constitution also refers.

64. 4 The Sector - New Lease (EX 4157)

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

The Executive considered an exempt report (Agenda Item 13) concerning the grant of a lease for 4 The Sector.

RESOLVED that: the recommendations) in the exempt report be agreed (as detailed at item 58).

Other options considered: To decline the proposed lease and continue to market the vacant property on the basis of letting the space at a higher rent in the future and with an Open Market Review at the end of year 5. Officers considered leaving the building part vacant was too high a risk to the council. The office market is challenging at present given the fall-out from Covid and so it is difficult to predict how long the building would remain partially vacant.

To dispose of the freehold, removing the property from the portfolio. This option is available but the council will find itself in a similar situation to the previous vendor in needing to offer incentive through escrow rent repayments of a reduced value. The market has also been impacted since the purchase in 2018 by both Brexit and more recently Covid 19.

(The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and closed at 6.45 pm)

CHAIRMAN …….

Date of Signature …….

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Executive – 10 February 2022

Item 3 – Declarations of Interest

Verbal Item

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Item 4:

Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 10 February 2022.

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

A. **Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport & Countryside:**

"What action should be taken by the council when a developer starts work without satisfying conditions to keep a planning application alive on Council owned land?"

B. **Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure & Culture:**

"Please will the Executive confirm the Council will immediately sign and date the Joint statement by West Berkshire Council and Sport England on the West Berkshire's Playing Pitch Strategy and Newbury Sports Hub 21st July 2021 to verify/authenticate it and ask Sport England to do the same?"

C. **Question submitted by Peter McGurk to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport & Countryside:**

"As a resident living adjacent to Henwick Worthy fields, my family and I are impacted by the activities on the fields. I have requested on a number of occasions of several Councillors that residents be allowed to attend and observe the meetings of this committee. The response is always no - most recently from Jeremy Cottam. Could the portfolio member responsible please explain by reference to the standing orders of West Berkshire Council and the constitution of the Henwick Worthy JMC, why residents are not permitted to attend the committee meetings? The only explanation residents have been given is you can't attend, Councillors are unable to provide an adequate response."

D. **Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Economic Development:**

"What is plan B if it is found that planning permission is not granted for housing on the faraday rd football pitch or turns out to be financially non viable?"

E. **Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure & Culture:**

"Please will the Executive confirm why it approved the Award of contract to build Newbury Sports Hub (Ex4149) as part of a replacement strategy as confirmed by Councillor Woollaston at the Executive meeting 16 December 2021 to public question (6), when to date (31st December 2021) the Service Director - Development and Regulation has not GRANTED PLANNING PERMISSION. (This is regardless of the fact the Faraday road replacement strategy was not submitted with th eapplication and may not be approved)."

Item 4:

Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 10 February 2022.

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

F. **Question submitted by Peter McGurk to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport & Countryside:**

"Where the Henwick Worthy JMC makes a recommendation which is approved by Thatcham Town Council (apparently by the Recreation and Amenities Committee), what is the decision making process within West Berkshire Council in respect of such a recommendation? Does it go to a committee, does a portfolio holder make the decision or does an Officer make a decision?"

G. **Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Economic Development:**

"Given the launch of the Central Government Green/Blue Infrastructure Framework in December 2021, and the modern Urban Design Principle to De-Culvert Ordinary Watercourse, Please please can the importance of the historic Northbrook Stream be taken into account in the more detailed work for Newbury Town Centre design, with a more strategic view of the many Health & Well-being, and Climate Change/Environmental benefits that can be obtained by De-culverting?"

H. **Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste:**

"Whilst welcoming the long refreshed Strategy, in preparation for the Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission, please can consideration be given to past successes and future Activities being broken down into Sub-Catchment Areas based on the Main Rivers and their Confluences, in a similar way to those followed by County Council level Lead Local Flood Authorities?"

Executive – 10 February 2022

Item 5 – Petitions

Verbal Item

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West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-23

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	10 February 2022
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Graham Bridgman
Date Head of Service agreed report: *(for Corporate Board)*	29 November 2021
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	29 November 2021
Report Author:	Jade Wilder
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4143

1 Purpose of the Report

This report has been produced for Executive to approve West Berkshire Council's (the 'Council') Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-23 ('Strategy'). The Strategy has been produced specifically to meet the Council's obligations under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (the 'Act') and will align with the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020-23 until both documents are combined in 2023/24.

2 Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Executive approve the Strategy, as set out in Appendix B.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The financial implications relate to costs associated with commissioning services to address gaps in service provision identified through our local needs assessment. The Council received £250,101.00 in 2021/22 in the form of a non-ring-fenced grant from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to implement Part 4 of the Act. This funding covers two combined aspects; support costs ie commissioning services and increased administration. Monies have been allocated to administration support and the

	remaining budget will be used to meet the gaps in service provision. Funding will be available in the form of a non-ring-fenced grant from the DLUHC for a further three years, however the amount will be determined at each appropriate government Spending Review. It is possible that funding could decrease in future years which may cause financial implications for any services commissioned. Funding will be closely monitored by the Domestic Abuse Board and any services commissioned are likely to be short term, in view of the uncertainty regarding government support. Financial Officer: Lisa Potts Date: 25 November 2021
Human Resource:	No HR implications.
Legal:	The Council are under a legal duty to meet the requirements as set out in Part 4 of the Act: (a) assess, or make arrangements for the assessment of, the need for accommodation-based support in its area, (b) prepare and publish a strategy for the provision of such support in its area, and (c) monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy. Statutory guidance, published on 1 October 2021, will support the implementation of the above duties. The key objectives of the guidance are to: • provide clear information on what domestic abuse is in order to assist with its identification; • provide guidance and support to frontline professionals, who have responsibilities for safeguarding and supporting victims of domestic abuse, for example through outlining relevant strategic and operational frameworks; and • improve the institutional response to domestic abuse by conveying best practice and standards for commissioning responses. The Regulations that arise from the Act state that a final version of the Council's Strategy should be published no later than 5 January 2022. A draft Strategy was published 10 weeks prior (on 26 October 2021). The public consultation could not begin

	until the local needs assessment had concluded (as required under the Act) and the Strategy had been drafted which was then subject to commenting by the Domestic Abuse Board – an external organisation was commissioned to complete this. The consultation was live for six weeks and once closed, the Strategy was revised and added onto the next available Executive cycle. As a result of meeting dates, the deadline of 5 January 2022 will not be met. The DLUHC have been informed but a response is yet to be received. The Act at Part 4 generally and section 58 specifically, requires a "relevant local authority" (which includes the Council) to appoint a domestic abuse local partnership board for the purposes of providing advice to the authority about certain functions and aspects of domestic abuse. The West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Board (the 'Board') has been constituted as the Council's domestic abuse local partnership board for this purpose. The Act also amends the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Code of Guidance, expanding the scope of the Council's housing duties. Legal Officer: Holly Whitwham Date: 30 November 2021			
Risk Management:	The main risk identified is in respect of resources to adequately address the gaps identified (as set out in our Strategy) to meet the needs of all victims of domestic abuse given the funding available and risk that this may decrease over the next three years. This will be managed by the Domestic Abuse Board who will monitor funding and decide how best the funding should be allocated.			
Property:	The Council will be required to ensure a variety of safe accommodation options are available for victims of domestic abuse.			
Policy:	The proposal relates to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.			
	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			Please refer to Appendix A, EqIA assessment.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The Strategy will have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics and/or complex needs. The Act requires the Council to meet the needs of all victims when providing support and safe accommodation, therefore more victims will be able to access support when they need it.
Environmental Impact:		X		
Health Impact:	X			The Strategy will have a positive impact on health as victims and their children will be able to flee unhealthy, abusive relationships and seek accommodation somewhere safe. Families will be better supported and have more support options available to them.
ICT Impact:		X		
Digital Services Impact:		X		
Council Strategy Priorities:	X			Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes. The proposal will support this priority because it will ensure all victims of domestic abuse have access to the right support within safe accommodation when they need it so they are not at further risk or harm.

Core Business:		X		
Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	Graham Bridgeman (Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing), Matt Pearce (Service Director, Communities and Wellbeing), Andy Sharp (Executive Director, People), Janet Weekes (Housing Service Manger), Susan Powell (BCT Team Manager), Lisa Potts (Finance Manager) and Holly Whitwham (Principal Solicitor – People Team, Legal and Democratic Services). Members of the public as part of a six week public consultation, members of the Domestic Abuse Board and Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse charity.			

4 Executive Summary

4.1 The Strategy has been produced in light of legislative changes with the introduction of the Act. It has been developed specifically in line with Part 4 of the Act which requires the Council to:

a) conduct (or make arrangements for) a local needs assessment to determine the level of need for support within relevant safe accommodation in their area; and

b) prepare and publish a local Domestic Abuse Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy based on a robust needs assessment.

4.2 The Strategy will enable the Council to meet the statutory requirements under Part 4 of the Act and ensure support is commissioned in relevant safe accommodation to meet the needs of victims including their children in line with the local strategy.

4.3 The Council carried out a public consultation for the draft Strategy from 19 September 2021 to 10 November 2021. This was for a period of six weeks which complies with the requirements of the Council's Consultation Policy.

4.4 A total of 50 responses were received as part of our consultation. During the cleansing process ten responses were removed from the final dataset as the questions had been abandoned (where a respondent only answers the first couple of questions ie about who they are and then either closes the survey or doesn't answer any further questions). Please refer to Appendix C to view the feedback during consultation and how this aligns to the Council's objectives.

4.5 This Council has a Domestic Abuse Strategy agreed in 2020, covering the period up to 2023. There will therefore be two concurrent strategies until 2023 - the Domestic Abuse Strategy and the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy.

4.6 It is being proposed that Executive approve the Strategy until combined with the Council's Domestic Abuse Strategy in 2023/24.

4.7 The recommendation to adopt and approve the Strategy should be agreed as it has been developed to meet all legislative requirements and in response a local needs assessment was undertaken. It has also been subjected to extensive engagement with relevant stakeholders.

4.8 The statutory guidance and accompanying Regulations state that a final strategy should be published before 5 January 2022. The public consultation could not begin until the local needs assessment had concluded (as required under the Act) and the Strategy had been drafted which was then subject to commenting by the Domestic Abuse Board – an external organisation was commissioned to complete this. Once the consultation closed, the Strategy was added onto the next available Executive cycle and as a result of meeting dates it has been impossible to meet this deadline.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

5.1 This report seeks approval to adopt the Strategy.

5.2 A draft action plan has also been produced which sets out how the Domestic Abuse Board will work with stakeholders to deliver possible activities that will help address the gaps identified and support the identified themes within the Strategy. The Domestic Abuse Board will be agreeing and refining what activities are carried forward from this.

Background

5.3 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. Various duties have been included under the Act, but Part 4 refers to the delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse, including children, within safe accommodation. Thus, the Council is required to assess the need for support, and prepare strategies to provide support for, victims and their children, who need to reside, in safe accommodation.

5.4 The Council was allocated and has received £250,101.00 in the form of a non-ring-fenced grant from the DLUHC to assist the Council in meeting the requirements under Part 4 of the Act. A clear breakdown of how allocated funding has been spent will be reported back annually to the Secretary of State. Funding covers two combined aspects; support costs ie commissioning services and increased administration. It is yet to be determined how long this funding will be available for and if the amount is subject to change, but it is expected that it will be paid on an annual basis and be non-ring-fenced for the first three years.

5.5 Since the Act came into force the Council appointed a local Domestic Abuse Board which is responsible for complying with the requirements of the Act.

5.6 A local needs assessment was undertaken earlier this year and concluded in July 2021 to help determine the level of need locally. A standardised needs assessment was utilised and provided by the DLUHC. This involved engaging with a wide range of key stakeholders and victims themselves. The overall provision in West Berkshire is very

comprehensive but there are clear gaps in some services which is likely to be as a result of being a small local authority area. The findings have been used to produce our Strategy.

5.7 A public consultation went live from 19 September 2021 to 10 November 2021. This was for a period of six weeks and looked to explore what support and safe accommodation needed to be in place, or expanded further, in the Council's area to make sure the needs of all victims (including those with protected characteristics and/or complex needs) are met. Responses have been considered and feedback reflected (where appropriate) into the finalised Strategy.

5.8 This Council has a Domestic Abuse Strategy agreed in 2020, covering the period up to 2023 – this strategy extends beyond requirements under Part 4 of the Act. It was agreed at an exceptional Domestic Abuse Board meeting on 11 August 2021 that instead of revising the Council's current Strategy, a new one would be created which focussed on support within safe accommodation.

5.9 There will therefore be two strategies - the Domestic Abuse Strategy and the West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy - until both are combined in 2023/24. This will also aligns with local commissioning arrangements currently in place.

5.10 The Domestic Abuse Board will be responsible for agreeing and refining the current drafted action plan that accompanies the strategy to ensure any gaps in service provision are being met and funding is utilised effectively. This will be a live working document.

Proposals

To approve the Strategy.

6 Other options considered

To revise our current Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020-23 to incorporate the support within safe accommodation aspect. This was dismissed due to the nature of requirements under the Act which is very specific whereas the current strategy extends beyond this requirement. Both strategies will be combined in 2023/24 which aligns in with the re-commissioning of the local domestic abuse service in West Berkshire.

7 Conclusion

7.1 The Strategy has been developed following an in-depth local needs assessment and public consultation. It meets all legislative requirements under Part 4 of the Act and will support the Council in meeting the needs of all victims, including children.

7.2 This report seeks approval to adopt the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-23.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment

8.2 Appendix B – West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-23

8.3 Appendix C – Consultation Feedback

Corporate Board's recommendation

To progress through to Executive without any changes required.

Background Papers:

Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse in domestic abuse safe accommodation services statutory guidance

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:

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Author:	Jade Wilder		
Owning Service	Communities and Wellbeing		

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 the Executive to make:	To approve our Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2020-23.
Summary of relevant legislation:	Part 4 of the Act requires the Council to assess the need for support and prepare strategies to provide support for victims and their children [who need to reside] in safe accommodation. Specifically, under this part of the Act it requires the Council to (a) produce a robust needs assessment regarding accommodation-based support for the victims of domestic abuse, and (b) prepare and publish a local domestic abuse strategy for the provision of such support.
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's priorities for improvement? • 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** ☐ **No** ☒ **If yes, please indicate which priority and provide an explanation**
Name of Budget Holder:	**Susan Powell**
Name of Service/Directorate:	**Communities and Wellbeing**
Name of assessor:	Jade Wilder
Date of assessment:	09/11/2021
Version and release date (if applicable):	

Is this a …. ?		**Is this policy, strategy, function or service … ?**	
Policy	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☐	**New or proposed**	**Yes** ☒ **No** ☐

Strategy	**Yes ☒ No ☐**	**Already exists and is being reviewed**	**Yes ☐ No ☐**
Function	**Yes ☐ No ☐**	**Is changing**	**Yes ☐ No ☐**
Service	**Yes ☐ No ☐**		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To meet the support needs of diverse groups of victims and their children in different accommodation settings.
Objectives:	Meet the needs of all victims including those with protected characteristics and/or complex needs by providing appropriate accommodation based support.
Outcomes:	All victims of domestic abuse and their children are offered accommodation-based support based on their needs.
Benefits:	All victims are given a fair and equal opportunity to find somewhere safe to live be it temporarily or permanently allowing them to live free from domestic abuse.

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

(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	Positively	Statutory guidance on the delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse, including children, in domestic abuse safe accommodation services
Disability	Positively	
Gender Reassignment	Positively	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Positively	
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positively	
Race	Positively	
Religion or Belief	Positively	
Sex	Positively	
Sexual Orientation	Positively	

Further Comments:
None.

(3) Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	**Yes ☐ No ☒**
The Strategy has been developed following Statutory Guidance issued under Part 4 of the Act to ensure support is offered to all victims of domestic abuse, including children of domestic abuse and those with protected characteristics and/or complex.	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	**Yes ☐ No ☒**
There will not be an adverse impact, only a positive one to ensure all domestic abuse victims are offered accommodation-based support fairly and equally by meeting their needs.	

(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqIA Stage 2 required	**Yes ☐ No ☒**
Owner of EqIA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqIA Stage Two:	

Name: Jade Wilder **Date: 09/11/2021**

West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy

2021-2023

West Berkshire Council

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1 Introduction

Domestic abuse is one of the most harmful crimes in society, with terrible and life threatening consequences for victims, including children, and long lasting consequences for society. The majority of domestic abuse is perpetrated in the home which is meant to be a place of safety and nurturing for families, but for victims of domestic abuse the home becomes a place of danger. Domestic abuse is the third most common cause of homelessness amongst women.

In West Berkshire, we aim to change this landscape for victims and welcome the opportunity provided by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (the Act) and the new Local Authority Statutory Duty to provide support within safe accommodation, to enable more victims to remain in their homes if it is safe to do so, to increase the range of support services for victims in safe accommodation, to improve long term housing security for victims while at the same time holding perpetrators to account.

The Home Office Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) ready reckoner[1] analyses the population of any given area and gives a guiding figure that 5,229 women and girls and 2,455 men and boys aged 16-59 living in West Berkshire have been a victim of domestic abuse in the past year. The problem is much bigger than shown in official statistics provided here.

This strategy is ambitious and sets out our road map to achieve the changes required that will enable victims and their children to achieve safe, fulfilled and independent lives free from domestic abuse. We have decided to broaden the scope of the strategy beyond safe accommodation support services to take a Whole Housing Approach (WHA) to domestic abuse, which considers the safe accommodation needs of victims across all tenure types (social housing, private rented and private ownership), to include the longer-term housing options for victims and to begin to address our approach to perpetrators and housing.

This Strategy will be delivered alongside the West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020-2023. As outlined within the Coordinated Community Response (CCR) model, the whole community, including every agency, has a role to play in response to domestic abuse.

Most public services are not designed with domestic abuse or violence against women and girls (VAWG) in mind, and as a result, they often struggle to protect people. Poor communication and gaps between services put survivors at risk. There is continuously a need for training, education and awareness raising and within West Berkshire we acknowledge the importance of our communities and how they can also be a source of help, if provided with the appropriate tools/resources. Therefore, we are committed to working more closely with residents in our communities in addition to our practitioners.

There will be a heightened focus on providing appropriate and good quality interventions to not only victims of domestic abuse but to families and how we work better with external agencies who engage in work to hold perpetrators to account for their behaviour and place responsibility on perpetrators to be accountable, and where safe and the wishes of victims, to remove perpetrators from the family home. Furthermore, we will continue to learn from our research to improve our local interventions and strengthen our community through a multi-agency partnership approach.

Our aims are aligned with two of the West Berkshire Council priorities “Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes” and “Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships”. In addition, the strategy links to the aims of Thames Valley Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner which are to improve the response to reports of domestic abuse, to improve outcomes for victims of domestic and sexual abuse and to identify and implement best practice in the management of perpetrators. Finally, this is also written to be aligned with the Berkshire West Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The actions identified to meet our aims have been decided through a range of multi-agency conversations, focusing on what we can implement and change over the next three years.

It should be acknowledged that there is ongoing work being undertaken outside of our developed strategy which is ‘business as usual’ to address domestic abuse in West Berkshire.

[1] https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20091212011207/http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/domesticviolence/domesticviolence072.htm

2 Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The Act received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. It brings wide reaching changes in protective legislation and provides a new statutory definition of domestic abuse which explicitly includes economic abuse, recognises children as victims of domestic abuse, and defines coercive and controlling behaviour between ex-partners and family members.

Part 4 of the Act introduces a Statutory Duty on all Local Authorities to provide safe accommodation support services. In line with the Act the term victim will be used to refer to people who have been or are subject to domestic abuse. The terms perpetrator will be used to refer to the person committing the abuse.

In West Berkshire, we will treat the Statutory Duty as a minimum standard and will work hard to ensure that all victims are treated fairly and justly and have access to safe accommodation at their point of need.

Local Authority Statutory Duty

Part 4 of the Act places Duties on West Berkshire Council to:

- Appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board which it must consult as it performs certain specified functions;
- Assess, or make arrangements for the assessment of, the need for domestic abuse support in their area for all victims and their children who reside in relevant safe accommodation, including those who come from outside of their area;
- Develop and publish a Safe Accommodation Strategy having regard to the needs assessment;
- Implement the strategy through commissioning / de-commissioning decisions;
- Monitor and evaluate local delivery and effectiveness of the strategy; and
- Report back to central government annually.

West Berkshire Council has appointed the West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Board (the DAB) as its Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board constituted under the Act which will be referred to throughout this strategy.

A full list of the measures can be found here: https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2021/04/29/domesticabuseactfactsheet/

"It brings wide reaching changes in protective legislation and provides a new definition of domestic abuse which explicitly includes economic abuse and recognises children as victims of domestic abuse."

3 Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that all victims, including children, subject to domestic abuse have access to safe accommodation support services appropriate to their needs in order to live safely and that responses to perpetrators support victims/victim safety.

Aims

- To ensure all victims, including children and those from out of area and/or with No Recourse to Public Funds, have access to safe, appropriate accommodation and support services at their point of need;
- To ensure victims are able to remain safely in their accommodation if they choose and it is safe to do so;
- To provide move on accommodation options for victims to support long-term recovery and independence;
- To ensure the effective management of perpetrators enables victims to remain safe in their homes and to access safe accommodation; and
- To ensure that other duties/legislation introduced as part of the Act (secure tenancies and homelessness) are considered in the context of safe accommodation and a WHA.

4 Definition of Safe Accommodation

The Statutory Guidance defines 'safe accommodation' as:

- Refuge accommodation - a refuge offers accommodation and intensive support which is tied to that accommodation;
- Specialist safe accommodation - safe accommodation which provides dedicated specialist support, such as specialist refuges for Ethnically Diverse, LGBTQ+, and disabled victims;
- Dispersed accommodation - Safe (secure and dedicated to supporting victims of domestic abuse) and self-contained:
    i. accommodation with the same level of specialist domestic abuse support as provided within a refuge;
    ii. 'semi-independent' accommodation which is not within a refuge but with support;
- Sanctuary Schemes - properties with local authority installed Sanctuary Schemes or other similar schemes which provide enhanced physical security measures within a home;
- Move-on and / or second stage accommodation - projects temporarily accommodating victims before they move to fully independent and permanent accommodation. There is no expectation that every victim will require this; and
- Other forms of domestic abuse emergency accommodation - a safe place (single gendered or single sex, secure and dedicated to supporting victims of domestic abuse) with domestic abuse support tied to the accommodation.

Accommodation such as generic Bed and Breakfast accommodation and homeless hostels – in that they are not solely dedicated to providing a safe place to stay for victims of domestic abuse, including expert support are not considered relevant safe accommodation.

5 Definition of Support

The following types of domestic abuse support will be provided through the new duty:

- Advocacy support – development of personal safety plans, liaison with other services (for example, GPs and social workers, welfare benefit providers);
- Domestic abuse prevention advice – support to assist victims to recognise the signs of abusive relationships, to help them remain safe (including online) and to prevent re-victimisation;
- Specialist support for victims with relevant protected characteristics and / or complex needs, for example, interpreters, faith services, mental health advice and support, drug and alcohol advice and support, and immigration advice;
- Children's support – including play therapy and child advocacy;
- Housing-related support – providing housing-related advice and support, for example, securing a permanent home and advice on how to live safely and independently; and
- Counselling and therapy for both adults and children.

6 Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment

A needs assessment has been undertaken looking at the current safe accommodation offer in West Berkshire and the gaps and needs. The new duty will cover the provision of support to victims and their children residing in some/all of the following:

- Refuge accommodation;
- Specialist safe accommodation;
- Dispersed accommodation;
- Sanctuary schemes; and
- Move-on or second stage accommodation.

The review of provision and the recommendations in this report have drawn on the Whole Housing Model[2] which endeavours to improve the housing options and outcomes for people experiencing domestic abuse so that they can achieve stable housing, live safely, and overcome the abuse and its harmful impacts.

The model consists of 14 elements and, although some of these fall outside of the requirements of the Act, this report draws on the wider learning of the model to support West Berkshire meet the new duties. The structure is in line with the WHA Toolkit[3].

"The Whole Housing Approach is referred to within the draft statutory guidance as a form of other safe accommodation."

[2]https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/what-we-do/whole-housing-approach/
[3]https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/what-we-do/whole-housing-approach/whole-housing-toolkit/

The green circles below represent the accommodation/tenure types in which survivors require access to support services, and the blue circles represent the specialist support interventions that offer victims interventions that meet their needs within each form of accommodation.

7 Strategic Priorities

The following strategic priorities are based on the key elements of the Statutory Guidance for local authorities across England and a WHA.

7.1 Delivering the Safe Accommodation Statutory Duty

Theme A: The DAB will ensure that West Berkshire has the resources and partnerships in place to undertake the Needs Assessment and implement this Strategy.

We recognise that prevalence data alone is not enough for an assessment of need and does not tell us about the impact of domestic abuse or the type of support needed by the different cohorts of victims. Therefore, this strategy draws on data from a range of local agencies and services responding to victims including their children to help us develop a more holistic understanding of unmet need. We also reference national data for comparison.

The needs assessment in West Berkshire was conducted by Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse in partnership with the Building Communities Together Team in compliance with the requirements of the Statutory Guidance:

- To determine the level of need for support within safe accommodation in West Berkshire; and
- To enable the Authority to understand the barriers to safe accommodation for the diverse communities of victims regardless of whether their original residence was out of area.

7.2 Access to Safe Accommodation

Theme B: Every victim will be supported to access safe accommodation appropriate to their needs and at their point of need.

We recognise that victims of domestic abuse are not a homogenous group, we therefore look to focus on the following areas in implementing this strategy:

- Younger victims;
- Older victims;
- Black and Ethnically Diverse victims;
- Migrant victims and victims with no recourse to public funds;
- Disabled victims;
- LGBTQ+ victims;
- Victims facing severe and multiple disadvantage;
- Victims with larger families;
- Victims with older male children; and
- Victims in employment.

Victims/survivors from these groups are less likely to access support due to factors such as social isolation, increased marginalisation, discrimination and/or vulnerability, lack of culturally appropriate services and a lack of awareness about what constitutes abuse and the services that are available. West Berkshire has a comprehensive range of services working with the identities listed above but will be looking to work in partnership with these agencies to ensure there is a joined up approach moving forward. West Berkshire is committed to providing sustainable funding and commissioning opportunities for these services to provide support to these marginalised groups.

In West Berkshire, Richmond Fellowship offers 13 units of supported housing in Newbury to anyone over 18 diagnosed with a mental health condition. The service provides flexible support packages tailored to meet individual needs ranging from long term intensive support for up to two years to brief solution focused interventions. The service helps people manage their tenancies, maintain domestic routines and play an active part in their community.

Both West Berkshire Council and the families of service users believe that safe supported living environments offer an ideal setting for many with moderate and in some cases severe learning disabilities and should be the preferred option where possible. West Berkshire Council currently funds around 215 individuals in a range of supported living settings, with c175 in West Berkshire and 40 outside, mainly in the Reading area.[4]

7.3 Refuge Accommodation

Theme C: The DAB will ensure there is sufficient refuge provision to meet the safe accommodation needs of women and children and explore the unmet need for refuge accommodation for male victims.

Refuge services are an established, essential element in delivering support to the most vulnerable victims of domestic abuse who are no longer safe at home. A refuge service provides holistic, specialist support to meet the needs of victims, including children, in a supportive, safe, and secure environment. There is no 'typical victim' supported in a refuge- victims and children will have a range of support needs, including those related to safety, criminal and family justice, disability, physical and mental health, immigration status, children's welfare and education, financial needs including debt, and social needs.

A2Dominion are commissioned to provide refuge in West Berkshire in the form of two family units accommodating one woman plus three children and two units accommodating a single woman. A license agreement is in place that residents are able to remain at the refuge for a maximum of six months, in exceptional circumstances this has been extended.

[4]https://ipc.brookes.ac.uk/files/market-position-statements/West-Berkshire-MPS-2020-23.pdf

A2Dominion are able to link victims with counselling, therapy or group work, provide practical day to day support to assist victims in living independently, dedicated support for children and young people in refuge and are able to liaise with other services to ensure a coordinated approach.

It needs to be explored further in West Berkshire to determine if the number of refuge units currently available is sufficient based on the population and need for the local area.

7.4 Move-on and second stage accommodation

Theme D: The DAB will ensure there is sufficient move on and second stage accommodation with specialist support for victims ready to leave refuge.

The DAB is committed to ensuring that victims and their children have access to safe, affordable move-on housing and are supported to achieve independent and fulfilled lives free from domestic abuse.

At the present time, there is a gap in our understanding of victims housing journeys- the type of tenure victims leave when they go into refuge and the type of tenure they move to when leaving refuge. In addition to the challenges of rehousing, victims often need follow up support to enable them to rebuild their lives once they are rehoused. Staffing capacity in refuges means that this can be limited.

There is currently no move-on accommodation available in West Berkshire with victims reporting that once they leave the refuge provision they feel totally on their own. The purpose of move-on accommodation is to provide housing and support to reintegrate those leaving refuge into independent living. For many victims of abuse space for action[5] is something that was controlled in their relationships which may have resulted in them having very limited capacity to make their own choices and decisions.

Ensuring victims and children can 'move on' from refuges is essential for supporting long-term recovery and independence and to ensure that refuge accommodation is available for women in crisis.

Second stage move on accommodation can be described as a bridge between refuge and independent living and can be particularly important for women who have continued advocacy and support needs, for example, women with unsettled immigration status who are awaiting an immigration outcome. The properties also free up refuge bed spaces for victims in crisis.

Families are able to stay in the properties while they have an active application for longer-term housing. It is anticipated that the average length of stay will be six months.

We look to monitor where victims are moving to, including refuge move on and other pathways to new accommodation as well as where they have come from to map their whole housing journeys. We will work with specialist services including; housing, refuge and other agencies to monitor the housing outcomes for victims, where there are opportunities for growth and development and what challenges and barriers might arise.

7.5 Sanctuary Scheme (Safer Spaces)

Theme E: The DAB will ensure that West Berkshire Council continues to deliver a Sanctuary Scheme with specialist domestic abuse support for all victims who wish to remain in their home and it is safe to do so.

The Sanctuary Scheme, referred to as Safer Spaces in West Berkshire, is a multi-agency centred initiative that aims to enable households at risk of violence to remain in their own homes and reduce repeat victimisation through the provision of enhanced security measures and domestic abuse support. This can, but does not have to, include a 'sanctuary room' in the victim's home. Sanctuary Schemes are only installed when the perpetrator is no longer living in the home.

[5] Long journeys toward freedom: The relationship between coercive control and space for action-Measurement and Emerging Evidence. Liz Kelly, Nicola Sharps-Jeff, Renate Klein. February 2017.

West Berkshire Council have an agreement with Safer Partnerships Limited to deliver the Sanctuary Scheme. Referrals can be made from any organisation linked to victims. Victims can also refer themselves by contacting the Housing Operations Team.

The Scheme is available to victims who have a legal right to occupy their property including victims who are owner occupiers and those living in the private rented sector but only with the permission of the landlord. Commissioned domestic abuse support provided by a specialist domestic abuse organisation includes legal rights advice to enable victims to exercise their right to occupy.

Security measures typically include composite doors, intruder alarms, external lights, window locks/jammers and door locks. All security measures are installed at no cost to the victim or the landlord.

The Scheme is an important safe accommodation intervention for disabled victims or victims with dependents who are disabled and whose home has been adapted and is also the key safe accommodation provision in West Berkshire for male victims.

The Scheme is not available to victims with No Recourse to Public Funds (as Sanctuary constitutes use of 'public funds').

We look to identify how we can maximise the use of the scheme to keep victims as safe as possible when remaining in their homes.

7.6 Male Victims

Theme F: The DAB will assess the safe accommodation and support needs of heterosexual, trans, non-binary, gay and bisexual victims in collaboration with local LGBTQ+ community groups and relevant national organisations to develop a safe accommodation and support pathway in response to need.

There is a need to develop our understanding of the safe accommodation and support needs of male victims and to review the safe accommodation provision in West Berkshire. A2Dominion currently support male victims through their service offer but a review should also include their longer term rehousing needs. The current picture of need is unclear.

There is currently no refuge service for male victim's locally and very low provision nationally. There is demand for refuge accommodation but because it requires victims to move away from the city, this creates a barrier to access. This section identifies some of the themes emerging in connection with the safe accommodation and support needs of male victims.

West Berkshire Council looks to explore what provision can be offered to meet the needs and ensure that it is suitable and sustainable.

A report by Respect, the national male victim helpline provider, found that 1.2% of callers were signposted to refuge services and that most commonly, callers wanted help with practical issues including legal advice, help in accessing the criminal justice system and accessing a local male domestic abuse service.

We look to continue to scope the needs of male victims and ensure the provision we offer is accessible for all genders.

7.7 Children and Young People

Theme G: In line with the Domestic Abuse Act and the Part 4 Statutory Guidance, children and young people will be recognised as victims in their own right and receive specialist support appropriate to their need including while in safe accommodation.

West Berkshire Council have implemented the Family Safeguarding Model, a way of keeping families together where it is safe to do so. This is achieved through a more collaborative way of working where parents are motivated to identify the changes needed within their own families. This helps achieve better outcomes for children. Family safeguarding sees specialist adult-focused practitioners – with expertise in domestic abuse, mental health or substance misuse – integrated within children's safeguarding teams – with the aim of providing comprehensive support.

We welcome the decision to include children and young people in the new statutory definition of domestic abuse as victims in their own right.

One in seven children and young people under the age of 18 will have lived with a domestic abuser at some point in their childhood[6].

The impact of domestic abuse on children can result in life long trauma which manifests itself in multiple ways. Very young children who are exposed to domestic violence and abuse at home can experience so much added stress that it can negatively affect brain development and impact on cognitive and sensory growth[7].

Part 4 Statutory Guidance defines safe accommodation support services for children as:

- Children's support – including play therapy and child advocacy; and
- Counselling and therapy (including group support) for both adults and children, including emotional support.

The benefit of specialist and tailored support for children has been well evidenced as critical to their recovery and it is important to remember that children and young people as well as their mothers have experienced trauma before fleeing the perpetrator[8].

In line with the Act, there are currently no Children's Refuge Worker posts in West Berkshire. Therefore, we look to improve our provision for children and young people who are victims of domestic abuse and ensure measures are sustainable.

7.8 Perpetrators of Abuse

Theme H: The DAB will ensure the development of an effective risk-managed perpetrator housing pathway and support in order to increase victim safety and housing security and prevent further domestic abuse.

There is an urgent need to consider what happens to the perpetrator when a victim leaves a property as many will remain in the home consequence free. Housing providers that intervene earlier with victims can help them to remain in their home when it is their choice to do so and yield costs savings related to repairs, arrears and evictions. Safe engagement with the perpetrator is also vital and requires that housing providers work in partnership with victims to offer effective interventions.

There are currently two provisions available in West Berkshire; The National Probation Service offer Building Better Relationships (BBR), a group designed to promote lifelong changes in behaviours and attitudes which, in the past, have resulted in male service users being convicted of intimate partner violence. However, this provision is only available for those convicted and have a sentence of 18 months or it is written into their license agreement. It is not used for women who have used violence or abuse.

The Family Safeguarding Service consists of two locality teams, one based in Calcot and the other in Newbury. FSS hold two posts of DA Practitioner (Perpetrator Workers) in the Family Safeguarding Service working with Social Workers, Family Support Workers, Mental Health Workers and a Substance Misuse Worker providing comprehensive and specialist assessments of risk and need in relation to perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Rehousing perpetrators may be ethically and practically challenging and appear to incentivise harmful behaviour but the option to remove and rehouse a perpetrator will allow the victim and children to remain in their home without disruption to children's education, victim employment, existing community and support networks and the financial hardship of moving into temporary accommodation and relocation. Victims frequently do not want their ex-/partner and parent of their children to be homeless.

There are several tools, options and opportunities for removing perpetrators from the home. These will often require a multi-agency approach, for example: the new statutory Domestic Violence

[6] https://www.womensaid.org.uk/the-victims-handbook/children-and-domestic-abuse/
[7] Patchy, piecemeal and precarious: support for children affected by domestic abuse (2019) Action for Children
[8] Nowhere to Turn for Children and Young People (2020) Women's Aid England

Protection Notices (DVPN) and Orders (DVPO) enable Police and the Courts to put in place protection for a victim in the immediate aftermath of a domestic abuse incident by removing the perpetrator from the property and liaison between Neighbourhood Community Safety Officers and Housing Patch Managers in response to complaints of anti-social behaviour.

We look to work in a CCR[9] model and engage with perpetrators working with local services, including Thames Valley Police, to hold perpetrators to account.

7.9 Social Housing

Theme I: The DAB will work with social housing providers in West Berkshire to ensure they have a policy setting out how they will address domestic abuse including how they will take action against perpetrators.

Social housing tenancy agreements often include domestic abuse as a breach of tenancy and therefore as grounds for eviction. Paragraph 14A of Part 2 of the Housing Act 1988 provides that a social landlord may gain possession of a property where it is occupied by a couple and one partner is forced to leave the property as a result of the other's domestic abuse towards them or any of their family living with them. It is a discretionary ground meaning that a judge can decide on the reasonableness of granting possession. Social landlords can also consider using the mandatory ground for possession where there has been a criminal conviction for a serious offence including an offence under Section 5 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.

For victims in social housing and privately rented accommodation, sharing a joint tenancy with the perpetrator presents the greatest barrier to safety and housing security[10]. While a perpetrator remains named as a joint tenant, he will be able to give notice to end the tenancy without the victims consent or knowledge even if he has physically left the property. A victim will not be able to change the locks or restrict his access to the property. As joint tenants they are classed as a single legal entity meaning the victim can be left with financial liability for any damage or rent arrears if the perpetrator refuses to pay. Rent arrears are the leading reason for evictions[11].

Several registered providers are in place in West Berkshire with Sovereign providing the most stock in the area. Other providers include Hanover Housing Association, Stonewater and Housing 21. Stonewater is a Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accredited provider and Sovereign are currently going through the DAHA accreditation process.

We look to work in partnership with social housing providers to ensure we are meeting the statutory duty including the use of legal remedies to remove the perpetrator from the property and restrict their ability to end the tenancy. Equally, achieving DAHA accreditation will enable social housing providers to use tools/resources available for perpetrator accountability.

7.10 Privately Rented Housing

Theme J: The DAB is committed to ensuring that victims living in the private rented sector access the support they need to achieve safety and housing security. This includes, bringing PRS stakeholders into the CCR, by supporting PRS landlords, letting agents and Local Authorities PRS professionals to respond to domestic abuse and take action against perpetrators.

Domestic abuse is as prevalent in the PRS as it is in any other housing sector which means that private landlords can be the first to see the warning signs of domestic abuse whether this is evidence of deliberate damage to the property, requests for lock changes, rent arrears or complaints from the neighbours about behaviour and noise.

[9]In Search of Excellence: A refreshed guide to domestic abuse partnership work-the Coordinated Community Response. Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse 2020. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ee0be2588f1e349401c832c/t/6087f76f7e98573c85c5e3fe/1619523443499/In+Search+of+Excellence+2020.pdf
[10]Policy Evidence Summary 4: Justice, housing and domestic abuse, the experiences of homeowners and private renters July 2019. https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/media/10214/bristol-uni-housing-and-dva-breifing-final-210819-_report.pdf

The specialist domestic abuse services report difficulties accessing the PRS with lettings agents and landlords reluctant to take applicants on Housing Benefit/Universal Credit, requesting professional references and guarantors who are owner occupiers, or to give permissions for Sanctuary Scheme measures.

For reasons of rent affordability and insecurity of tenure, the PRS is a last resort housing option for victims who are forced to leave due to domestic abuse. There is more work to be done to make the sector accessible to those victims who currently live in or need to access the PRS and we will work proactively with landlords to resolve matters of Housing Benefit discrimination, deposits, high rents, Sanctuary measures and secure tenancies. These are all matters that require addressing in order to make the accommodation 'suitable'.

We look to work in partnership with the private rented sector to ensure we are meeting the statutory duty and working towards keeping victims and their families safe.

7.11 Privately Owned Housing

Theme K: The DAB is committed to raising awareness of the specialist safe accommodation and support available to victims who are homeowners, to widening the CCR to include private housing stakeholders and to increasing partner understanding of the links between privately owned housing, domestic abuse and economic abuse.

Research undertaken by the Justice, Inequality and Gender Based Violence Project found that the needs of victims who were owner occupiers were largely invisible. Victims were unaware of their rights and the specialist support available and faced significant barriers to safety. The private housing sector including estate agents, conveyancing solicitors, banks and mortgage lenders, lacked an understanding of domestic and economic abuse while at the same time the domestic abuse and homeless/housing sector lacked knowledge and understanding of privately owned housing and how perpetrators use the privately owned housing system to abuse victims through:

- Home purchase and sale;
- Mortgage lending; and
- Family law response.

Surviving Economic Abuse (SEA) is the leading UK charity working to raise awareness of economic abuse which forms one of the key elements of a WHA.

We look to work in partnership with local and national services to ensure we are meeting the statutory duty and working towards keeping victims and their families safe.

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WBC/JW/BCT0921

Appendix C

Consultation Feedback

Feedback on Domestic Abuse and Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-23 following consultation closing on 10/11/2021

Focus Area on Draft Strategy	Issue identified by consultation	Strategy Action Plan Number	Objective
General Provision	More provision should be made available	Evidenced throughout	
	Victims should be supported to stay in their own homes	B4	All agencies to ensure that victims are informed of the full range of safe accommodation options available including making their own accommodation safe through the Sanctuary Scheme.
	Attitudes, knowledge and understanding of housing staff	A2	Commission the delivery of a programme for training and briefings to professionals to raise awareness of both domestic abuse and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
		B2	Commission a Safe Domestic Abuse Housing Advocate service to be co-located between Housing Options and A2Dominion to provide advice, support and advocacy to victims making homeless applications.
	Support for victims with NRPF	B15	Refuges to utilise the flexible housing fund to cover accommodation costs for victims with no recourse to public funds while they are waiting for the Destitute Domestic Violence Concession.
Experiences of Children	Long and short term therapeutic support should be available	G1	Commission specialist Children's Refuge Worker posts in the refuge to provide support to children in refuge and second stage move on accommodation.
		G2	Commission a specialist peripatetic Children's Therapeutic service to provide counselling including art and play therapy to children across the refuge and move on properties.

Focus Area on Draft Strategy	Issue identified by consultation	Strategy Action Plan Number	Objective
		G3	Consult with children in refuge to ensure their needs for support and barriers to access to support are fully understood and inform service provision and development.
	Parallel programmes for victims and child(ren) should be available	To be considered as part of G1-3	
Refuge Provision	More refuge provision	Evidenced throughout	
	More move-on support	D1	Utilise the Statutory Duty new burdens costs to fund specialist second stage Move On housing management and support costs from April 2022.
		D2	West Berkshire Council to proactively seek funding opportunities to purchase additional family move on properties to meet need and to purchase additional refuge and move on accommodation for single women.
		D3	Refuges to understand the support and recovery needs of victims and their children living in second stage Move On accommodation.
	Better provision for men, clients with multiple complex needs, single women and Trans clients.	F1	Commission a Male Victim Safe Accommodation Advocacy service to be hosted by a specialist domestic abuse service.
		B18	Refuges to review their access arrangements for disabled victims, take action to install adaptations where feasible and ensure their access listing on Routes to Support and in other publicity media is accurate.
		B19	Assess the provision of specialist support available to those with mental health need including learning disabilities.
		B20	Commission an LGBT+ Safe Accommodation Advocate service to provide targeted support and advocacy to be hosted by a specialist domestic abuse service.

Focus Area on Draft Strategy	Issue identified by consultation	Strategy Action Plan Number	Objective
	Dispersed refuge provision	C1	Increase specialist refuge provision in West Berkshire to meet need to include the consideration of dispersed accommodation.
	Should be provided by a specialist provider		
Perpetrators	Stricter enforcements	H2	Where appropriate, ensure that Registered Providers are represented at MARAC and MAPPA in order to support the effective housing management of perpetrators including the diversion or removal of a perpetrator from a victim's home.
	Local behavioural change programme readily available	H3	Seek to engage perpetrators in behavioural change by ensuring there is sufficient provision for those using harmful behaviours. All formal provision to be accredited to Respect Accreditation Standards for perpetrator programmes.
Social Housing	More training for staff	A3	Work with key Housing Associations to achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation.
	Not their problem, this issue sits with the local authority	N/A	N/A
Private Sector	Additional training should be made available	A2	Commission the delivery of a programme for training and briefings to professionals to raise awareness of both domestic abuse and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
	Sanctuary scheme needs to be promoted	J4	Work with landlords to increase the number of Sanctuary Schemes installed in privately rented accommodation.
	Support for victims with rent arrears	J3	Where rent arrears have accrued and the landlord is seeking possession of the property, to work with the landlord to automatically screen for domestic abuse in order to prevent eviction.

Focus Area on Draft Strategy	Issue identified by consultation	Strategy Action Plan Number	Objective
	More information for private landlords	J2	Provide training to landlords to enable them to identify the warning signs of domestic abuse (including economic abuse), to intervene safely and appropriately and to distinguish between anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse.
	Neighbour hotline	Could consider a bystander campaign B1	Commission awareness raising campaigns to ensure the pathways into safe accommodation are widely publicised to and understood by residents and professionals.
	Perpetrating DA should be enforced as a breach of tenancy	H5	Commission specialist training for housing professionals on responding to and engaging perpetrators safely and effectively.
Final comments	I don't know what is available	B1	Commission awareness raising campaigns to ensure the pathways into safe accommodation are widely publicised to and understood by residents and professionals.
	Provision should be prioritised over cost when awarding contracts	To note	

Newbury Town Centre Masterplan

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	10 February 2022
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Ross Mackinnon
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	20 January 2022
Report Author:	Katharine Makant
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4166

1 Purpose of the Report

This report summarises the Newbury Town Centre Masterplan and Vision commissioned by the Council in 2020 and developed by a consultant team led by Hemingway in collaboration with residents, businesses and stakeholders. It goes on to outline the next steps and potential risks associated with the delivery of the Masterplan by the Council in partnership with key stakeholders and seeks endorsement for taking the Masterplan forward.

2 Recommendation

The recommendation is that:

(a) the Newbury Town Centre Masterplan and Vision be endorsed by Executive as a strategy to reposition the town centre's offer to ensure it continues to meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors; and

(b) that the delivery of the Masterplan is taken forward in partnership with key stakeholders as opportunities arise.

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The Council has already invested over £110,000 in commissioning the Masterplan and a Conservation Area Appraisal for Newbury and a further £150,000 is earmarked in revenue reserves for similar studies for Thatcham and Hungerford. The Newbury Masterplan Delivery Strategy identifies external and internal potential funding sources including the private sector, Community Infrastructure Levy and S106.

	A capital bid of £100,000 for the 22/23 financial year to deliver public realm works proposed as 'quick wins' in the Newbury Masterplan has been submitted as part of the budget setting process, and it is envisaged that this will be used to match fund future external funding bids such as to the Government's Levelling Up Fund.			
Human Resource:	Subject to funding being secured for a new post of Principal Place-shaping Officer to support town centre regeneration, the delivery of the Newbury Masterplan will be programme managed within the Economy Team. Project management resources for individual projects will form part of the project business plan and funding application.			
Legal:	A number of the projects outlined in the Masterplan will be subject to statutory public consultation through the appropriate legal process e.g. planning applications and traffic regulation orders.			
Risk Management:	The risks and their management are set out in the report.			
Property:	Not all of the development projects proposed by the Masterplan are on land owned or controlled by the Council. Delivery will be subject to the agreement of and in partnership with key stakeholders.			
Policy:	The Masterplan aligns with the regeneration of Newbury Town Centre which features in the Council Strategy 2019-2023, the adopted Core Strategy 2012 (Area Delivery Plan Policy 2) and the 2020 Economic Development Strategy and 2021 Refresh.			
	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			The Masterplan proposals aim to make the town centre more accessible and welcoming for everyone, which will have a positive impact on inequality.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The Masterplan proposals aim to make the town centre more sociable, more accessible and welcoming, which will have a positive impact on the lives of all residents, visitors and employees, including those with protected characteristics.
Environmental Impact:	X			The Masterplan aims to make the town centre 'greener' with additional planting and open space, and promotes alternative modes of transport by making it more 'walkable' with improved permeability for pedestrians and better connectivity between bus and train stations.
Health Impact:	X			The Masterplan proposals will have a positive impact on community health and well-being through improvements public realm and additional planting.
ICT Impact:		X		Not applicable
Digital Services Impact:		X		Not applicable
Council Strategy Priorities:	X			The regeneration of town centres is a key priority for the Council.
Core Business:		X		Not applicable
Data Impact:		X		Not applicable

Consultation and Engagement:	Over 4,000 responses received to 1st online public survey in Dec 20/Jan 21 and over 1,000 responses to 2nd online public survey in July 2021. In addition, consultant team engaged with landowners, community groups, local businesses, Newbury Town Council and Newbury BID. Within the Council, consultants reported to Working Group that included the Leader, Portfolio Holder, Executive Director (Place) and officers from Economic Development, Planning and Highways. Legal, Finance, Environment and the Equality Officer have been consulted in the writing of this report. A Question and Answer session with the consultants was held for all members of West Berkshire Council on 27 January 2022.

3 Executive Summary

3.1 This report seeks Executive's endorsement of the Newbury Town Centre Masterplan and Vision as a strategy to reposition the town centre's offer to ensure it continues to meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors.

3.2 If endorsed by the Executive, the Masterplan will be taken forward for engagement with key stakeholders including Newbury Town Council. The proposed projects will be worked up in more detail, including further feasibility work and appropriate levels of public consultation around ideas to make the town centre more 'walkable' and 'sociable'. The working up will also include the identification of additional funding sources for public and private sector investment.

3.3 This Masterplan is one of a number of place-shaping initiatives being developed by the Council across the district in line with the Council Strategy and to support the Local Plan Review. £150,000 has been set aside in revenue reserves for economic development focussed town centre studies for Thatcham and Hungerford, in addition to the visioning work for Thatcham and Newbury being carried out to support the Local Plan Review. These combined will become part of a wider Place Infrastructure Programme being developed to allow the Council to consider its priorities for infrastructure funding and delivery across the District as a whole.

4 Background

4.1 The Hemingway team was commissioned by the Council in 2020, following an extensive procurement exercise, to engage with residents and stakeholders on the development of firstly a Vision and then a Masterplan for Newbury Town Centre. The governance of the project was undertaken by Economic Development Board. Newbury Town Council was engaged via its dedicated Town Centre Working Group.

4.2 Over 4,000 responses were received to the initial online public survey held in Dec 20/Jan 21 and the consultant team engaged with landowners, community groups and local businesses as well as Newbury Town Council to get their input as the project progressed. The Vision for the Town Centre was widely shared and formed the basis

for another online public survey in July, in which the Vision was endorsed by over 90% of around 1,000 respondents. The survey responses are summarised on pages 70 to 77 of the document.

4.3 The consultant team continued to engage with Newbury Town Council and other stakeholders until early autumn. The full Masterplan document was submitted in draft form to West Berkshire Council by the consultant team in November 2021. The final draft document is attached as Appendix 2.

5 Summary of Masterplan Proposals

5.1 The key features of the Vision and Masterplan Strategy may be summarised as follows:

- Newbury has a lot to celebrate but there is room for improvement;
- The town centre is 'The Crossroads', with Bridge St and the canal at its heart;
- The town centre needs to be 'broader' to encompass leisure, community and cultural experiences to attract visitors and make them stay longer;
- It needs to be more 'walkable', with better integration of the lanes and the canal, reduced car access and a new pedestrian bridge;
- Key arrival points need to be made more 'welcoming', with improved routes for pedestrians and cyclists and better links between rail and bus stations;
- It needs to be 'greener', more 'cultural' and more 'sociable', with flexible event space at the Wharf, pocket parks, Victoria Park and more spill-out space for cafes;
- Uses need to be more 'independent', 'entrepreneurial' and 'balanced', with family housing, flexible office space, and more small independent businesses.

5.2 The Public Realm and Movement Strategy focusses on a 'pedestrianised core' which reduces vehicular access and restricts traffic to one-way to release space for other uses. This recognises that further engagement with businesses, residents and market traders is needed to address any concerns and proposes a trial period to assess implications. The Strategy also proposes the removal and relocation of car parking from the Wharf area to create new social and event spaces that make more of the waterfront – this was very popular with survey respondents.

5.3 The Spatial Masterplan sets out a range of proposals for public realm, infrastructure and development across the key areas of The Wharf; the Canal; Victoria Park & Parkway; Northbrook St, Bartholomew St and Market Place; the Lanes & Yards; and Broadway, Cheap St and Bartholomew St (south).

5.4 The Brand, Meanwhile and Events Strategy recognises the good work already being done to encourage visitors to the town centre and proposes the expansion of these events programmes into the areas that are 'unlocked' by the masterplan proposals, such as the Wharf and Victoria Park. Activities that draw in young people are seen as very important, as are 'meanwhile uses' to encourage creative and cultural activity in disused and underutilised space such as Cromwell Place and the former Debenhams store.

5.5 The Delivery Strategy proposes to deliver the Masterplan in partnership with key stakeholders including Newbury Town Council and Newbury BID over the short, medium and longer terms, and it identifies some 'quick wins' and funding streams which merit further investigation, including CIL and S106, the Levelling Up Fund and the Arts Council. It also identifies policy interventions to support the Masterplan, particularly in

planning and transport policy, and references the need for the proposals to be endorsed by the Council and key stakeholders.

6 Commentary

6.1 The Newbury Masterplan and Vision contain design-led proposals and have already generated a sense of excitement in the town. Over 4,000 people responded to the first online public surveys and the feedback was in the main very positive. The Masterplan is aligned with the Council's strategic vision and town centre regeneration features in both the Economic Development Strategy and the Recovery Strategy. It has been developed in collaboration with a number of key stakeholders, including Newbury Town Council and Newbury BID. However, delivering the Masterplan in partnership with key stakeholders to meet high public expectations is likely to prove challenging for several reasons. The risks and proposed mitigation are set out below.

6.2 The delivery of the 'Branding, Meanwhile and Events Strategy' is heavily dependent on the Newbury BID, which is due to go to ballot for a third term with the result announced on 25 February 2022. If local businesses vote against the BID, it will cease to exist in June 2022 and other ways of delivering events, Shop Front Improvements and support to town centre businesses will need to be found. The Council's Economy Manager is on the BID Board of Directors.

Risk – the ability to deliver part of the Masterplan is removed or reduced if the BID fails to secure a 3rd term.

Mitigation – publically support the BID and consider a Plan B around town centre management if the ballot is lost.

6.3 The indicative cost of delivering the public realm proposals identified in the Delivery Strategy as being led by West Berkshire Council has been roughly estimated by officers at around £4m, plus another £3m - £4m for a new pedestrian bridge over the canal. A breakdown of the indicative costs is set out in the table below. It should be noted that these costs are a rough estimate and subject to change should the proposals be worked up in detail and the appropriate statutory consultations carried out.

Newbury Town Centre Masterplan

Masterplan Timescale Q/S/M/L	Action	Scope	Estimated Cost
Not in MP as a project	Bartholomew Street and Wharf Road Improvements	Removal of bus stop in Bart St and additional tree planting in Wharf Rd.	£150,000
Q	Create Parklets along Northbrook & Bartholomew Street	Appoint landscape architect / designer to create outdoor spaces for F&B outlets adding greenery & increasing seating capacity.	£165,000
Q	Wayfinding	Additional wayfinding and signing for 'The Lanes'.	£66,000
Q	Partial or full closure of The Wharf car park and the temporary installation of large scale planters and street furniture ahead of a fully designed remodelling of The Wharf	Appoint designer to produce layout of space to be used as flexible event and social spaces. Review car parking policy and potential relocation of taxi rank.	£561,000
S	Local Neighbourhood improvements – Broadway/London Road, Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street (south)	Set out a programme of public realm improvements e.g. planting, removal of unnecessary street furniture, to promote the independent identity and character.	£80,000
S	Enhancement of green space alongside the canal at The Wharf	Agree and produce programme of works with Canal & River Trust to vegetation to create visual connection with the outdoor space and activity proposed with the Waterside Centre.	£120,000
Appears in MP as several projects	Public Realm Improvements including enhanced surfacing, streetscape improvements and potential localised raising of the carriageway in London Road, Oxford Street, Bart St South, Bear Lane and Market Street. Extension of paving and 'pedestrian priority' character across the junction with Market Street and Bartholomew Street.	Scope out works to carry out paving and improvement works, requiring hard and soft landscaping..	£1,500,000
M	Enhancing routes through Victoria Park & improving links across Park Way to Northbrook Street & across the canal to The Wharf & Market Place.	Appoint engineer and landscape architect to produce plan of enhanced routes and planting design.	£250,000
M	Greater pedestrianisation of Northbrook St, Wharf Street, Bridge Street, Mansion House Street, Bartholomew Street (north) and Market Place, achieved by prohibiting through traffic at all times and introducing one-way working for the remaining essential vehicles on Northbrook Street and Bridge Street.	Tying in with WBC's wider initiatives to promote alternative modes of transport, undertake and review post COVID traffic modelling, assessment of impact of alternative travel initiatives, use of technology to enable cost effective management and full public consultation.	£200k to £400k dependent on traffic control and physical measures required following feasibility and consultation.
M	Improvements to Victoria Park, including: Eastern zone of the park - more of an 'activity' zone connected by cycle routes; Central zone – different arrangements to the bandstand; North zone – keep open space. More trees and garden type area to the far north of the park; Enhanced fitness / play areas Parkway – car park could have a green wall.	Appoint landscape architect to map out spaces and design green wall.	£400,000
M	More prominence to existing pub gardens and eating areas to the rear of pubs and restaurants fronting Market Place.	Carry out parking review to determine if a reduction in parking could enable a new series of lanes to be created. However, this proposal may be constrained by the different land ownerships to the rear of these pubs and restaurants.	£300,000
M	Improvements to railway (Blackboys Bridge in Bart St South) bridge.	Engage with Network Rail to determine if an improvement to design and materials would be acceptable.	£200,000
L	Improved canal crossing of the Kennet & Avon Canal	Appoint consultant to determine best place for pedestrian crossing and then appoint designer and engineer to create a crossing that will become a piece of public art and a visitor attraction. Locations to be considered: new crossing connecting The Wharf to the Waterside Centre and improved pedestrian option at the 'American Bridge'.	£3,000,000 to £5,000,000 depended on design.
L	Arrival from Bear Lane	WBC to agree how they would like to see the Telephone Exchange and the retail park redeveloped along with a reconfiguration of the A339 roundabout. Carry out scoping exercise & engage with business owners.	£800,000 including removal/filling of subways.

6.4 With the exception of a capital funding bid of £100,000 for 'quick wins' in 22/23, there is currently no provision in the Council's budget to deliver these proposals.

Risk – lack of funding or staffing resource means the Masterplan proposals can't be delivered.

Mitigation – seek funding from CIL and S106 and from external funding sources.

6.5 The Masterplan Delivery Strategy sets out a number of 'quick wins' designed to maintain momentum, act as 'tests' for some proposals and create the visibility necessary to attract central government and private sector investment. A capital bid for £100,000 to fund some of the quick wins has been put forward as part of the Council's budget setting process. Potential external funding sources have been identified, including the Government's Levelling Up Fund and the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund – a White Paper on these is expected to be published in early February. Interim resource to support the prioritisation and working up of a 'pipeline' of business plans and funding bids for some of the Masterplan projects has been secured for the final quarter of 21/22. Project management support will be required in the event that these project bids are successful.

6.6 Discussions with Planning Policy have taken place around the use of CIL and S106 and steps are being taken to maximise the potential use of these funding streams, by ensuring that town centre regeneration is included in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the relevant draft Local Plan Policies as they move towards public examination. However, it should be noted that the majority of the Council's CIL and S106 funding is currently prioritised for Education and Highways projects.

6.7 The Masterplan makes reference to addressing environmental sustainability and includes proposals to mitigate climate change, including promoting alternative modes of travel and the introduction of more urban trees and planting, which have a cooling effect, improve air quality and create calming settings that are good for mental health. However, this could perhaps be made more explicit, with more detail around how the proposals contribute to our Net Zero Carbon agenda and how they support the vision of the Environment Strategy. That vision aims to mitigate against carbon emissions; restore natural capital; protect the environment for future generations; work in partnership with residents, businesses and communities to deliver positive change; and shape other key strategic aims through integration. The Environment Strategy sets a number of strategic objectives, including a primary target of achieving carbon neutrality in the district by 2030 to support the mitigation of climate change. Other strategic objectives include responsible economic growth, healthy communities, resilience to climate change and working with the districts communities and partners.

6.8 The Masterplan needs to be delivered with key environmental themes in mind, including sustainable transport; improving building efficiency for new and existing stock; the sustainable and renewable use of energy; protecting and enhancing the natural environment; and waste and resource efficiency.

Risk – opportunities are missed to embed the Council's sustainability principles and ambitions into the delivery of the Masterplan.

Mitigation – work closely with the Environmental Delivery team to ensure that the delivery of the Masterplan supports the implementation of the Environment Strategy vision and objectives.

6.9 The Masterplan includes proposals which are likely to be of concern to some sections of the local community. An example of this is the proposal to make the town centre more 'walkable' by removing general traffic from the town centre and making Bridge St and Northbrook St one way. Another is the suggestion that the taxi rank could be relocated away from the Wharf in order to create a more 'sociable' town centre. The Masterplan recognises that both these proposals would be subject to further feasibility work and appropriate levels of public consultation to understand the implications.

6.10 The Masterplan is ambitious and cannot be delivered overnight. For this reason, the Delivery Strategy proposes a phased approach, based on priorities and the likely availability of funding. As time goes on, this will need to be kept under review – some medium to long term projects may be brought forward and others may be paused as opportunities rise and fall away. Communication with residents and interested parties will be key.

Risk – the delivery of the Masterplan fails to win public support and/or meet public expectations.

Mitigation – develop a communications plan to ensure that information is shared in a timely and effective way and appropriate consultation is carried out.

7 Other options considered

7.1 The original project brief approved in July 2020 envisaged that the Masterplan would form the basis of a draft Supplementary Planning Document which would then proceed to statutory public consultation and adoption. However, the planned submission of the Local Plan Review in 2022 means that this cannot take place until after the new Local Plan is adopted.

7.2 The Newbury Town Centre Masterplan and Vision could be rejected by the Council, in which case it would not be taken forward. However, this is likely to result in lost opportunities to secure external funding and public or private sector investment for the town centre, to the detriment of local residents, businesses and visitors.

8 Conclusion

8.1 The Newbury Town Centre Masterplan and Vision provides a strategic framework to reposition the town centre's offer over the short, medium and longer term, to ensure it continues to meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors. Its development has been carried out in collaboration with key stakeholders and it has created a great deal of public interest in the town.

8.2 It is clear that the Council cannot deliver the Newbury Town Centre Masterplan and Vision in isolation. Engagement with other key stakeholders including Newbury Town Council and the local business community in the form of Newbury BID (should a third term be secured) will be needed to take it forward in partnership. There is significant

work to be done to work up the Masterplan proposals to the level of detail required to seek external funding from the public and private sectors.

8.3 However, the delivery challenges that have been identified in this report should not detract from the overall ambition of the Masterplan to create a sustainable, thriving and prosperous future for Newbury Town Centre. Therefore the recommendation is that Executive endorse the Masterplan as a strategy to reposition the town centre's offer, in order to progress its delivery in partnership with key stakeholders as opportunities arise.

9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment

9.2 Appendix B – Newbury Town Centre Masterplan

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: Newbury Central, Newbury Clay Hill, Newbury Greenham, Newbury Speen, Newbury Wash Common

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Owning Service	Development & Regulation		

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1	17/12/21	Original	
3	23/12/21	Amended by Eric Owens	
4	11/01/22	Amended by Katharine Makant	

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:

(i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

(ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

(2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

(3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:

- **Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?**
- **(The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)**
- **Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?**
- **Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?**
- **Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?**
- **Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?**
- **Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?**
- **Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?**

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

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:	That the Newbury Town Centre Masterplan and Vision be endorsed by the Council as a strategy to reposition the town centre's offer to ensure it continues to meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors.
Summary of relevant legislation:	N/A
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's priorities for improvement? • 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** ☐ **No** ☒ **If yes, please indicate which priority and provide an explanation**
Name of Budget Holder:	**Katharine Makant**
Name of Service/Directorate:	**Development & Regulation**
Name of assessor:	Katharine Makant
Date of assessment:	11/01/22
Version and release date (if applicable):	

Is this a …. ?		**Is this policy, strategy, function or service … ?**	
Policy	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☒	**New or proposed**	**Yes** ☒ **No** ☐
Strategy	**Yes** ☒ **No** ☐	**Already exists and is being reviewed**	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☒
Function	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☒	**Is changing**	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☒
Service	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☒		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To endorse the Newbury Town Centre Masterplan and Vision for progression towards delivery in partnership with key stakeholders.

Objectives:	To reposition the town centre's offer to ensure it continues to meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors.
Outcomes:	Newbury Town Centre is perceived by residents, businesses and visitors as an attractive and vibrant place to live, work and visit.
Benefits:	Newbury Town Centre continues to thrive and grow to the benefit of businesses, residents and visitors.

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

(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age		
Disability		
Gender Reassignment		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Race		
Religion or Belief		
Sex		
Sexual Orientation		

Further Comments:

The Masterplan proposals aim to make the town centre more accessible and welcoming for everyone, thereby resulting in positive impacts for those with protected characteristics. There has been no evidence as part of the responses received to date to suggest that people within the Protected Characteristics groups are likely to be negatively affected. However, we will continue to monitor this aspect throughout the delivery of the Masterplan and further action will be considered should this change.

(3) Result

Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	**Yes ☐ No ☒**
There has been no evidence as part of the responses received to date to suggest that people within the Protected Characteristics groups are likely to be negatively affected. However, we will continue to monitor this aspect throughout the delivery of the Masterplan and further action will be considered should this change.	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	**Yes ☐ No ☒**
There has been no evidence as part of the responses received to date to suggest that people within the Protected Characteristics groups are likely to be negatively affected. However, we will continue to monitor this aspect throughout the delivery of the Masterplan and further action will be considered should this change.	

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

If an EqIA 2 is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the EqIA guidance and template – http://intranet/index.aspx?articleid=32255.

(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqIA Stage 2 required	**Yes ☐ No ☒**
Owner of EqIA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqIA Stage Two:	

Name: Katharine Makant **Date: 13/01/22**

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 Newbury Town Centre Masterplan

NEWBURY TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN
DRAFT REPORT

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All town centres across the UK are having to respond to the huge change in national shopping and leisure habits, driven originally by out of town shopping, then by the growth in internet shopping and society's increasingly more conscious approach to consumption (including a re-discovered desire to prioritise independent businesses) both of the latter accelerated by the impact of COVID-19. The pandemic has also resulted in a fundamental shift in working habits, with large-scale office closures requiring many employees to work from home. The traditional 9-to-5, office-centric work model is rapidly becoming replaced with a hybrid model, giving workers increased flexibility around when and where they work and resulting in less time spent in offices.

All towns and their communities have suffered socially and economically from the enforced closures over the last 18 months and Newbury is no exception. The impacts on the town centre are most visibly demonstrated by the loss of the John Lewis Home and Debenhams stores that previously anchored the Parkway Centre. However, the loss of these stores, whilst impacting on footfall in the short term, provides an opportunity to revision and revitalise the centre and its relationship with the Canalside and Victoria Park to meet the changing needs of residents, visitors and indeed society in a post COVID-19 future.

As a result, to address these long-term issues, to give confidence to businesses, to the market and the local and regional community, and to take advantage of the funding opportunities available, it is essential that the correct vision is in place to steer the direction of travel for Newbury, and to implement a clear strategy for delivering it.

In October 2020, West Berkshire District Council appointed a multi-disciplinary team of consultants comprising HemingwayDesign, New Masterplanning, GL Hearn and Urban Movement, working in partnership with the community and local stakeholders, to produce a long-term strategy and masterplan to reposition the town centre's commercial, leisure, residential, cultural and public realm offer, to ensure the town centre continues to meet the needs of residents, businesses, workers and visitors both now and for years to come.

It was clear from our first visit to the town, reinforced by the feedback from over 5,000 people, that Newbury has a lot to celebrate, particularly Market Place; Northbrook Street and Newbury's distinct heritage; the parks and recreational space; and the Canal. The people of the town value the independent retail, restaurant and café offer, complemented by Parkway's national retailers. Despite these strengths, nearly 90% of respondents believe that the town centre could be improved, and we have received overwhelming support throughout the development of the vision, which has evolved through close engagement with those with an interest in the town.

The Vision is underpinned by the 'Crossroads' of Newbury, where Bridge Street crosses the Kennet & Avon Canal at the heart of the town centre.

The Vision

Crossroads are a place where routes, and therefore people, come together. Crossroads are why many places exist and were the 'birthplace' of many market towns.

In placing the concept of The Crossroads at the heart of the future Vision, our aim is to ensure that as Newbury responds to the need for change, it remembers its market town heritage, and remains a focus for social interaction, economic growth, civic engagement and community activities.

This Vision and overall masterplan is reinforced by a number of fundamental principles based on both national and local priorities for change.

Principle 1: A 'broader' town centre

The key structural objective of the masterplan is to expand the perceived extent of Newbury town centre. This may seem counterintuitive given the declining demand for retail, but by broadening the leisure, community and cultural 'experience', the town centre can be transformed into a 'multi-functional' space, attracting more visitors and increasing dwell time.

Principle 2: Celebrating 'The Crossroads'

Newbury's 'Crossroads', where the town centre's north-south route, Northbrook Street/ Bartholomew Street, meets its east-west route, the Kennet & Avon Canal, forms an integral part of the masterplan, by putting Bridge Street and the Canal firmly at the heart of the town centre.

Principle 3: A more 'walkable' town centre

The masterplan seeks to make the town centre more 'walkable' and aims to increase the appeal of the town's spaces, buildings and key assets by enhancing north-south and east-west permeability by foot.

Principle 4: A more 'welcoming' town centre

The masterplan aims to improve the sense of arrival for pedestrians, cyclists, rail and bus users, and motorists, by enhancing arrival spaces at the rail and bus station, improving links from the rail station to the town centre, improving routes for pedestrians and cyclists and enhancing arrival spaces along London Road from Robin Hood roundabout.

Principle 5: A 'greener' town centre

The masterplan aims to improve Victoria Park, provide a 'pocket park' at the Wharf and improve accessibility to green space along the Canalside, whilst delivering additional open space and 'greening' of the town centre to address environmental sustainability and improve community health and well-being.

Principle 6: A more 'sociable' town centre

The masterplan proposes additional open space at the Wharf and enhanced leisure and recreation facilities at Victoria Park and along the Canal. The masterplan will also support opportunities for increased spill-out space, particularly for the existing cafes and restaurants on Northbrook Street, in Market Place, behind the Corn Exchange and Museum, as well as in the Lanes and Yards.

Principle 7: A more 'cultural' town centre

The masterplan seeks to improve existing and create additional indoor and outdoor space for arts and cultural activities catered for all ages, particularly by reinforcing the cultural importance of Market Place and creating a cultural and leisure destination at the Wharf.

Principle 8: A more 'independent' town centre

The masterplan seeks to promote the heritage of Newbury as an "independent" market town, by supporting the concentration of independent businesses in the Lanes as well as those in Broadway, Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street, and recognising that the proposals for the Eagle Quarter, if approved, will provide units catered for small, independent businesses.

Principle 9: A more 'entrepreneurial' town centre

The masterplan recognises the importance of delivering new office space and focuses particularly on delivering smaller, fit-for-purpose, flexible office space for small businesses, start-ups and those looking for occasional workspace closer to home.

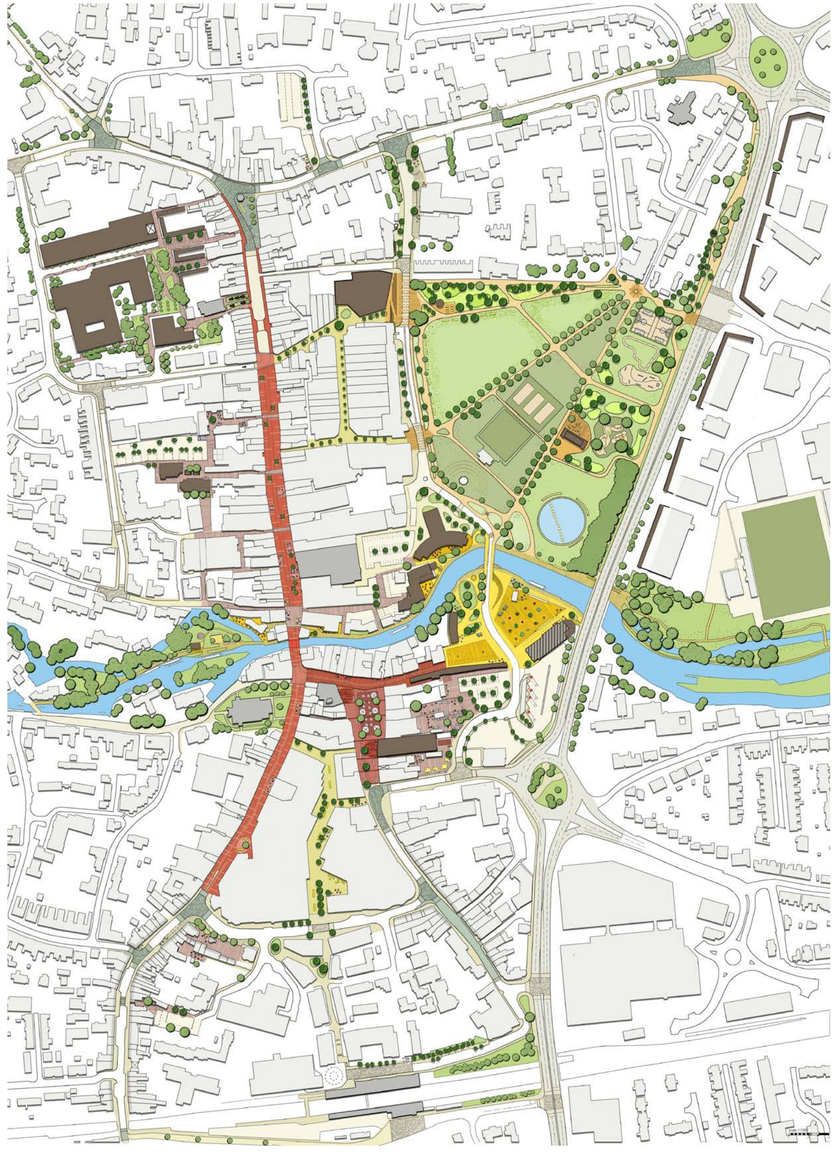
Principle 10: A more 'balanced' town centre community

The masterplan recognises the need to rebalance the significant increase in residential developments delivering apartments within the town centre, by delivering a wider range of housing, including family housing or more innovative residential schemes.

These principles which underpin the masterplan, and which will help to deliver the Vision for the town centre, have informed a range of public realm, infrastructure and development proposals across the key areas of the Wharf; the Canal; Victoria Park & Park Way; Northbrook Street, Bartholomew Street and Market Place; The Lanes & Yards; and Broadway, Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street (South).

The proposals are also accompanied by a Meanwhile Use Strategy to support the temporary use of empty buildings or spaces for participative public events, pop up shops, workspaces and markets to bring people together and encourage community cohesion and enterprise. These measures will kickstart the delivery of positive change ahead of the longer-term, more permanent changes proposed as part of the masterplan. Key spaces within Newbury town centre to be used for 'meanwhile purposes' include vacant shop units, the Wharf surface car parking, and the former Debenhams buildings.

The Delivery Strategy sets out a variety of ways in which the objectives of the Vision and masterplan can be achieved over time. Although the implementation of some of these proposals is constrained by land ownership and sources of funding, the Delivery Strategy identifies 'quick wins' which will help to build momentum and deliver effective, vital change at the start of the process to creating and sustaining a thriving and prosperous future for Newbury. By prioritising these 'quick wins' and the wider set of masterplan proposals, Newbury town centre will embody its values, shape perceptions and start to build its own brand that better positions itself as a successful and distinctive modern market town.



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INTRODUCTION

Some media reports would have us believe that we are witnessing the death of our urban centres and high streets, but this is far from the case. The UK's town centres have traditionally been places where people live, work, and socialise. However, over the decades they have become home to sprawling shopping centres and as a result, town centre high streets have been overtaken by mainstream retailers. This is sadly often at the expense of the real social importance of town centres - green spaces, generous public realm for social interaction, entertainment, nightlife, leisure, non-retail workplaces and homes.

We believe the future is bright for our town centres, for they are the beating heart of the community. We believe that recent store closures and the number of vacant shops nationwide does not mean town centres are dying, but that consumer behaviours are shifting. The 'offer' from retail needs to match a changing demographic that has a developing taste and understanding about the values of disposable income. It needs to recognise that people are eschewing 'goods' in favour of experiences; something that's reflected in the general market buoyancy of leisure, sports, travel, cafe culture, and events.

No one would argue that online shopping hasn't affected our high streets, or that it won't continue to do so in the future. But this doesn't have to mean the end of busy town centres - it merely emphasises the urgency with which they must adapt. Humans will always be innately social beings - we will always want to get together, to celebrate, to share experiences. It is time to alter our course - to steer our town centres back to being the heart of our social lives, the places we live, work, and socialise. Retail is a key part of this, but it's not the sole focus. Opportunities to generate social capital must be built into our town centres from the ground up.

Strong social capital often reflects a community in which people are actively involved and their willingness to contribute. A sense of feeling able to influence events, being well informed, having access to key people as well as the intensity of involvement. The role social capital and community play is pivotal for any town centre to maximise its potential and provide the space for people to enjoy, learn and call home. Towns that actively deliver on inclusivity, equality, accessibility through the type of homes it provides, the workplaces, the public spaces and parks are the ones that will make the kind of "noise" that reaches increasingly purposeful generations. The experience that is provided in a town centre can leave long standing perceptions of a town. By creating a town centre that is continuously changing and experimenting through pop-ups, exhibitions, festivals, and markets will leave its mark as being exciting and interesting.

It is well documented how COVID-19 has accelerated economic, social, and physical trends the UK high street was already witnessing. As the current pandemic has altered the way people live, work, shop and socialise, now is time town centres must react, and identify ways to maximise on these evolving habits. High streets need to be multi-purpose, multi-use, reflective of to the local context and relevant to the way people are now consuming. We have already seen early signs of this. Towns and councils have transformed streets into spaces where people can socialise, eat, play, and enjoy. Putting social experience above retail and returning town centres back to vibrant multi-dimensional places. Reclaiming streets back from the car is not just attracting people back in town centres but also addresses the need for healthier towns and cities via cleaner air.

The COVID-19 crisis has been described as a dry run for the climate crisis. The pandemic has exposed the fragility of the systems and governance that underpins our societies, acting as a wakeup call to prepare for a future where such challenges are increasingly common. But rather than see these as distinct challenges, we could use this pandemic to set in motion broader changes to reduce carbon in our towns and cities. A more ecological approach to urbanism is key. An approach that reduces emissions and energy use, through the reuse of buildings, reducing car dependence, and by adding biodiversity.

The pandemic has also resulted in a fundamental shift in working habits, with large-scale office closures requiring many employees to work from home. The traditional 9-to-5, office-centric work model is rapidly becoming replaced with a hybrid model, giving workers increased flexibility around when and where they work and resulting in less time spent in offices.

Newbury is no exception to these societal shifts. The impacts on the town centre are most visibly demonstrated by the loss of the John Lewis Home and Debenhams stores that anchor the Parkway Centre. However, the loss of these stores, whilst impacting on footfall in the short term, provides an opportunity to revision and revitalise the centre and its relationship with the Canalside and Victoria Park to meet the changing needs of residents, visitors and indeed society in a post COVID-19 future.

There is no doubt that Newbury, as a town, has a number of key strengths. The place has a rich and colourful heritage associated with its market town identity, evident by Market Place. The town offers a range of high-quality parks, waterways and historic street patterns and architecture, including the coaching inns on Broadway and London Road, and St Nicolas Church.

Newbury caters for a range of markets, including its weekly and artisan markets, cultural organisations and independent retailers and food and drink operators at a time where national multiples are in decline.

A number of well renowned events are held in the town, helped by the location of Newbury Racecourse to the east of the centre, attracting visitors in their numbers.

The town also offers excellent road and rail connections, with immediate access to the strategic road network via the A339 and A34 and accessibility to London by train in under an hour making Newbury attractive to commuters. Workers can still take advantage of its proximity to key cities, including London, whilst benefiting from larger residential properties offering better value for money than the likes of nearby London and Reading.

Newbury's reason for existence, like every town, is to bring people together. Whether it's to work, learn, shop, relax or simply somewhere to call home. Importantly, the role of transport should therefore be subservient to this higher purpose. Transport is there to connect people with the places they want to be – most people don't want to be travelling, they want to be somewhere. This relationship must underpin any understanding of the current role of Newbury's transport network and how it might change to better serve the town.

To establish how transport should change in the future we need to develop a Vision. Essentially, we need to decide upon the sorts of choices that we would like more people to make more of the time. It is highly unlikely that we will be able to do this directly (it is rare that it is either feasible or advisable to force people to do what we would like them to), but we can change the existing conditions in such a way that people are more likely to make these positive choices.

For example, we might make it easier for people to access the town centre, thereby encouraging more people to visit and spend more money there. We might improve conditions for less polluting modes of travel, thereby encouraging a mode shift that improves air quality. Or we might make the train station more accessible, thereby reducing journey times to other important towns and cities that encourages more large companies to locate in Newbury. Making these connections is important because such changes in people's travel choices invariably requires some people to make concessions. And these tend to be much more acceptable when they are seen as addressing universal concerns relating to social justice, public health, educational equality, economic justice, inclusive communities and social inclusion, rather than simply trading the convenience of one mode of travel for another.

We believe Newbury can grow successfully, but firstly must rediscover its identity as a bustling market town. Focus should be shifted towards independent retail; creative and community uses; residential and workspace. Fresh investment should be made in the core retail streets and public spaces including Market Place and the Wharf; canals and rivers; parks and cultural and historic buildings. Measures must be taken to address climate change, reducing reliance on the private vehicle and increasing uptake of sustainable modes of travel. Growth in residential development should be planned and designed to create a more diverse and inclusive town. Interventions should seek to make the town centre more relevant and accessible to all its residents and visitors, by catering for all ages.

We understand that a successful masterplan should be developed in collaboration with its local and wider community. This helps to restore civic pride, increase community involvement and ensure the overall Vision responds to the needs and desires of those most impacted, which cannot be fully understood solely through site visits and desktop studies.

This masterplan process has incorporated a wide range of consultation and engagement with over 5,000 local residents, stakeholders, business operators, landowners and both the district and local councils to ensure the Vision embraces different perspectives to deliver a more diverse, inclusive, robust and meaningful town centre.

We believe this to be Newbury's largest survey undertaken to date, both in terms of completion numbers and the time spent completing the survey, averaging around 25 minutes – proof of the community's enthusiasm to have their views on the town heard.

The process has sought to identify the key issues, challenges and opportunities preventing Newbury from fulfilling its full potential for growth and has worked with the town to embrace opportunities to revitalise the centre and to ensure the Newbury is well-positioned as a forward facing, thriving destination that can withstand future challenges presented by this continuously-evolving future.

The structure of the following document therefore presents the current conditions of Newbury, the aspirations of its community and a long-term Vision and masterplan proposals to deliver transformative change based on consensus.

Any successful masterplan requires a robust methodology that is strictly adhered to throughout the duration of the project. The methodology has been underpinned by a 2-stage approach, split down into four separate stages.

Stage 1A - Launch, Baseline & Key Issues

The purpose of this stage has been to generate a 'whole town' understanding of the project. The team has engaged with local press and media to raise the profile of the project and create a 'buzz', involving the whole town, not just the 'usual crowd'. It has involved a combination of baseline evidence review, desktop information gathering and site visits to provide us with a practical insight of the issues and opportunities. However, engaging with the community has been invaluable to provide us with a robust, meaningful picture of the key priorities and focus areas on which to base the Vision and masterplan.

Stage 1B - Vision & Evidence Base

The baseline findings of the engagement exercise have then been analysed and a draft Vision has been prepared to respond to the outcomes of Stage 1A. The Vision has identified how it responds to the specific needs of local residents and businesses, how it responds to wider trends and challenges and how it enhances the distinctive market town character of Newbury.

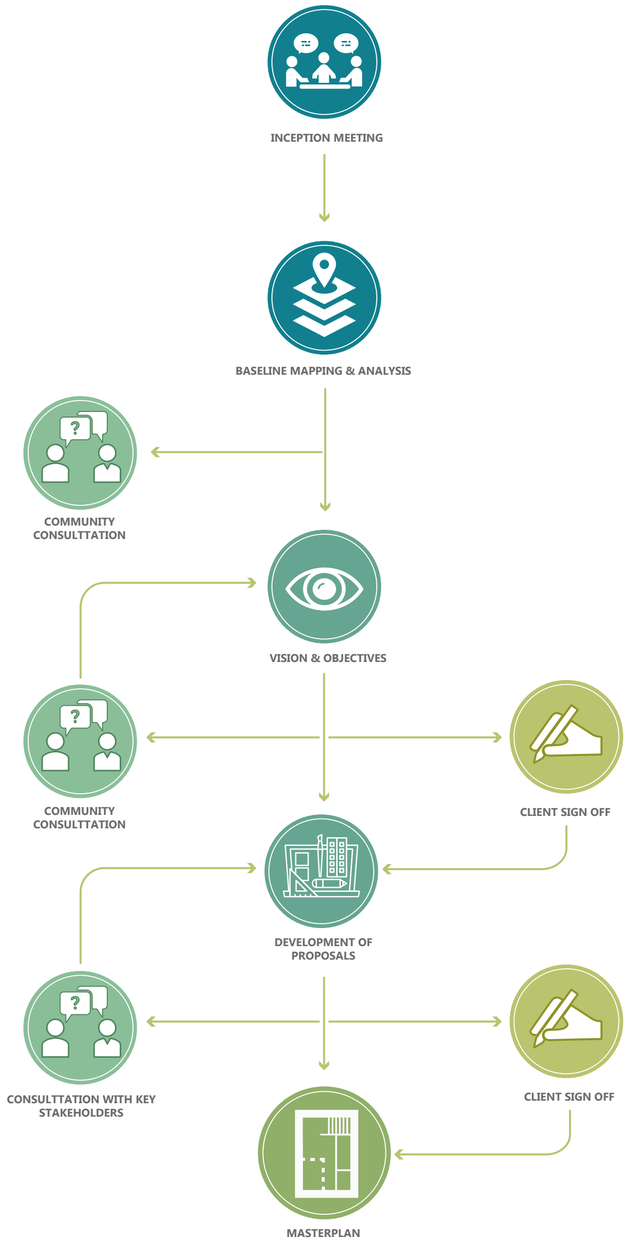
Having been tested with a number of key stakeholders including West Berkshire District Council and the Newbury Town Council, the draft Vision has been made publicly available for comment as part of the second round of public consultation and engagement. Analysis of the feedback received has resulted in the Vision being further refined ahead of Stage 2.

Stage 2A: Presentation & Refinement of Proposals

A series of deliverable proposals have been designed to achieve the Vision objectives. The team have undertaken an iterative and collaborative process to refine each proposal with key stakeholders and to devise 'optimal' proposals, rather than 'preferred' proposals.

Stage 2B: Action plans, Funding & Delivery

This stage has involved finalising the proposals and confirming the overall masterplan for the town centre based on the findings from the previous stages and the stakeholders' needs and aspiration shaped through extensive consultation. The final document advises on the short, medium and longer-term actions required to deliver the Vision and identify potential funding sources to deliver the specific proposals.



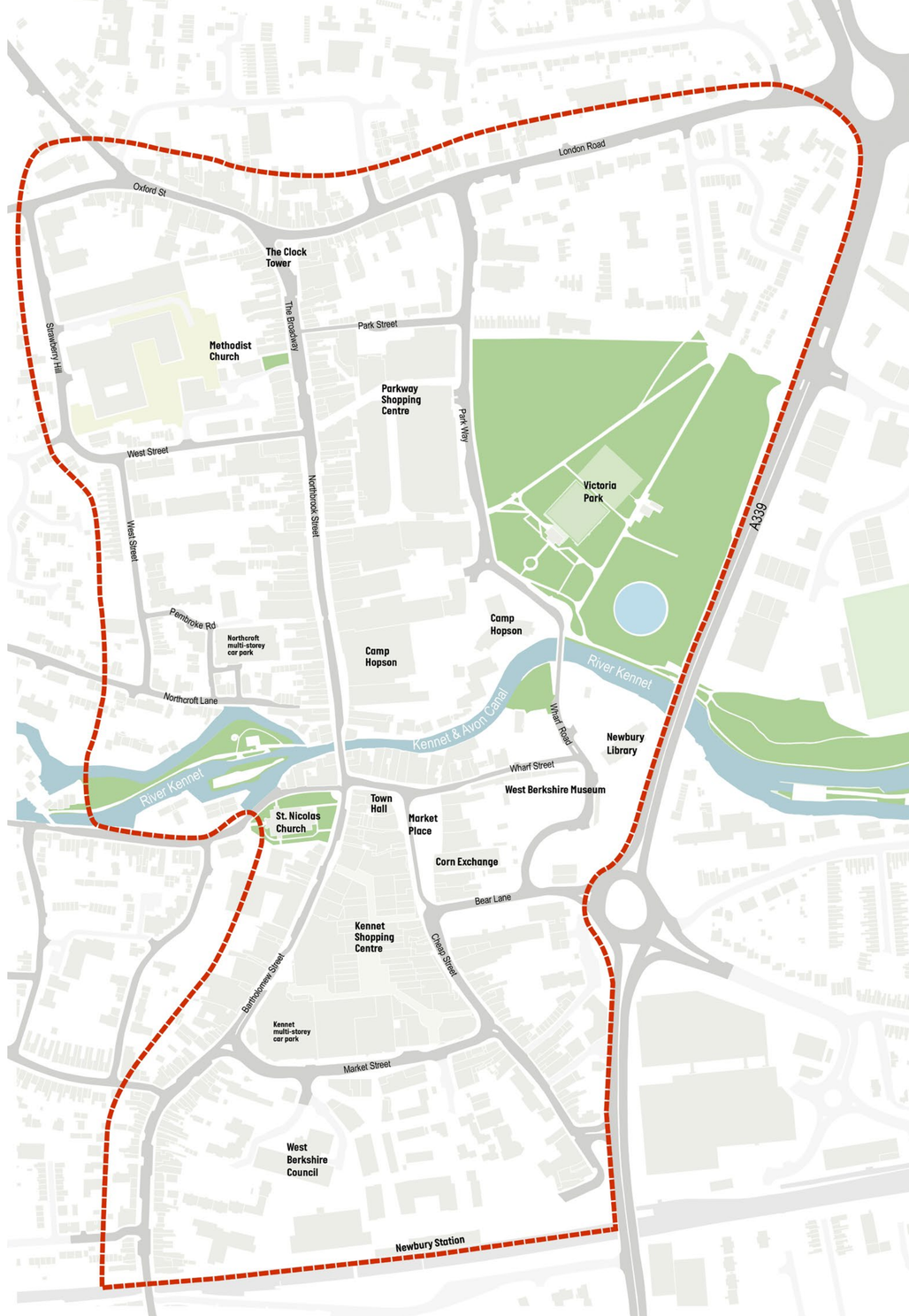
Introduction
Study Area

The Study Area focuses on the town centre of Newbury, centred around the ‘Crossroads’ where Bridge Street crosses the Kennet and Avon Canal. The challenges facing town centre retail have resulted in the decline of high streets across the UK, evident by rising town centre vacancy rates and reduced footfall.

Consequently, over time, town centres’ reliance on retail has had a detrimental impact on their functionality. As mentioned in Beyond Retail Taskforce’s report ‘Beyond retail: Redefining the shape and purpose of town centres’, town centres must be rebalanced and repurposed to deliver a range of different and complementary uses, including community, leisure, commercial and residential.

In Newbury, these opportunities to deliver multifunctional uses are not confined to the main retail streets currently perceived as the town centre street network, specifically Northbrook Street, Bartholomew Street, Market Place and Cheap Street. Instead, this masterplan embraces the opportunity to extend this network of streets within the existing geographical limits of the town centre to increase opportunities for social interaction, economic growth and community activities.

The masterplan will seek to improve connections through to the Wharf, the Canal and create better linkages through to Victoria Park, to make the park feel more integrated within the centre, as well as improving accessibility to Newbury’s Lanes and Yards.



An extensive consultation process including two public surveys, receiving a combined total of over 5,000 responses, as well as a series of conversations and workshops with local stakeholders, businesses, resident groups, students, and other local organisations, have helped shape this Vision and masterplan.

The survey results highlight that those who know Newbury best, those that live, and work in the town are welcoming of change. Out of the 4,095 respondents to the initial public survey, only 182 people wished for the town to stay as it is.

Evidence nationally shows that the town centres which will 'bounce back' most effectively from the impact of the pandemic are those with strong local identities and connections with their local communities. 'Multi-functional' centres with a good leisure, community and cultural offer are less heavily reliant on retailing and more resilient to change. Town centre living and a strong employment base is also a key asset.

The evidence locally shows that Newbury has many of these characteristics. Residents value Market Place, Northbrook Street and St Nicholas Church, the canalside, the parks and green spaces. They value Camp Hopson and the independent shops and the range of restaurants and coffee shops, complemented by the national retailers in Parkway and the Vue Cinema.

The public survey highlights that Newbury is valued as a mid-sized market town, with a good range of town centre amenities, and convenient access to both urban centres (London, Reading and Bristol) and rural environments. But it also emphasises several weaknesses in the town centre, and a desire to address them. These weaknesses relate particularly to the make-up and balance of the shopping, cultural and leisure offers, the amount and quality of open / public/ green space, and the lack of facilities for younger people.

Public

Initial online public survey
7th December 2020 - 31st January 2021
4095 responses

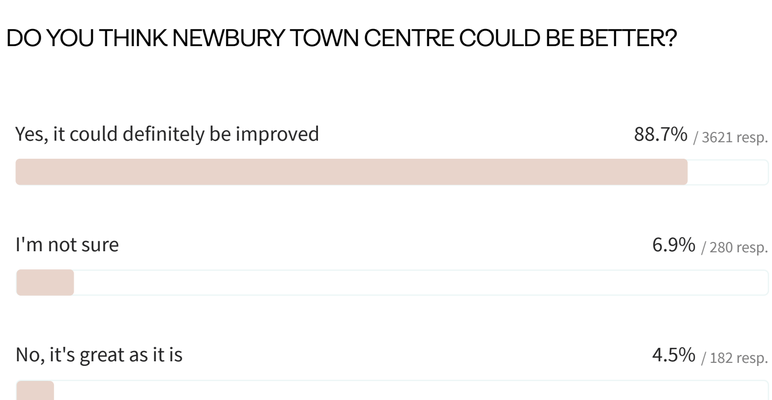
Draft Vision survey
28th June - 31st July 2021
1083 responses

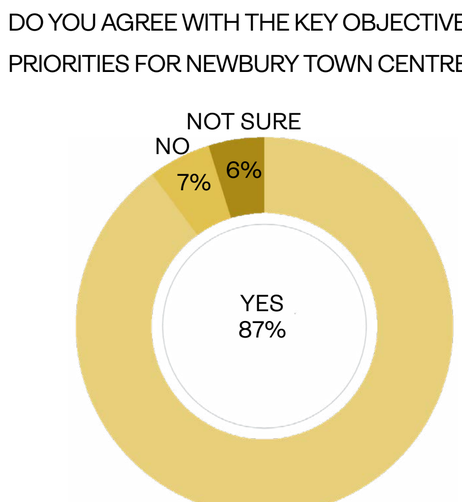
Draft Vision public engagement
22nd July 2021

Stakeholder

Discussions & workshops with:

- Newbury BID
- Berkshire Youth
- Owners of Parkway Shopping Centre
- Greenham Common Trust
- Corn Exchange
- Watermill Theatre
- Newbury City Arts
- College Students





Key Messages

• There are a wide variety of favourite places within the town centre, with independent shops and restaurants, cultural venues, and green spaces being favoured over large shopping destinations such as Parkway. This is in line with the national trend for multi-purpose town centres that offer a range of experiences alongside retail.

• Young people are more likely to visit the town during the day to eat and drink but are less likely to visit for a specific cultural activity. This is likely a result of a lack of cultural activities currently, as their desire for improved cultural space and importantly their desire for more 'spaces for young people to hang out' was nearly 50% compared to 22% of the wider population.

• People living locally use the town centre more in the evening, walk more, visit more often, and spend more. People living close to the town centre particularly benefit the evening economy.

• Overall reliance on the car is 66% (people driving or being driven) but for people outside Newbury it is almost 90%. By comparison – for those living in Newbury it is a reasonably even split between driving and walking/cycling. This shows that we can shift local people away from the car, particularly with a big increase in town centre living.

• Young people currently are more likely to visit a few times per month rather than a few times per week, as opposed to the overall response which was equally split between a few times a week, once a week and a few times per month.

• Local residents are more supportive of Northbrook Street being permanently pedestrianised.

• Top 5 priorities include more local and independent shops, cafes and restaurants, more green space and access to the canal, better spaces for public events and festivals, more street furniture and planting. All this backs up national surveys that show a shift towards an importance of green spaces, al fresco dining and a shift to independent retail.

• U25s top four priorities are spaces for young people to hang out, more independent shops, more green space and access to the canal, and more independent cafés and restaurants.

The Vision and masterplan have come out of an inclusive design process, which has engaged all stakeholders of Newbury, to create a common sense of direction that responds directly to the needs and wants of the local community. However, this report has little to no weight in the statutory town planning process. In order to attract weight, the document must be turned into a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD will enable the District Council to apply weight to the objectives and policy guidance within it to successfully implement the vision for Newbury and the placemaking and masterplan proposals, to ensure Newbury serves as a multi-functional centre, well placed to respond to change for years to come. The SPD will also outline principles that must be followed by developers bringing forward proposals within the town centre.

Following the public examination and formal adoption of the Local Plan Review (anticipated in Winter 2022/23), the draft SPD will be subject to a formal six week round of consultation undertaken by West Berkshire District Council prior to adoption. Once adopted, the SPD will set the formal planning framework for the future regeneration and development of the town centre. At the time of writing, we anticipate the adoption of the SPD in 2023.

2

NEWBURY TODAY ~
POLICY AND ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Planning Policy

Local planning policy for Newbury is contained within the adopted Development Plan: the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2006 – 2026), adopted in July 2012, alongside the Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document, adopted in May 2017, and the saved policies of the Local Plan 1991-2006, amended in 2012 and 2017.

The Council have begun a review of their Local Plan to cover the period up to 2037, and their emerging Draft Plan was published in December 2020. Adoption of the Local Plan Review 2020 – 2037 was scheduled for December 2022, however the process had been delayed due to revisions to national planning policy in July 2021.

The Core Strategy is based on a number of key strategic objectives, including to support housing growth by delivering at least 10,500 homes by 2026 and ensuring the provision of affordable and market housing to meet local needs. The Core Strategy seeks to support economic growth, whilst ensuring that the infrastructure needs (including community services and facilities) of the district are met. Local policy seeks to deliver vibrant town centres that meet a range of shopping needs. The Core Strategy aims to create a strong network of well-connected, multifunctional green spaces and deliver a sustainable transport network, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport in accordance with the district's focus on tackling climate change. Finally, future development must protect, conserve and enhance the local distinctive character, heritage and identity of the district.

Spatial Strategy

The Core Strategy sets out a clear vision for Newbury:

- Newbury will retain its traditional market town heritage whilst undergoing infrastructure improvements and development and renewal or commercial use and housing, to create a vibrant 21st century centre.

- Newbury will continue to fulfil its key role as the administrative centre and major town centre for the district, with a wide range of retail, employment, leisure and community services and facilities.

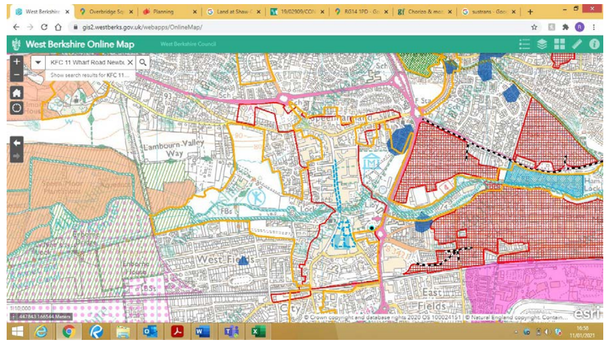
- Newbury's accessibility in terms of access to rail and to the strategic road network will mean that it remains a key focus for business investment and development.

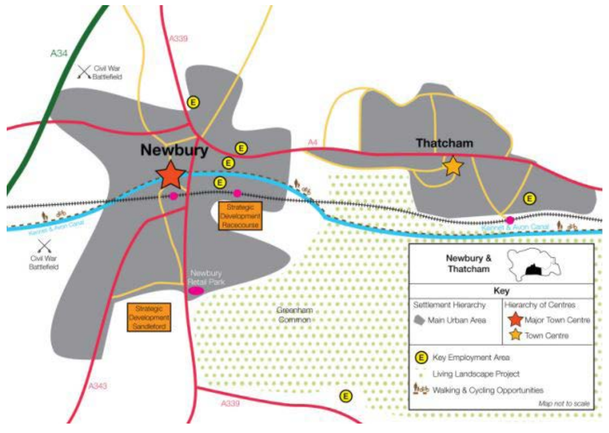
- Newbury will build on its existing strengths and historic legacy to reinforce its district identity and differentiate its shopping centre from other town centres in the region.

- Tourism will play a bigger part in the town's economy.

- Open spaces will be better linked to improve access for pedestrians and cyclists within the town and to improve public access to countryside on the fringes of town which will continue to form an important recreational resource.

Specific policy relating to Newbury, particularly the town centre, supports improvements to Victoria Park, including improved linkages through to Northbrook Street to help to enhance the provision of open space in the town centre. The Wharf area will also be enhanced and developed as an extension to the cultural quarter of the Market Place, providing new open space and becoming a focus for cultural activities and outdoor events. The Market Place will continue to be developed as a high quality café and leisure quarter and Market Street developed as an 'urban village', a mixed use but predominantly residential area. Improvements will also be made to the Kennet and Avon Canal to support its landscape and recreational role and to ensure the canal makes a strong, positive contribution to the character and heritage of the town centre.





Housing

The Core Strategy provides guidance on the scale of new housing development to be permitted within Newbury, which is anticipated to be 5,400 new homes over the plan period, particularly where there is significant development potential on previously developed land in the town centre and periphery.

Design

Local planning policy seeks to create safe environments that address crime prevention and promote community safety; ensure environments are accessible to all, whilst giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists; and make efficient use of land whilst respecting the density, character, landscape and biodiversity of the surrounding area. Opportunities to deliver a mix of uses, buildings and landscaping should be considered, and opportunities to display public art will be supported. Historic and cultural assets must be conserved and enhanced and opportunities to display public art will be supported. Development proposals must also consider opportunities to provide, conserve and enhance biodiversity and create linkages between green spaces and wildlife corridors where possible.

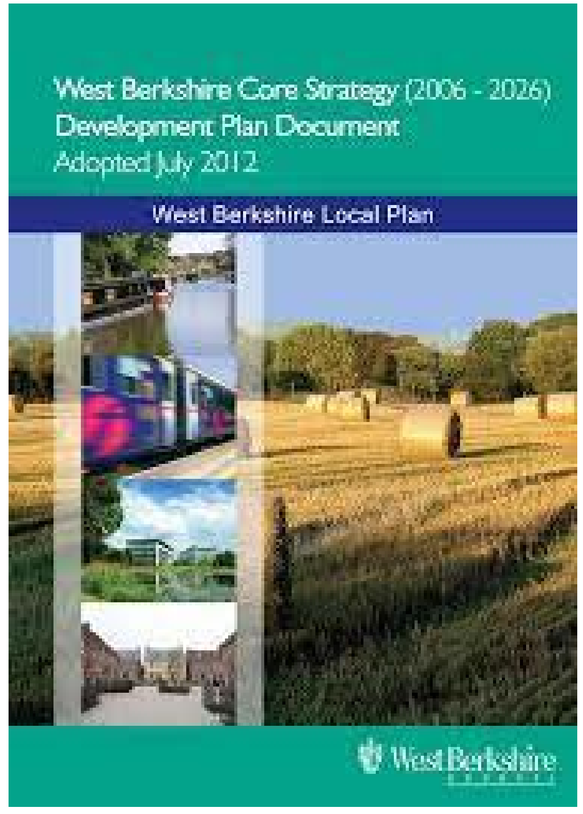
Transport and Accessibility

Demand for travel across Newbury will be managed and accessibility to sustainable transport opportunities increased by improving choice to a range of different transport modes. Additionally, measures to improve and manage flows along the A339 and A4 will be supported. Local planning policy also supports the provision of a range of facilities associated with different transport modes, including public transport, walking, cycling and parking provision, and seeks to promote opportunities for healthy and safe travel, minimise the impact of all forms of travel on the environment and mitigate the impact on the local transport network and strategic road network

Heritage and Historic Environment

Newbury Town Centre is allocated within a Conservation Area, and consequently, any proposals must accord with the Newbury Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal, which is currently being prepared. Opportunities will be taken to support and enhance Newbury's townscape whilst conserving and enhancing the centre's designated and non-designated heritage assets. Existing 'eyesore' buildings may provide redevelopment opportunities and improving the appearance of key gates to the town to enhance Newbury's identity will be supported.

However, regard must be given to the sensitivity of the area to change, ensuring that new development is appropriate in terms of location, scale and density in the context of the existing settlement form, pattern and character.



Green Infrastructure

The Core Strategy aims to protect and enhance the District's existing green infrastructure, by providing for high quality and multifunctional open spaces of an appropriate size, whilst enhancing links to the existing green infrastructure network.

Retail and Commercial Uses

Any proposals for the change of use from retail uses to other uses within the primary shopping frontages of Newbury, specifically a portion of Northbrook Street and the area occupied by the Kennet Centre, will not be supported by the Council where they would result in a concentration of non-retail uses that would harm the viability of Newbury's town centre.

In relation to the town's commercial uses, Newbury will be the main focus for business development over the plan period to ensure the vitality of the District's economy is maintained. Additionally, the emerging Local Plan Review states that new office and retail development will be directed to Newbury Town Centre. The Council will also support proposals in town centres which incorporate local community and cultural uses, to support the vibrancy and economic sustainability of these centres.

Flood Risk

Due to the location of the Kennet & Avon Canal, that runs through the centre of Newbury, a large portion of the town centre, whilst benefiting from Flood Defences, is located in Flood Zone 3, particularly north of the Canal and south of London Road.

Socio-Economic Overview

• Newbury has a total population of just over 42,000, which has increased by 19% between 2011 and 2020.

• 19%% of Newbury's population is aged 65 and over, up 25% since 2011.

• Incomes are relatively high in Newbury, with the total annual household income averaging £51,880.

• The majority of Newbury's population are either in very good or good health (84.4%), which is slightly higher than the regional average for the south east (83.6%).

• Although slightly below the regional average of 74%, levels of economic activity are relatively high in Newbury, with 71.1% of the town's economically active population (aged between 16 and 74) in employment.

• The majority of Newbury's residential properties are owned, equating to 62%.

• The area maintains low levels of deprivation

Demographics

According to the mid-year estimates published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) in 2020, 42,083 people live in Newbury. 60% of the population are of working age (between 18 and 64), marginally higher than the regional average for the south east. 19% of Newbury's population is aged 65 and over, up 25% since 2011.

Economy & Employment

In recent decades, Newbury has seen significant growth in the technology, research and creative sectors, supported by the market town's prime location along the M4 corridor. The 2018 Tech Nation Report identified Newbury as leading Britain's tech boom on the basis of its digital density, 15 times higher than that of London, and consequently the town is becoming the most tech specialised local economy in the UK.

According to an article published by the fDi, a world-leader in investment promotion and economic development solutions, Newbury featured in its European Cities and Regions of the Future 2020/21. Based on its economic potential, human capital and lifestyle, cost effectiveness, connectivity and business friendliness, the town was ranked fifth in the Micro European Cities of the Future and ranked ninth in the Northern European Cities of the Future.

The District's recent Economic Development 2020-2023 also highlights the town's recognition as having more economic potential than any other UK small town. Newbury will be a focus for the district's economic development, helping to create a sustainable environment for both existing and future businesses to prosper.

Since 1985, Newbury has been home to Vodafone's UK headquarters and technology hub for the UK, and across its 5 different business parks, supports a wide variety of businesses including Micro Focus, Newbury Investments, Hitachi, Rebound Technology and Sovereign Housing. In Newbury, employment sections focused on finance, business services, ICT and administration account for 33.8% of jobs, with the largest subsector, Information and Communication, accounting for 13.5% of total employment.

However, over recent years, Newbury has seen a decline in town centre office stock, a large proportion of which has been lost to office to residential conversion through permitted development rights, and jobs, which have moved to out of town locations. As a result, Newbury's office market is characterised predominantly by more traditional, outdated, non-purpose built office space above existing town centre retail units and out of town centre business parks, offering larger, more modern facilities, including at Newbury Business Park. Since the end of 2018, this has created a Town Centre/Out of Town office take-up split of 13%/87%.

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted office working practices for the longer-term, normalising remote working and many companies are now embracing a more 'hybrid' way of working. Employees have developed new expectations around flexibility, working conditions and work-life balance and a hybrid model is now emerging where companies are balancing the efficiencies and benefits gained by remote working with the benefits of social interaction and collaboration created by working with others in an office environment. A large number of organisations are rethinking their working arrangements. Many companies no longer require large city centre offices and are reaping the cost-savings in favour of a more flexible workspace model in more suburban locations.

Research by Workthere shows that the popularity of flexible office spaces in suburban locations outside of city centres is expected to rise as a result of an increased work-life balance and reduced commuting time. Their research points to the fact that town centres with a poor cultural and creative base are less likely to attract these businesses. It is important that Newbury builds on its cultural momentum, to firstly attract co-work space operators to Newbury, similar to the local operator Myworksport, who have identified a requirement for up to 20,000sqft of new serviced office space within Newbury town centre, but also attract start-ups, businesses and people looking for occasional workspace closer to home to occupy these spaces.

These operators will benefit from the town's relatively high levels of employment, with 71% of the town's economically active population (aged between 16 and 74) being in employment, only slightly lower than the regional average of 74%.

Housing Market

Newbury benefits from a strong residential market, with average house prices standing at slightly over £400,000, up £50,000 on the District's average. Demand for properties has increased by 15% since July 2020, with the market benefiting from the rise in people moving out of London and other cities within commuting distance of Newbury to take advantage of the increased flexibility of emerging working patterns. When once there was a desire to live close to your place of work, buyers are increasingly looking for larger properties in more suburban locations, combined with more open space and affordability, whilst still benefiting from good transport connections into business districts, making Newbury an attractive location. However, stakeholder feedback from Berkshire Youth highlighted that rising house prices in Newbury are pricing out locals who are increasingly unable to afford properties in the area.

Newbury has a variety of residential streets in the town centre, within close proximity to the main shopping streets. These are typically concentrated with semi-detached and terraced dwellings built in the 18th and 19th century, as well as more recent higher-density apartment buildings. The concentration of flats will continue to increase, proven by the approved new-build and proposed pipeline residential development within the town centre, including Grainger's 232 dwelling Market Street development currently under construction, the proposed housing as part of Lochailort's Eagle Quarter redevelopment and the London Road Industrial Estate.

The proposed redevelopment of Kennet Centre, if approved, will see residential units delivered above retail, similar to the mixed-use Parkway scheme, completed in 2011, which delivered 147 residential apartments alongside 37 affordable units above the existing shopping centre. The town also benefits from a number of schemes specifically catering for Newbury's older population, including Churchill Retirement Living's Avonbank Lodge on West Street, as well as Eden Retirement Living's Pearl House on Bartholomew Street.

The volume of new-build and pipeline residential developments either proposed or under construction proves the popularity of Newbury for developers, attracted by strong house prices and increasing property demand.
The vacant Bayer office premises, which has recently been sold, has prior approval for the building's conversion into 191 flats through permitted development rights. David Wilson Homes also has a strong interest in Newbury, and is currently delivering schemes at Cherry Blossom Meadow, The Chase at Newbury Racecourse and Willows Grange.

Given the scale of development coming forward across the town, it is important that the residential offer within the centre continues to cater for all needs, by delivering a greater diversity of dwelling types and tenures, including affordable units for first-time buyers, to help to create a liveable, thriving and sustainable centre.

Retail, Community and Leisure Market

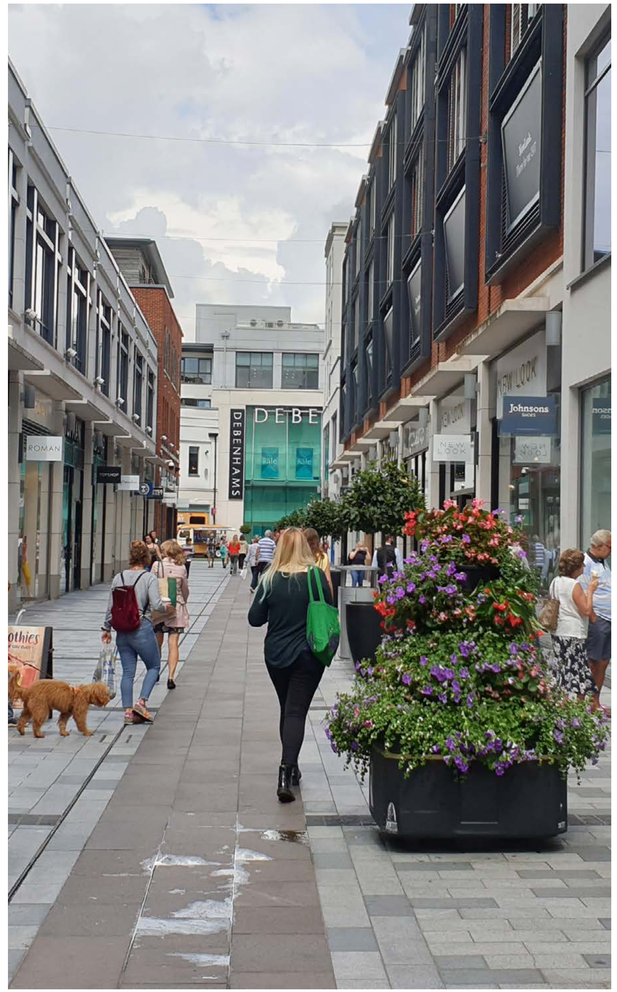
Newbury boasts a traditional market town heritage and alongside Reading, is the focus for retail and commercial leisure activity within the district. These operators are supported by the Newbury Business Improvement District (BID), which was set up in 2012 by local businesses for local businesses to enable town centre operators to continue to thrive. The BID not only aims to support existing and new businesses but also seeks to increase footfall and engagement with these businesses through positioning and promotion of their 'Visit Newbury' brand, to establish Newbury as a go-to destination for both businesses and visitors.

Similar to the whole of the UK, Newbury has seen a decline in national high street chain retailers and restaurants, including Debenhams, John Lewis Home, Bella Italia, ASK and Café Rouge, as shifting consumer preferences heightened by the pandemic move to online purchasing and more ethical, local consumerism supporting local, independent businesses.

Northbrook Street and Parkway, at the northern end of the centre, represent the core area of Newbury's retail offer, and alongside Bridge Street, are allocated as primary shopping frontage within local planning policy. These areas contain the highest proportion of national retailers, including Hotel Chocolat, Marks and Spencer and H&M.

The Kennet Centre, located at the southern end of the town, provides a second shopping centre facility, however it is older and noticeably more dated than Parkway and provides a lower quality retail offer. However, a planning application is awaiting determination for the redevelopment of the Kennet Centre to be rebranded as the Eagle Quarter. If approved, the scheme will reduce the overall volume of retail floorspace, whilst offering new flexible-use commercial uses of varying sizes to attract a mix of artisan and local operators, supported by flexible terms, to complement the national multiple retail offering more concentrated in the northern end of the town centre.

This independent-focused model has been successfully trialled by the Kennet Centre's Asset Management, Rivington Hark, who have seen the Kennet Centre's occupancy rates increase from around 65% to 95% over the last year, attributable to short term lets offered to local independents until the Centre closes in 2023.



Newbury's market town heritage is evident in the town's regular markets, including the Farmers' Market and Artisan Markets, held in the Market Place. These provide an opportunity for residents and visitors to shop ethically from independent businesses and ensures the long history of the Markets, believed to have been around since Anglo-Saxon times, is retained.

The 2017 West Berkshire retail study identified 47% growth in expenditure in restaurants and cafes, and 46% growth in expenditure on leisure activities in the Newbury area by 2036. The UK's 'experience economy' is on the rise and Newbury must increase its provision of independent food and drink operators, and cultural activities to take full advantage of the economic benefits.

The leisure use provision in the centre notably includes the Corn Exchange Theatre in Market Place and the Vue Cinema in the Kennet Centre. Whilst there are a number of chain restaurants dispersed throughout the town centre, the Newbury BID recognise that greater dining successes now lie within the independent sector, and whilst local operators make up the majority of the food and drink offering in the town, more financial incentives need to be in place to help these operators establish themselves and support the economic sustainability of the town.

Community uses in the town include the Waterside Centre, and the Museum and Library, both situated in the Wharf adjacent to the Canal. The Waterside Centre has benefited from a recent refurbishment of the building to deliver an outdoor seating area, informal social area and café. The Council have also recently appointed Shared Intelligence to carry out a Libraries Community Needs Assessment for library services across the district to better understand the current use of the facilities, whilst helping to improve and retain these vital community hubs by delivering a high-quality public experience.

Conservation

In early 2021, West Berkshire District Council instructed a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan to be undertaken for Newbury Town Centre, with the purpose of clearly defining the area's special architectural and historical interest; identifying ways to preserve and enhance the area's uniqueness and providing a clear context for future development within the area with respect to heritage matters. The Appraisal is nearing completion but is not yet finalised.

As part of the Appraisal, the Town Centre Conservation Area boundary is proposed to be narrowed to concentrate on the main areas of special architectural and historic interest in the town centre. With regards to the Masterplan area, Newbury Bridge falls within the revised Town Centre Conservation Area boundary, however the Wharf and the canal to the east of the bridge falls within the proposed new Kennet and Avon Canal East Conservation Area and the area to the west of the bridge comprises part of the proposed new Kennet and Avon Canal West Conservation Area.

Public Realm

In terms of issues of direct relevance to the Masterplan, the Conservation Area Appraisal recognises the need to enhance the existing public realm, particularly by improving the town centre wayfinding to better reflect the town's traditional character; retaining surviving historic boundary treatments; and improving pavement surfaces, including repairing traditional characterful surfaces, such as cobbles and sets.

Built form and Extensions

The Appraisal recommends that building extensions are sympathetic to the character and special interest of the Conservation Area and respectful to the character and appearance of the host building. Upward extensions of buildings will be discouraged, particularly where they would have an adverse impact on the heights, character and setting of existing buildings. There will be a presumption against the demolition of buildings that contribute positively to the Conservation Area. Any new development must respect existing building heights, should not be excessively tall or interrupt the overall roofline to restrict visibility to key views. Additionally, schemes should be designed to re-establish historic plot sizes and scale rather than deliver large homogenous blocks and should use carefully chosen materials, forms and features that reflect the traditional character of the area.

Retail Uses

Retaining retail uses within the conservation area boundary will be encouraged wherever possible to support the economic vitality of the centre, and where changes of use are proposed, an assessment of the impact of the use on the character and sustainability of the Conservation Area will be required. However, to make the centre visually more attractive, improvements to the shopfronts of these units are encouraged, but they must respect the character of the buildings, and use traditional materials and colours that are sensitive to adjacent shopfronts. The Appraisal also recognises that parking creates urban voids, which can be repurposed or enhanced by providing public amenity space, 'greening' measures and planting. Improvements to Victoria Park are also encouraged by increasing planting, trees and access to public spaces.

Relationship to the Masterplan

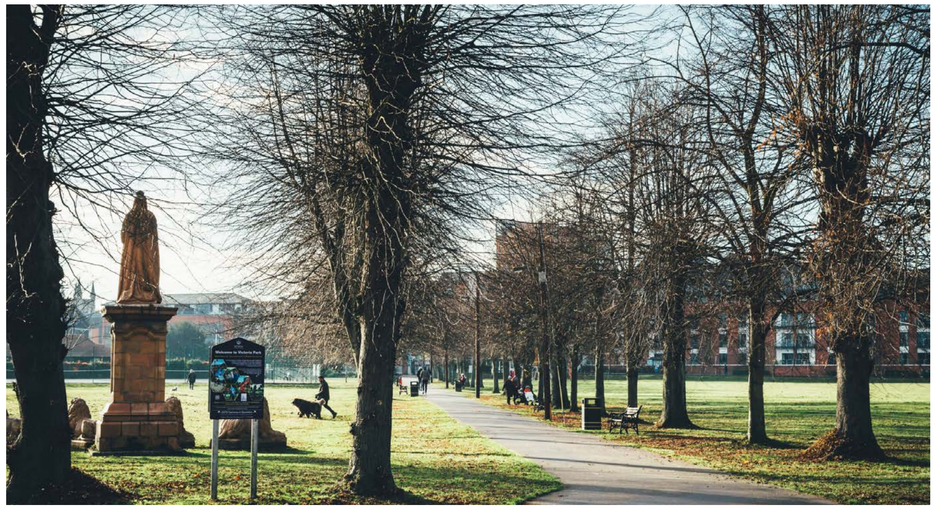
The findings and recommendations of the Appraisal, although not formally adopted by the Council at this stage, have informed the development of the Masterplan proposals, particularly the opportunity areas identified within the Appraisal, such as improving the sense of arrival to Newbury for pedestrians through public realm improvements; enhancing the town's interface with Victoria Park along Park Way; and promoting the sensitive redevelopment of the Kennet Centre.

NEWBURY TODAY ~
BASELINE ASSESSMENTS

Newbury Today
Introduction

Newbury has a rich heritage spanning many centuries, transforming from an early Saxon settlement into a town with the right to hold a fair and market during the 11th century. The town has evolved into a successful market town centred during the 13th century around the cloth trade, although this trade had virtually ceased by the 17th century. Newbury became an important coaching centre during the 18th and 19th centuries, due to its location on the old Bath Road and attracting those travelling from London to Bath, whilst also benefiting from its location on two intersecting roads and later the Kennet and Avon Canal.

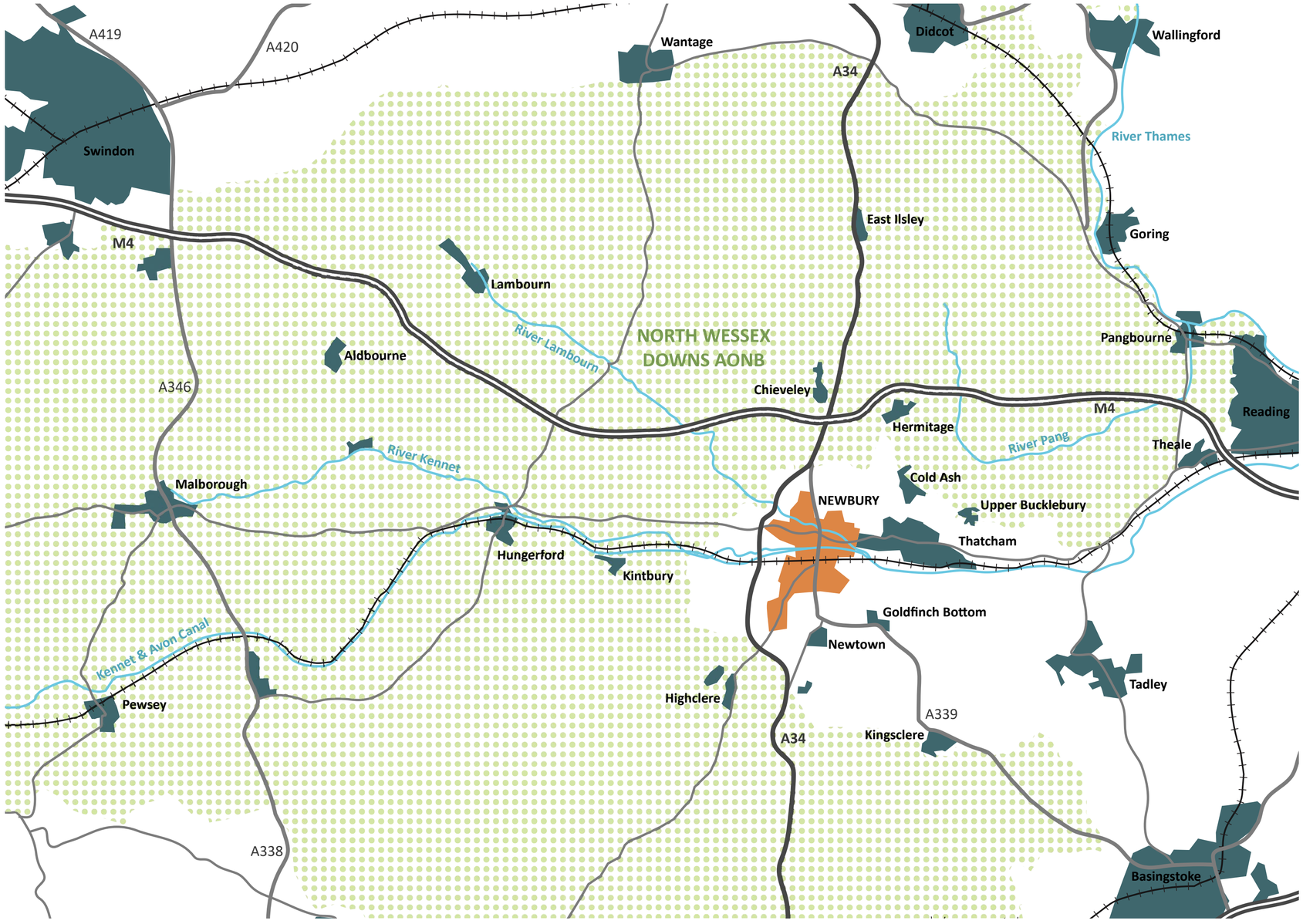
The town benefits from its historical buildings and rich architecture; green spaces and waterways; physical connections; established infrastructure; and a proud community of over 42,000 people. The following section will provide the context to the town, highlighting Newbury's historical past and existing conditions, including the town's urban structure and character, uses, connectivity, and socio-economic profile to help to inform the future direction of travel, whilst taking into account the planning policy context that informs future development within the town centre.



The study area reflects the Town Centre boundary as defined in the Newbury Town Plan and Design Statement. Our report does however have regard to the wider context and the different roles that Newbury town centre serves.

The Vision and masterplan need to recognise the increasing number of people that live within and immediately adjacent to the town centre, and how they are affected by any proposals.

West Berkshire District has a population of around 160,000. Whilst these areas contain local centres, alongside the town centre of Hungerford, the retail studies show that many residents within this wider rural area look to Newbury on a regular basis to meet their shopping, leisure, cultural and service needs. The town centre therefore has to ensure that it remains accessible and relevant to this population.



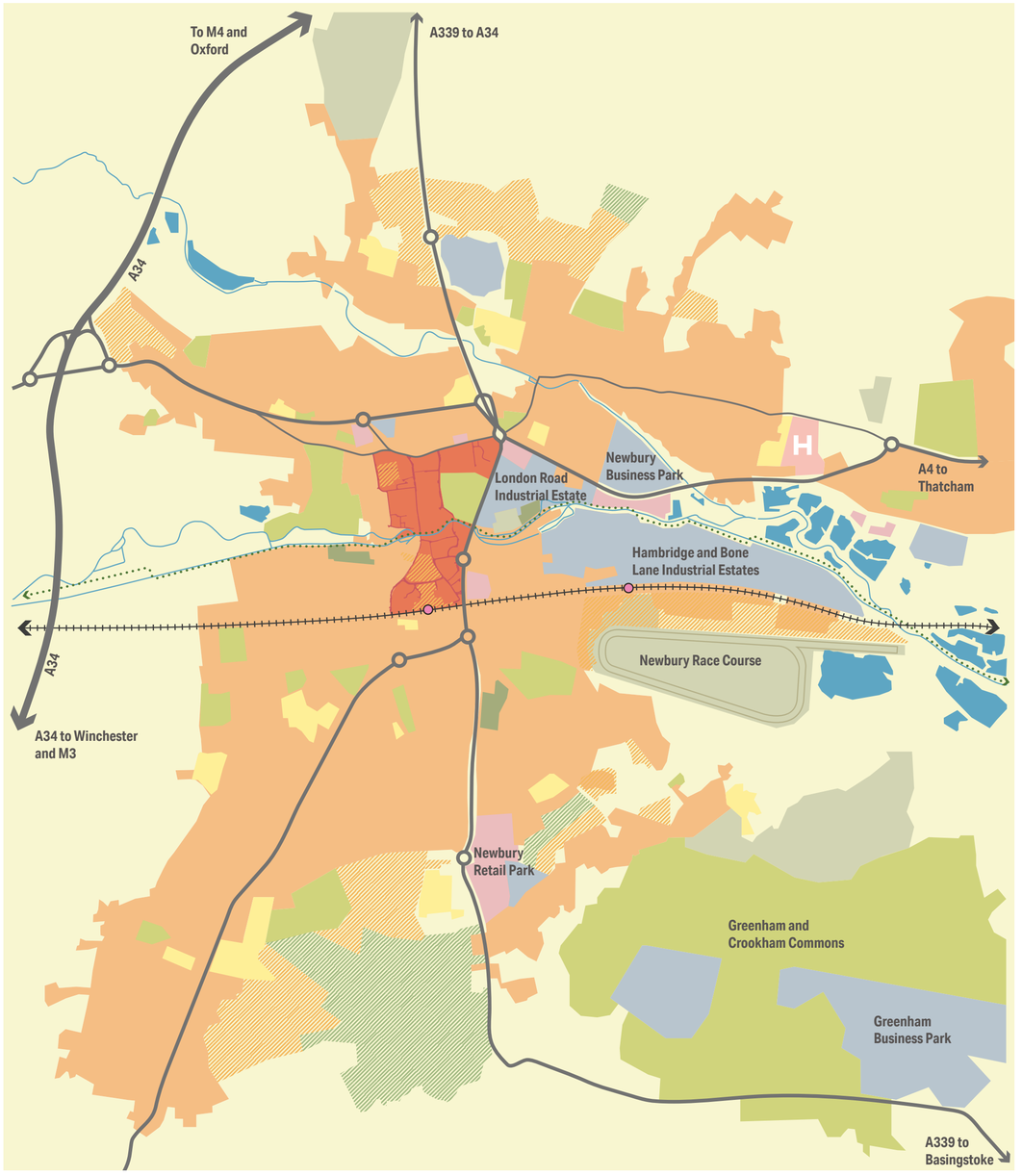
Newbury Town Urban Area

Newbury town has a population of 40,000, but for many shopping, leisure and service functions it is also the town centre for Thatcham residents. This gives it a combined population of approximately 70,000. Newbury town centre therefore needs to have regards to any needs of the population of Thatcham which are not being met by Thatcham town centre.

Although historically the major communication routes were east-west (London Road/A4, the canal/river corridor and the railway) the majority of residential growth has been north and south of the town centre. Crossing the barriers created by the railway line and the A4 corridor is therefore a factor in encouraging residents to walk and cycle into the town centre.

Employment has however been concentrated east of the town centre, between the A4 and the railway line/canal. The exception to this is the more recent development of Vodafone, located to maximise accessibility via the A339 and strategic road network.

There is a similar pattern of retail development outside the town centre, with a string of retail parks and supermarkets along the A4/railway line corridor but with the strongest competition coming from Newbury retail park located to the south along the A339 corridor.

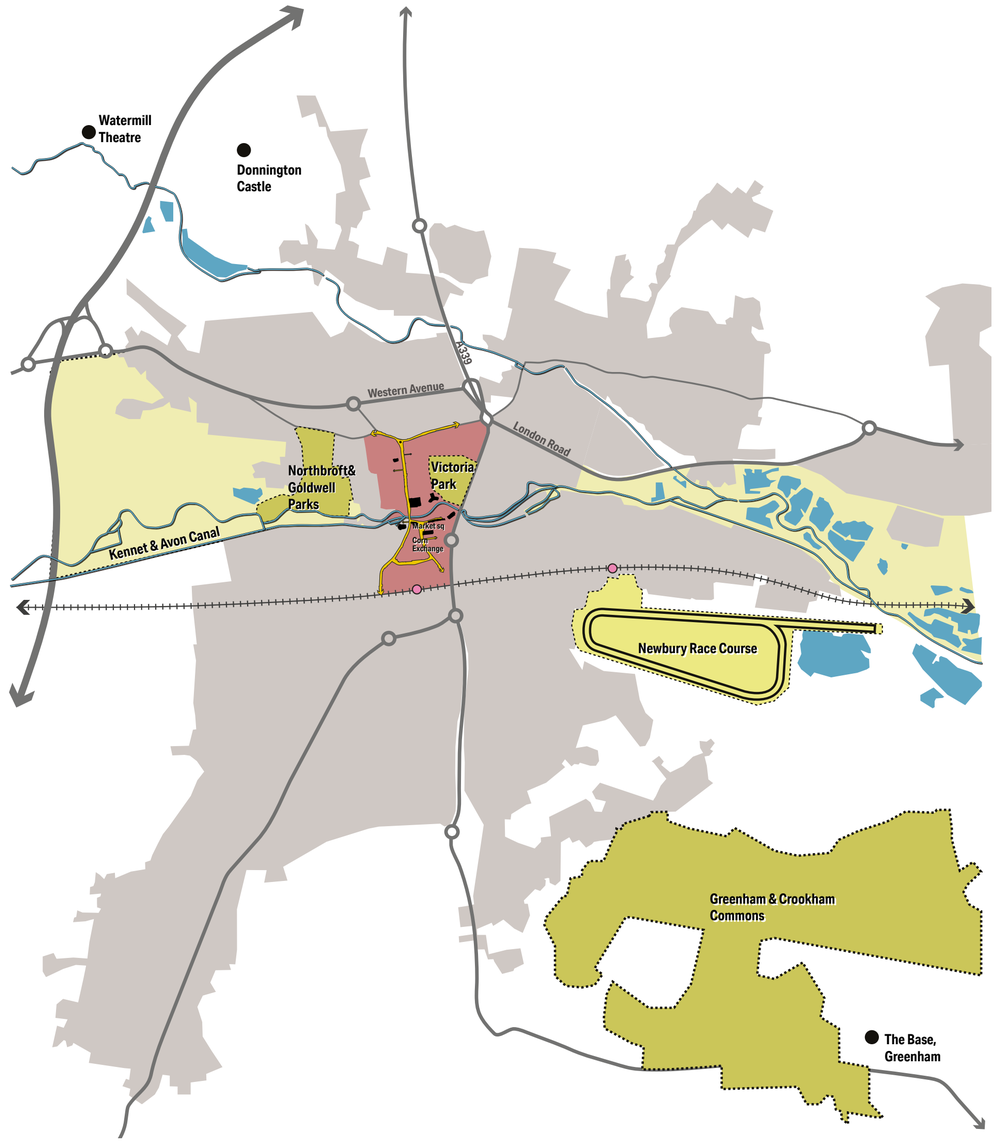


Newbury Townwide Destinations

Newbury town centre has a number of cultural, historic and key town centre attractions including the Corn Exchange, West Berkshire Museum, the Market square including its numerous artisan markets as well as the Canal and Victoria Park.

Outside of the town centre Newbury is also home to a number of venues and destinations that have the ability to attract large numbers of visitors at various times through out the year including Newbury Race Course, Greenham Common, Donnington Castle, the Watermill Theatre as well as the Kennet & Avon Canal and towpath and associated green spaces.

Improving connections, both physically and in terms of programming, and promotion across these sites will help to create a more dynamic Newbury and also help to support town centre businesses such as shops, restaurants and hotels.



Historic growth of Newbury

In Newbury historic east west connections such as the River, London Road, the Canal and Railway have brought growth and prosperity to Newbury while modern infrastructure such as the north/ south A339 have perpetuated movement past the town centre and created barriers in particular for pedestrians and cyclists.

Kennet River

Newbury developed around its key crossing of the Kennet River and its role as a market town. Its focus was around the River, St. Nicolas's Church, the market square with the latter two originally joined as one space. Its historic inverted 'Y' shaped street structure shaped early in the towns history provided key routes into and supporting the market space.

London Road

The growth of Bath as a spa town perfectly placed Newbury as a over night stop halfway between London and Bath. Coaching inns opened to service the passing trade pushing the focus north of the river along London Road. Providing another strategic east -west connection.

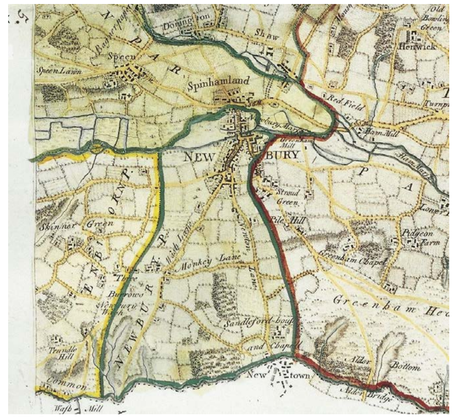
Canal / Railway

Construction of the Kennet and Avon Canal brought the focus back around the River. Development of the basin and Wharf buildings was undertaken to store bulky good and trade flourished. This was superseded by the development of the railway which sped up the movement of goods and people into Newbury again reinforcing another east-west corridor and a prominent point of arrival into the town centre.

A339

The arrival of the A339 constructed between 1950's - 80's severed Cheap Street and the connection to the Market Place. It also created a corridor which allowed for people to move quickly through Newbury without the need to stop in the town centre and created a barrier along the eastern edge of the town centre.

The heritage value inherent in the town centre is recognised by the Conservation Area designation. The Council has commissioned an Appraisal of the Conservation Area and a Management Plan (CAAMP), alongside this Masterplan. The outcomes and implications of the CAAMP are reflected in the Masterplan and have been referred to in more detail earlier in this Report.



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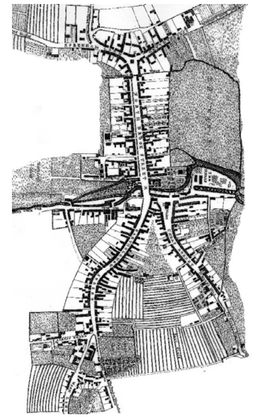
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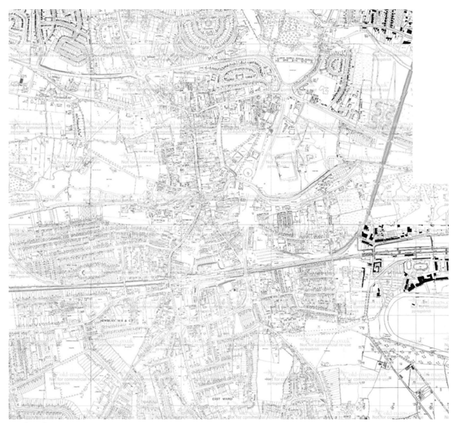
1880 - 1881

1933 - 1934


1967

1982

Newbury Today
Urban structure and townscape

Town centre structure

The Nolli plan differentiates between internal spaces (within buildings), private external spaces and the public external spaces. The external (white) areas are the places through which people arrive in the town, through which they move within a town and in which they are encouraged to linger and spend time within the town. They include spaces accessible by foot, bicycle, bus, car or boat. These public spaces, together with the quality of the buildings that surround them, are the areas which shape a visitor's perception of the civic quality of a town.

The basic Nolli plan indicates large areas of external space. The key element which stands out is the scale of space at Victoria Park and the Wharf. The second element is the importance of the east-west corridor created by the canal. These two areas provide the majority of the green space within the study area.

The north-south corridor created by the A339 dominates the plan, but the parallel corridor created by Northbrook Street, Bridge Street and Bartholomew Street is also a very strong feature. Apart from the canal, the only coherent east-west route is provided by London Road/Oxford Road/Oxford Street.

Key Messages

• Victoria Park and the Wharf stand out as the most significant areas of publicly accessible space. Market Place and St Nicolas Church are notable spaces of smaller scale.

Nolli diagram.

A plan showing the relationship between built form and publicly accessible space (including streets) by presenting the former in black and the latter as a white background (or the other way round)

CABE/DETR: By Design 2000

Newbury Today
Urban structure and townscape

Town centre structure

When the traffic-dominated public areas are added to the Nolli plan, a different message emerges for Newbury. The A339 and the Wharf area no longer appear as attractive public spaces, and reflect the fact that they are dominated by through traffic and parked vehicles.

Although Victoria Park remains as an important green space, the plan shows it is surrounded on three sides by traffic dominated areas.

Apart from the grounds of St Michael's Church, the only other pedestrian friendly areas of significant scale are the core shopping streets. Outside 10am-5pm these areas are reduced to (most of) Market Place, and the privately owned by publicly accessible shopping streets within the Parkway and Kennet Centre (Eagle Quarter) developments.

Key Messages

• Newbury's public spaces are heavily impacted upon by moving or parked vehicles. Only a small area of the town centre is traffic free during the day.

Views

Due to the long linear nature of Northbrook Street and the continuous nature of the building line there are limited views into or out of the core historic area of Newbury. While there are limited views to surrounding areas the gentle curve of Northbrook Street provides interesting views in both directions along its length. This is more prominent closer to the bridge where the topography rises and falls more dramatically to cross the river.

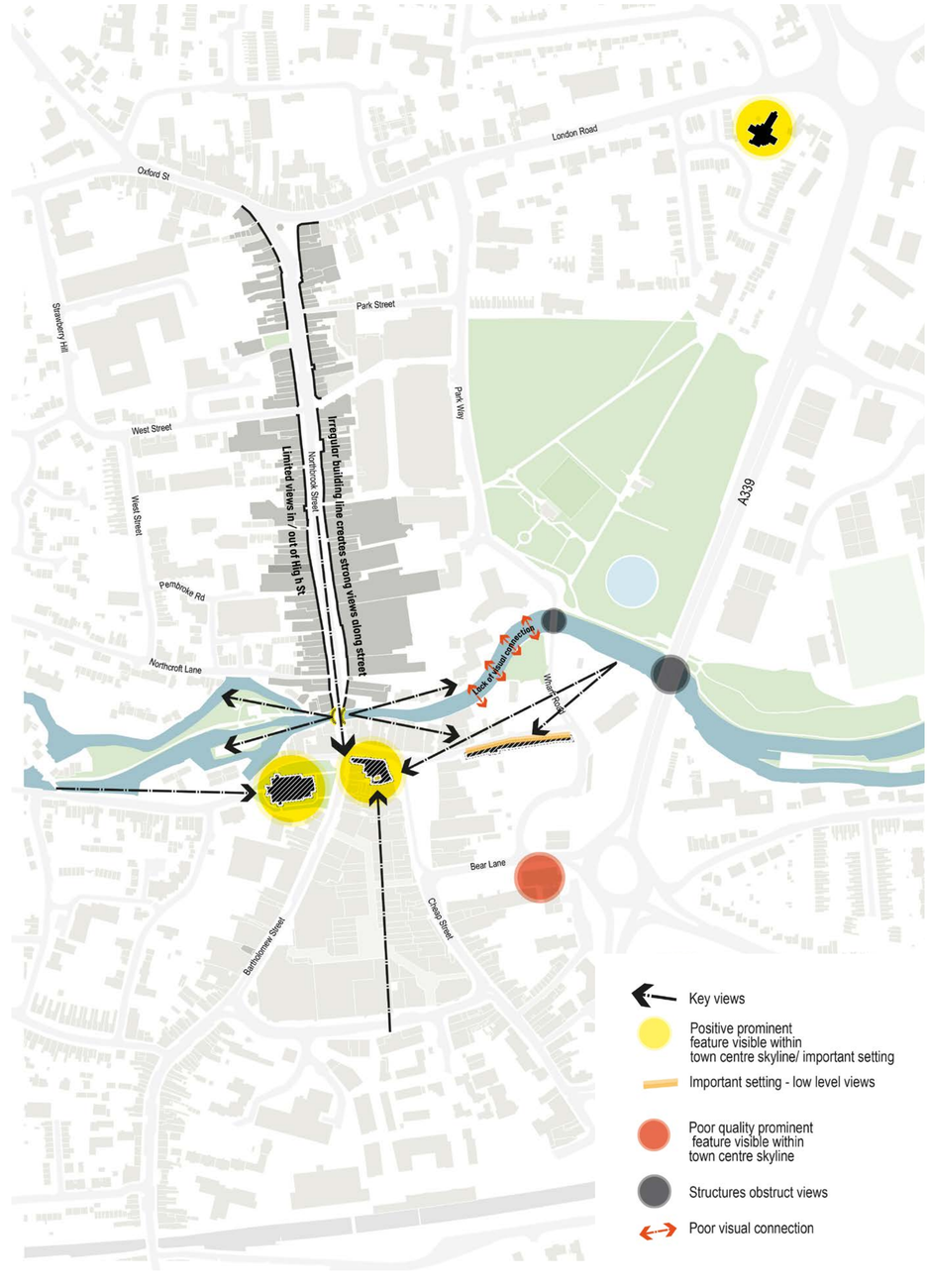
The bridge and its raised position above the water affords fantastic open views in both directions and is the key vantage point from which to view the canal within the town. The dramatics of the view are heightened as the approaches are both enclosed suddenly opening to reveal the surrounding landscape.

Historically there are very few tall buildings in the centre, with the maximum along core streets approximately 3 stories. This allows for strong views to key landmarks such as the Town Hall Clock Tower and the towers of both St. Nicolas and St. Joseph's. Their prominent position above the surrounding skyline making them visible from a number of vantage points.

The Museum building is another key landmark in Newbury. Its low, long linear shape is currently appreciated from the open environment of the Wharf area; however the public realm does little to reflect its importance.

The BT tower rivals the Clock and church towers for prominence on Newbury's skyline but its monolithic nature adds little to the skyline or as a welcome feature to visitors approaching on the A339.

"'The views to and from Newbury Bridge are a significant feature (but) the views into and out of the historic core of the town are limited. From a distance the prominent landmarks include the towers of St Nicolas and St Joseph's churches, the clock tower of the Town Hall and the late 20th Century telephone exchange building."
Historic Character Study



Key Messages

• Key landmarks such as St. Nicholas and Town Hall towers create positive landmarks for the centre clearly visible from various locations around the town.

• Long linear high street limits views into and out of the space.

• Strong views from the Bridge in both directions

• Museum building is very low in scale and there are strong views towards it from the Wharf area.

• Lack of access to the southern edge of the river and over grown green spaces as well as raised bridges break up views between riverside edges making people less likely to cross the river to explore.

Street Network

The character of the town centre is defined predominantly by the core street network of Northbook Street, Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street, the canal and Victoria Park.

As the only central street crossing of the canal, and the only shopping street providing views along the water, Bridge Street becomes a natural focal point for visitors in the town centre even though there is limited space to linger. The fact that there is only one crossing point also creates a sense of separation between areas north and south of the bridge.

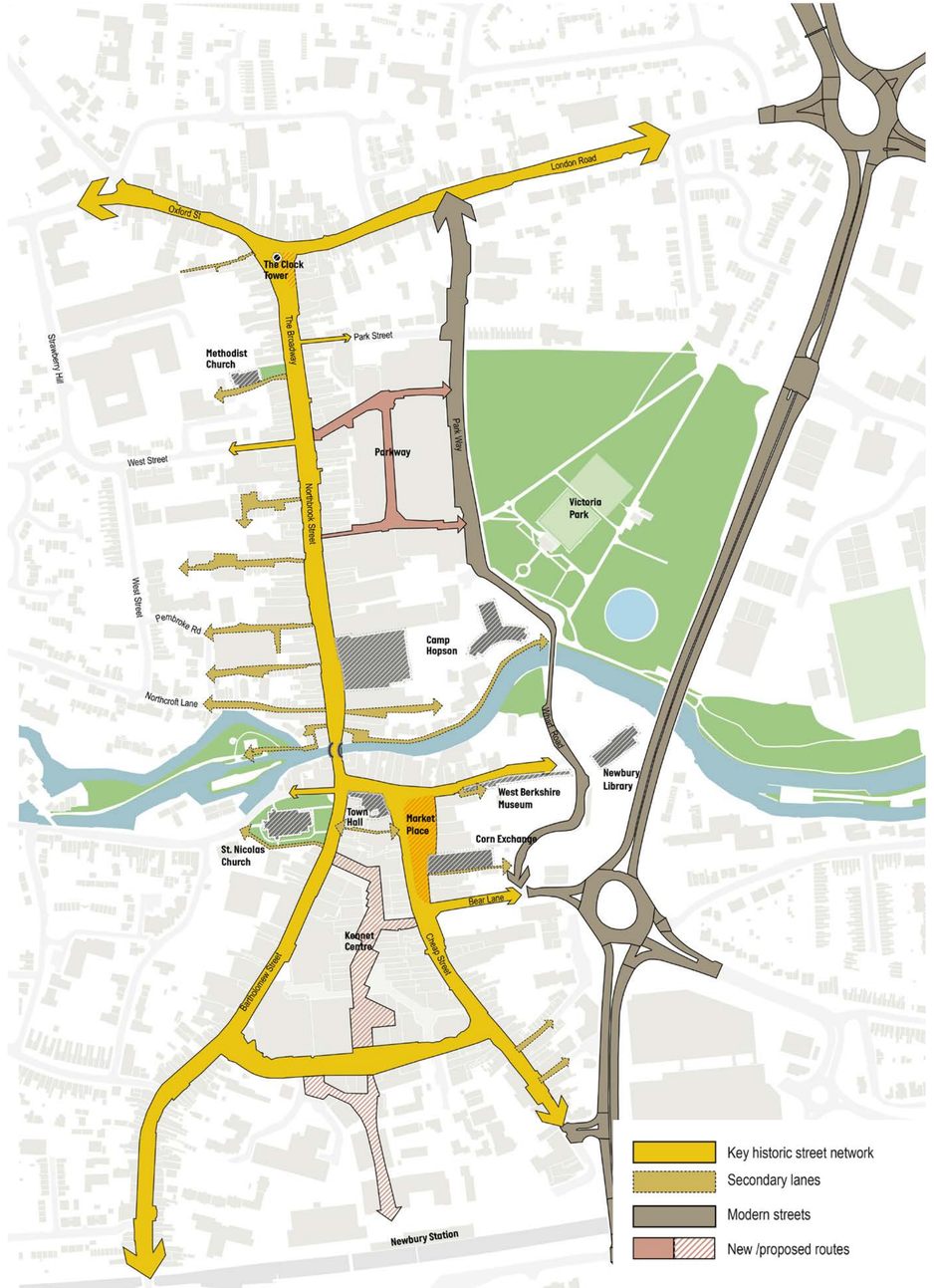
Although much of Northbrook Street is pedestrianised during the day, Market Place is the only significant public space in the town centre. It is an attractive square and a focus for civic and cultural uses, food and drink, markets and other events. The library and museum are important uses to the east of Market Place, but the connections are weak and Market Place as a result can feel on the edge of the town centre.

There is a strong, north-south, linear quality to the town, but with a variety of short lanes leading off the main streets. Some of these lanes are connected to other streets or lead to attractive spaces, but many end in poor quality car parks or service areas.

The Parkway scheme creates a network of pedestrian streets east of Northbrook Street but the connections to Victoria Park remain poor, interrupted by the barrier of Park Way. There are proposals to redevelop the Kennet Centre and create a more open network of streets, connecting to the Market Street redevelopment and the rail station. The principle of the street structure is positive, but could have a potential impact on pedestrian flow in Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street.

"Newbury has two particularly strong character traits: the historic market core and the 'garden suburbs'. The historic market core is reinforced by the historic street pattern, the character of the Market Place and the scale and materials used in the largely 18th and 19th century buildings fronting the Market Place, Northbrook Street, Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street."

Historic Character Study



Street Character

Within the core street network, there are a variety of characters.

At the northern end of the town centre, the 'Broadway' has a distinctive neighbourhood character, but the east-west route of Oxford Street and London Road has a grander character, reflecting its historic role as a coaching route. The quality of the street does however decline as it approaches the A339, and the hotels have an out of town character despite being 2 minutes walk from Northbrook Street or Victoria Park.

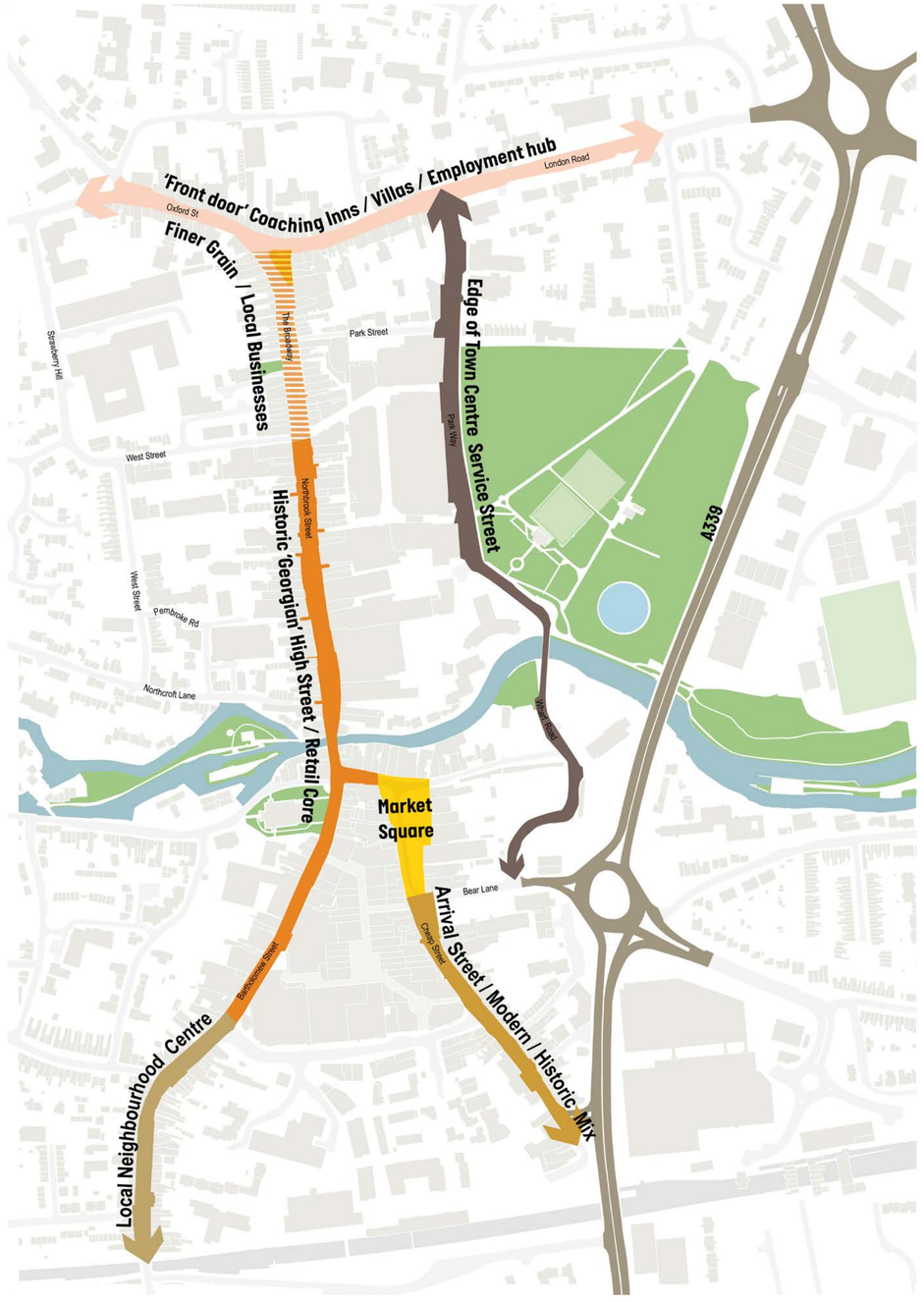
Park Way is an important arrival street for residents and visitors, on foot, cycle, car or bus. Connecting London Road to the canal and the Wharf, and running alongside Parkway shopping centre and Victoria Park, it has the potential to be a grand civic street. Currently however its character is more of a service route, providing access to car parks, service yards and the bus station.

Northbrook Street, Bartholomew St and Cheap street a contain buildings from both the 18th and 19th century. The plot based nature of development is a key characteristic of Newbury. A rich mix of architectural styles create well composed streets despite the mix of architectural periods. Larger building footprints tend to be found in the core area along Northbrook Street and Bartholomew Street. Desirable for national retailers this area has provided the core retail focus for Newbury. Further on the fringe building frontages tighten and the mix of uses broaden along both Bartholomew and Cheap Street which encompass more of a local neighbourhood feel .

Key Messages

- The historic streets combine to create a common sense of 'Newburyness' but have distinctive characters which can be reinforced.

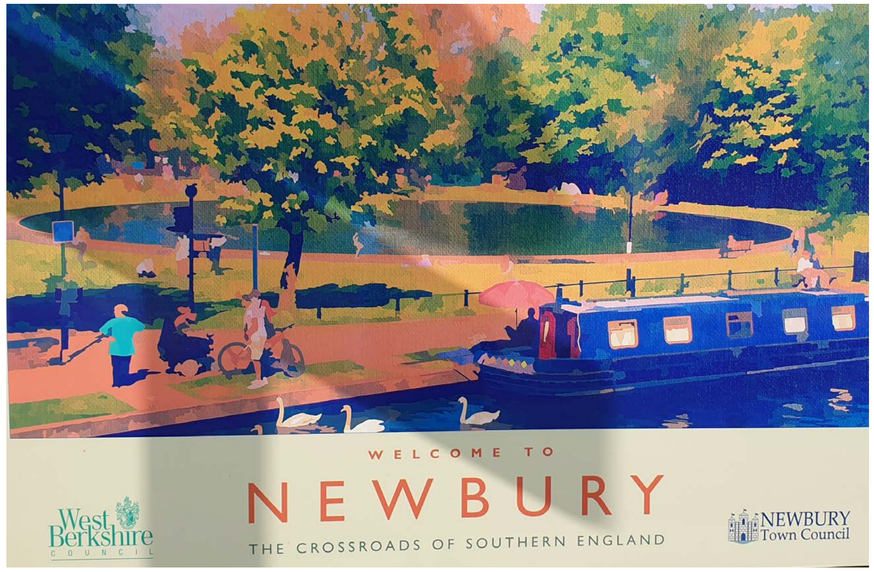
- The human scale of the town centre streets contrasts with the traffic dominated qualities of the A339.



Key Messages

• The town centre is very walkable, but linear rather than ‘compact’.

• As the only ‘town centre’ crossing of the canal, Bridge Street is a focus and the natural ‘crossroads’ of Newbury.



The slogan “Newbury – the Crossroads of Southern England” has been devised with the intention to highlight Newbury’s role as a town at the centre of innovation and creativity, open to outside influences, while retaining its strengths and character.
Newbury Town Plan

Public Space

The canal is an important accessible area of ‘public open space’ for Newbury as a whole. Within the town centre, the most important area is the Wharf which provides the main opportunity to relax and enjoy the waterfront.

On the opposite side of the canal, Victoria Park is the most significant green space in the town centre. Northcroft Park is an important recreation and leisure area for Newbury but does not function as a ‘town centre park’ in the same way. Victoria Park is directly adjacent to the new Parkway scheme, and 2-3 minutes walk from Northbrook Street, Bridge Street or Market Place.

Key Messages.

- Victoria Park is a major asset but its pedestrian connections could be improved, particularly from the town centre.
- Market Square is an attractive space, but improving connections to the Wharf and the Canal would help improve its vibrancy
- There is a possible shortage of space for events.

“The great asset of Newbury is its present parks, public open spaces, and allotments.”
Newbury Town Plan

Kennet & Avon Canal

Character

The canal changes character as it passes through the town centre.

West of Bridge Street the canal is rural in character, with open views to countryside. As it approaches the town centre there are strong views to the church and to Bridge Street.

In the core area it has a more urban quality, with buildings close to the water's edge. Views of the water, and along the water, are relatively limited.

As the canal reaches Victoria Park and the Wharf it again becomes more open, but with a 'civic' town centre quality. There are longer distance views to the water and along the water, and recreational use of the water.

East of the A339 the canal has a 'working' quality, with a marina and industrial buildings, alongside sport, allotments and residential use.

Canal Access

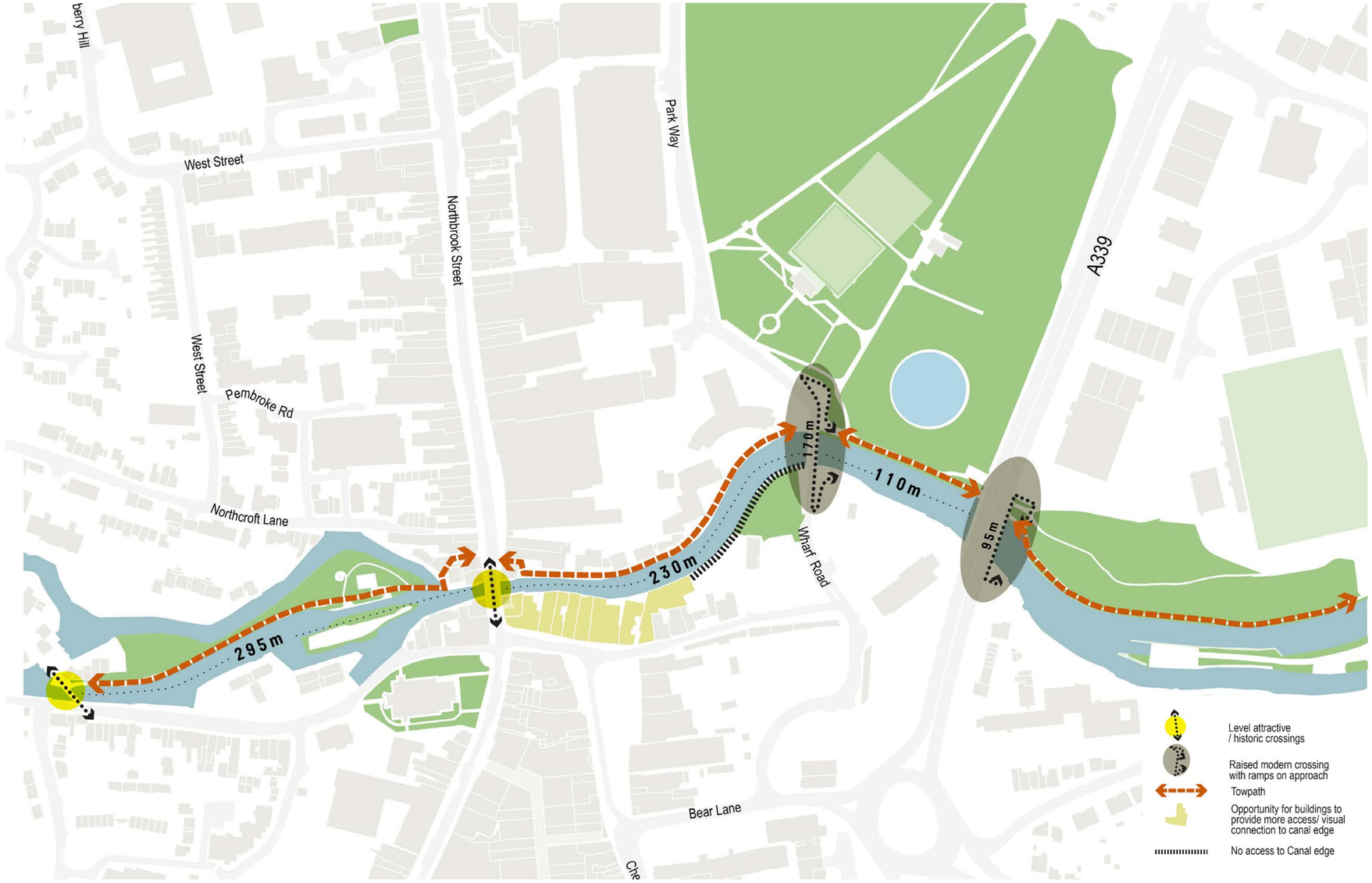
West of Bridge Street and east of the bus bridge there is reasonably access to the edge of the water, the only exception being the restricted access past the canoe club. In the core town centre area however, access is more limited and more complicated. There is no towpath on the southern edge, and access to the northern edge is gained via a relatively unattractive connection from Bridge Street.

There are three crossing points in the 400m stretch of what can be considered the town centre area of the canal. Accessing these crossings requires pedestrian to take a circuitous route away from the water. All three crossings have only a weak association with the water itself and only Bridge Street provides an attractive environment for pedestrians.

Key Messages.

• Access to the water for pedestrians and cyclists needs to be improved in the 'town centre' area of the canal.

• More attractive and convenient crossings for pedestrians would help encourage exploration of the canal corridor.



Newbury Today
Uses

Town centre living

Residential uses bring life to the town centre during the evenings and weekends, supporting local businesses and making the town centre feel more secure.

Newbury has a variety of residential streets in close proximity to the main shopping streets, and this will increase with the Market Street development (shown on the plan) currently under construction. The vacant Bayer office premises also have permitted development rights for potential conversion to apartments and there are proposals to provide additional residential through redevelopment of the London Road Industrial Estate.

The Parkway scheme has increased the number of people living on upper floors above ground floor retail, and it is likely that this will increase further with the proposed redevelopment of the Kennet Centre (Eagle Quarter).

The plan does however show a lack of town centre living in the core of the town centre, close to Market Place and along Northbrook Street. The new schemes under construction, with permitted development rights or currently out for consultation are also heavily dominated by apartments.

Key Messages.

• There is a variety of town centre housing within walking distance of the town centre. This is likely to increase significantly with a number of schemes at different stages of development. There may be concern however regarding the percentage of apartments proposed in the town centre and lack of diversity in the housing offer.

Newbury Today
Uses

Employment

Town centres with a strong employment base are predicted to recover quicker and stronger from the economic impact of the pandemic.

The core areas of employment are shown to the Oxford Road/London Road corridor, the rail station area and the London Road Industrial Estate. There is a relative lack of office or employment space in the core of the town centre. The Council offices are therefore an important ingredient in the town centre employment offer.

The Oxford Road/London Road corridor has a strong 'professional' office character, recognising the quality of some of the historic buildings along this route, but has lost significant employment in the former Bayer offices. The London Road Industrial Estate (and areas to the east) are a key employment area for the town, but likely to bring less direct expenditure to the town centre because of the barrier created by the A339.

"Newbury must provide opportunities to new business start-ups, growing businesses requiring new space, and businesses seeking to enter the area. More incubation hubs should be provided for start-up businesses and remote workers."
Newbury Town Plan

Key Messages.

• Newbury has lost some large office employers. There is potential for new office space (and residential) on the London Road industrial estate but for the town centre to benefit from this pedestrian connections need to be improved.

Newbury Today
Uses

Retail & Leisure

‘Multi-functional’ town centres which have a range of attractions and are less reliant on A1 shopping uses are less vulnerable to the changes in shopping patterns which are seeing a reduction in demand for retail space.

The variety of uses in Newbury town centre shows that it is reasonably ‘multi-functional’ but there are some clear weaknesses. The core of Northbrook Street and Parkway is heavily dominated by A1 retail (red) and its potential vulnerability has been demonstrated by the recent loss of Debenhams and John Lewis. The Kennet Centre has also been dominated by A1 uses, and at the time of the GOAD survey in 2018 suffered heavily from vacancies. It is notable that the redevelopment proposals significantly reduce the scale of A1 uses and focus on food and drink and independent businesses.

Those areas with the best mix of uses are the more ‘peripheral’ areas of Broadway/Oxford Street, Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street. Market Place also has a high percentage of food and drink uses (although these have suffered recently with the impact of the pandemic).
The small number of cultural uses are also concentrated close to Market Square and the Wharf, including the Corn Exchange, Museum and Library.

There is a mix of community uses in close proximity to the town centre, but an absence of secondary schools or colleges which can bring additional life and expenditure.

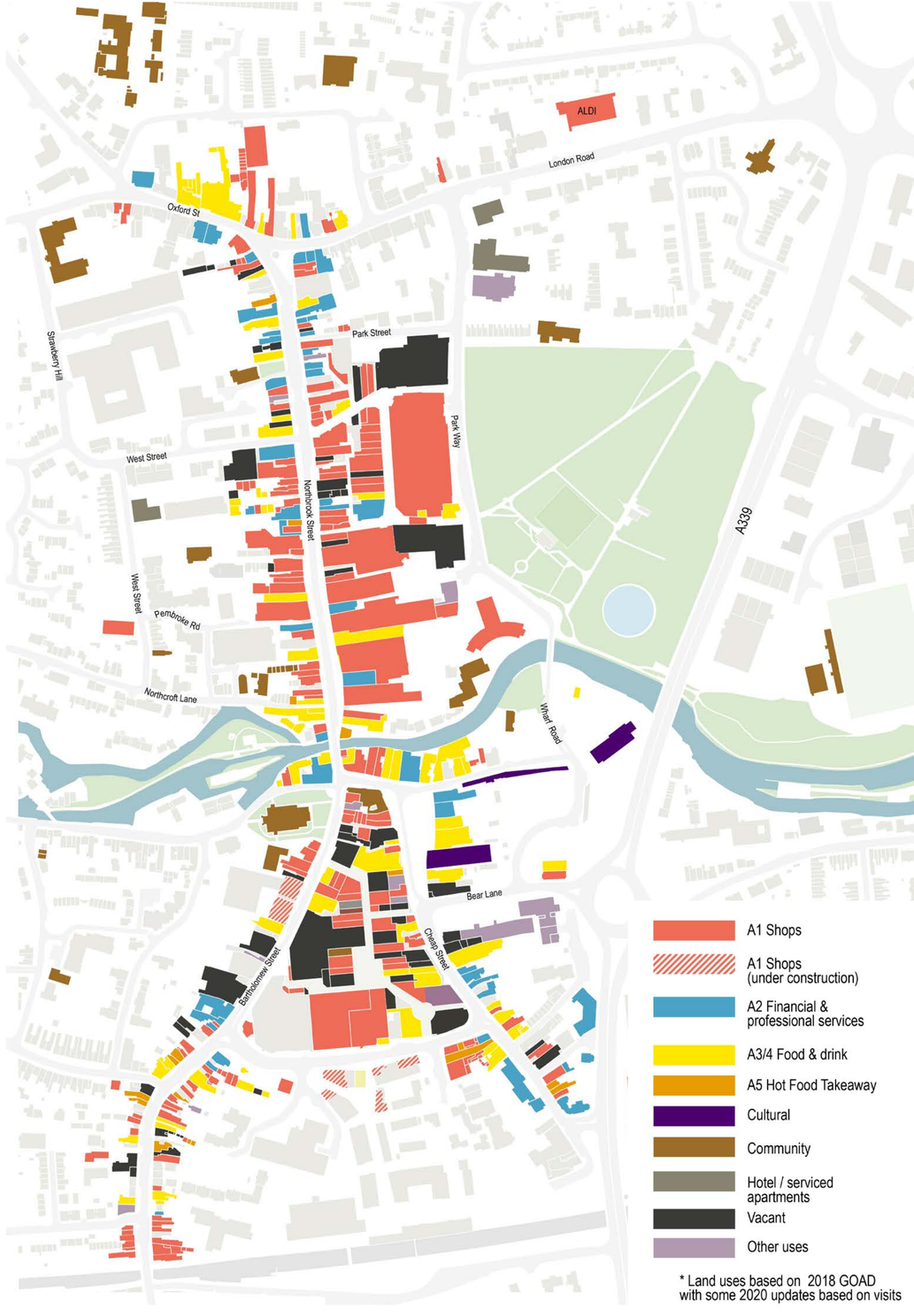
Key Messages.

• Pedestrianised area of Northbrook St and Parkway heavily dominated by A1 retail. There is greater diversity around Market Place and in secondary retail areas.

• Cultural uses clustered around Market Place & the Wharf but slightly isolated from the town centre.

“In recent times a clustering effect has made Newbury north of the Canal specialise in shops while south of the Canal specialises in restaurants, bars, and the night-time economy. South of the Canal is the Market Place with its weekly and monthly markets, but other retail outlets are at a footfall disadvantage compared to those north of the Canal, and are limited to specialist shops. The planned development at Market Street and refurbishment of the Kennet Centre should help to redress this imbalance.”

Newbury Town Plan



Newbury Today
Uses

Retail & Leisure

Independent businesses bring a stronger sense of identity to a town centre, particularly market towns. They also help make a town centre less vulnerable to decisions made at a national level.

Newbury has a reasonably good mix of independents, but again these are concentrated in the 'peripheral' areas of Broadway/Oxford Street, Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street, where rents are cheaper and the unit sizes often smaller.

With the notable exception of Camp Hopson, the central area of Northbrook Street, Parkway, Market Place and the Kennet Centre is dominated by national businesses. The proposed redevelopment of the Kennet Centre states that it will focus on smaller ground floor units to attract independent businesses.

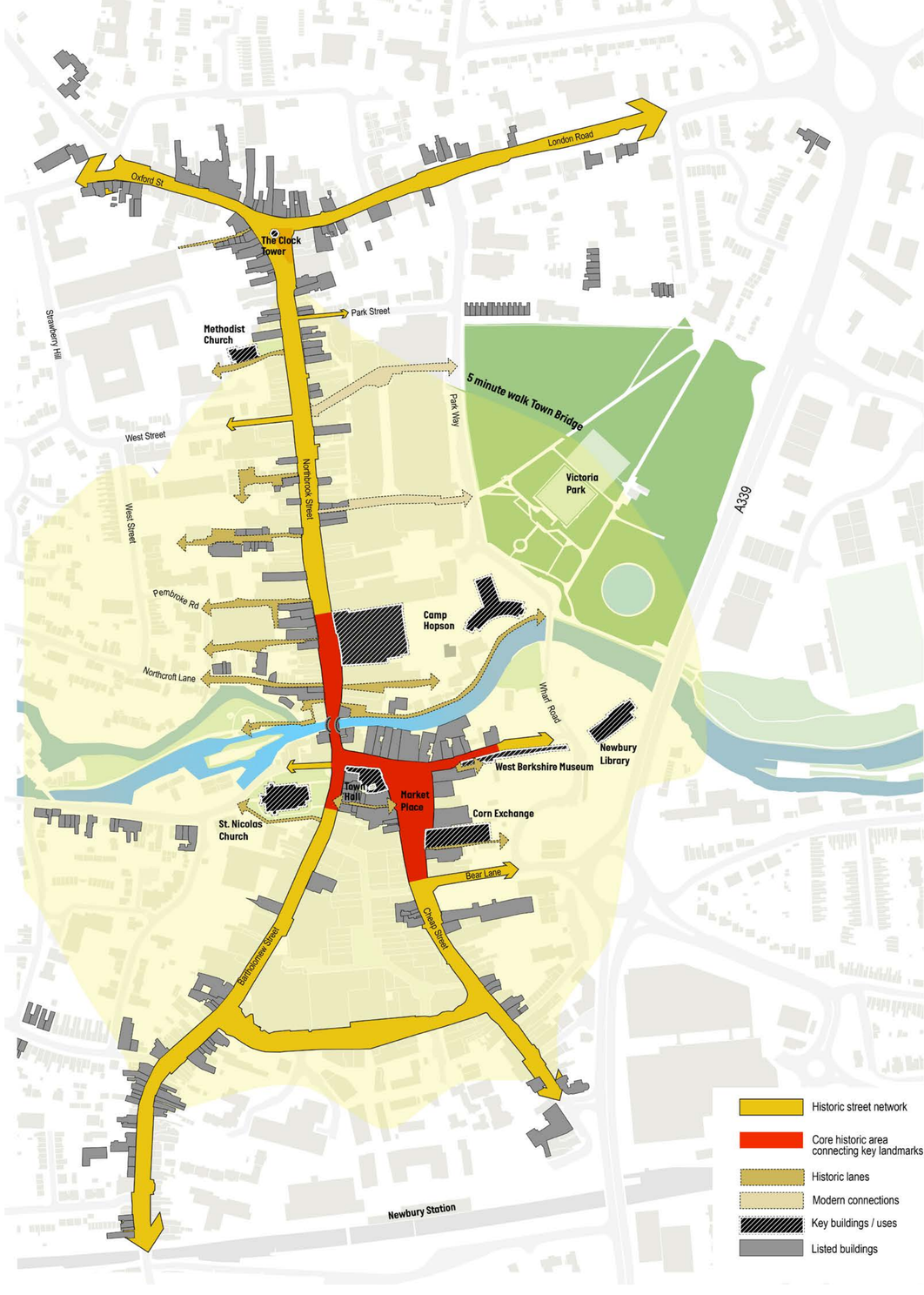
Key Messages.

• Independent businesses are clustered in the secondary retail areas. There is a lack of independent businesses in the core area, with the notable exception of Camp Hopson.

Newbury Today
Summary

Key Features

- Compact nature of town centre - most key destinations/ features all within a 5 Min walk.
- Strong North - South historic street network. Linear nature of North South route would makes features such as the clock tower feel more connected than the park despite being more than a 5 Min walk away.
- Secondary lanes are a key feature but they often don't link very well to additional uses/ spaces or create circuits
- Areas away from central north south spine are poorly connected. Wharf area and river provide perfect opportunity to create improved / new connections to make destinations such as the library and Victoria park feel more part of the town centre.



Newbury Today
Summary

Opportunity Areas

The baseline assessment has identified a number of vacant buildings, underutilised sites and areas in need of improvement within the town centre.

The Wharf

This includes the areas of surface car parking to the south of the canal, the Waterside Centre and land to the rear of Camp Hopson to the north of the canal. It includes the existing Camp Hopson building as they have indicated a potential desire to consolidate their retail use and that this may no longer be required. It is considered important that the areas north and south of the canal are considered as a coherent site, even if delivered independently.

Bear Lane

The BT Exchange and adjacent Royal Mail depot area has long been a priority for the town centre. Current discussions still indicate an unwillingness from BT to consider its redevelopment.

The A339

Treatment of the A339 is needed to improve perceptions of the town centre, and to reduce its impact on the Wharf and Victoria Park as well as on the proposed redevelopment of London Road Industrial Estate. Crossing of the A339 for pedestrians and cyclists needs to be improved to support the town centre.

London Road/Park Way

The vacant Debenhams building requires redevelopment or 're-purposing'. This provides an opportunity to enhance connections between Northbrook Street and Victoria Park. This should be considered comprehensively with the opportunity to improve arrival into the town centre via London Road.

Broadway

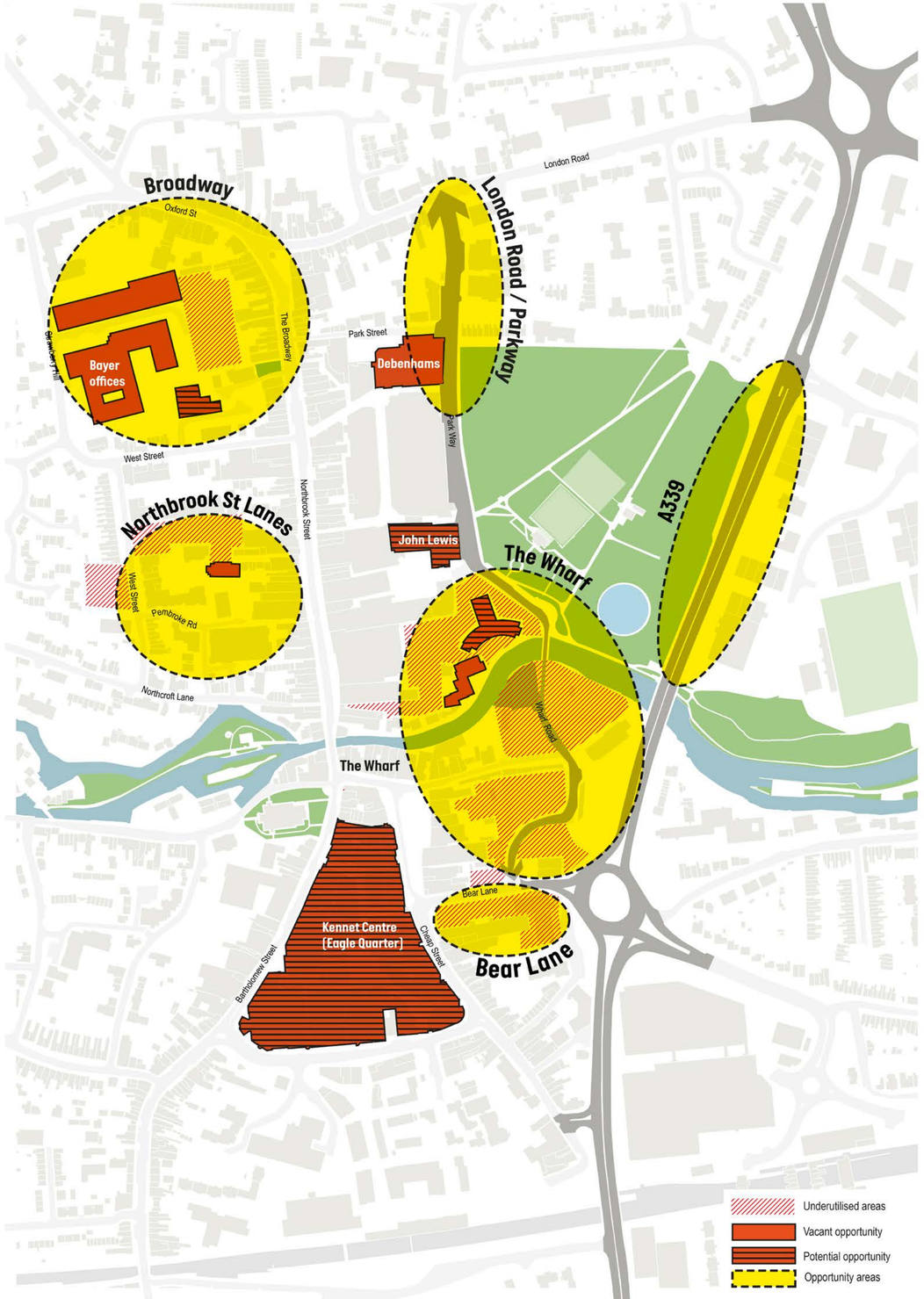
There are vacant buildings and underutilised land to the rear of Broadway, including the Bayer offices and associated car park. There is an opportunity to enhance connections to Broadway and should be considered comprehensively with potential public realm improvements in this area.

Northbrook Street Lanes

There is an opportunity to improve connections from Northbrook Street, via Weavers Walk and other lanes, to residential areas to the west. This could include consideration of the surrounding surface car parks the area around the United Reform Church and Northbrook Multi-storey car park.

Kennet Centre / Eagle Quarter

There are proposals to redevelop this area, as noted in the baseline reports. The principle of the new street structure is to be welcomed but consideration will need to be given to the massing and heights of replacement buildings.



3

A VISION FOR NEWBURY

Crossroads are a place where routes, and therefore people, come together. Crossroads are why many places exist and were the ‘birthplace’ of many market towns.

In placing the concept of The Crossroads at the heart of the future Vision our aim is to ensure that as Newbury responds to the need for change, it remembers its market town heritage, and remains a focus for social interaction, economic growth, civic engagement, and community activities.

Newbury will continue to be a successful, modern market town by ensuring it is a place that:

- promotes its heritage and independent identity
- is innovative and entrepreneurial, able to respond quickly to economic change
- is social and welcoming, where people gather to meet and celebrate
- is green in the widest sense, promoting sustainability, biodiversity, and healthy living
- listens to the needs of its urban and rural community.

Based on its identified strengths, key national trends, and local priorities, we believe Newbury town centre should aspire to be:

Inclusive & Welcoming

A town centre that is walkable and easy to navigate. That everyone can access and in which they feel safe and comfortable.

Social & Cultural

A town centre that encourages social interaction in its streets, spaces and buildings. A place where people want to come to meet friends, relax and have fun.

Historic & Progressive

A town centre that protects its distinctive market town identity but recognises the need to adapt and evolve. A place that values its heritage assets and places them at the centre of modern civic and community life.

Green & Healthy

A town centre that puts people and the planet first. That addresses the challenges of physical health, mental health, and the climate emergency.

Independent & Entrepreneurial

A town centre that welcomes innovation. That promotes local, ethical, and independent traders. Where start-ups and small businesses can thrive.

Local & Regional

A community focused town centre that provides a high quality of life, that meets the needs of all its residents and those in the rural areas that depend on it.

4

MASTERPLAN STRATEGY

This section of the report describes the principles which underpin the masterplan, and which will help deliver the objectives identified in the Newbury Vision. There are 10 principles:

Principle 1: A ‘broader’ town centre

Principle 2: Celebrating ‘The Crossroads’

Principle 3: A more ‘walkable’ town centre

Principle 4: A more ‘welcoming’ town centre

Principle 5: A ‘greener’ town centre

Principle 6: A more ‘sociable’ town centre

Principle 7: A more ‘cultural’ town centre

Principle 8: A more ‘independent’ town centre

Principle 9: A more ‘entrepreneurial’ town centre

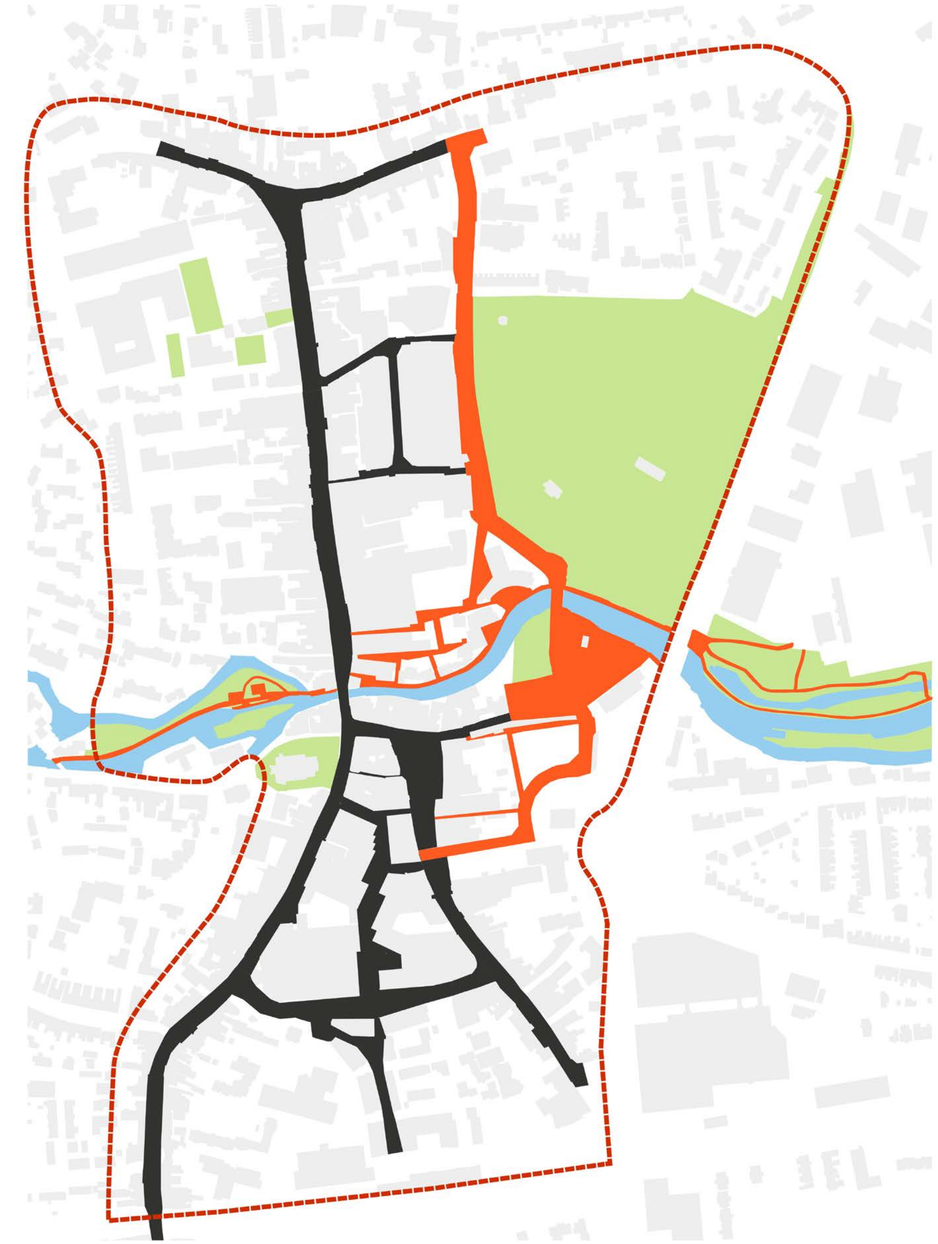
Principle 10: A more ‘balanced’ town centre community

Principle 1: 'Broadening' the town centre

The masterplan for Newbury town centre has been prepared in the context of a national decline in demand for retail floorspace, most visibly demonstrated in the closure of the Debenhams department store. But it is also prepared in the context of Newbury being a relatively prosperous and successful market town that has the opportunity to respond positively to the current social and economic changes.

The key structural objective of the masterplan is to expand the perceived extent of Newbury town centre. This may seem counterintuitive in the face of declining retail demand, but by broadening the leisure, community and cultural 'experience' Newbury can attract more visitors, encourage them to stay longer and use the town centre differently. The key opportunities in this respect are considered to be Victoria Park, Kennet & Avon Canal and the Wharf, alongside the Museum, Library and Waterside Centre.

By making the town centre more 'walkable', and enhancing permeability north-south and east-west, the masterplan can assist Newbury to achieve this by making the most of its existing spaces, buildings and other assets, and with relatively limited need for investment in new floorspace.



Principle 2: Celebrating the 'crossroads'

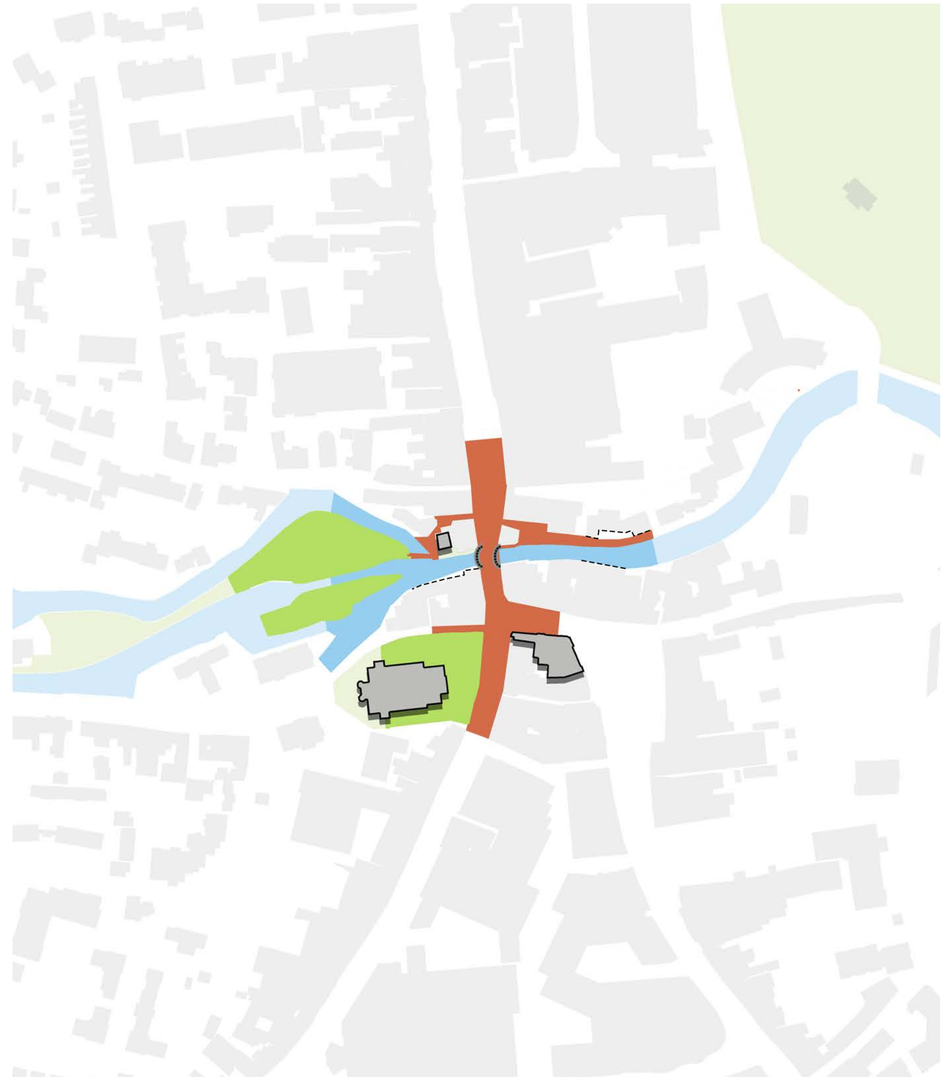
The masterplan marks the meeting point of Newbury town centre's most important north-south route, Northbrook Street/Bartholomew Street, and its most important east-west route, the Kennet & Avon Canal.

The public realm strategy reinforces the Newbury Crossroads. Reducing traffic on Bridge Street, and making it one-way allows for traffic signals, signage and vehicular 'infrastructure' to be significantly simplified, improving pedestrian enjoyment of the Bridge and improving the setting of St Nicolas Church. Enjoyment of the canal can be enhanced by:

- improving signage and visibility of the lanes which provide access to the canal,
- improving the physical environment of the towpath at those access points,
- improving views from Bridge Street along the canal, and
- improving arrival into Bridge Street from the towpath.

The masterplan places more activity and destinations along the canal, both east and west of Bridge Street. It encourages more pedestrian flow along the towpath and more people to arrive into the town centre via the canal. The masterplan therefore puts Bridge Street and the Canal firmly at the heart of the town centre.

There is currently very limited activity along the towpath. The Waterside Centre will provide opportunities for café/restaurant and leisure activity to front the towpath and the masterplan proposes that this should also be considered as part of the uses for the Camp Hopson building. Further east the proposed extension to the Library should create a new destination at the Wharf. And west of Bridge Street there is potential to promote safe access to the water for small scale recreational uses such as canoeing and paddle boarding.



Principle 3: A more 'walkable' town centre

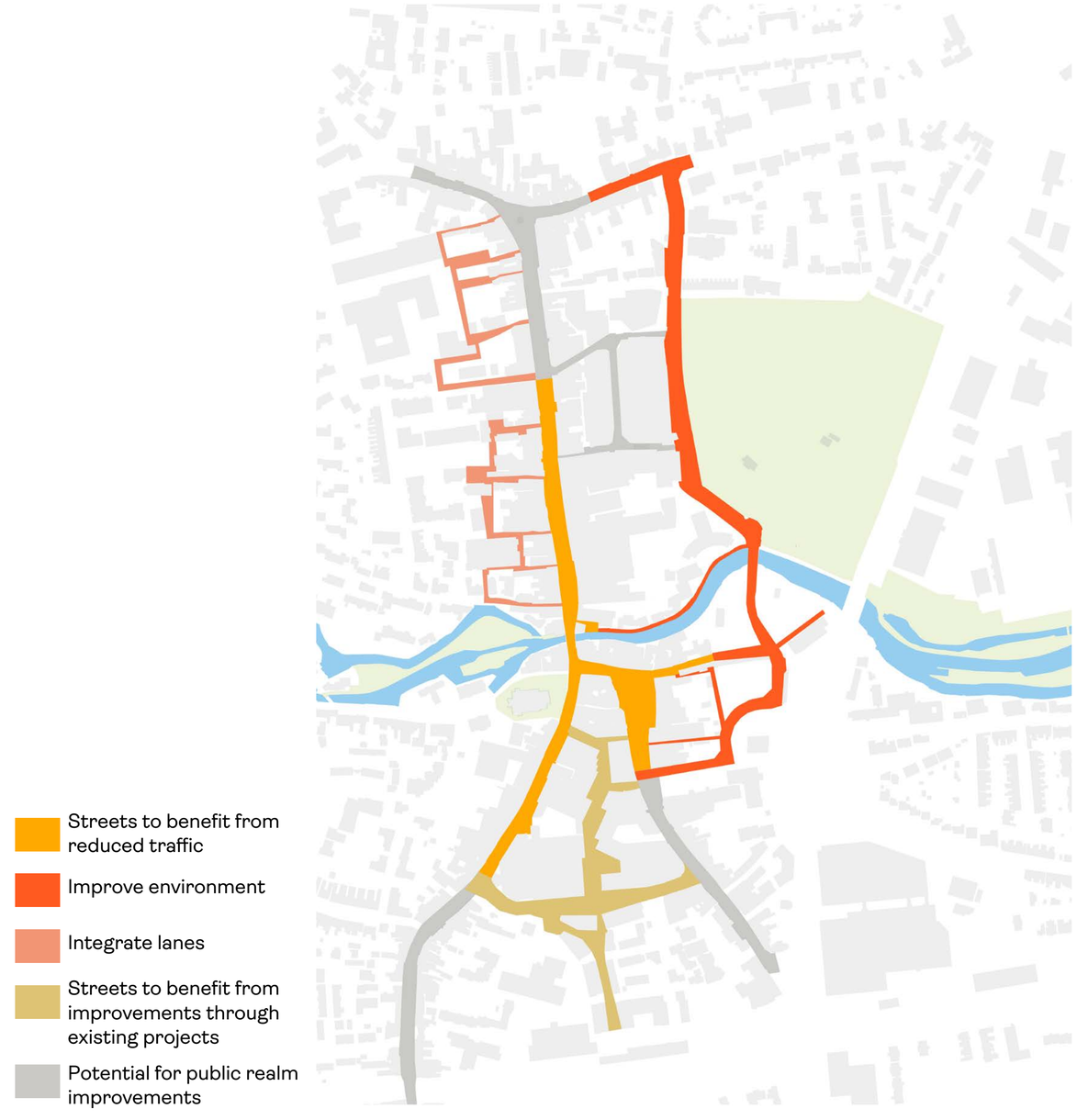
By making the town centre more 'walkable', and by enhancing permeability north-south and east-west, the masterplan can assist Newbury to 'broaden' its appeal by making the most of its existing spaces, buildings and other assets. This strengthens the historic character of the town centre and reduces the need for investment in new floorspace.

Newbury should be a highly 'walkable' town centre. It has a compact form with many of its core attractions within a potential 5-minute walk from Bridge Street. But there are a number of barriers which deter pedestrians from visiting these areas.

The main barriers to east-west integration are the qualities of Park Way, Wharf Street and the towpath. The main barriers to north-south movement are the limited opportunities to cross the water, with only Bridge Street providing a high quality pedestrian environment. The public realm strategy therefore includes proposals for:

- improving Park Way as a street for pedestrians and cyclists
- connecting Parkway shopping centre (and Northbrook Street) more effectively to Victoria Park
- improving 'wayfinding' to the towpath from Northbrook Street
- improving pedestrian and cycle crossing of the water.

Removing the traffic from Market Place increases its attractiveness for outdoor eating and drinking and the flexibility for markets and events. The public realm and movement strategy reinforces Market Place as the social and cultural focus of Newbury. The expanded pedestrian network increases the variety of routes into Market Place. The masterplan also increases the concentration of activity east of Market Place. Alongside creating a new events and social space at the Wharf (see below) and improvements to Wharf Street, the masterplan proposes to improve the space to the rear of the Corn Exchange and adjacent public houses. The strategy therefore strengthens footfall into Market Place by increasing the activity around it and improving the pedestrian connections into it.



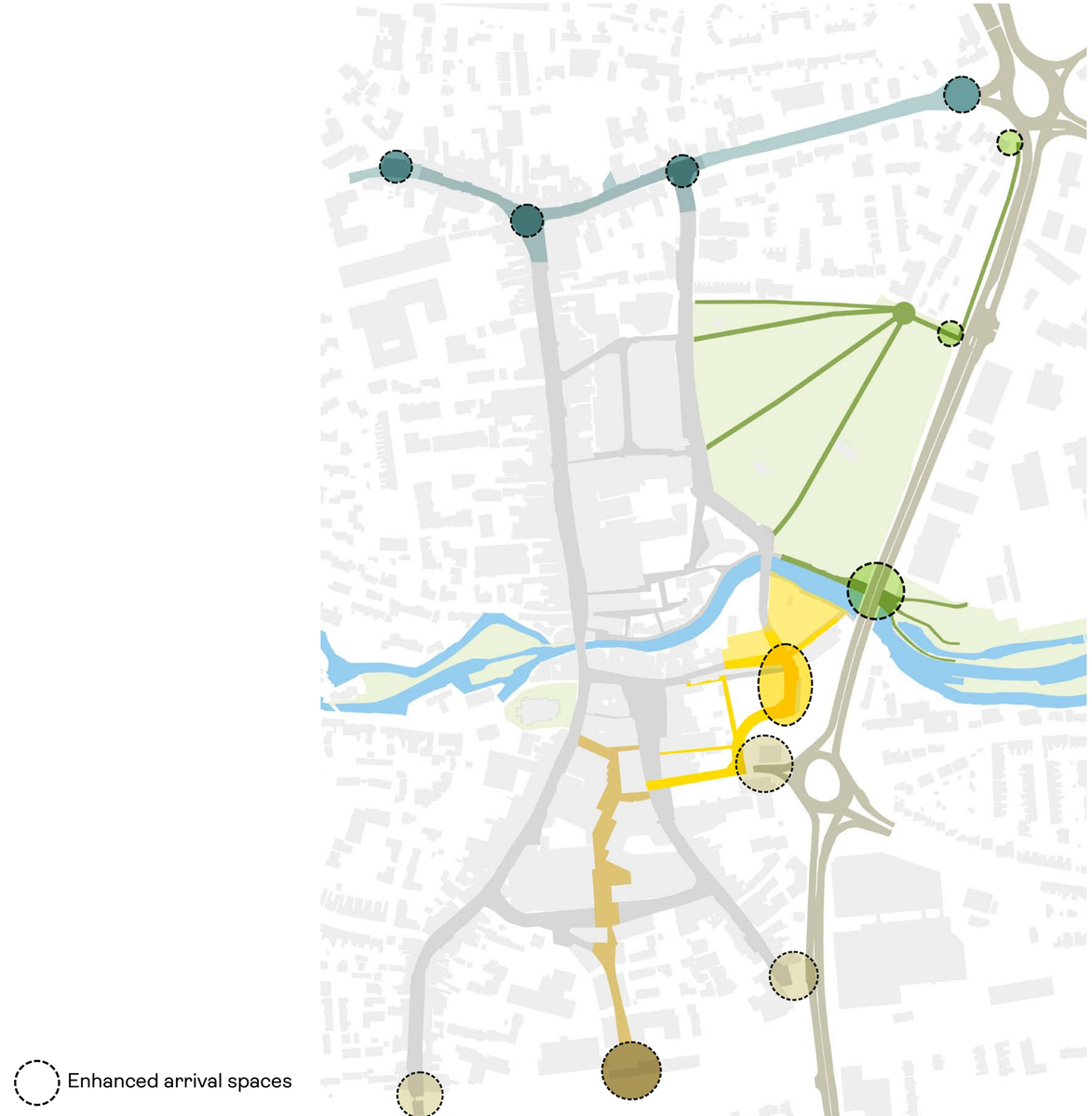
Principle 4: A more 'welcoming' town centre

Arrival into the town centre for pedestrians, cyclists, rail passengers, bus passengers and motorists needs improving. This was highlighted in the baseline study and in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

The masterplan proposes enhanced arrival spaces at the rail and bus station. The Kennet Centre proposals, together with the Market Street redevelopment, create stronger links from the rail station to the town centre. The masterplan proposals for the Wharf area will help integrate the bus station into the town centre, making it a more pleasant place to wait and to arrive.

The A339 and London Road are key arrival points. Key arrival spaces should be improved along London Road, from Robins Hood roundabout. Routes for pedestrians and cyclists are proposed to be improved across and underneath the A339, with a particular focus on arrival into Victoria Park.

In the longer term, the A339 should feel more like a town centre 'street' than a bypass. The Conservation Area Appraisal highlights the impact of the 'noise, smells and vibration' from the A339 traffic on Victoria Park. Improvements to the A339, including reducing traffic speeds, can help address this and ensure that the future mixed-use community on the London Road Industrial Estate feels part of the town centre.



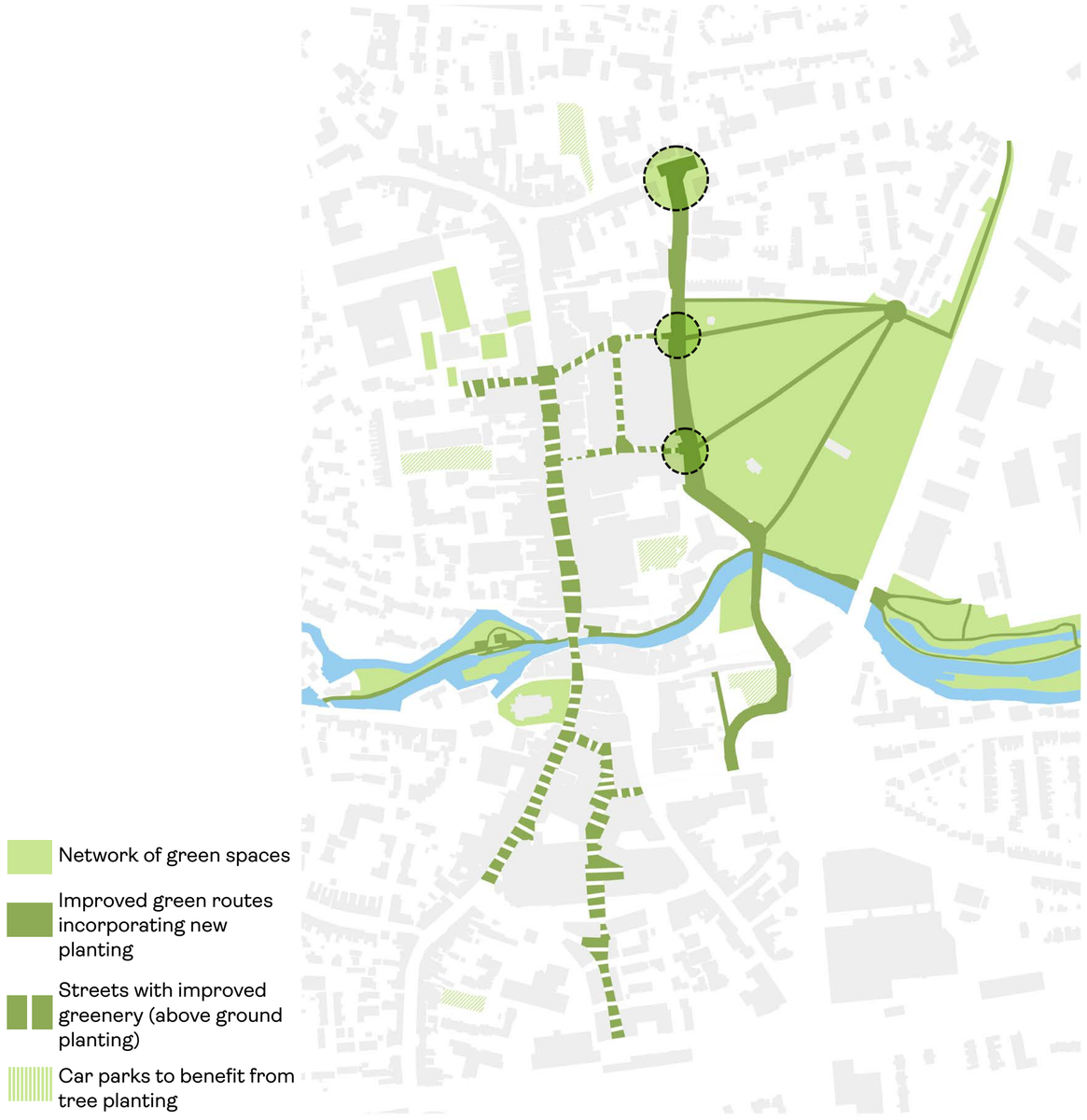
Principle 5: A 'greener' town centre

Victoria Park is a large green space close to the town centre but the only other green space of any quality is associated with St Nicolas Church. The masterplan proposes to enhance Victoria Park but also to enhance the small area of green space at the Wharf, immediately west of the American Bridge and opposite the new Waterside Centre. This would then form part of a stronger network of green spaces along the canal, from the marina in the east to Monkey Bridge in the west.

The green space at the Wharf can be made more usable and more attractive as a 'pocket park'. Removing the car parking would enable a larger public space to be created improving the physical setting of the Museum building, and providing spill out space for events and exhibitions. Restructuring the planting would enable views between the Museum and the Waterside Centre, improving the sense of connection north and south of the Canal.

East of the A339 there is a potentially attractive green space along the canal and close to the marina. Redevelopment of the London Road Industrial Estate provides an opportunity to create a higher quality park for residents and visitors, and to enhance the arrival into the town centre from this direction. This is particularly important in maximising the commercial and community benefits of the new housing and employment proposed.

The canoe club is also located east of the A339 (south of the canal) but discussions with the Canal & River Trust indicate that it would be difficult to increase public leisure use of the canal here or adjacent to the Wharf. The masterplan therefore proposes that consideration be given to increasing informal leisure use of the water at the green space further west, between Bridge Street and Monkey Bridge. This would give paddleboarders or kayakers potential access to a longer and safer stretch of water and would link the town centre more actively with the countryside to the west. If successful it could also encourage visitors to explore as far as Northcroft and Goldwell Parks, which provide important recreational space for residents but do not currently feel part of the town centre.



Principle 5: A 'greener' town centre cont.

The masterplan also identifies opportunities to bring additional planting into the town centre streets and surface car parks. The priority is to provide additional planting along Park Way. A higher quality 'gateway' space at its junction with London Road would create a strong sense of arrival into the town centre, and enhance the environment for the two hotels. More greenery and tree planting along Park Way would create a more appropriate route south to Victoria Park.

The potential exists to bring additional planting (permanent or mobile) into West Street. This would help soften the shopping centre environment, but also help draw visitors from Northbrook Street towards Victoria Park. Any redevelopment or repurposing of the former Debenhams store should take the opportunity to improve the 'green connection' across Park Way to Victoria Park. The potential could be considered for a 'green wall' to improve the appearance of the adjacent car park. If space is created through the redevelopment of Debenhams then consideration could also be given to additional planting along Park Street, linking Park Way to Northbrook Street.

West of Northbrook Street the former Bayer offices site, together with the Council's West Street offices has the potential to create a small 'pocket park' in the town centre. Any potential reuse of the Bayer offices should consider this, together with improved pedestrian links to Northbrook Street and The Broadway via the identified Lanes and to the green space in front of Newbury Methodist Church.

Within Northbrook Street the potential for significant planting is constrained both by the need for vehicular and service access but also by the qualities of the Conservation Area and listed buildings. There are however opportunities for smaller scale, removable planting and parklets along Northbrook Street which can be coordinated with outdoor seating for cafés and restaurants.

Survey Response:

45% of survey respondents would like the town centre to have more green spaces

66% would like Victoria Park to be more integrated with the town centre.

"Add more planting and green space to the (town) centre, perhaps incorporated with flexible seating spaces"

"Open up more green space and pedestrianise more of the town centre."

""Integrate the river more. There is wasted space between the white bus bridge and the small northbrook street bridge that could be turned into eating places and shops - and the library car park area towards the river. We have a lovely river and no one would even know it exists"

Principle 6: A more 'sociable' town centre

The masterplan proposes additional open space at the Wharf and looks to provide improved leisure and recreation facilities at Victoria Park and along the Canal. The new space at the Wharf, in conjunction with Market Place would significantly increase the flexibility of the town centre to host events and activities, as well as being a social space in its own right, increasing access to the water.

The masterplan also recognises the increased demand for outdoor eating and drinking. The focus for this remains Market Place which provides an attractive space and a critical mass of bars and restaurants and acts as a destination for the town centre, but it is considered that there is potential to extend provision into the streets, lanes and waterfront areas around Market Place, and for some additional provision at the Wharf.

Many of the operators on the eastern sides of Market Place rely on space to the rear for outdoor eating and drinking. The masterplan seeks to support this by creating a series of attractive lanes and small spaces between the rear of the Corn Exchange and the Museum.

There are opportunities to increase spill-out space available to existing cafes and restaurants on Northbrook Street, in conjunction with measures to reduce the amount of traffic using the street in the evenings. Making Northbrook Street one-way only for traffic would create potential space for small 'parklets' with bespoke seating and planting. By defining these areas it allows for the layout of market stalls to be coordinated to create attractive seating areas to support street food vendors. This has the potential added advantage of extending the length of the market stalls further north, drawing pedestrians along Northbrook Street towards Broadway and London Road and supporting independent food and drink operators within the Lanes.

Survey Response:

"Encourage the use of the canal as a backdrop for eating and socialising."

"Pedestrianise the town centre and utilise the space to create spaces for socialising and play, animating the high street."

Principle 7: A more 'cultural' town centre

The masterplan seeks to reinforce the cultural importance of Market Place and create a complementary cultural and leisure destination at the Wharf. The masterplan proposes the removal of car parking at the Wharf to allow for the creation of a new cultural event space for the town.

The new 'cultural' space at the Wharf should be considered to extend north and south of the Canal. The masterplan proposes that opportunities be explored to make better long term cultural use of the Library and create a focus for leisure and cultural activity around the Waterside Centre and Camp Hopson. Improved pedestrian crossings over the canal would create a more integrated cultural hub that also includes event spaces and activities within Victoria Park.

The masterplan seeks to strengthen the connection between Market Place and the Wharf by improving Wharf Lane and creating a series of attractive lanes and small spaces between the rear of the Corn Exchange and the Museum.

Removing some parking in this area would create additional spill out space for both these cultural facilities, and potentially provide an opportunity for small scale exhibition or gallery space. This would strengthen links between the Corn Exchange and the Wharf and significantly improve arrival at the bus station.

Survey Response:

Better open space to hold public events and festivals and more cultural space are amongst the top 5 priorities for survey respondents.

"Add space for a variety of events to draw people in."

"Bring lots more variety of activities in the High Street for young and old alike. It needs to be much more lively and the Wharf area needs to be a place people want to go to rather than a place to get from A to B (or the library)."

Principle 8: A more 'independent' town centre

The masterplan seeks to promote the heritage of Newbury as an "independent" market town, and the focus on the Newbury 'Crossroads', The Wharf and the Kennet & Avon Canal will all help to achieve this.

A key part of the strategy is to support the concentration of independent businesses in the Lanes as well as those in Broadway, Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street, recognising that the proposals for the Eagle Quarter also propose to increase the space available for small, independent businesses.

The masterplan and public realm strategy look to improve the prominence and the connectivity of local and independent businesses, particularly within the Lanes. This is a combination of public realm improvements, wayfinding and a coordinated 'branding' strategy for these areas. Along Northbrook Street potential 'loops' are identified whereby the rear of individual Lanes can be connected, creating more interesting pedestrian routes and additional arrival points into the Lanes from car parks or residential areas. This is all designed to encourage exploration of the Lanes, increase pedestrian flow and make them less reliant on the entrances from Northbrook Street. In the shorter term the main entrances can be made more prominent and distinctive, with coordinated signage and treatment of the public realm to mark the Lanes and draw visitors along Northbrook Street.

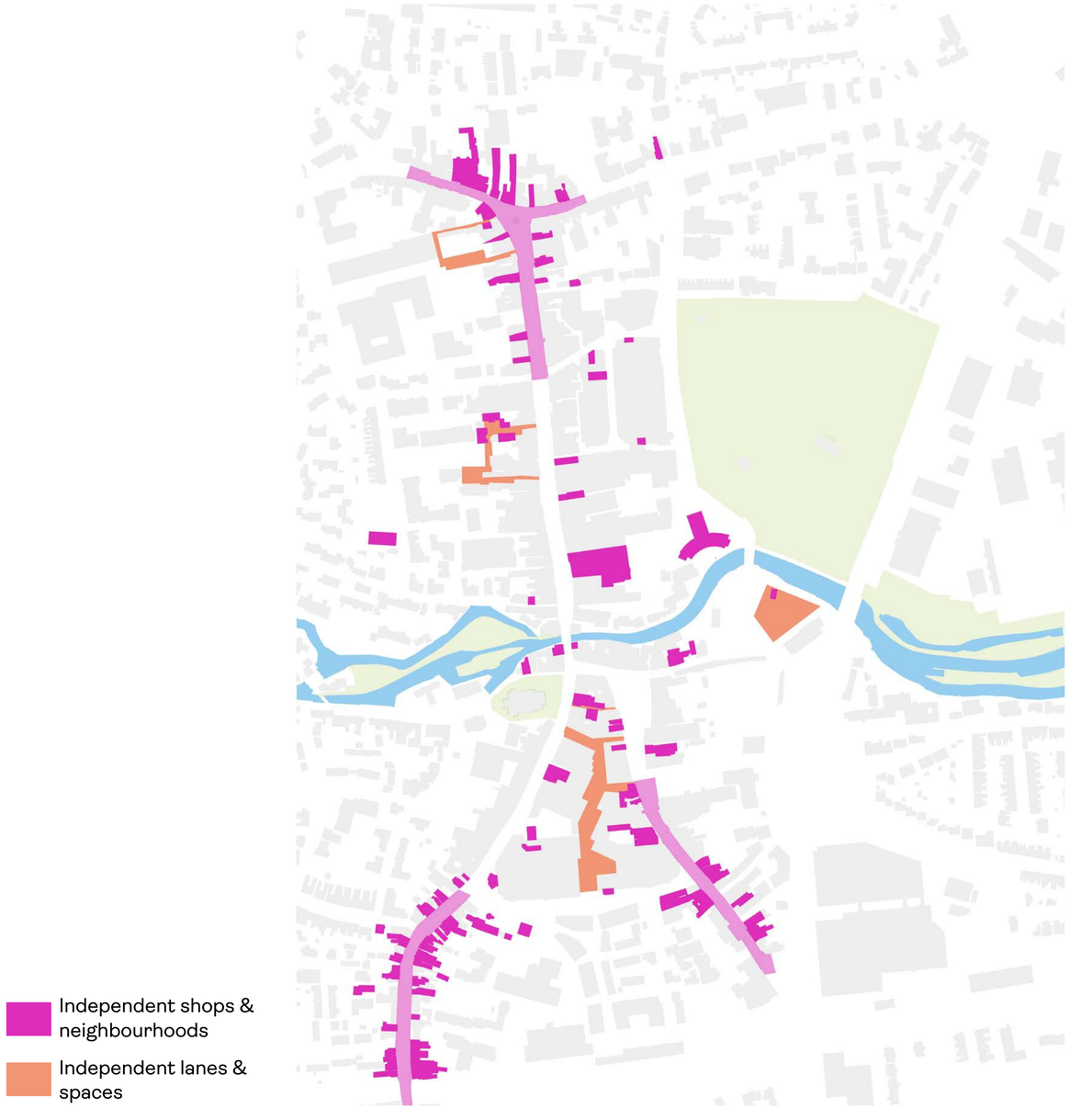
Outside the 'core area' of Newbury town centre, Broadway/London Road, Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street have their own distinct character which the masterplan seeks to support and reinforce through small scale public realm and associated shopfront improvements.

Survey Response:

Over two thirds of survey respondents wanted more local and independent shops in Newbury town centre, whilst over 45% would like to see more local, independent cafes and restaurants.

"Encourage independent cafés, shops etc. through rate drops etc."

"Lower rents for independent shops so it encourages entrepreneurs to be in the town."



Principle 9: A more 'entrepreneurial' town centre

Opportunities for new office space are available through potential conversion/redevelopment of the former Debenhams store and through the proposed redevelopment of the Eagle Quarter. Such space is a vital element of any successful town centre, and should be supported with smaller scale flexible office space for small businesses and start-ups, as well as for the increasing number of people working 'flexibly' at home with reduced levels of commuting to larger cities.

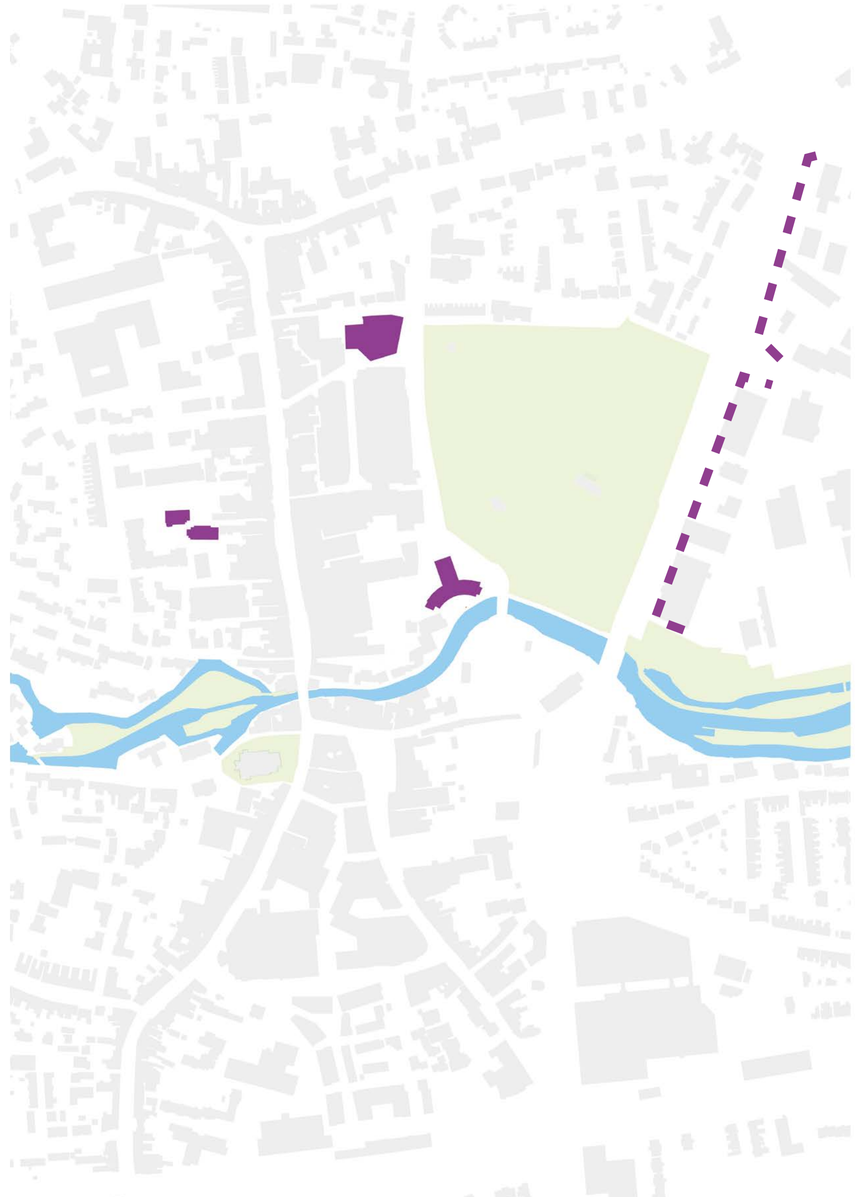
Across the country vacant department stores are being repurposed for a mix of interesting cultural, leisure and community uses, promoting local craftspeople, encouraging start-up businesses or providing space for a range of NHS treatment centres. The Debenhams store is a key location within Newbury town centre and needs to be 'curated' accordingly. It has the potential to 'anchor' the northern end of the town, to reinforce the professional office 'quarter' on London Road as well as supporting the hotels, fitness facilities, pubs and restaurants in that area.

Larger office space is also proposed as part of the London Road Industrial Estate redevelopment. It is important that any such offices present a positive 'face' to the A339, creating a high quality town centre environment. Excellent pedestrian links from these new offices across the A339 are critical in maximising the benefits of these new jobs for town centre businesses.

Survey Response:

"*Think outside the box to fill Debenhams and John Lewis - co-working spaces, market stalls etc."*

"Newbury needs to embrace the demand for satellite offices and co-working hubs in a post pandemic world. This will reduce the number of people jumping on a train to London or Reading 5 days a week. Keep them in Newbury for 2-3 days a week."



Workspace opportunities

Principle 10: A more 'balanced' town centre community

The recent Parkway development, on-going Market Street development and proposed Eagle Quarter redevelopment bring a significant increase in town centre living. The former Bayer offices also have Permitted Development Rights (PDR) for conversion to residential. All these schemes, alongside the growth in later living apartments, will benefit retail, leisure and cultural activity in the town centre. Provision in the town centre has however focussed very heavily on apartments and there is a need to balance this with a wider range of housing.

There are limited development opportunities within the town centre study area which have the scale to deliver a significant level of family housing or more innovative housing schemes. In the longer term redevelopment of the BT site or relocation of the Civic Offices could provide such a site, or consideration could be given to acquisition and redevelopment of the former Bayer offices.

The major opportunity site lies just outside the town centre boundary and is the London Road Industrial Estate. The masterplan supports the principle of redeveloping this for a mix of employment and residential and in the longer term it is suggested that improvements to the crossing of the A339 that would make it easier for those living and working on the site to walk into the town centre. It is also important that the London Road Industrial Estate strikes the right balance in terms of housing provision in the town centre, complementing the scale of smaller scale apartments already provided.

5

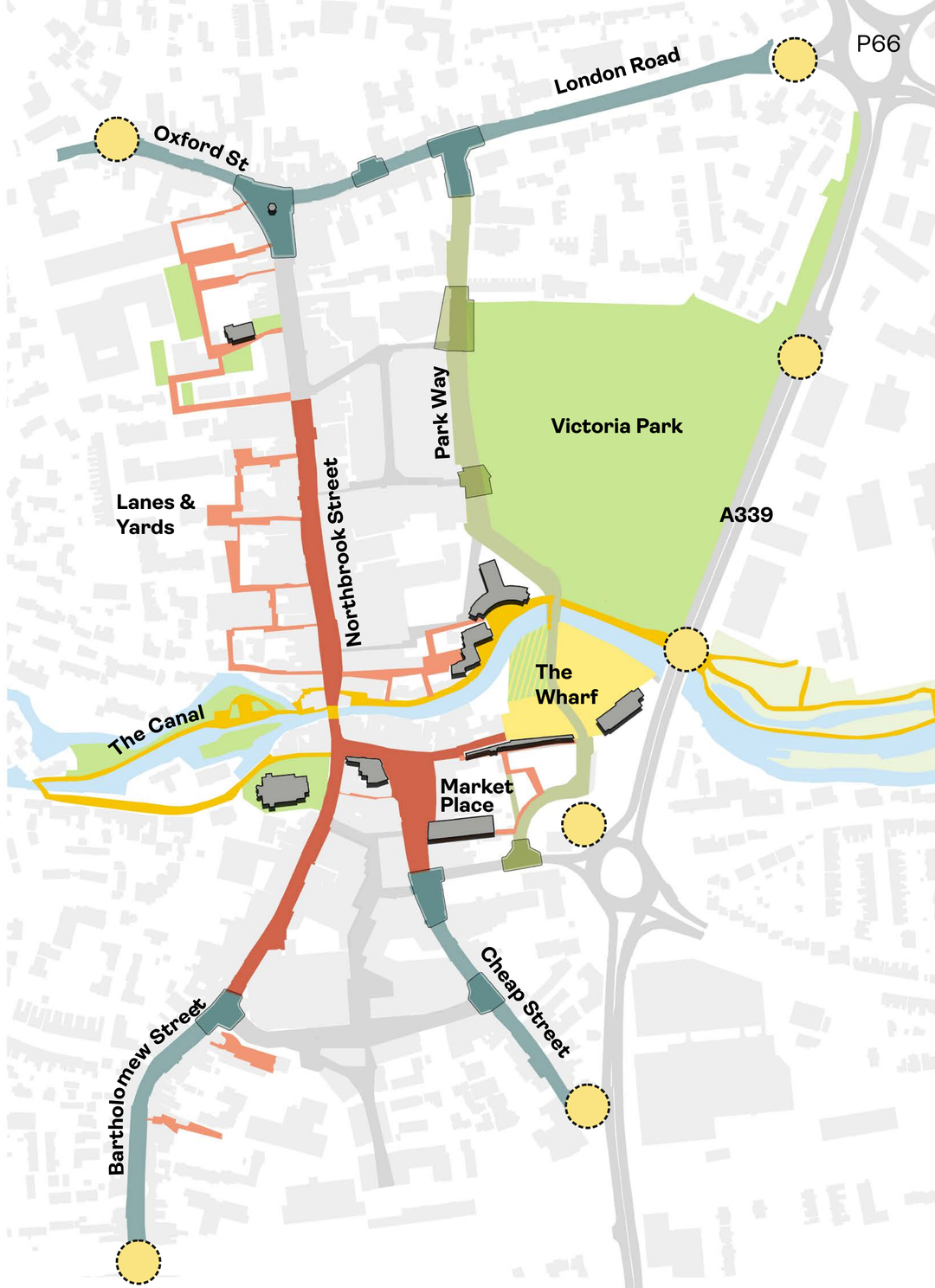
PUBLIC REALM AND MOVEMENT STRATEGY

Pedestrianised Core

The masterplan creates an improved environment for pedestrians by reducing vehicular access and restricting traffic to one-way working. This will reduce the amount of space required to be kept free for vehicles and create opportunities for planters, seating and parklets to create attractive areas for external eating and drinking. The need to introduce one-way working is critical to this as retaining the existing two-way working, even if vehicular traffic is reduced, will result in no new permanent space available for other uses.

The switch to one-way working would enable the width required to be kept clear on Northbrook Street for the passage of vehicles to be reduced to a single lane (with occasional loading bays) and the traffic signals either side of the bridge of the Kennet to be removed. So, whilst the benefits of removing general traffic from the area will be most obvious between the hours of 5pm and 10am, the significant reduction in traffic flows and the potential to reduce the amount of space that must be kept clear for vehicles will benefit the town centre at all times.

Perhaps most importantly, further engagement is required. Consultation with businesses, residents and market traders is necessary to better understand if and how they might take advantage of the space that could be created and whether these might outweigh people's concerns. It is then recommended that a trial is conducted (using an Experimental Traffic Order), potentially using temporary installations of street furniture and planting to help demonstrate the possible implications of the change.



Lanes & Yards

A coordinated programme of signage and public realm improvements is proposed to mark the entrances to the Lanes & Yards from the main shopping streets across the town centre. Improved paving and signage can also improve the arrival from the 'rear' of the Lanes and improve connections between them.

Distinctive Neighbourhoods

A coordinated Shopfront Improvement Strategy for Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street South can enhance the independent qualities of these shopping areas, improve arrival into the town centre and address some of the concerns of the Conservation Area Appraisal. Improved paving and junction design (at the Market Street areas in particular) can create a more welcoming pedestrian environment and secure better integration with the proposed Eagle Quarter redevelopment.

Along Oxford Street and London Road the public realm strategy proposes a series of improved spaces at the key junctions (particularly with Broadway and Park Way) and to improve the settings of key buildings. This would enhance the coaching inn character and heritage of this important street. It would also bring a stronger civic quality to the entrance into Park Street and create opportunities for outdoor eating and drinking alongside existing hotels, public houses and restaurants. This corridor, particularly where it meets the A339, also presents an opportunity to improve bus journey times and variability by introducing bus priority measures.

Furthermore, there is the potential for the hotels, restaurants and bars around Oxford Street to hold an annual festival by temporarily closing the carriageway to through-traffic between the junctions with Broadway and Oxford Road. Such an event would be likely to help encourage more people to explore the northern extents of the retail core and provide a new cultural dimension to the town's offer.

The Wharf

Removal and relocation of car parking would allow for the creation of a new social space and event space at the Wharf. The space would be comparable in size to the existing event space in Market Place giving more flexibility for Newbury to hold events and markets at the same time. It will create a strong network of spaces from Market Place to the Wharf and Victoria Park.

A new space is also proposed immediately north of the Museum, to enhance its setting and provide a prominent location for external events and seating for the cafe.

Canal Edge

Improved signage to the towpath is proposed, particularly from Bridge Street, and removal of car parking and refuse storage to improve the environment for pedestrians. Small public spaces would create opportunities for cafes along the waterfront, green spaces for visitors to enjoy the canal environment, and opportunities for leisure uses to encourage more active use of the water. Improved crossings of the canal for pedestrians are identified as a priority between Bridge Street and the A339.

Parks & Greenspace

Improvements to Victoria Park are proposed to create a stronger arrival into the Park and to make more productive use of some of the less attractive areas. A series of improvements are proposed to the green spaces along the canal and to smaller pocket parks across the town centre. Increased planting within existing streets and surface car parks should also be part of a wider commitment to greening the town centre wherever possible.

Park Way

Additional planting can create a stronger 'civic' feel to this important street and encourage pedestrians to visit the park. The priority is to improve east-west connections across the street from Parkway shopping centre to Victoria Park

Gateways & Arrivals

The public realm strategy and the Conservation Area Appraisal highlight the importance of improving arrival into the town centre by all modes. Improvements are proposed to the arrival at the rail and bus stations, and to pedestrian arrival along the canal and across the A339 into the park. Key vehicular arrival points include the railway bridge (Bartholomew Street south), Robin Hood roundabout, and the public car parks, which can be a focus for additional tree planting and greening.

Train Station

With the introduction of two new Cycle Hubs, the possible extension of the Jet Black 1 and Bus routes 1A and 1C to the station and the completion of the Market Street development immediately to the north, better connecting the station to the rest of the town centre, there is a renewed focus on Newbury train station. This is also being complemented by a scheme to redevelop the south side of the station, led by Great Western Railway in partnership with West Berkshire Council and the Local Enterprise Zone. The proposals include the introduction of three business growth units as well changes to improve the customer experience. Where it had once felt slightly outside the town core, it is likely to be far better integrated. However, the public realm on the approaches to the station are relatively poor, with the southern forecourt (the natural arrival point for those arriving by train from London) providing a particularly underwhelming arrival experience with limited options for interchange.

It is recommended that a detailed review of the station environs is carried out with the aim of increasing the range and attractiveness of travel choices for the town and improving the arrival experience at the station.

A339

Whilst the A339 is unlikely to ever feel like a core part of the town centre, and is part of the reason why it does not formally form part of this masterplan, it should still act as an important gateway. Rather than being just another part of a bypass that connects the M3 with the M4, the section that passes through Newbury should articulate to drivers the presence of the town as well as hint at its heritage and scale. The Council have already made improvements to the Bear Lane junction with more changes planned at the Robin Hood junction. The Masterplan encourages further enhancements to this corridor.

The A339, between its junctions with St. John's Road to the south and the A4 Western Avenue to the north, has the potential to be a grand, tree-lined, civic avenue that, whilst continuing to carry significant volumes of traffic, better knits together the urban fabric to either side. With a number of current and future development sites likely to be progressed in the coming years, there is the opportunity to change the relationship between the town and the A339 with more active frontage and better infrastructure for those on foot or travelling by bicycle.

6

SPATIAL MASTERPLAN

Spatial Masterplan
Masterplan Proposals

This section of the report provides more detail on key areas of public realm and masterplan proposals. These concentrate on the following areas:

- The Wharf
- The Canal
- Victoria Park & Park Way
- Northbrook Street, Bartholomew Street and Market Place
- The Lanes & Yards
- Broadway, Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street (South)

The Wharf

The Wharf proposals would help it become a stronger destination for the town centre. It is considered the only opportunity to meet the identified need for additional public space and event space in Newbury town centre. It is also an ideal location for improved cultural and leisure facilities, close to the water and Victoria Park but also close to the Museum and Corn Exchange.

It is therefore proposed that the existing car parking be removed, and that it be kept relatively clear of new buildings, consistent with Conservation Area Appraisal guidance on the historic and cultural sensitivity of the area. Bus access will be retained but consideration may need to be given to relocation of the taxi rank*.

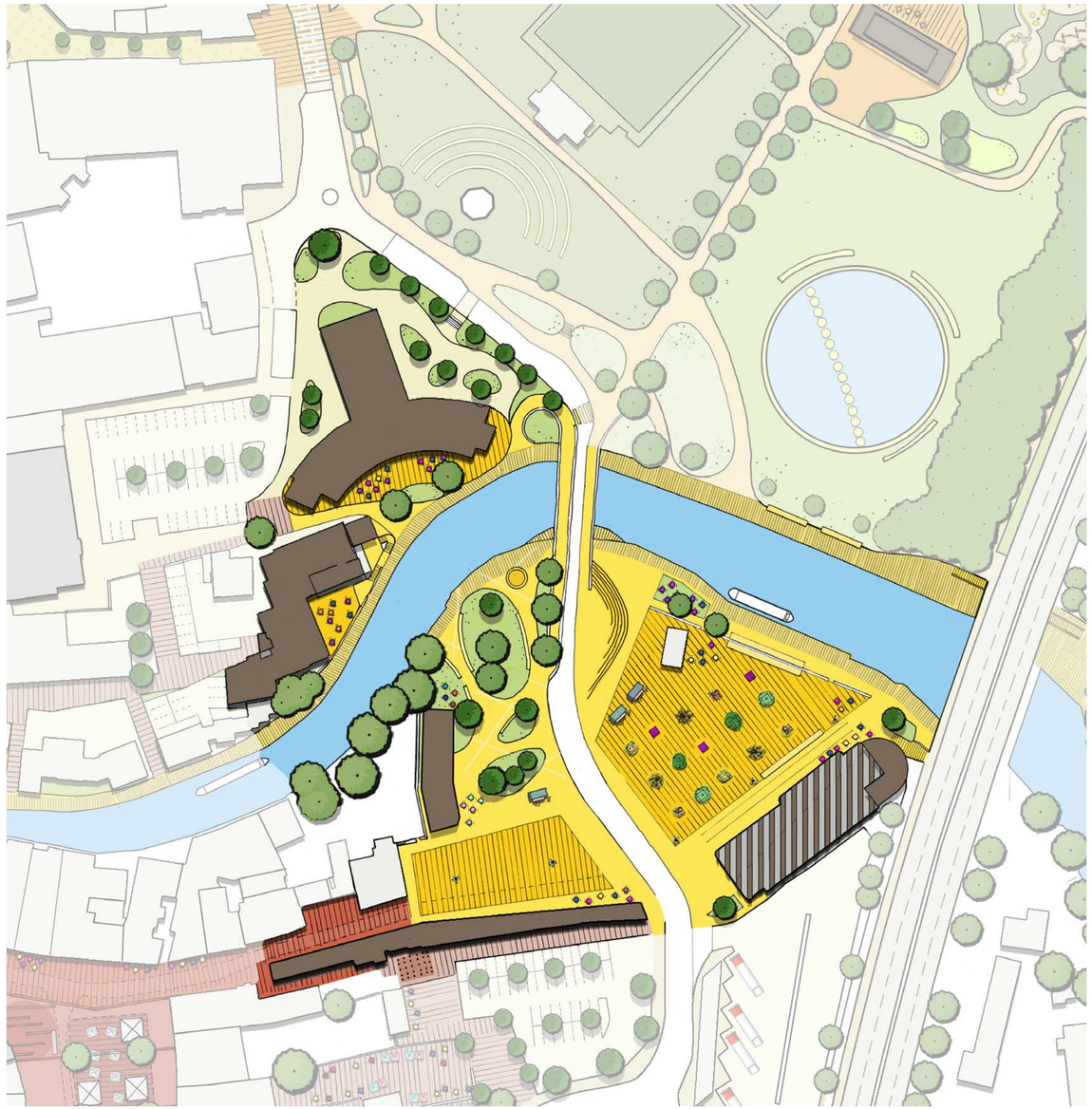
The Wharf would be considered as three distinct areas, partly due to retention of the north-south bus route that bisects the space.

The new event space is to the east, bounded by the American Bridge, the canal and the library. Although the area would be kept largely free of new buildings, to maximise the space available for events, any public space must be enclosed and animated by the uses that surround it. Opportunities for livelier ground floors and spill-out activity into the public realm should be considered for the library. A small extension to the library would also provide the opportunity for additional leisure/café/restaurant facilities along the waterfront. These buildings would enclose the space to the south-east. To the north the space would remain open to improve the connection with the canal (as recommended in the Conservation Area Appraisal). Space would be available for temporary street traders which can bring a greater sense of enclosure when there are no events proposed.

It is anticipated that Wharf Street would remain clear for emergency access at all times. Reducing overall traffic would however enable space to the north to be available for the Museum to 'spill out' into, whether for events or for its café. The new space would significantly enhance the setting of this important building and the attractive office elevation to the west. It is proposed that the unattractive public toilets be improved with a more appropriate structure that can also function as a piece of 'public art'.

The existing green space alongside the canal can be enhanced as a natural green space for the town. Some thinning of the vegetation and planting along the canal edge may be necessary to achieve visual connection with the outdoor space and activity proposed within the Waterside Centre, giving this important building more prominence and encouraging young people to visit the Wharf.

* relocation of the taxi rank will be subject to detailed feasibility work and appropriate consultation.



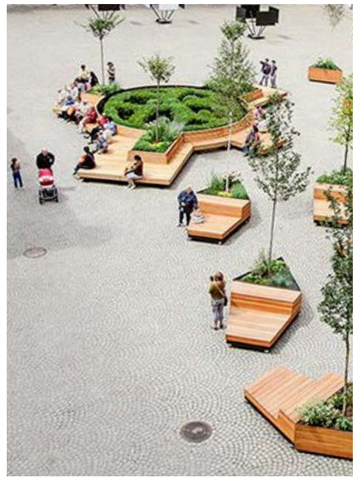
Survey Response

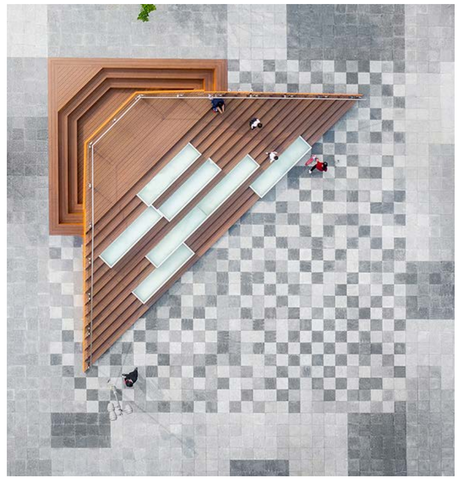
The Wharf proposals are amongst what survey respondents feel to be the highest priority for Newbury town centre. Respondents feel that the Wharf area is currently underutilised, and would like to see more made of the museum and library. Better links to Market Place and Northbrook Street, and to ensure that it is kept as a public space for events or just to 'hang out'.

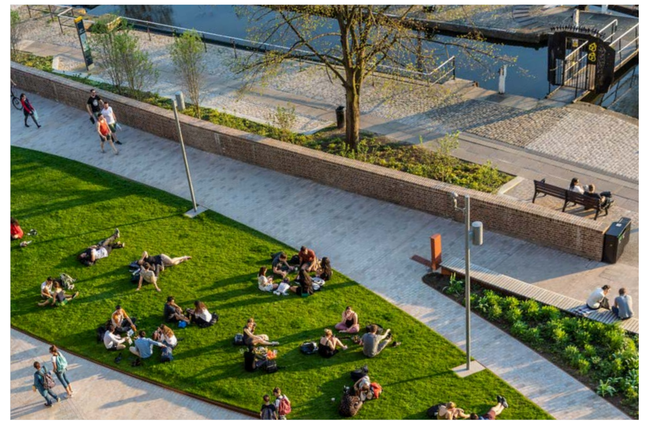
"The Wharf's current use as a car park is a missed opportunity to provide an exemplar for good waterside placemaking and we believe that the opportunities mentioned in the Vision could, if carefully designed, achieve this."

"100% agree with the vision. There's so much more I think Newbury could do with such a picturesque part of the town. With careful planning to accommodate parking for places such as the library, that area could be a really nice place to play, eat and socialise. It could almost be an extension of Victoria Park for families and groups."

"Finding a new purpose for the Wharf that is not just a big, tarmacked parking- this area is a missed opportunity to connect with the park and create a large, dynamic and peaceful 'lung' for the centre of Newbury and doing this will help make Newbury feel 'grounded and centred' and stop it feeling so 'bitty and disconnected'."







Kennet & Avon Canal

To be a successful destination, and 'broaden' the town centre, the Wharf needs to be better connected to the water and to Victoria Park. The new 'destination' at the Wharf must feel like it extends both sides of the water, incorporating the southern edge of the park, the new Waterside Centre and the Camp Hopson building.

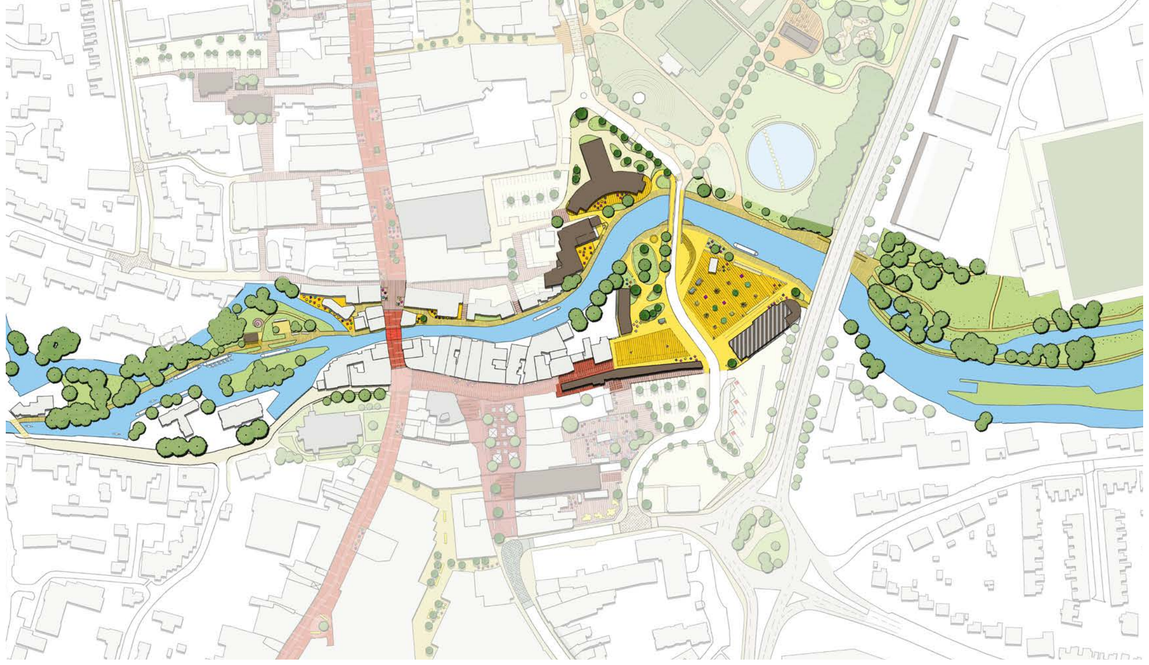
The masterplan identifies improving the pedestrian crossing of the canal in this area as a priority. The delivery of improved crossings would be complex and require more detailed design investigation but the principles are that the designs should be a piece of public art and a visitor 'attraction' in their own right, and that any new crossing seeks to keep pedestrians close to the water.

Two options are identified. The first option is for a new crossing, connecting the Wharf to the Waterside Centre. This would be a relatively small scale bridge, similar in operation to the existing crossing west of Bridge Street. Any such crossing would require investigation of land conditions and require detailed discussions with the Canal & Rivers Trust. The objective however would be to create a strong pedestrian desire line between a new space at The Waterside Centre and a new space north of the Museum, via an enhanced green space south of the canal.

The second option is that pedestrian improvements are made to the 'American Bridge'. Again this would require more detailed design consideration. Widening the bridge, and increasing the space available to pedestrians, could help to reduce the existing dominance of buses and taxis. On the west side new steps and additional space would strengthen connections between the Wharf and Northbrook Street, via the Waterside Centre. On the eastern side a new pedestrian space could be created, overlooking the Park and the new event space at the Wharf, and improving views from the A339.

New bridge connection

Improvements to 'American Bridge'

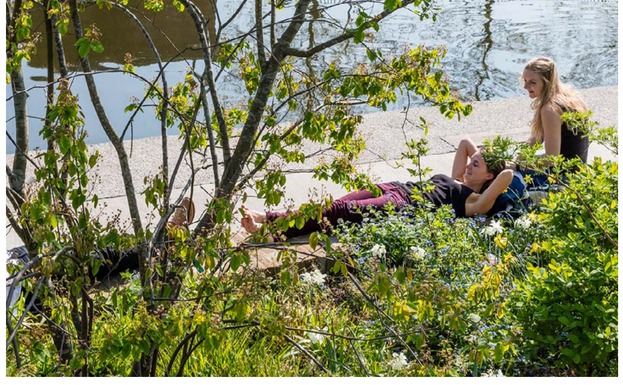


Survey Response

Respondents agree with the need for clearer access points to the waterfront, and improvements to the towpath for pedestrians and cyclists. Promoting an increase in activity overlooking the central section of the canal between Northbrook Street and the Wharf is supported.

Respondents would particularly like to see water-based activities such as paddleboarding and canoeing, as well as more places to sit, eat, drink, and socialise.

"Camp Hopson should do something more positive with the homewares building that makes the most of facing the canal."



Victoria Park & Parkway

The key objective is to make Victoria Park feel less peripheral and more of a 'town centre destination'. This can be achieved by enhancing the routes through the park and improving links across Park Way to Northbrook Street, and across the canal to the Wharf and Market Place. The key focal point for connecting to Northbrook Street is the (former) Debenhams store. A stronger pedestrian route can be made through the park, with better sight lines into the Parkway shopping centre and an improved pedestrian crossing of Park Way.

The public realm strategy promotes a new public space at the junction of London Road and Park Way. A greener space with additional planting would create a stronger 'civic' feel to Parkway, and a stronger connection to the north-west corner of Victoria Park. It would also enhance the historic character of London Road.

Future uses of the Debenhams store (whether redeveloped or repurposed) should create a livelier use along the ground floor facing the park to bring life to this area, potentially extending across to a small scale café or other attraction in this corner of the park. It is considered that this would complement the existing proposals to enhance the existing café in the centre of the park.

There are also other opportunities to make the park a stronger destination. This could include the creation of four zoned areas to support a more diverse range of uses in the park such as:

1. 'Activity': Improved leisure offer for younger children and teenagers. Area to be supported by increased tree planting

2. 'Traditional': Improvements around band stand to allow for seating to view performances retention of more traditional uses such as tennis, bowls.

3. 'Open park area': Retain open area of grass to hold events and allow for park setting with improved seating

4. 'Ecology zone': Additional tree planting and wildlife friendly planting to edge of park

Finally, improved 'gateways' into Victoria Park from London Road and the A339 would create a stronger sense of having arrived in the town centre, and would have the added benefit of encouraging walking and cycling into Newbury.

Zoned location areas

Survey Response

Respondents agree that Park Way currently creates a barrier to the park and would like this to be made more attractive and permeable.

Respondents would like to see the park used more frequently as an events space with space for local bands to perform. Additional comments include for the park to have more facilities such as public toilets, a year-round cafe offer, landscaping to create different zones and wilder areas, and updates to the children's play area.

"Could the park be used for more events e.g., open air concerts during the Spring festival, theatrical/arts events curated by the Corn Exchange. Tie such events in with local retail themed events/evenings to encourage later shopping/dining, and tie in with the Wharf and market square"

"Victoria Park needs to be brought up to modern standards and have more amenities and places to rest and enjoy nature."

"(The park) Needs somewhere for the young adults to hang out which is cool, entertaining, and interesting to them."

Northbrook Street, Bartholomew Street and Market Place

The public realm strategy is based on the recommendation that traffic be one-way only, which is only made possible by the removal of through traffic. The movement analysis has highlighted the feasibility of limiting the type of vehicles that can access Northbrook Street, Bartholomew Street and Market Place to just those that require local access and servicing. If this measure is implemented, the space required for vehicles could be reduced to a single lane.

The key economic (and social) benefit of this is that it provides additional space, a more attractive physical environment and greater flexibility for spill-out space, markets and events in these areas. The public realm strategy proposes that the demand for such space be tested on a 'trial' basis, introducing temporary, but high quality, planting and seating ('parklets') along Northbrook Street and Bartholomew Street. The priority locations would be those associated with operators currently promoting outdoor eating and drinking, and those units which are considered potentially suitable for such activity.

The 'spill out' areas and 'parklets' should also be located to avoid hiding or blocking routes to connecting streets, to the Lanes or to the canal towpath. The Lanes should be marked by coordinated paving, signage and lighting to complement the branding/marketing strategy for the Lanes.

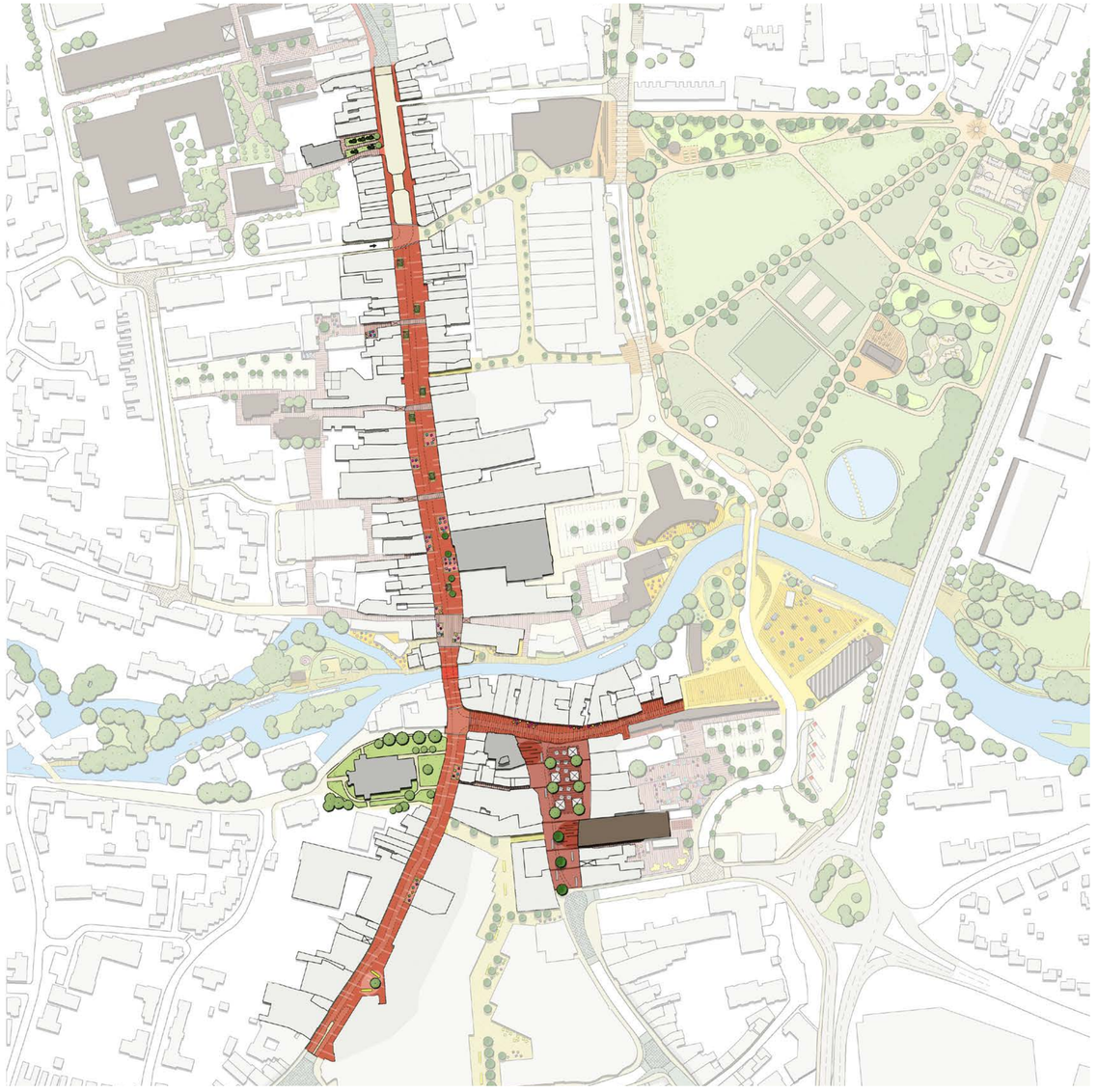
Survey Response

Respondents are supportive of the proposals to provide space for cafés and restaurants to spill out, creating alfresco style dining. Many feel it is essential that Northbrook Street is pedestrianised for this to be successful.

Respondents highlighted the importance of retaining Northbrook Street's historic identity.

Many respondents would like to see Market Place permanently pedestrianised, allowing cafés, pubs, and restaurants to have an increased amount of outdoor seating.

Respondents support proposals for public realm improvements, providing flexibility for larger and more regular events. Many would like Market Place to become the centre of culture and entertainment in Newbury.



Survey Response

"Pedestrianise the whole street (Northbrook) which will then give space for breakout seating from cafés, pubs etc. Without this the current proposal is pointless as traffic ruins any vibrant feeling the street has."

"(Market Place) is a great space which we need to try to use more in the daytime as well as for the evening economy. How can the markets expand, hold additional special themed markets etc? How can we make it easier for the Corn Exchange or Spring Festival to use this space for events to draw in people who will then use restaurants etc?"

"Market Place needs full pedestrianisation rather than the current uncomfortable compromise. With this it starts to become one of the best town squares in the country. Avoiding excessive fixed street furniture would facilitate more events and the movement of the market to Northbrook St would create greater flexibility for these."

"Really showcase the coaching inns."

Lanes and Yards

Proposals are to promote Newbury's Lanes and Yards as a distinctive area for local and independent businesses, utilising them to attract visitors along Northbrook Street and into Broadway, and improve north-south permeability.

Public realm enhancements including new street furniture, street planting, feature entrances, and wayfinding signage should create points of interest, improving visibility from Northbrook Street, and connections to residential areas and car parks, creating attractive routes for shoppers into the town centre, and increasing footfall along the Lanes. Where possible lanes should connect to each other to create loops, encouraging further exploration.

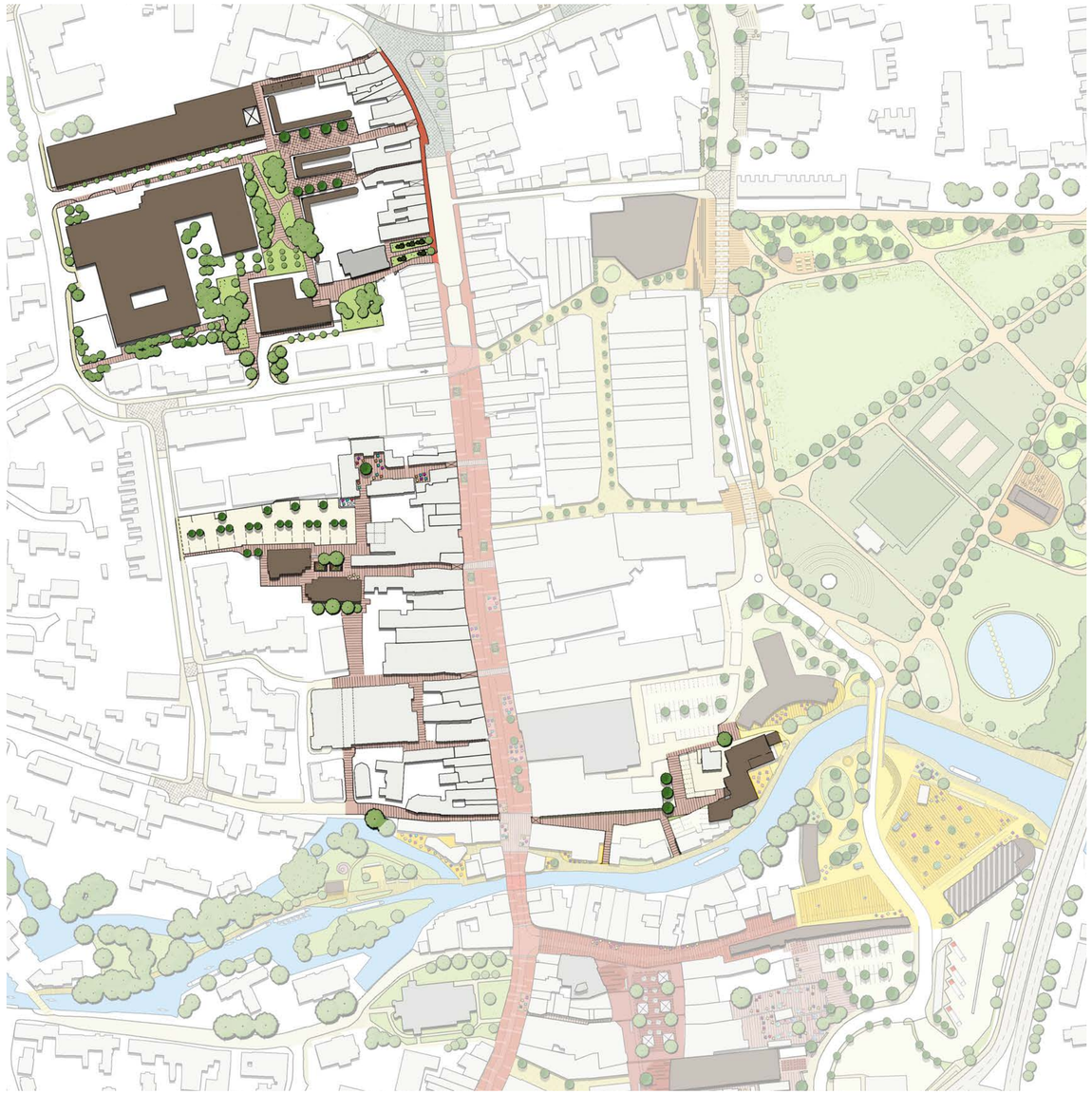
Reuse of the vacant Cromwell Place School building, to support the local artistic community and start-up businesses, could provide an opportunity to further establish the Lanes and Yards as a creative, independent destination within Newbury town centre.

Survey Response

"I love the Lanes and Yards. They create such a unique experience. More should be done to lure visitors in so they can enjoy the unique set-up."

"Considering the role of Lanes and Yards is an excellent insight to improve the culture and experience of the town centre."

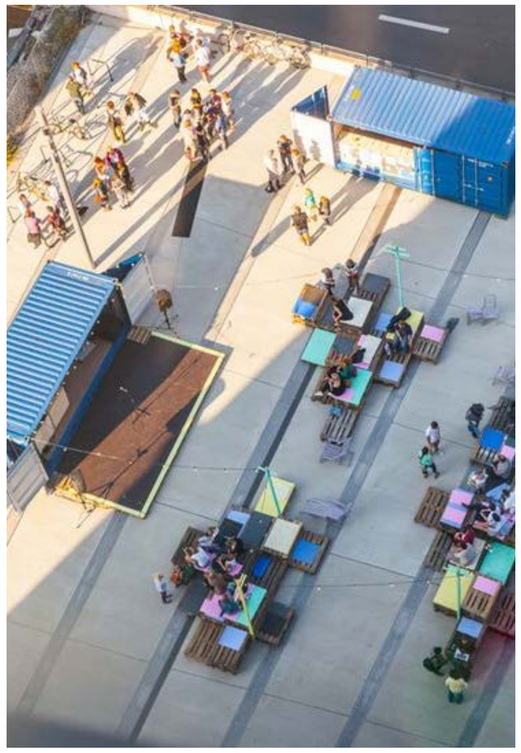
"The problem with some of the Lanes and Yards is that they don't offer a reason to go along them, they are narrow and don't go anywhere. Compare Newbury's lanes with Bright-on's for example where the latter provides attractive jour-neys of exploration and experiences."



Bear Lane

Arrival from Bear Lane is particularly poor. The Conservation Area Appraisal highlights the detrimental impact of the A339, the Telephone Exchange and the 'retail park' style uses which it has recommended be removed from the Conservation Area. These are longer term objectives and are not addressed within this document. However there are measures which can improve this area, and create a stronger connection between Market Place, Bear Lane, Wharf Street and the Canal.

The masterplan proposals give more prominence to the existing pub gardens and eating areas to the rear of the pubs and restaurants fronting Market Place. Improving entrances and arrival from this area can also give a more prominent profile to the Corn Exchange and the Museum. A reduction in parking would enable a new series of lanes to be created, linking Wharf Street and the Museum to the Corn Exchange, creating the space for complementary cultural space. In the longer term this would help stimulate higher quality redevelopment proposals for the Telephone Exchange and the retail park. Ideally this should be considered alongside a reconfiguration of the A339 roundabout to remove the subways and further improve crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.



Local Neighbourhoods

The measures for the proposals at the Wharf, and improvements to the majority of the town centre streets have been set out above. In addition, a programme of public realm improvements are also proposed to promote the independent identity and the local 'neighbourhood' character of the important historic streets of Broadway/London Road, Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street (south).

Broadway/London Road

Broadway/London Road can make more of its 'coaching inn' heritage, emphasising the quality of the pubs and restaurants, improving the setting of its hotels and supporting the smaller scale professional office provision. A coordinated approach should be taken to enhancing arrival from the west (at Oxford Road/Oxford Street mini-roundabout) and from the east (at the London road/A339 junction / Robin Hood roundabout) and enhancing the junctions with Park Way and The Broadway as the two key spaces along the route.

The events strategy suggests potential for occasional closure of Oxford Street to encourage festivals and events which would promote the independent character of the London Road corridor, and promote the food and drink offer in this area.

Cheap Street & Bartholomew Street (south)

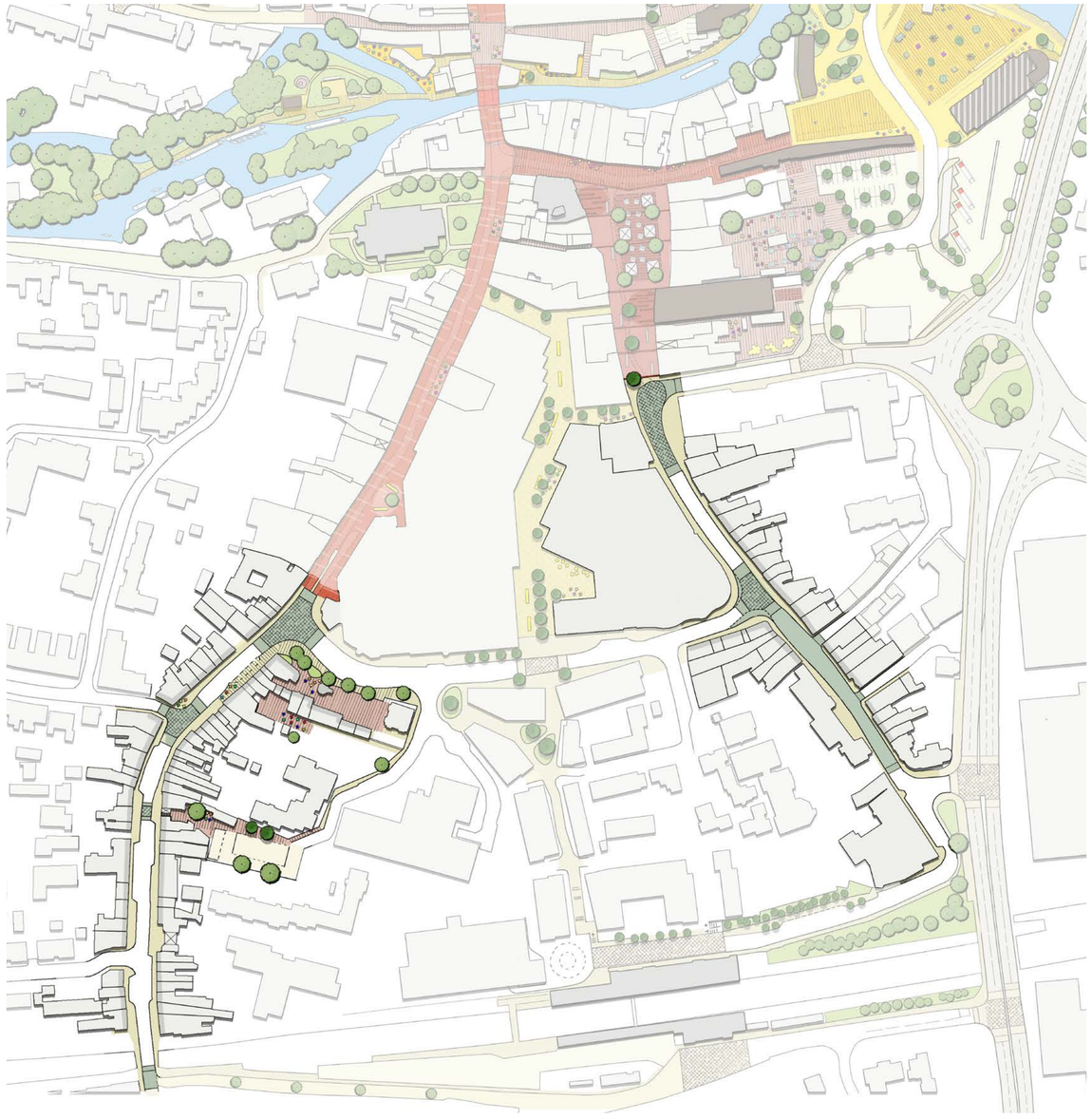
South of Market Street, Bartholomew Street and Cheap Street have a more local character.

Bartholomew Street has an attractive, independent local neighbourhood quality supported by the availability of on-street parking and the increasing number of people living and working within easy walking distance. These factors should continue to ensure that this remains a successful local centre, and no strategic masterplanning interventions are considered necessary.

Improvements should be made to the railway bridge which is basic in its design and choice of materials. This would significantly improve arrival into this area from the south. From the north, extension of the paving and 'pedestrian priority' character across the junction with Market Street would help to attract visitors south and promote the qualities of Inch Yard.

The opportunity is also identified for a coordinated shopfront improvement scheme to promote the independent character of the area. This can create a strong sense of community amongst traders and local residents, as well as addressing some of the concerns raised in the Conservation Area Appraisal regarding modern insensitive shopfronts.

Cheap Street has a variety of interesting and attractive buildings, and is less of a 'local centre' than Bartholomew Street. It would benefit from improved streetscape and parking design in a similar manner to Bartholomew Street. The Eagle Quarter proposals should also ensure that care is taken with the public realm to encourage visitors to the leisure facilities to visit the independent pubs and restaurants in Cheap Street.



7

BRAND, MEANWHILE & EVENTS STRATEGY

Newbury town centre has a ‘brand’ already – all places do. That brand is the mental image that people hold about the place – the instant connotations that spring to mind when you hear ‘Newbury town centre’. And just like a commercial brand, places are in competition with each other. Because of this, there’s a growing realisation that brand strategy applies to places as much as anything else:

- To influence how places are perceived and positioned to drive positive engagement with target markets
- To generate civic pride through communicating better about your place
- To attract the right mix of people, business, and activity
- To confidently become and be known as the place its own community wants and needs it to be

Newbury town centre impacts on the quality of life of tens of thousands of people – not just in traditional economic terms but modern measurements of life – happiness, health, mental wellbeing and social capital. The town centre Vision and masterplan can provide a steer in navigating these vital factors.

This masterplan aims to help position Newbury as a modern market town that “remembers its market town heritage, and remains a focus for social interaction, economic growth, civic engagement and community activities”

Newbury town centre can embody its values, shape perceptions, and start to build its brand by prioritising the actions that emerged from the Vision and masterplan project, and developing a series of quick wins to elevate the brand signifiers that its community wants:

- Broadening the shopping offer and focusing on independents
- Improving the leisure offer
- Improving access to and the quality of open space
- Improving the cultural offer
- Creating opportunities for businesses
- Creating a liveable town centre
- Demonstrating purpose and environmental conscience by protecting Newbury’s heritage and market town identity

Whilst the marketing tool ‘Visit Newbury’ has been successfully established, this should not be considered as the ‘brand’ for Newbury.

Should Newbury choose to go through a full placebrand process at any time in the future, then it is the aims and the outputs of the masterplan that will create actions by which a brand is judged. After all a brand is not a logo but a set of values embodied by its actions.

Case Study

Incredible Edible Todmorden – An unofficial placebrand

Incredible Edible is a local food movement that originated in Todmorden in 2008 when residents of the town were becoming increasingly worried about young people leaving due to a lack of employment opportunity, rising food prices, and climate related events. Residents looked for a way to get people to come together to create a stronger, greener, healthier town and came up with an idea to plant fruit and vegetables in public places throughout the town centre for residents to share.

Incredible Edible Todmorden (IET) now has over 70 sites around the town centre. Raised planters have been sited within the Police Station grounds, and on rail station platforms. Grass verges throughout the town centre have been turned in to herb gardens, and all local schools are involved in food production.

The movement has attracted visitors from around the UK and abroad, and there are now as many as 500 community food growing groups across the world using the Incredible Edible name.

In recent years, and as a direct result of these actions, Todmorden has seen an influx of new residents. The town has become a gastronomic focal point, with the cafe and restaurant economy being a substantial draw. In 2021 Todmorden was voted by The Sunday Times as the best place to live in the North/Northeast.

Events bring colour, serendipity, excitement, diversity, independent retail, eye candy, art, culture, and so many more positive human experiences to town centres. They are vital in bringing the local community together and help to create identity, visitor satisfaction and increased footfall.

A report commissioned by Arts Council England, based on independent research, shows that arts and culture are as important as good schools when people make their decisions about where they live. There is not only tangible value in investment in arts and cultural events, but also huge public demand for it. Of those surveyed, 44% said the local arts scene is an important factor, compared with 43% saying the same about schools. Performances, exhibitions, markets, and festivals can arrest decline and help to make town centres attractive places to visit and socialise. The figures in the report support this, with 68% of people saying that arts and cultural events are very important for fostering community feeling. Source

Newbury Business Improvement District have established a programme of well attended public events and markets including the monthly Newbury Artisan Market. The masterplan strategy and proposals provide opportunity for this events programme to expand, activating town centre streets and spaces to a greater extent.

The masterplan proposals are to 'unlock' and enhance the Wharf and Victoria Park providing opportunity to animate these spaces more often with public events and festivals. Furthermore, proposals to reduce traffic in Northbrook Street and Market Place, should enable increased use of these spaces, along with the Lanes and Yards, for market day activities and town centre events.

For these spaces to function successfully as events spaces, they need to be flexible enough to support a wide range of events, markets, and 'pop-up' placemaking activity. Public realm upgrades must consider these uses from the outset, for example by ensuring public seating and planting is positioned to allow adaptable use of the space or is moveable at reasonable cost. Infrastructure that supports the range of events and activities should also be provided e.g. 'pop-up' power sources.

For events to have the best possible impact, it is essential that they are carefully curated, promoted, and continually benchmarked against best practice events from across the country. Every experience that a visitor has at an event, they will associate with their experience of Newbury as a whole.

Case Study - The Frome Independent

The Frome Independent is an award winning, destination street market that 'reclaims' Frome's high street once a month to showcase the best independent craftspeople, designers, makers, food producers and vintage traders in the Southwest region.

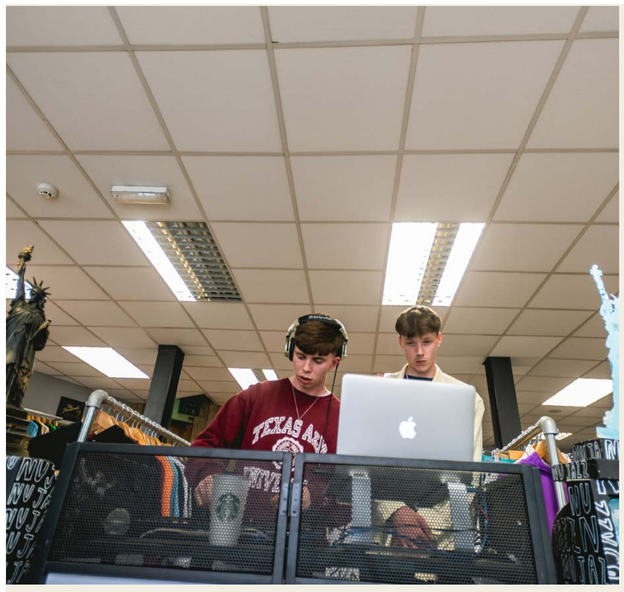
The event activates the entire town centre, including core retail streets, public spaces, and surface car parks with live music, DJs, performance, creative workshops, activities, and market stalls.

The initial aim for the market was to bring footfall to Frome's independent businesses. Within a decade the event has grown to be one of the most significant public events in the region's calendar attracting over 80,000 visits each year, not only from the local region but also from larger towns cities such as Bath, Bristol, and London.

Between events The Frome Independent runs 'Night School'. A series of evening sessions, workshops and supper clubs that provide opportunity to learn new skills under the guidance of the Frome Independent traders and local businesses.

The Frome Independent brand is recognisable, and consistent through curation, marketing, promotion, event infrastructure and merchandising. This cohesive brand strategy has enabled the event to gain over twenty-four thousand followers on Instagram.

Whilst the Frome Independent itself is non-profit making business, the event helps generate an estimated £2.5 million in revenue for its traders and Frome's independent retailers and hospitality businesses. The town has frequently been voted 'Best place to live in the Southwest'.



Engaging with Newbury's youth

Public survey analysis indicates that, at present, young people are more likely to visit the town during the day to eat and drink but are less likely to visit for a specific cultural activity. This is likely a result of a lack of cultural events and activities currently, as their desire for improved cultural space and importantly their desire for more 'spaces for young people to hang out' was nearly 50% compared to 22% of the wider population.

It's important that events actively draw in as many of Newbury's young population as possible both in participation and attendance. This can be achieved through thoughtful programming and curation, to careful communication and marketing. To assist with this, events should be as 'free' as possible whilst being economically viable, and 'profitable' for all businesses involved. Selected elements (e.g. workshops, certain performances) can be paid entry, but these should be positioned as optional up-sells as part of a primarily free-to-attend event.

Case Study - The FOLD

In 2020, Deco Publique were commissioned to produce a programme of events and activities that engaged and supported young people to become creatively empowered in their towns. Funded by the National Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England, the programme ran for three consecutive weeks in three locations in the Lake District and North Yorkshire and included a range of activities such as drop in and bookable art workshops, live music sessions, performances, talks and debates, each tailored to be specific to the location.

The event programme included several 'co-design' workshops, where the attendees' discussed ideas for the towns' future, and creative & political ways in which young people could have more say in their town. One outcome of these events is a bold mural in Settle town centre. An idea that came from the young people in the co-design sessions, and where young people gave their input on artist selection, style, colour scheme and words for the mural.

Events rooted in Newbury

For events to create real value in terms of economic impact, civic pride, placemaking and place-marketing, and to ensure these benefits are long-lasting, it is crucial for them to be pertinent, distinctive, and to engage local residents and businesses, as well as being of a calibre to draw in visitors from further afield.

Newbury town centre, at present doesn't have a regionally significant event. Thus, there is opportunity to develop an event that is 'distinctly Newbury'. An event with a narrative that is embedded in Newbury, with connections to the town's history, geography, and communities (residents, businesses, cultural organisations etc). An event that cannot be found or replicated elsewhere.

The following events are examples that really put places on the map and help to embed brand distinctiveness.

Case study – Ludlow 'The food town'

Ludlow, Shropshire, through its established events and markets has become known as the 'the food town'.

In 1995 members of Ludlow and District Chamber of Trade and Commerce came up with several ideas to help boost the business image of Ludlow and the surrounding area. The main idea was to create a festival, which would both promote the area's small food and drink producers and encourage visitors to explore Ludlow's shops, restaurants, and pubs. The inaugural event was a resounding success, and the event has grown year on year since. Ludlow Food Festival now hosts three events taking place over weekends in spring, summer, and autumn. Combined these events attract over 30,000 visitors to the town.

Case study – First Light Festival, Lowestoft

First Light Festival is a truly unique, 24 hour long multi-arts beach & beach front festival that, as the sun rises, celebrates the UK's 'First Light' of the day as it touches Britain on the seafront of its most easterly town, Lowestoft. The event took place for the very first time over 24 hours of midsummer weekend on 22nd/23rd June 2019 on Lowestoft's South Beach and seafront. With free access and 160 + innovative and engaging events. It is estimated that 30,000 people were in attendance over the course of 24 hours. Its economic impact was considerable, specifically, an investment of £90,000 of business rates retained by East Suffolk Council was converted into between £700-£900k of direct spend at the festival. This is in addition to wider financial benefit to local hotels, restaurants, and bars, which all sold out.

Case Study - Festival of Making, Blackburn

The National Festival of Making reinforces Blackburn being a "making town " with the highest proportion of a workforce in manufacturing / making of any town in the UK.

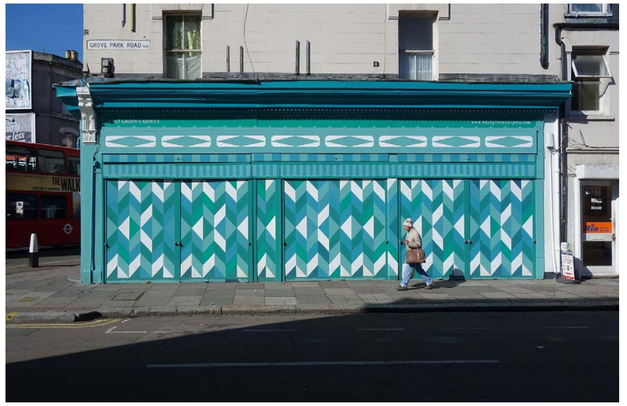
Taking place over two festival days in June, with long-term projects running throughout the year, The National Festival of Making takes over the streets of Blackburn with music, markets, street food, art, performance, tours, talks and above all, an eclectic mix of making experiences for everyone to enjoy.

‘Meanwhile use’ refers to the short-term use of temporarily empty buildings such as shops and offices, or the temporary use of a space. Meanwhile uses can take place for as little as a few weeks, or for as long as several years, whilst long-term plans for the buildings or spaces are finalised. They allow for constant positive change, evolution, and meta-morphosis. They ensure town centres feel exciting, giving residents and visitors the gift of surprise and entertainment.

Temporary initiatives can include small to large scale participative public events, pop-up shops, workspaces, markets, outdoor activities that bring people together, enable networking, play, and help to create a people centred place that people want to visit again and again.

By allowing disused and underutilised spaces to be used as ‘meanwhile hubs’, councils can unlock space for the benefit of creative and cultural activity, as well as start-up and scale up entrepreneurs, which in turn facilitates community activity, cohesion and enterprise.

West Berkshire Council, with its pre-existing relationships with local developers and landlords, can be instrumental in enabling spaces to be used for ‘meanwhile purposes’. Key spaces within Newbury town centre for meanwhile initiatives include vacant shops, the Wharf surface car parking, former Debenhams building, and disused buildings such as former school on Cromwell Place.



Case Study - Oxford Broad Meadow

During the summer 2021 Oxford City Council transformed Broad Street in to 'Broad Street Meadow' with the aim to "give all of Broad Street back to people in the long-term". The main purpose of Broad Meadow was to promote the safe use of the centre post-COVID-19, to support Oxford's economic recovery and to inform the development of longer-term options for creating better civic spaces on Broad Street and in other parts of Oxford in the future.

Vehicle access was restricted between 08:00 and 21:00 and the temporary outdoor public space saw wildflower meadows, lawns and seating made by local makers.

Cost: £120,000 (excluding on-going running costs)

Case Study - Central Parade, Walthamstow

Delivered in partnership with the London Borough of Waltham Forest, the former council direct centre, left unoccupied for years, is now home to over 20 businesses of different scales and uses, a public bakery/ café, incubator retail opportunities for start-ups and desks for freelancers.

Meanwhile Space worked to transform the space into a mixed-use creative hub, with a variety of retail; workspace and studio space, and bakery cafe, initially open for two years, this has since been extended for a further 3 years, whilst the long term future of the site is being decided.

Case Study - Queens Parade, Willesden

Queens Parade opened in March 2012, as an Outer London Fund project, offering local entrepreneurs and start-up businesses, who were given business rate relief by the borough, the chance to occupy and run their own shop on the High Street. After 2 months of opening its doors, Queens Parade was voted by Time Out readers as one of nine best shopping locations in London.

1 Markets and market content

Market activities extending to the Lanes, Yards, Market Place and town centre green spaces, and surface car parks.

2 Small - Medium sized event space

More frequent programme of small - medium sized public events in Market Place.

3 Annual / biannual event

See Oxford Street Party proposal (Quick Wins)

4 Medium - Large sized event space

Opportunity for Victoria Park to host a handful of medium-large scale outdoor events such as music concerts and contemporary fêtes.

5 Flexible events space

Monthly, fortnightly, or weekly events at the Wharf could include:

- Street food markets

- Jumble sales

- Performances (coinciding with Corn Exchange and Market Place events programme)

6 The Wharf meanwhile space

Meanwhile opportunities include:

- Pop-up theatre/performance space

- Urban community garden ~ A temporary garden with mobile planters and public seating.

- Urban play ~ skate ramps, scooter tracks etc.

7 Former Debenhams Store meanwhile space

Opportunities include:

- Co-working provision

- Rehearsal rooms

- Maker spaces

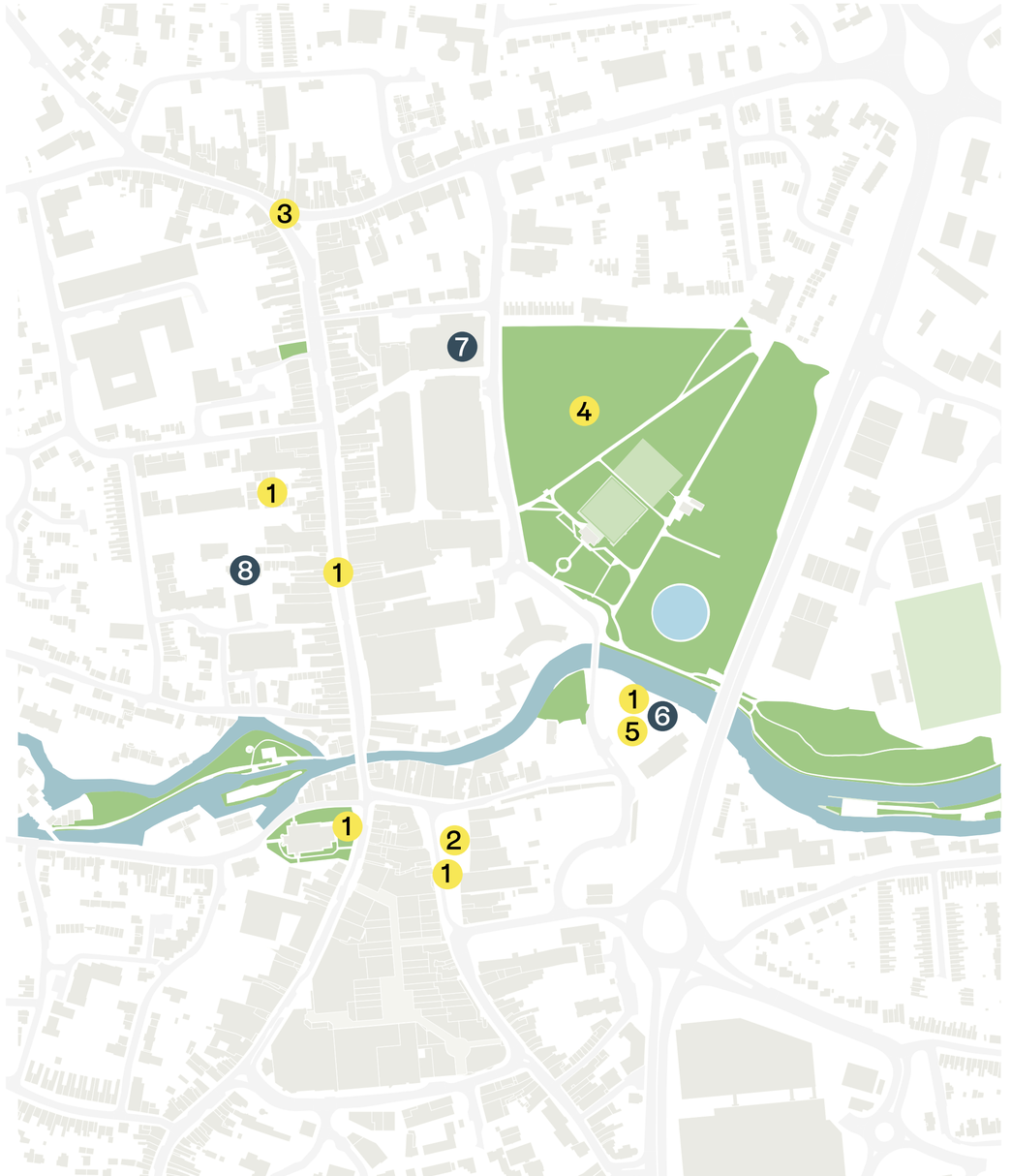
- Indoor markets

8 Cromwell Place school building meanwhile space

Opportunities include:

- Art/Creative studios

- Maker spaces



The Wharf Meanwhile & Events Space options

KEY

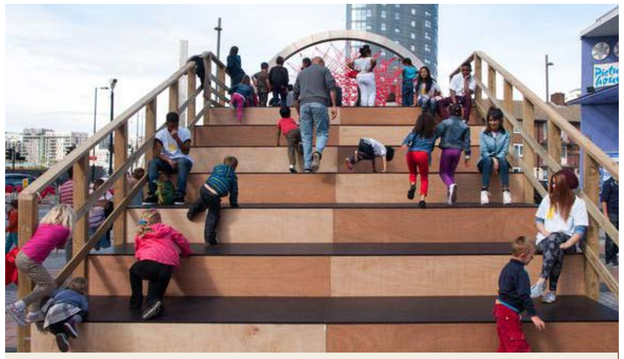
Delivery cost

£ £1k - £50k

££ £50k - £100k

Street Food Market
Year Round
£

Pop-up Garden
Year Round
£



Urban Play
Year Round
££

Performance Space
Temporary
££

Urban Sports (Skatepark)
Year Round
£

Outdoor Cinema
Seasonal
££

Quick Wins

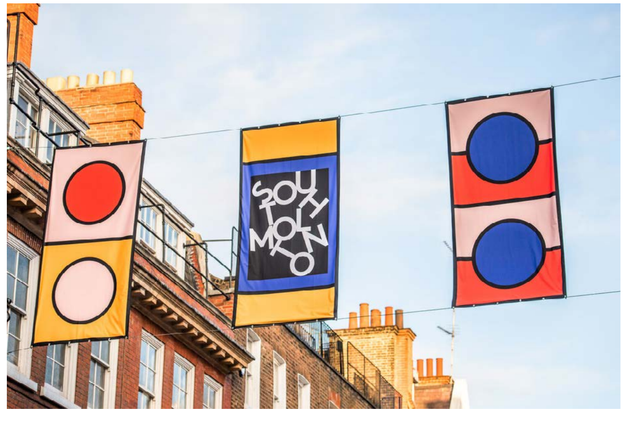
Too few masterplans come to fruition soon enough, and many not all. In order for the 'Newbury Town Centre Masterplan' to start to deliver on the desires of the thousands of people who spoke purposefully through the surveys and engagement sessions over the past year we are proposing some 'quick wins'. Quick wins are a relatively low-cost way of easing the masterplan into action and demonstrating the art of the possible. They can act as 'tests' for some of the masterplan principles and are able to create the noise and visibility sometimes needed to attract central government and private sector investment in the town centre.

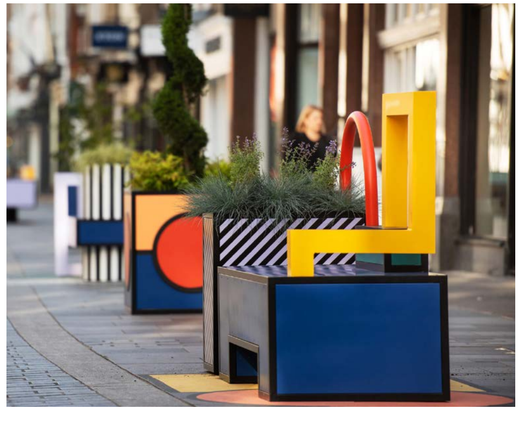
1. Northbrook & Bartholomew Street Parklets

High Streets across the UK have shown how they can quickly adapt with great examples of pop-up outdoor seating for cafés and restaurants in the form of 'parklets'. Parklets not only provide opportunity for small F&B outlets to grow by increasing seating capacity, but they also animate our streets, add greenery, provide shade, create socialising opportunities, and increase dwell time, reaping rewards for retail and F&B businesses and bringing vibrancy back to high streets.

2. Design-led wayfinding and lighting to the lanes and yards

The masterplan strategy is designed to encourage exploration of The Lanes, supporting the local, independent businesses that occupy them. A design/art/led wayfinding/signage/branding strategy will support this, helping to create a high-quality and attractive environment, that supports independent businesses and community activity.





3. Event Activation – Oxford Street Party

Temporary closure of Oxford Street for one evening (or a Sunday in the run-up to Christmas), enabling the pubs, inns, and restaurants to spill out on to the street, alongside further activations such live entertainment and curated market stalls. There is opportunity for this to coincide with a late-night shopping event in the town centre.

4. Vacant shop strategy

Opportunity to diversify the retail offer in the town centre through making vacant shops available to local, start-up businesses using incubator rent models. Additional uses for vacant town centre spaces could include community venue, makerspace, rehearsal spaces.

5. Wharf Events Space

Creating a ‘meanwhile’, flexible events and social space at the Wharf. A place for pop-up events, performances and temporary installations, mobile food traders, with low-cost, but artistically designed seating, planters, etc. encouraging people to sit and linger, and children to play.

8

DELIVERING THE VISION

Masterplans are of no value unless they can be delivered. Whilst the masterplan provides the blueprint for a set of deliverable proposals across the town centre, grand ideas are no more than that if they cannot be funded.

The following section identifies the strategy for delivering each proposal identified within the masterplan, how each can be delivered and funded, and the timescales for delivering them. Where partners, such as the Town Council, Newbury BID and LSD Promotions are referenced within the strategy, this is subject to their confirmation and agreement.

The delivery strategy includes:

- Priorities and phasing;
- Delivery Strategy and Mechanisms for Delivery;
- Policy Interventions; and
- Next steps

It is anticipated that in the period up to 2036, in line with the Council's level of ambition for change and development, Newbury town centre will see the delivery of significant regeneration and public realm schemes based on the proposals detailed within this masterplan.

West Berkshire District Council recognises the need to deliver change early and as a result, the strategy identifies a number of 'quick wins', to be implanted within the next 18 months, to establish early momentum and deliver visible improvements to the town centre, particularly on publicly owned land, which is fundamental to retaining the strong sense of community support and enthusiasm gained throughout the consultation process. The majority of these 'quick wins' would be directly delivered by West Berkshire District Council via internal and external funding streams including Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106, subject to availability.

The strategy also identifies proposals to be delivered in the short term, in the next 18 months - 3 years; medium term 3 years - 5 years; long term 5 years plus, and identifies appropriate delivery and funding mechanisms for each.

Whilst the strategy provides a recommended programme in terms of early wins, short, medium and long term actions, the phasing plan needs to be fluid and able to adapt to changing priorities and circumstances, available funding and changes to the baseline. The strategy will therefore need regular review and offers the potential to bring forward medium/long term and new projects where required. Furthermore, considering the vital role the masterplan will have in delivering economic growth for Newbury's town centre, any opportunities to proactively accelerate the provision of proposals identified for the medium to long term should be considered.

Quick Wins	• Create Parklets along Northbrook & Bartholomew Street • Design-led wayfinding and lighting to the Lanes & Yards • Event Activation along Oxford Street • Vacant shop strategy • Partial or full closure of the Wharf car park and the temporary installation of large scale planters and street furniture ahead of a fully designed remodelling of the Wharf • More spill out space for businesses at the northern end of Park Way • Local Neighbourhood improvements
Short Term Proposals	• Enhancement of green space alongside the canal at the Wharf • Support to business owners in Cheap St & Bartholomew St
Medium Term Proposals	• Extension of paving and 'pedestrian priority' character across the junction with Market Street and Bartholomew Street • Extension of the Library • Enhancing routes through Victoria Park & improving links across Park Way to Northbrook St & across the canal to the Wharf & Market Place • Redevelopment/reuse of Debenhams building for a mixed-use scheme • Improvements to Victoria Park • Pedestrianisation of Northbrook St, Bartholomew Street and Market Place • More prominence to existing pub gardens and eating areas to the rear of pubs and restaurants fronting Market Place. • Emphasising the quality of pubs & restaurants & supporting the small scale office provision at Broadway/London Road. • Improvements to railway bridge • Replacement of the existing toilets at the Wharf with a new structure that incorporates new public toilets
Long Term Proposals	• Improved canal crossing of the Kennet & Avon Canal • Arrival from Bear Lane

Action	**Strategy**	**Delivery & Funding**	**Timeframe**	**Phasing**
Create Parklets along **Northbrook & Bartholomew Street**	Appoint landscape architect / designer to create outdoor spaces for F&B outlets adding greenery & increasing seating capacity.	Direct delivery by WBC. Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources, including CIL and Section 106.	0-18 months	Quick Win
Design-led wayfinding and lighting to **The Lanes & Yards**	Appoint designer to create design/art led wayfinding, coordinated paving and signage coupled with branding strategy developed by the BID team.	Direct delivery by WBC. Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources, including CIL and Section 106.	0-18 months	Quick Win
Event Activation – **Oxford Street Party**	Apply for temporary road closure and WBC to work with Town Council to create outdoor spaces for daytime/evening/Christmas event.	WBC and Town Council Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources.	0-18 months	Quick Win
Vacant shop strategy	Create and run advertising campaign to use vacant shops to offer incubator rent model to start ups or use the space for community venues, rehearsal spaces etc.	WBC and Town Council Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources.	0-18 months	Quick Win
Partial or full closure of **the Wharf car park** and the temporary installation of large scale planters and street furniture ahead of a fully designed remodelling of the Wharf	Appoint designer to produce layout of space to be used as flexible event and social spaces. Review car parking policy and potential relocation of taxi rank.	Direct delivery by WBC. Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources including CIL and Section 106.	0-18 months	Quick Win

Action	Strategy	Delivery & Funding	Timeframe	Phasing
More spill out space for businesses at the **northern end of Park Way** (this would be in addition to the spaces provided under the Northbrook St programme)	WBC, with the help of the BID Team, to support businesses with licenses and permits. Appointment of a designer may be required to increase spill out space for these businesses	Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources including CIL and Section 106.	0-18 months	Quick Win
Local Neighbourhood improvements – **Broadway/ London Road, Cheap Street and Bartholomew Street (south)**	Set out a programme of public realm improvements e.g. planting, removal of unnecessary street furniture, to promote the independent identity and character.	WBC direct delivery Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources including CIL and Section 106.	0-18 months	Quick Win
Support to business owners in **Cheap St & Bartholomew St**	BID team to work with local business owners to agree a coordinated shopfront improvement scheme.	BID and local businesses Pump prime funding to be sought from WBC with match funding from private businesses.	18 months - 3 years	Short Term
Enhancement of green space alongside the **canal at the Wharf**	Agree and produce programme of works with Canal & River Trust to vegetation to create visual connection with the outdoor space and activity proposed with the Waterside Centre.	To be delivered by WBC & Canal & River Trust Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources including CIL and Section 106.	18 months - 3 years	Short Term
Replacement of the existing toilets at **the Wharf** to include a cafe or other community use as well as public toilets	Run competition to find designer to create a more attractive toilet structure which can also function as 'public art'.	Delivery by the Town Council with input from WBC Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources including CIL and Section 106	3 years - 5 years	Medium Term
Extension of paving and 'pedestrian priority' character across the junction with **Market Street and Bartholomew Street**	Scope out works to carry out paving and improvement works, requiring a reorganisation of the junction, to attract visitors and promote the qualities of Inch Yard.	Direct delivery from WBC Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources including CIL and Section 106	3 years - 5 years	Medium Term

Action	**Strategy**	**Delivery & Funding**	**Timeframe**	**Phasing**
Enhancing routes through **Victoria Park** & improving links across **Park Way** to **Northbrook Street** & across the canal to **the Wharf & Market Place**	Appoint engineer and landscape architect to produce plan of enhanced routes and planting design.	Direct delivery by WBC. Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources.	3 years - 5 years	Medium Term
Redevelopment/reuse of Debenhams building for a mixed-use scheme involving pulling back the building lines onto **Parkway** and **West Street** to create more public realm and allow the Park to spill over the **Parkway.**	WBC to agree how this area should be improved and then engage with the building leaseholders or Standard Life Assurance Ltd. the freeholder of the site. However, the building's redevelopment may be constrained by WBC not owning this site.	Private funding by current or future owner.	3 years - 5 years	Medium Term
Improvements to **Victoria Park**, including: Eastern zone of the park - more of an 'activity' zone connected by cycle routes; Central zone – different arrangements to the bandstand; North zone – keep open space. More trees and garden type area to the far north of the park; Enhanced fitness / play areas Parkway – car park could have a green wall.	Appoint landscape architect to map out spaces and design green wall.	WBC and Town Council. Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources.	3 years - 5 years	Medium Term

Action	Strategy	Delivery & Funding	Timeframe	Phasing
Pedestrianisation[1] of **Northbrook St, Bartholomew Street and Market Place**	Tying in with WBC's wider initiatives to promote alternative modes of transport, review post Covid traffic modelling, assessment of impact of alternative travel initiatives, use of technology to enable cost effective management and full public consultation.	WBC direct delivery Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources including CIL and Section 106.	3 years - 5 years	Medium Term
More prominence to existing pub gardens and eating areas to the rear of pubs and restaurants fronting **Market Place.**	Carry out parking review to determine if a reduction in parking could enable a new series of lanes to be created. However, this proposal may be constrained by the different land ownerships to the rear of these pubs and restaurants.	WBC direct delivery Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources including CIL and Section 106.	3 years - 5 years	Medium Term
Improvements to **railway bridge**	Engage with Network Rail to determine if an improvement to design and materials would be acceptable.	Network Rail and WBC Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources.	3 years - 5 years	Medium Term
Extension of the north side of the library to better address the waterside and the A339 at **the Wharf**	Appoint architect to design extension to provide additional leisure/café/restaurant facilities along the waterfront	Direct delivery by WBC Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources.	3 years - 5 years	Medium Term
Emphasising the quality of pubs & restaurants & supporting the small scale office provision at **Broadway/London Road.**	Promotion of local businesses and support to employers to be led by BID Team and Town Council	WBC direct delivery Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources including CIL and Section 106.	3 years - 5 years	Medium Term

[1] Allowances made for servicing, emergency vehicles etc.

Action	**Strategy**	**Delivery & Funding**	**Timeframe**	**Phasing**
Improved canal crossing of the **Kennet & Avon Canal**	Appoint consultant to determine best place for pedestrian crossing and then appoint designer and engineer to create a crossing that will become a piece of public art and a visitor attraction. Locations to be considered: new crossing connecting the Wharf to the Waterside Centre and improved pedestrian option at the 'American Bridge'.	Direct delivery by WBC Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources including CIL and Section 106.	5 + years	Longer Term
Arrival from **Bear Lane**	WBC to agree how they would like to see the Telephone Exchange and the retail park redeveloped along with a reconfiguration of the A339 roundabout. Carry out scoping exercise & engage with business owners.	WBC direct delivery for scoping exercise Funding to be sought from WBC and external sources.	5 + years	Longer Term

We have considered the different funding streams available to WBC to move forward with the proposals in the masterplan. Some may not be relevant to Newbury town centre but we recommend that further investigation into the funding criteria is made.

Public Work Loan Board (PWLB) Borrowing

The terms and arrangements for borrowing are determined by HM Treasury and set out in the Lending Arrangements for PWLB loans with interest rates being determined by HM Treasury. Many local authorities can take out the PWLB loans with major local authorities being responsible for their own financial decision making. They are 'free to finance capital projects by borrowing, provided they can afford to service their debts out of their revenues'. Loans are secured on the revenues of the authority rather than by reference to specific revenues, assets or collateral.

Funding streams -Levelling Up Fund

Announced as part of the 2020 Spending Review to support communities realise the vision of the most impactful infrastructure projects. The fund will support capital investments to local infrastructure having a visible and tangible impact on people and places and supporting economic recovery.

Any bid to this fund will require local MP support and bids can be made under the headings of; Transport, Regeneration and town centre investment and Cultural investment.

Successful bids have been announced for the first round of funding and there will be future opportunities to bid in subsequent rounds. Spending of any funding awarded will have to be by 2024.

Towns Fund

The Towns Fund was launched in 2019 and proposed a partnership between communities, businesses and local leaders. Much of this funding has been allocated and it's unlikely that Newbury would qualify as it was directed towards struggling towns.

Future High Streets Fund

The aim of the fund is to renew and reshape town centres and high streets to drive growth, improve experience and ensure future sustainability. The fund will support local areas to prepare long-term strategies for their high streets and town centres and will provide co-funding with local area projects including:

• investment in physical infrastructure, including improving public and other transport access, improving flow and circulation within a town / city centre, congestion-relieving infrastructure, other investment in physical infrastructure needed to support new housing and workspace development and existing local communities, and the regeneration of heritage high streets; and

• investment in land assembly, including to support the densification of residential and workspace around high street in place of under-used retail units.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

To be launched in 2022 to replace EU Structural Funds. The prospectus advises that this will focus on:

A place-based portion which will target places most in need across the UK, such as ex-industrial areas, deprived towns and rural and coastal communities. It will support people and communities, opening up new opportunities and spurring regeneration and innovation. It will enable joined-up, holistic investment to support local communities and people; and

A second portion of the Fund will be targeted differently to people most in need through bespoke employment and skills programmes that are tailored to local need. This will support improved employment outcomes for those in and out of work in specific cohorts of people who face labour market barriers.

Details are to be provided later this year and WBC is recommended to review the details when they are announced.

Development of Commercial Strategy

To develop a long term funding stream which is not reliant on government funding, WBC could look to develop its own commercial strategy looking at such activities as: the improvement of internally delivered services; establishing new delivery models along with; diversification through income and trade. This is of course not a short term fix and will require the political will and an understanding of the council's risk appetite to succeed.

Arts Council

Our suggestion to redevelop the existing unattractive toilets at the Wharf to include a cafe or other community use as well as public toilets, which also functions as a work of public art could attract grant from The Arts Council and WBC is recommended to research the criteria around funding applications.

One Public Estate

OPE partnerships are run across the country and have shown the value of working together across the public sector. The masterplan aims to meet two of the three core objectives of creating economic growth and delivering more integrated customer focused services.

Planning Policies

The proposals to increase space to socialise, better spaces for eating and drinking and more ability to be involved in cultural events to support Newbury's tourism sector fall under Policy CS 14 Design Principles and Area Delivery Plan Policy 2 of the Core Strategy as well as the Council's Cultural and Heritage Strategy making sure that Newbury continues to be a place that people want to live, work and visit.

The masterplan proposals seek to consolidate, protect and enhance the important role of retail in the shopping centre at Northbrook Street and Parkway, whilst embracing proposals that support independent retailers within a revitalised Eagle Quarter. However, given the changes in the retail market, the masterplan recognises that creating a 'multi-functional' town centre that supports a range of uses is key to ensuring the future success of the town centre.

Recent Government changes to the Use Class Order, and the introduction of Class E covering commercial, business and service uses reflect these ambitions, by supporting the change of use of retail premises to diversify the offer within the town. These uses must serve to protect the town centre's vitality, in accordance with the Saved Policies of the Local Plan as well as the Core Strategy.

The town's defined primary retail frontage comprises Northbrook Street and Bridge Street (from the junction of Northbrook Street with West Street to the bridge crossing of the canal); and frontages along part of Bartholomew Street and within and around the Kennet Centre, including the northern section of Cheap Street and Market Place. Within this area, the saved policy indicates that planning applications for change of use away from retail will be refused, but these Use Classes Order changes have weakened the effect of this policy. However, any application to change the use of a Listed Building, of which there are a considerable number within the town centre, will require planning permission.

There is the potential for the Council to put in place an Article 4 Direction to require any proposals for a change of use to be sought as part of a planning application. The Government has issued advice to the effect that any such proposals for Article 4 Directions should only be pursued where there is robust evidence to show that they are necessary and justified. The Council are therefore advised to prepare an up-to-date retail analysis of the town centre which may then be used to inform or justify any proposed Article 4 Direction(s) that the Council may wish to impose.

Transport Policies

Transport in all its different forms is also at the heart of the masterplan, be it ensuring that the town presents a more 'welcoming' entrance, potentially amending traffic flow to Northbrook Street or increasing the walkability across the town and encouraging more people to explore Victoria Park which meets the Council's Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan.

As part of our proposals, we have suggested the removal of car parking and this element will form part of an overall car parking review undertaken across the town by the Council. The proposals within the masterplan will in turn need to be assessed against the Local Transport Plan and may influence future iterations of the plan, subject to the outcome of the car parking review.

Economic Delivery

The public realm improvements, strategic branding exercise and the works to The Lanes to increase awareness and interest will all help to encourage a more independent town centre and help to support the Economic Delivery Plan.

The adopted Core Strategy directs new office provision towards town centres. In accordance with this, the vision supports the creation of new serviced office space through conversion of existing buildings and the masterplan identifies the former Debenhams building as a suitable site for a mixed-use scheme, incorporating co-working office space to support start-ups and small businesses.

Changes to permitted development rights have made office spaces vulnerable to change of use. We have seen this with the vacant Bayer offices being granted permission for conversion to flats. The Council should continue to try and resist future conversion of office premises to residential or other uses, to support the town's economy and encourage businesses to set up in Newbury.

It is essential that the momentum generated during the masterplan process continues with the endorsement of the proposals by the Council and key stakeholders as the basis for their delivery.

Delivery should be in accordance with the Phasing Plan, with the identified early wins requiring immediate consideration.

Following the endorsement of the masterplan, the next step actions include:

<u>Quick Wins</u>

• Secure funding andimplement the identified Quick Wins

• Preparation of detailed public realm and streetscape design briefs, associated cost estimates and programmes

• Provide support to business owners within the town centre, through the help of Newbury BID

• Implement a Vacant Shop Strategy to reduce retail vacancies in the town centre

<u>Short Term</u>

• Identify available funding and prepare funding applications and bids as appropriate

• Preparation of design guide for shopfront improvements

• Create a Business Case for the larger proposals, including the Wharf

• Undertake a car parking review of the existing parking facilities in Newbury town centre

<u>Medium to Longer Term</u>

• Preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document for Newbury town centre including the masterplan area

• Trial the implementation of the proposed changes to the existing pedestrianisation scheme for the town centre

• Preparation of development briefs, including for the Wharf, Victoria Park and the existing Canal crossing

West Berkshire COUNCIL

HemingwayDesign

NEW masterplanning

urban movement

GL Hearn
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Report Title: West Berkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	10 February 2022
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Richard Somner
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	20 January 2022
Report Author:	Stuart Clark
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4142

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To seek approval of the West Berkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022-2027.

2 Recommendation

2.1 That the Executive approves the West Berkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022-2027.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	There are no financial implications for the council. Flood defence schemes proposed in the strategy are funded by Grant-Aid and contributions from the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.
Human Resource:	There are no direct human recourse implications at present, however, the enactment of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) may require additional resources. The council employs engineering consultants to assist with the design of flood defence schemes and to meet peaks in workload from our duties under the Flood and Water Management Act.

Legal:	Legal assistance is required with land purchases for flood defence schemes.			
Risk Management:	The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) is an essential part of the Council's duties as Lead Local Flood Authority under the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA). Reputational harm would be caused by a failure to implement the actions contained in the LFRMS and our duties under the FWMA.			
Property:	It is sometimes necessary to purchase private land to construct major flood defence schemes.			
Policy:	The LFRMS supports HM Government Policy Statement 'Flood and coastal erosion risk management', the National Planning Policy Framework and the EU Floods Directive.			
	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		There are no Equalities impacts associated with the LFRMS.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		There are no Equalities impacts associated with the LFRMS.

Environmental Impact:	x			A Strategic Environmental Assessment is included in Appendix C. Whenever possible, all flood defence schemes, sustainable drainage systems and land drain works undertaken or approved by the council aim to achieve biodiversity, water quality and amenity benefits. Adaptation and protecting the District against the impacts of climate change is an integral part of the Council's Environment Strategy.
Health Impact:	x			Flooding can have a significant impact on Health and Wellbeing of those residents that have been affected. Reducing the risk of flooding will therefore lead to healthier communities.
ICT Impact:				No impact.
Digital Services Impact:				No impact.
Council Strategy Priorities:				Approval of this strategy is in line with the Council Strategy Priorities of 'maintaining a green district' and 'developing local Infrastructure to support and grow the local economy.
Core Business:				The LFRMS supports the council's Environment Strategy.
Data Impact:				No impact.

Consultation and Engagement:	The draft strategy was published on the council's web-site from 23 August 2021 with comments invited by 3 October 2021. In total 101 responses were received from a mixture of residents, Local Ward Members, Parish Councils and Local Flood Forums. A wide range of feedback and comments were received. The feedback from the consultation was on the whole constructive and supportive. The general consensus was that the document is welcomed and the objectives are appropriate to reducing flood risk within the district. Details of the responses along with an officer comment can be seen in Appendix B.

4 Executive Summary

4.1 The Flood & Water Management Act 2010 places a duty on West Berkshire Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management (the 'Strategy'). This Strategy forms the framework within which communities have a greater say in local risk management decisions.

4.2 The Strategy encourages effective flood risk management by enabling people, communities, businesses and the public sector to work together to ensure a clear understanding of the risks of flooding so that investment in flood risk management can be prioritised more effectively.

4.3 The Strategy sets out clear and consistent plans for flood risk management that forms links to local planning policies and helps ensure that emergency plans and responses to flood incidents are effective. This will in turn help communities recover more quickly and effectively after flood incidents.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

5.1 The Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) 2010 requires West Berkshire Council as a Lead Local Flood Authority to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to provide the framework for managing local flood risk from groundwater, surface water and ordinary watercourse within the District.

5.2 The draft Local Flood Risk Management Strategy was made available for public consultation from 23 August 2021 to 3 October 2021. Consultees included members of the Berkshire Strategic Flood Risk Management Partnership, Environment Agency, Thames Water, Parish Councils, Water, local flood forums, and the general public.

Background

5.3 The Strategy establishes a set of objectives and corresponding measures (presented as an action plan) that will steer the Council towards meeting those objectives; and provides a single consistent reference point against which the Council can develop and monitor flood risk management. The objectives may also be regarded as an adaptation to the changing climate and as such supporting the wider strategic objectives of the Council's Environment Strategy.

5.4 The Strategy sets out how West Berkshire Council will work with other agencies and the public to understand local issues and to communicate and manage the risk of flooding. The Strategy will help communities, individuals and businesses understand local flood risk, what action they can expect to see with regards flood risk management and what action they can take to reduce the impact of future flood events.

Proposals

5.5 There are four main objectives in the Strategy as listed below. These are covered in more detail within the document along with the strategic measures and actions required to achieve these objectives. The objectives are:

1. Maintain and update our understanding of flood risk within West Berkshire and increase public awareness;

2. Develop plans to reduce flood risk taking account of people communities and the natural environment;

3. Identify measures that aim to reduce flood risk;

4. Ensure that planning decisions take account of flood risk.

Overview and Scrutiny

5.6 The Flood and Water Management Act has made an amendment to the Local Government Act, under Section 21F, introducing powers for Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review and scrutinise the activities of the flood risk management authorities. In addition, under the Flood Risk Management Overview and Scrutiny (England) Regulations 2011, the lead local flood authorities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is empowered to request reports or the attendance at meetings of any flood risk management authority, to enable the scrutiny of the delivery of their flood risk management functions.

5.7 The Strategy will be reviewed every five years and reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.

Implementation and Review

5.8 Reviewing and updating this strategy will be essential to ensure it remains fit for purpose and as a way of demonstrating successes in delivering reduced flood risk within West Berkshire. Implementation of the strategy will be led by the Highways and Flood Risk Asset Management Team within the Environment Department,

working closely with the Council's Joint Emergency Planning Unit and professional partners through the Berkshire Strategic Flood Action Group.

6 Other options considered

6.1 No other options were considered. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 places a duty on West Berkshire Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, to develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Flooding can have severe detrimental impacts on people's lives, from short duration nuisance flooding of highways, open space and river corridors to flooding of people's homes and businesses leading to damage, loss of personal possessions, displacement during remedial works and environmental impacts from pollution. The effects can also lead to physical and mental health issues and increased strain on people's lives.

7.2 This Local Flood Risk Management Strategy sets out how West Berkshire Council will work with its partners in local flood risk management to understand local flooding, communicate risks and manage unacceptable risks now and in the future.

7.3 Through the process of developing the LFMS, the Lead Local Flood Authority have assessed flood risk management measures that support the wider objectives of the council's Environment Strategy, and other related policies. The declaration of a Climate Emergency by West Berkshire Council in 2019 means that the objectives contained in the LFMS may be regarded as planned adaptation and coping response to the changing climate.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022-2027

8.2 Appendix B – Consultation responses and officer comments

8.3 Appendix C – Strategic Environmental Assessment

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:**	November 2021
Version:		**Date Modified:**	-
Author:	Stuart Clark		
Owning Service	Transport and Countryside		

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:

(i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

(ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

(2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

(3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:

- **Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?**
- **(The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)**
- **Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?**
- **Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?**
- **Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?**
- **Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?**
- **Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?**
- **Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?**

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

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:	Approval of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2022-2027
Summary of relevant legislation:	The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is a requirement of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's priorities for improvement? • 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** ☐ **No** ☒ **If yes, please indicate which priority and provide an explanation**
Name of Budget Holder:	**Andrew Reynolds**
Name of Service/Directorate:	**Transport and Countryside**
Name of assessor:	
Date of assessment:	
Version and release date (if applicable):	

Is this a …. ?		**Is this policy, strategy, function or service … ?**	
Policy	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☐	**New or proposed**	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☐
Strategy	**Yes** ☒ **No** ☐	**Already exists and is being reviewed**	**Yes** ☒ **No** ☐
Function	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☐	**Is changing**	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☐
Service	**Yes** ☐ **No** ☐		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	The LFRMS sets out the aims and priorities to reduce flood risk over the 5 year period ending in 2027.
Objectives:	Develop plans and identify measure to reduce existing flood risk. Improve the understanding of flood risk in West Berkshire and increase public awareness.

Outcomes:	Raising public awareness of flooding and reducing flood risk.
Benefits:	The primary beneficiaries are the residents and businesses in West Berkshire effected by flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourse.

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

(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age		
Disability		
Gender Reassignment		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Race		
Religion or Belief		
Sex		
Sexual Orientation		
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 ☐ No ☒**
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	**Yes ☐ No ☒**
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	

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

If an EqIA 2 is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the EqIA guidance and template – http://intranet/index.aspx?articleid=32255.

(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqIA Stage 2 required	Yes ☐ No ☒
Owner of EqIA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqIA Stage Two:	

Name: Stuart Clark **Date: 6 December 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.

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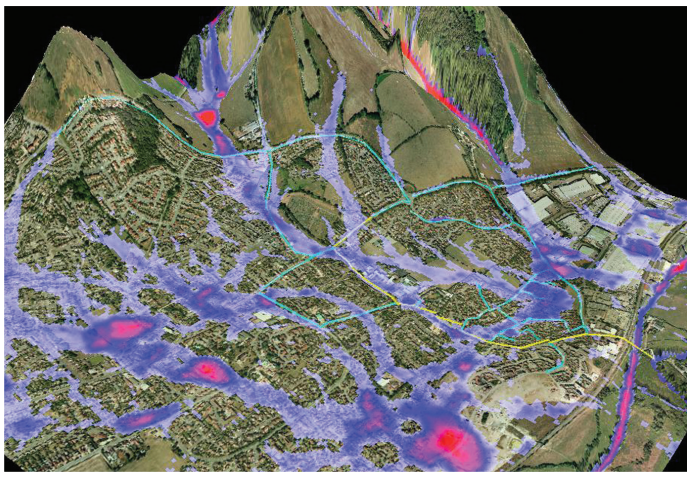
Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
2022–2027



West Berkshire Council
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Revision Schedule

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Executive Summary

As with many areas of the United Kingdom, West Berkshire has suffered as a result of recent floods. This has provided us with first-hand experience of the consequences of flooding. Owing to the effects of climate change, extreme weather events are predicted to become more likely and consequently this will lead to an increased risk of flooding. Whilst flooding can never be prevented, it can be predicted and the effects forecast; measures can then be put in place to manage the flooding and its consequences.

West Berkshire Council recognises that flooding can have far reaching effects on people's lives: From short duration highway flooding and the flooding of open spaces and river corridors, to the flooding of homes and businesses that leads to damage and loss of personal possessions. There is also displacement during remedial works and environmental impacts from pollution. The effects can also lead to physical and mental health issues causing increased strain on people's lives.

West Berkshire Council is committed to minimising the effects of future flood events on its residents. This first Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) sets out how West Berkshire Council will work with its local flood risk management partners to better understand local flooding, communicate risks and manage unacceptable risks both now and in the future.

Our Objectives

Through the process of producing this LFRMS West Berkshire Council has established the following local flood risk management objectives:

Table 0-1: West Berkshire Council Local Flood Risk Management Objectives 2020

Ref No:	Objective
O1	Maintain and update understanding of flood risk within West Berkshire and increase public awareness.
O2	Develop plans to reduce existing flood risk taking account of people, communities and the environment.
O3	Identify measures that aim to reduce existing flood risk
O4	Ensure that planning decisions take full account of flood risk

Our Measures

To achieve these objectives, West Berkshire Council has identified 16 measures which are presented in the Action Plan associated with this LFRMS. These measures address various aspects of local flood risk management, from improving awareness and communication to implementing measures to reduce unacceptable flood risk. All the measures will be actioned by West Berkshire Council with assistance and support in some cases from its local flood risk management partners, including residents and communities.

Funding the implementation of Flood Risk Management Measures

To achieve the implementation of the above measures West Berkshire Council in consultation with its partners in local flood risk management has identified that funding will need to be sought from a variety of sources including:

- Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant in Aid (FCRM GiA)

- West Berkshire Council
- Professional partners
- Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Local Levy
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
- Section 106 contributions
- Local Community contributions

Through the process of developing this LFRMS, West Berkshire Council has assessed the potential of measures to support the wider, environmental objectives for the district. It has also assessed timeframes for implementation of the measures in light of the periodic review cycle for other assessments and documents relating to local flood risk management and catchment management. This LFRMS will be formally reviewed for potential updating in 2025.

1 Introduction

In recent years, West Berkshire along with many other parts of the UK has suffered from a number of flooding events which have directly affected people's lives, homes and businesses. The West Berkshire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy aims to help reduce and manage flood risk. This will be achieved through a better understanding of flood risk within West Berkshire, better co-operation between organisations involved in flood risk management and better communications with the public about the risks and what can be done.

Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (FWMA), West Berkshire Council is designated as Lead Local Flood Authority for West Berkshire District and has statutory powers and responsibilities for co-ordinating flood risk management in partnership with other organisations. A key component of the Act is that West Berkshire Council must 'develop, maintain, apply and monitor a strategy for local flood risk management'. The Strategy establishes a set of objectives and actions (presented as an Action Plan) that will direct the Council towards meeting those objectives. The Strategy therefore provides a single consistent reference against which West Berkshire Council can develop, apply and monitor flood risk management, both now and in the future. In doing so the Strategy will help individuals, communities and businesses understand local flood risk and what actions they can expect to see with regards local flood risk management and what actions they can take to reduce their risk from future flood events.

In accordance with Section 9 of the FWMA, Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA) are required to develop, maintain, apply and monitor Local Flood Risk Management Strategies which set out their vision for managing flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses in their administrative areas.

1.1 What is a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

The Strategy establishes a set of flood risk management objectives and corresponding measures (presented as an action plan) that will steer West Berkshire Council towards meeting these objectives. The LFRMS provides a single consistent reference point against which West Berkshire Council can develop, apply and monitor flood risk management.

Who is the LFRMS for?

The LFRMS will help individuals, communities and businesses understand local flood risk, what action they can expect to see with regards to local flood risk management and what action they can take to reduce their risk from future flood events.

1.2 The Aim of the Strategy

The aim of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) is to explain how West Berkshire Council will engage in the management of flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses within its administrative area, now and in the future.

Principles of the Strategy

The following are guiding principles on which flood risk management in West Berkshire will be based:

a) Flooding is a natural process that will occur despite all efforts to prevent it. It is therefore important to focus on reducing the consequence of flooding and the disruption that it causes, as well as on measures to prevent it.

b) Improving our knowledge and understanding of flood risk within West Berkshire is essential.

c) Decisions on where local resources are focused will be evidence based and proportionate.

d) No organisation is able to ensure that householders and businesses are safe from flooding. Householders and businesses have responsibility for protecting their own property,

e) No single organisation can effectively manage flood risk across the whole of West Berkshire, so co-operation among public and private sector agencies is essential for the long-term success of flood risk management.

f) Proposals to prevent or reduce flooding can sometimes have significant effects on the natural environment. Flood prevention schemes will only be approved if it can be shown by means of an Environmental Assessment, that the environment will not be adversely affected.

g) New developments should ensure that there is no increase in flood risk, either on or off site, and where possible improve the existing level of flood risk.

h) The cumulative impact of small developments on flood risk can be as significant as the impact of major developments, and so both must be managed in order to ensure the risk of flooding does not increase.

In accordance with Section 9 of the FWMA 2010, a LFRMS must specify:

(a) the risk management authorities in the authority's area,

(b) the flood and coastal erosion risk management functions that may be exercised by those authorities in relation to the area,

(c) the objectives for managing local flood risk (including any objectives included in the authority's flood risk management plan prepared in accordance with the Flood Risk Regulations 2009),

(d) the measures proposed to achieve those objectives,

(e) how and when the measures are expected to be implemented,

(f) the costs and benefits of those measures, and how they are to be paid for,

(g) the assessment of local flood risk for the purpose of the strategy,

(h) how and when the strategy is to be reviewed, and

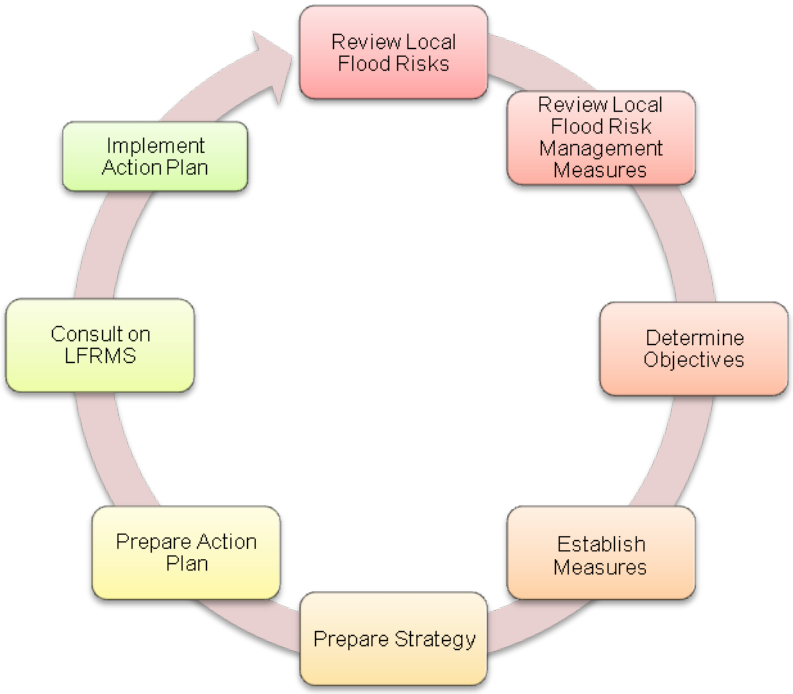
(i) how the strategy contributes to the achievement of wider environmental objectives.

1.3 Development of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

The preparation of Local Flood Risk Management Strategies is cyclical. The Strategy is intended to be used as a guide to inform and benchmark local flood risk management activities and as such should be in constant use. It should be periodically reviewed and updated where necessary.

This LFRMS has been developed by West Berkshire Council in consultation with its local partners in flood risk management and local communities.

The process followed for the development of this LFRMS is illustrated below.



1.4 Synopsis of the West Berkshire Council LFRMS

Section 2 presents the legislative context for this LFRMS, the power, duties and responsibilities of the Lead Local Flood Authority and the wider legislative context for flood risk management in England. Section 3 identifies the Risk Management Authorities operating within the West Berkshire district, their roles and responsibilities, along with details of how those authorities cooperate in discharging their responsibilities for local flood risk management. A brief summary of flood risk in West Berkshire is presented in Section 4.

The objectives, measures and action plan for flood risk management within the West Berkshire district are presented in Section 5 along with how they contribute to wider environmental objectives. Section 6 discusses how these may be funded and how funds will be distributed..

2 Legislative and Policy Context

There are several pieces of legislation and national and local policy documents that govern the roles, responsibilities and standards for flood risk management. This section provides a summary of the relevant legislation and policy documents.

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 The Pitt Review (2008)

Following widespread floods during the summer of 2007, in which over 50,000 households across the UK were affected and damages exceeded £4billion, Sir Michael Pitt carried out an independent review of national flood risk management practices. The Pitt Review was published in June 2008 and called for urgent and fundamental changes to the way flood risk was being managed. The report contained 92 recommendations, of which 21 related specifically to Local Authorities (Appendix A). The recommendations were based around the concept of local authorities playing a major role in the management of local flood risk through coordinating with all the relevant authorities.

2.1.2 Flood and Water Management Act (2010)

Many of the recommendations contained within the Pitt Review were implemented within the Flood and Water Management Act (2010), which gained royal assent on the 8th April 2010 and provides legislation for the management of risks associated with flooding.

The Act reinforces the need to manage flooding holistically and in a sustainable manner. It also places a number of new roles and responsibilities on West Berkshire which is designated (through the Act) as a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA). Bracketed references at the end refer to Sections/Schedules from the Act.

LLFAs have a **responsibility** to:

- develop, maintain, apply and monitor a Local Flood risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) (Section 9);
- consult the public and local risk management authorities on its LFRMS (Section 9);
- establish and maintain a register of structures or features which, in the opinion of the authority, are likely to have a significant effect on a flood risk in its area (Section 21); and,
- set up an overview/scrutiny committee to oversee the flood risk management functions or coastal risk management functions of the local authority's area (Schedule 2).

The FWMA imposes **duties** on LLFAs to:

- Investigate flooding incidents (Section 19); and,
- Co-operate with other Risk Management Authorities (RMA) (Section 4 & 11).

LLFAs have **powers** to:

- Consent works on ordinary watercourses (Section 23);
- Designate 3rd party assets (including private assets and those owned by other RMAs) that affect flood risk and give notice to owners that the assets have been adopted (Schedule 1);
- Request information from Risk Management Authorities (Section 14); and
- Carry out works relating to groundwater and surface water flooding (Schedule 2).

These are discussed in more detail in later chapters.

2.1.3 National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy (2020)

In July 2020, the Environment Agency published the updated Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England. The updated Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy sets an ambition for the management flood risk and coastal change up to 2100. This will be achieved through a series of shorter term objectives for the next 10 to 30 years.

The strategy states that the objectives will need to be achieved by investment in infrastructure combined with softer measures. Objectives are grouped under three broad ambitions:

- Create climate resilient places
- Ensure today's growth and infrastructure is resilient to tomorrow's climate
- Develop a nation of climate champions, able to adapt to flooding and coastal change through innovation

The National Flood Risk and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy defines the responsibilities of LLFAs as:

> *"developing, maintaining and applying a strategy for local flood risk management in their areas and for maintaining a register of local flooding infrastructure. They also have an operational role as the lead authorities with responsibility for managing the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses."*

2.1.4 EU Floods Directive & Flood Risk Regulations (2009)

The Directive required Member States to assess if watercourses and coastlines that are at risk from flooding, to map the flood extent, assets and people at risk in these areas and to take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce this flood risk.

The EU Floods Directive was transposed into law for England and Wales in The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 which came into force in December of that year. The Flood Risk Regulations require the following four main activities are completed:

- Produce a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) – this involves collecting information on past and future floods from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.
    - West Berkshire Council produced their Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment in June 2011.
- Identification of 'Flood Risk Areas', i.e. areas where the risk of flooding is 'significant'.
    - West Berkshire does not have any areas defined as being at 'significant' risk as defined by the Flood Risk Regulations therefore the Council is only required to produce the Preliminary Assessment Report.
- Prepare Flood Hazard and Flood Risk Maps – Where areas have been identified within the PFRA as being at significant risk then the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authorities were required to produce hazard and risk maps for indicative Flood Risk Areas.
    - West Berkshire does not have areas defined as having 'significant' risk as defined by the Flood Risk Regulations therefore they are only required to produce the Preliminary Assessment Report under the first bullet point above.
- Prepare Flood Risk Management Plans – The final stage was for the production of a Flood Risk Management Plans for the indicative Flood Risk Areas.

- West Berkshire does not have areas defined as having 'significant' risk as defined by the Flood Risk Regulations therefore they are only required to produce the Preliminary Assessment Report under the first bullet point above.

2.1.5 The Land Drainage Act (1991)

The Land Drainage Act details the duties and powers to manage land drainage for a number of bodies and groups, including local authorities, the Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Boards and riparian owners. The Flood and Water Management Act updates a number of elements of this legislation.

The key powers and duties provided by the Land Drainage Act are:

- Duty on internal drainage boards to exercise a general supervision over all matters relating to drainage of land;
- A general duty to the environment when exercising powers;
- Powers to maintain, improve and build new drainage related works;
- Consenting and enforcement powers for ordinary watercourses;
- Powers to create byelaws; and
- General power of entry onto land for water level management so that statutory authorities can exercise flood risk management for the common good.

2.1.6 The Localism Act (2011)

The Localism Act introduces a number of proposals to provide new freedoms and flexibilities for local government. With regards to flood risk management the Localism Act requires Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) to establish processes to enable overview and scrutiny committees to review and scrutinise risk management authorities in their area. Risk management authorities have a duty to comply with a request made by an overview and scrutiny committee for information or a response to a report in relation to its flood or coastal erosion risk management functions.

The Localism Act introduces the 'duty to cooperate', which requires all risk management authorities to work together. It is important these organisations work together across administrative boundaries when working in relation to flood and coastal erosion risk management.

2.1.7 Water Resources Act (1991)

The aim of the Water Resources Act is to prevent and minimise the pollution of water. Under the Act it is an offence to cause or knowingly permit any poisonous, noxious or polluting material, or any solid waste to enter any controlled water. The Environment Agency is responsible for policing this Act.

The definition of polluting material includes silt and soil from eroded areas. If silt or soil from eroded areas is found to be polluting a water body or watercourse, the Environment Agency has the power to prevent or clear up the pollution and recover the damages from the landowner or responsible person.

2.1.8 Highways Act (1980)

The Highways Act provides powers to West Berkshire Council as the Highway Authority for the creation, improvement and maintenance of roads and for acquisition of land. It also provides:

- Responsibility to maintain highways, including ensuring that highway drainage systems are clear and that blockages on the highway are cleared, this is a duty under the Highways Act and therefore strategic highways are inspected and maintained regularly.

- Powers to deliver works that they consider necessary to protect the highway from flooding. These works can either be on the highway itself or on land which has been acquired by the Highway Authority in the exercise of highway acquisition powers.

- Authority to divert parts of watercourses or carry out any other works on any form of watercourse if it is necessary for the construction, improvement or alteration of the highway or provides a new means of access to any premises from the highway.

2.1.9 Civil Contingencies Act (2004)

The Civil Contingencies Act details the framework for civil protection in the UK and sets out the actions required for a flood event. In order to provide protection in the event of a flood the Act is arranged in two sections: Part 1: local arrangements for civil protection; and Part 2: emergency powers.

Under Part 1 of the Act West Berkshire Council is responsible for:

- Undertaking risk assessments;

- Developing Emergency Plans;

- Developing Business Community Plans;

- Arranging to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency;

- Share information with other local responders to enable greater co-ordination;

- Co-operate with other local responders to enhance greater co-ordination and efficiency; and

- Provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations about business continuity management.

2.1.10 Reservoirs Act (1975)

The Reservoirs Act is applicable to all reservoirs classified as ‘large raised reservoirs’ and regulates the responsibility for their management and supervision. Large raised reservoirs are defined as reservoirs which hold a volume of water of 25,000 cubic meters or more above the natural level of any part of the surrounding land adjoining the reservoir. ,

The Reservoirs Act is due to be amended by the Flood and Water Management Act, with the introduction of new arrangements for reservoir safety and the redefining of ‘large raised reservoir’ to include any reservoir with a volume of more than 10,000 cubic meters.

Under the changes provided by the Flood and Water Management Act all large raised reservoirs that are assessed as ‘high risk’ will be subject to full regulation, and any large raised reservoirs not at ‘high risk’ will need to be registered. In addition, all incidents at reservoirs will need to be reported.

A ‘high risk’ reservoir is any reservoir for which the Environment Agency considers that “human life could be endangered in the event of an uncontrolled release of water from the reservoir and the reservoir does not satisfy certain conditions”.

If a reservoir is subject to ‘full regulation’ a qualified (panel) civil engineer must be appointed to supervise the design and construction, the reservoir must be continually supervised once constructed, an inspection must be undertaken every ten years, and any measures recommended to be taken in the interests of safety must be implemented and inspected by a supervising engineer.

2.1.11 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations transpose the European Commission Habitats Directive (1992) into law in England and Wales.

The regulations focus on the importance of conserving natural habitats in order to help maintain and enhance biodiversity. The primary tool within the regulations for achieving this is the establishment of a network of protected areas and strict protection measures for particularly rare and threatened species.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations will be a material consideration for any flood alleviation measures and or watercourse maintenance activities, where it may be necessary to demonstrate the impact flood risk management measures may have on local habitats and their dependant species.

2.1.12 Water Environment Regulations (2003)

The Water Environment Regulations transpose the European Union Water Framework Directive (2000) into law in England and Wales. The Water Framework Directive is designed to improve and integrate the way water bodies are managed throughout Europe, requiring all member states to manage the water environment to consistent standards. In addition, European Member States are required to aim for inland and coastal waters to be at “good” chemical and ecological status by 2015.

The Environment Agency is the coordinating authority for the implementing the requirements of the Water Framework Directive. In order to address the requirements of the Directive, the Environment Agency has produced river basin management plans, which develop new and better ways of protecting and improving the water environment.

River basin management is the approach the Environment Agency is using to ensure combined efforts of the stakeholders achieve the improvement needed in the Thames River Basin District.

Objectives and measures within the LFRMS will need to consider whether they are compliant with the Water Framework Directive and how they contribute to the overall objectives of the river basin management plans. This offers opportunities to reduce flood risk and provide multiple benefits in line with the RBMP objectives.

River basin management is a continuous process of planning and delivery. The Water Framework Directive introduces a formal series of six year cycles. The first cycle will end in 2015.

2.1.13 River Basin Management Plan Thames River Basin District (2009)

The River Basin Management Plan for the Thames River Basin District covers the catchment areas draining West Berkshire. The Plan has been prepared by the Environment Agency in consultation with stakeholders in response to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

The Thames River Basin Management Plan sets out the status of water bodies throughout the River Thames Catchment, highlights the reasons water bodies in the basin don’t achieve ‘good’ ecological status which include reference to poorly planned flood risk management infrastructure and diffuse pollution from urban centres. The plan identifies the Environment Agency’s Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management investment programme as a main programme which can be used to improve the quality of waterbodies within the Thames catchment. This can be achieved through carrying out flood mitigation projects more sustainably such as incorporating Natural Flood Management (NFM).

2.2 National Policies

2.2.1 Making Space for Water (July 2004)

The Making Space for Water strategy covers the period from 2004 until 2024 and sets out how the Government will adopt a more holistic approach to managing flood and coastal erosion risk in England during this period. All sources of flooding will be accounted for, with flood and coastal erosion risk becoming embedded in a range of Government policies. The strategy aims to manage risks by implementing integrated national and local approaches, with the purpose of reducing flood risk and providing environmental, social and economic benefit, consistent with the Government's sustainable development principles.

2.2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

To rationalise the volume of planning legislation and guidance the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was introduced in March 2012 and updated in July 2021. The NPPF provides one coherent document replacing Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk (PPS25). The NPPF provides guidance on how flood risk should be included within various stages of the planning process.

NPPF Paragraph 159-161 states:

"159. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

160. Strategic policies should be informed by a strategic flood risk assessment, and should manage flood risk from all sources. They should consider cumulative impacts in, or affecting, local areas susceptible to flooding, and take account of advice from the Environment Agency and other relevant flood risk management authorities, such as lead local flood authorities and internal drainage boards.

161. All plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development – taking into account the current and future impacts of climate change – so as to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property. They should do this, and manage any residual risk, by:

- *applying the sequential test and then, if necessary, the exception test as set out below;*
- *safeguarding land from development that is required, or likely to be required, for current or future flood management;*
- *using opportunities provided by new development and improvements in green and other infrastructure to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding, (making as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques as part of an integrated approach to flood risk management); and*
- *where climate change is expected to increase flood risk so that some existing development may not be sustainable in the long-term, seeking opportunities to relocate development, including housing, to more sustainable locations.*

Through the above approach the NPPF specifically encourages a risk based approach to development and flood risk. It fundamentally aims to steer new development to areas of lowest flood risk, where this is not possible to achieve sustainable development then appropriate measures, which can include new flood defences and resilience measures, should be provided.

2.2.3 National Planning Practice Guidance

In March 2014, the Technical Guidance for the NPPF was replaced by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The NPPG provides guidance on how the policy of the NPPF should be implemented. The NPPG elaborates on the requirements of the Sequential test and Exceptions tests,

providing guidance on the types of development appropriate in the various flood zones and the requirements of flood risk assessments in support of development. The NPPG also provides guidance on how climate change should be considered in the context of development planning.

The NPPF and the NPPG are material considerations for any new development and will be used by West Berkshire Council as the Local Planning Authority to steer development to the areas of lowest flood risk.

2.3 Local Policies

2.3.1 West Berkshire Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (2011)

The West Berkshire Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment characterises the flood risk throughout West Berkshire now and how this might change in the future. It uses this data to determine if any areas are defined as being at significant flood risk.

The PFRA established that despite the flood history in West Berkshire no areas qualify for classification as being at significant flood risk. However, Newbury and Thatcham are identified as local adverse flood risk areas due to the impact of flooding in these towns on the towns themselves and adjoining communities.

2.3.2 Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMP)

CFMPs provide an overview of flood risk across a river catchment. They enable a more holistic approach to flood risk management to be adopted and consider all types of flooding (except coastal flooding which is addressed in Shoreline Management Plans) and the impacts of climate change. They review flood risk management objectives over a 50 – 100 year period determining the most appropriate techniques to achieve a given level of flood protection. Techniques for managing flood risk include changes to the way we interact with, manage and occupy land within river catchments. CFMPs are used to assist the Environment Agency achieve the requirements of the Floods Directive and as a framework to deliver flood risk management measures with its partners.

2.3.3 Thames Catchment Flood Management Plan (2009)

The Thames Catchment Flood Management Plan characterises flood risk across the Thames River basin including the area of West Berkshire.

Key policies and actions at the catchment scale are provided in order to assist in the management of flood risk. For the flood risk typology associated with West Berkshire, the Environment Agency propose to take action with others to store water or manage run-off in locations that provide overall flood risk reduction or environmental benefits in areas of low to moderate flood risk.

The Environment Agency acknowledges that the scattered nature of flood risk throughout the area means managing the consequences of flooding will be an increasingly effective and sustainable approach to managing the risk.

Furthermore they indicate that community scale action related to flood resilience, flood awareness and watercourse maintenance will be encouraged.

2.3.4 Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan (2010)

The Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) was prepared following the flood event of July 2007 as part of the Defra pilot studies for Surface Water Management Plans.

Through development of the Plan, links were forged with stakeholders in local flood risk management, a detailed understanding of flood risk in Thatcham was developed and through the use of hydraulic

models, options to alleviate flooding to the town were identified. The options were then presented as an action plan for implementation.

Since the completion of the SWMP, West Berkshire Council has been engaged in delivering the Action Plan including the implementation of several Flood Alleviation Schemes within Thatcham. Any future development in Thatcham will be reviewed to ensure they are consistent with the objectives of the action plan.

2.3.5 Lambourn Surface Water Management Plan (2018)

Following the July 2007 floods and subsequent February 2014 floods West Berkshire Council carried out a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) for Lambourn. The SWMP assessed the complex interactions between surface water, groundwater and fluvial flood risk within Lambourn and included detailed hydraulic modelling.

As part of the SWMP an Action Plan was developed and signed up to by all project partners, to manage the risk of flooding within Lambourn.

2.3.6 Pang Valley Flood Management Plan (2013)

The Pang Valley Flood Risk Management Plan sets out how flood risk will be managed throughout the Pang Valley through the period of 2013 to 2016. It gives details of the roles of the organisations and individuals who are responsible for managing flood risk and sets a number of flood risk management objectives. It draws together a range of proposed actions for individuals and organisations to undertake to minimise future flood risk.

Much of the information presented in the Pang Valley Flood Risk Management Plan is also presented in this LRFMS.

The Pang Valley Flood Forum have taken forward measures for managing flood risk within the catchment and developed a live Action Plan to achieve the proposed objectives.

2.3.7 Lambourn Valley Flood Management Plan (2013)

The Lambourn Valley Flood Management Plan sets out how flood risk will be managed throughout the Lambourn Valley in the future. It also gives details of the roles of the organisations and individuals who are responsible for managing flood risk and sets a number of flood risk management objectives and draws together a range of proposed actions to be undertaken by individuals and organisations to minimise future flood risk.

Much of the information presented in the Lambourn Valley Flood Management Plan is also presented in this LRFMS.

2.3.8 West Berkshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2019)

The West Berkshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was updated in 2019 to support the development of the Local Plan Review and Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The SFRA sets the evidence base for flood risk for the creation of Local Plan policies and also for the allocation of development within the district. The SFRA acts as the basis for carrying out the Sequential Test for the allocation process.

The West Berkshire SFRA also provides an overview of all types of flood risk and contains details of historic flooding within the district.

2.3.9 Newbury Flood Action Plan

The River Kennet and River Lambourn within Newbury are managed by a series of control structures along their lengths. These control structures are used to manage flood risk through the town as well as ensuring there is adequate water within the rivers.

The Newbury Flood Action Plan sets out a framework for the management of this control structures by different organisations including West Berkshire Council, the Environment Agency, the Canal & River Trust, and private owners and operators.

2.3.10 West Berkshire Council Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2018)

The West Berkshire Council SuDS SPD is intended to outline the principles required for the delivery of SuDS as part of development within the district. In WBC's role as LLFA it is a statutory consultee to the planning process on surface water drainage matters for major developments. The SuDS SPD provides guidance to ensure that SuDS are appropriate for the local area and deliver the expected multi-functional benefit.

3 Flood Risk within West Berkshire

The nature of flood risk within West Berkshire is varied and widespread across the district. The main sources of flooding are summarized below, however, it is important to emphasise that the cause of flooding is not always certain or possible to be attributed to just one source of flooding.

Type	Description
Groundwater flooding	Groundwater flooding occurs when water levels in the ground rise above the ground surface. Groundwater flooding occurs after long periods of rainfall and can last for several weeks or even months. The areas most at risk are often low-lying areas where the water table is more likely to be at a shallow depth. Groundwater can be predicted well in advance by the Environment Agency who monitors groundwater levels throughout the year. Groundwater flooding in the Lambourn Valley is a significant contributor to other flooding types.
River flooding (Fluvial flooding)	River flooding, also known as fluvial flooding, occurs when a river channel cannot accommodate the volume of water flowing into it, causing water to spill over onto the surrounding land, or flood plains. These events normally follow an extended period of heavy rainfall and are usually predicted in advance by the Environment Agency and Met Office.
Surface water flooding (Pluvial flooding)	Surface water flooding, also known as pluvial flooding or flash flooding, occurs when heavy rainfall generates runoff which flows over the ground and ponds in low lying areas. This type of flooding is usually short lived and associated with heavy downpours of rain, thunderstorms etc., and is made much worse when the ground is already saturated. Often there is limited advance notice of surface water flooding; however, weather forecasts from the Met Office can give an indication of the flood risk.
Sewer flooding	Sewer flooding occurs when a sewer network cannot cope with the volume of water entering it or when the pipes within the network become blocked.
Highway flooding	Highway flooding is caused by heavy rainfall which coupled with blocked drains, gullies or roadside ditches, causes water to pond within the highway.

3.1 Overview of West Berkshire

The administrative area of West Berkshire Council covers approximately 700 km^2 and has a population of approximately 153,000 (source: 2011 West Berkshire District Profile) with an estimated 62,300 households (source: 2011 Census). West Berkshire's principal urban areas are Newbury, Thatcham, Hungerford and the areas of Tilehurst, Purley and Calcot to the west of Reading.

West Berkshire has two nuclear installation sites, which are AWE near Aldermaston and AWE near Burghfield. The world headquarters of Vodafone is located to the north of Newbury near to Junction 13 of the M4 motorway.

The topography of West Berkshire varies between the higher Downlands in the north and north-west of the district and the low lying floodplains of the Main Rivers, principally the Thames, Kennet, Lambourn and the Pang. The River Kennet's floodplain is defined on either side by steep slopes, rising to the county boundary with Hampshire to the south and to the Berkshire Downs to the North. Part of West Berkshire is within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The geology of West Berkshire is comprised of The White Chalk overlain by Clay with Flints in much of the north and west of the district. To the south of Newbury and East of Thatcham the bedrock geology is predominately composed of the Thames Group overlain by Sands and Gravels. Alluvium is present in most river valleys, becoming quite expansive along the Kennet to the south and east of Thatcham.

Figure 3-1: Topography of West Berkshire

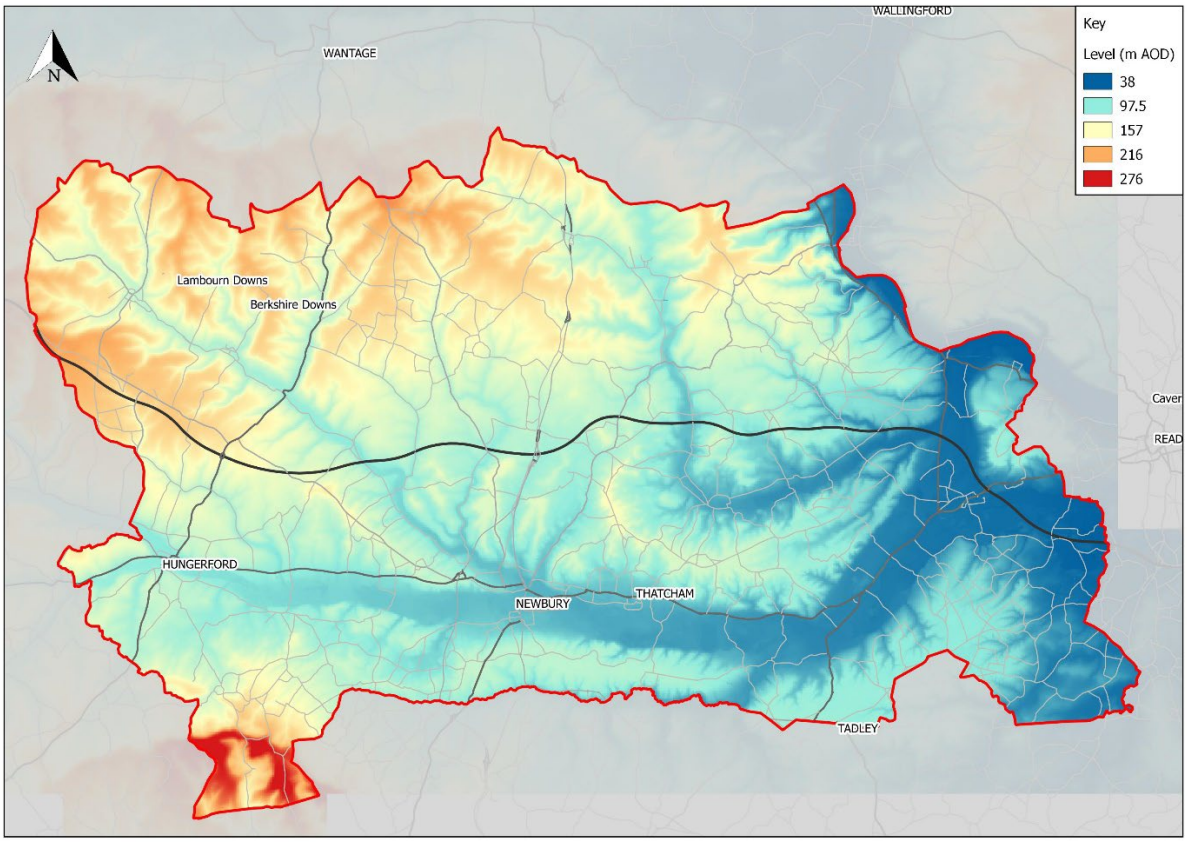
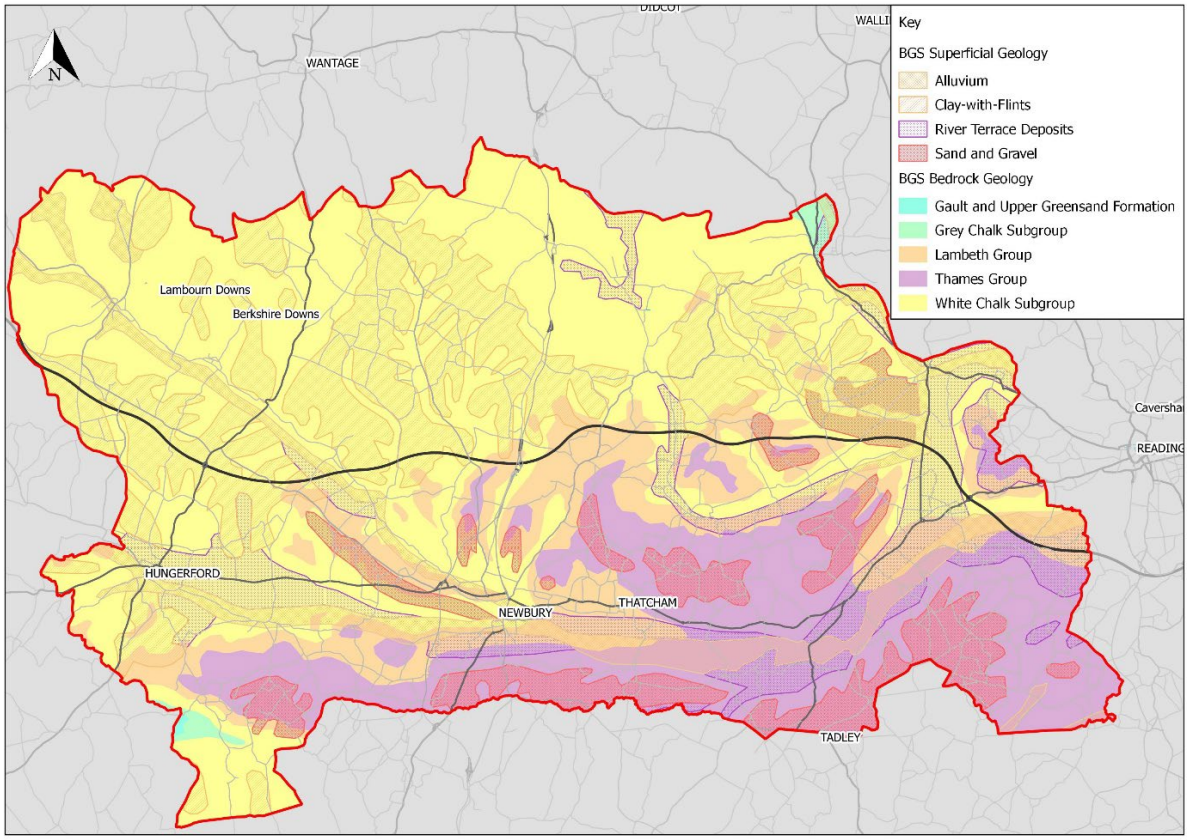


Figure 3-2: Geology of West Berkshire



Land use in West Berkshire is characterised by green space (which includes gardens and bodies of open water) and accounts for 95% of the land coverage within the district. Transport, buildings and other, non-specified land uses account for the remaining 5%. There are numerous SSSI's within West Berkshire and four international Designated Environmental Sites, namely, the Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain, the River Lambourn, Hartslock Wood and the Kennet Valley Alderwoods (Figure 3-4). There are no World Heritage Sites within West Berkshire. West Berkshire also hosts approximately 350km of Chalk Stream.

Chalk streams are globally rare habitats, with only around 200 worldwide, predominantly in South and East England and small areas of Northern France. England contains around 85% of the world's chalk streams with almost 4000km of combined river length. Due to a combination of both the geological history and climate, these watercourses are limited to certain areas. West Berkshire contains four main chalk streams, the Rivers Lambourn, Kennet, Pang, and Loddon.

Chalk streams are characterised as rivers where more than 75% of the base flow is from groundwater aquifers, and the chalk geology through which the river runs. Due to the natural filtration provided by the chalk, these river waters have generally low turbidity and good chemical status. This allows for a wide range of fauna and flora to flourish, including many rare species such as fine-lined pea mussels, mayfly and southern damselfly. Fish species are also abundant and varied within chalk streams, primarily Brown Trout and Atlantic Salmon, but also including Grayling, Brook Lamprey, and Bullhead. This biodiversity, in turn provides food for key species within chalk streams such as otters, water voles, kingfishers and white-clawed crayfish.

The delicately balanced water ecosystems that thrive in chalk streams are constantly under threat from a number of sources. Over-abstraction has reduced many chalk streams ability to cope with drought, and in extreme cases they have dried up.

Agricultural run-off can lead to an increase in dissolved nutrients such as nitrates and phosphate which can cause eutrophication and lead to depleted dissolved oxygen concentrations within the rivers, ultimately leading to fish death. Fine particulates and suspended solids washed into chalk streams from urban run-off and soil erosion increase the turbidity of the naturally clear waters, reducing the amount of sunlight penetrating the waters.

The rivers in West Berkshire have been modified over hundreds of years to aid irrigation, drinking water supply, navigation, and flood management. An increase in urbanisation has led to further stream channel modification and diversion, whilst simultaneously increasing runoff areas. This reduces the amount of infiltration into the natural chalk aquifers that filter the water and feed the chalk streams, and increases the amount pollution washed into the streams.

Figure 3-3: West Berkshire Watercourses

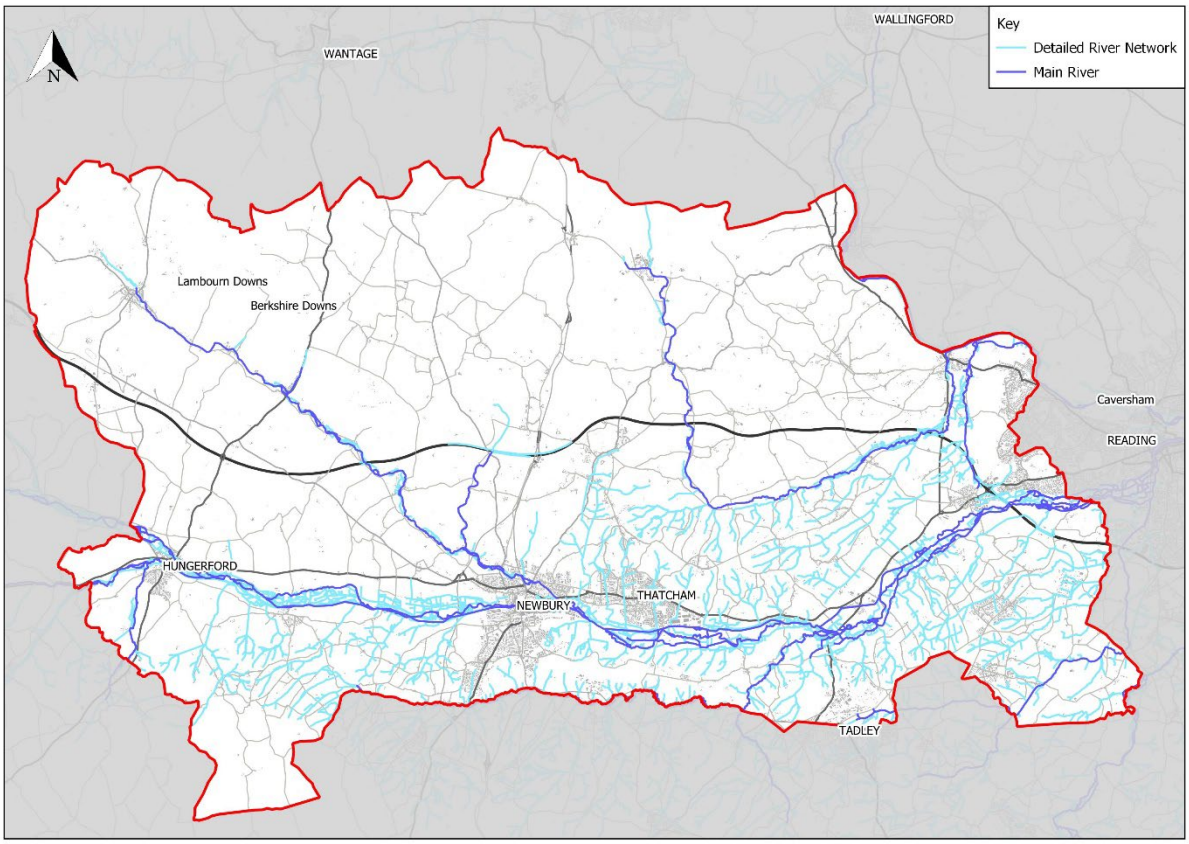
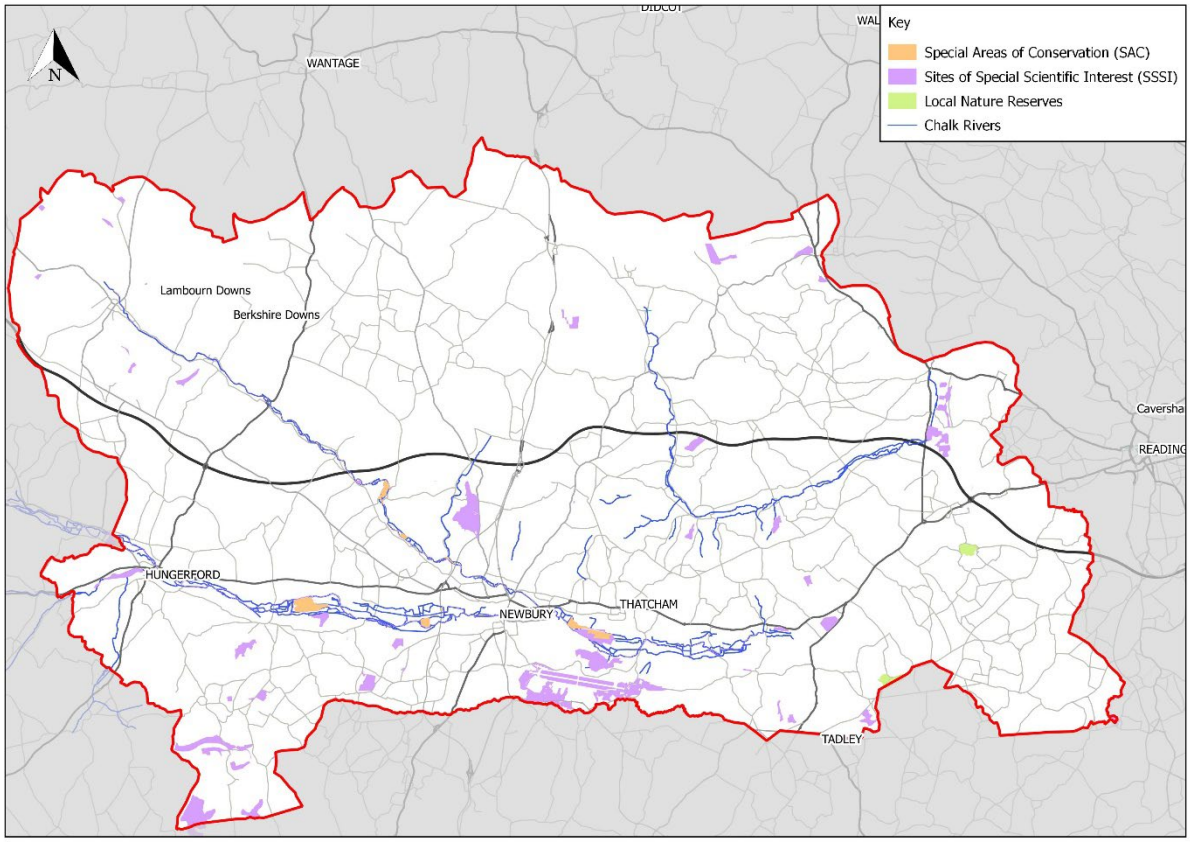


Figure 3-4: Environmentally Sensitive sites in West Berks



3.2 Types of Flooding and Risks within West Berkshire

West Berkshire understands that its residents will have less interest in distinguishing between types of flooding than ensuring the safety and security of their families, friends and property during a flood event. This LFRMS strategy takes this into account and therefore the interaction of the types of flooding has been considered in establishing the objectives and measures.

There are many different types of flooding that affect West Berkshire and a brief overview is provided below,

Measuring Flood Severity/Occurrence

The severity of a flood is often referred to in terms of its estimated frequency of occurrence. This is on the basis that the greater the magnitude of the flood the less frequent it is when considered over a very long period of time. Using this system a flood referred to as a 1 in 20 year flood would be expected to occur more frequently than a 1 in 100 year flood but result in less widespread flooding.

The term 1 in 100 year or 1 in 20 year should not be confused with that type of flood occurring exactly every 100 or 20 years. In some cases it is possible to experience a 1 in 20 year flood in consecutive years but when considered over a long period of time only two of that magnitude of flood over 40 years, for example.

Rather than referring to a flood in terms of a 1 in ‘x’ year flood it can be simpler to refer to it in terms of the probability of it being exceeded in any one year. Table 3-1 presents the annual exceedance probability corresponding to the return period of a flood.

Table 3-1: Flood Return Periods and Annual Exceedance Probability

Return Period (1 in 'x' year)	Annual Probability of Exceedance (%)
1	100
2	50
5	20
10	10
20	5
30	3.3
50	2
75	1.3
100	1
200	0.5
1000	0.1

Finally, when considering flood occurrence it can also be helpful to consider them in terms of 'odds'. For example there is a 20 to 1 chance of a flood occurring or there is a 100 to 1 chance of a flood occurring. In the event the 20 to 1 flood occurs there would be less flooding than if the 100 to 1 flood occurred.

3.2.1 Flooding from Rivers and Streams

Flooding from rivers and streams is also known as fluvial flooding. This type of flooding occurs when a watercourse cannot accommodate the volume of water that is flowing in it or when there is significant impedance to the passage of flow within the channel of the watercourse to the extent that it causes flow to come out of banks onto the floodplain.

The responsibility for flooding from watercourses in West Berkshire is split between the Environment Agency, who is responsible for Main Rivers (River Thames, River Kennet, River Pang, River Lambourn, Holy Brook, Sulham Brook and Foudry Brook) and West Berkshire Council who is responsible for Ordinary Watercourses. Ordinary watercourses are any watercourses which are not designated by the Environment Agency as a Main River. Essentially this covers smaller watercourses, ditches and streams.

Historical Ordinary Watercourse Flooding

The majority of the ordinary watercourse flooding during the 2007 flood event was exacerbated due to a lack of maintenance of the watercourses. This was due to a lack of awareness of the responsibilities of riparian owners to maintain these watercourses. Whilst the flooding at Pangbourne was principally caused by the Sulham Brook over-topping its banks it was noted that there was an interaction between the Main River and local ordinary watercourses in the area that ultimately caused the river to over-top.

There are a number of local flood risk events that have been noted within the West Berkshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment. These may have some influence from ordinary watercourses in combination with surface water flooding, however the exact nature of the interaction is unknown.

Historical Main River Flooding

Flooding from the River Kennet has been recorded as far back as the 19th century. Particularly severe flooding occurred in 1947, an event that caused widespread damage throughout the lower reaches of the River Thames catchment. Flooding within the lower reaches of the River Kennet, affected properties in Newbury and Thatcham (and surrounding areas) also occurred in 1971, 1990, 2000 and 2003.

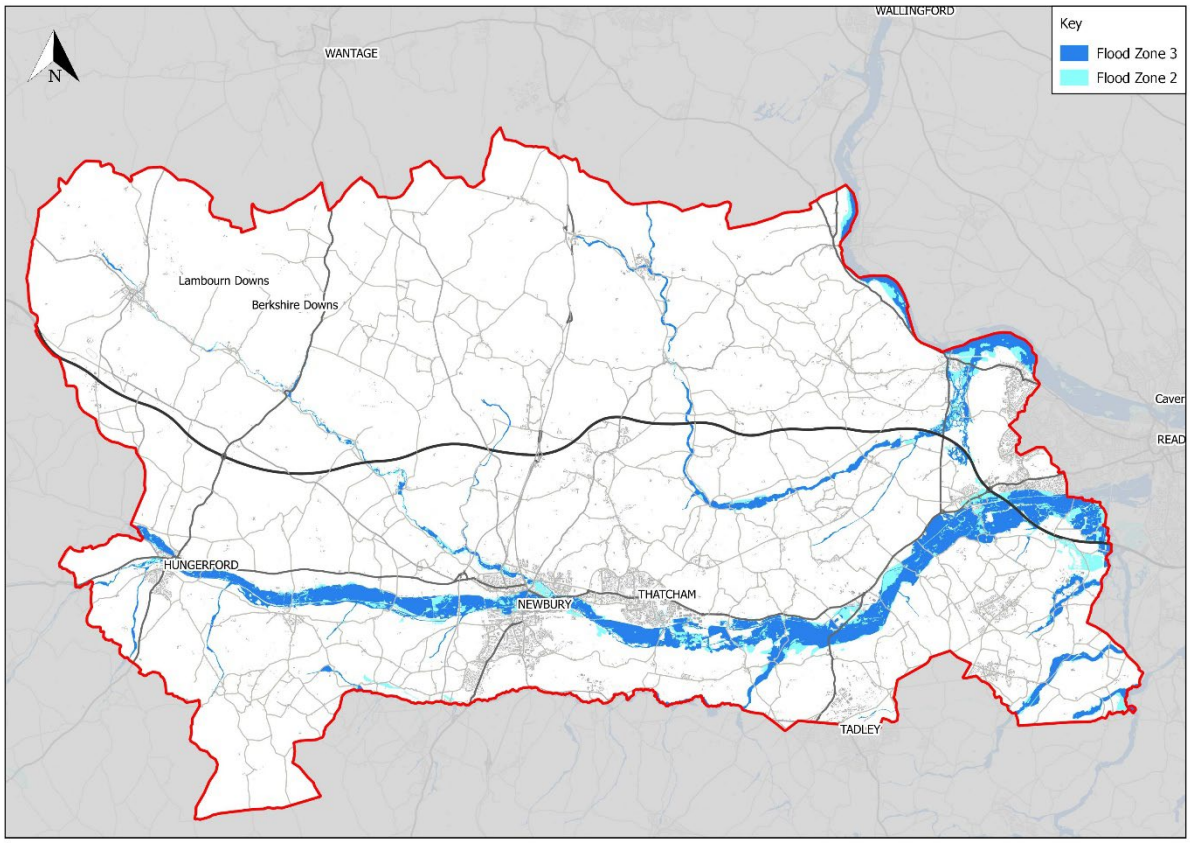
Table 3-2: West Berkshire River Flooding Historical Records

Date	Event
1915	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames
1947	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames
1974	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames
1990	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames
1992	Flooding across district including – Newbury, Thatcham, Aldermaston, Sulhampstead & Pangbourne
1993	River Pang flooding of Stanford Dingley and Pangbourne and localised flooding along River Enbourne
1999	River Kennet flooding of Burghfield and River Pang flooding of Tidmarsh and Pangbourne.
Jan 2003	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames 40 homes flooded in worst event since 1947.
2008	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames Flash flooding in Thatcham – Bowling Green Way Woolhampton- The Mill Stream overflow
2009	The Mill Stream overflow – Woolhampton
2010	River Lambourn – Head Waters overflow- Upper Lambourn
2012	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames. River Lambourn flooding – Groundwater flooding of areas near Lambourn River (Upper Lambourn, Eastbury, Great Shefford, Boxford to Winterbourne Road near Winterbourne Wood and Shaw) . River Kennet flooding of Pingewood, Denford Mill (Hungerford), Marsh Benham and Ufton Lane (Ufton Nervet). Surface water flooding in Colthrop due to lack of maintenance of the stream.
2013/14	River Thames flooding of Purley on Thames.

Environment Agency Flood Map

The Environment Agency also produces a fluvial flooding map known as the Flood Map, which provides information on flood risk. The Flood Map for West Berkshire is provided in Figure 3-5.

Figure 3-5: Fluvial Flood Risk from Main Rivers



3.2.2 Flooding from the Land

Flooding from the land is also referred to as surface water flooding, pluvial flooding or flash flooding. This type of flooding occurs when high intensity rainfall is unable to enter local drainage networks or infiltrate into the ground due to the rate at which it is delivered resulting in runoff. The runoff flows over the surface of the ground following local topography and accumulates in low lying areas. It is usually associated with thunderstorms and can be exacerbated when the ground is saturated or extremely dry or when the drainage network has insufficient capacity to cope with the additional flow.

Surface Water Flood History

Historical information on surface water flood risk has previously been captured by the Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The most notable event within West Berkshire was in July 2007 which was predominately due to heavy rain falling on saturated ground.

Table 3-3: West Berkshire Surface Water Flooding Historical Records

Date	Event
July 2007	Following unseasonably wet months in May & June torrential downpours in July 2007 contributed to widespread flooding across West Berkshire affecting 2500 homes. The communities of Thatcham, Pangbourne, Bucklebury, Burghfield and Woolhampton were some of the worst affected locally. However almost all communities were affected due to the intensity and widespread nature of the rainfall.
2016	Flooding within Newbury primarily affecting the railway station.

Table 3-4 presents the results of Parish Council reports, based on local information, undertaken in August 2007 to establish the numbers of properties that experience flooding in July of that year.

Table 3-4: Number of Properties Flooded in July 2007

Location	Number of properties
Thatcham	1107
Newbury	151
Pangbourne	123
Woolhampton	56
Lambourn	46

Flooding in July 2007 was exacerbated by blocked culverts, pipes and poorly maintained watercourses. A number of commercial buildings, schools and areas of agricultural land were also flooded. Within a number of parishes the flooding lasted for three days causing major property damage. Other parishes were subject to flash flooding of between half an hour and three hours.

In addition to residential property flooding, infrastructure and several key services were flooded during the 2007 floods, including:

- AWE Burghfield, which experienced on-site flooding, but it did not pose a risk to the public or interfere with operations.
- The headquarters of Vodafone, were badly flooded causing considerable disruption to business operations.
- The railway tracks at Newbury Station and Aldermaston Station, were flooded resulting in the main line between London and Penzance being closed for 24 hours.

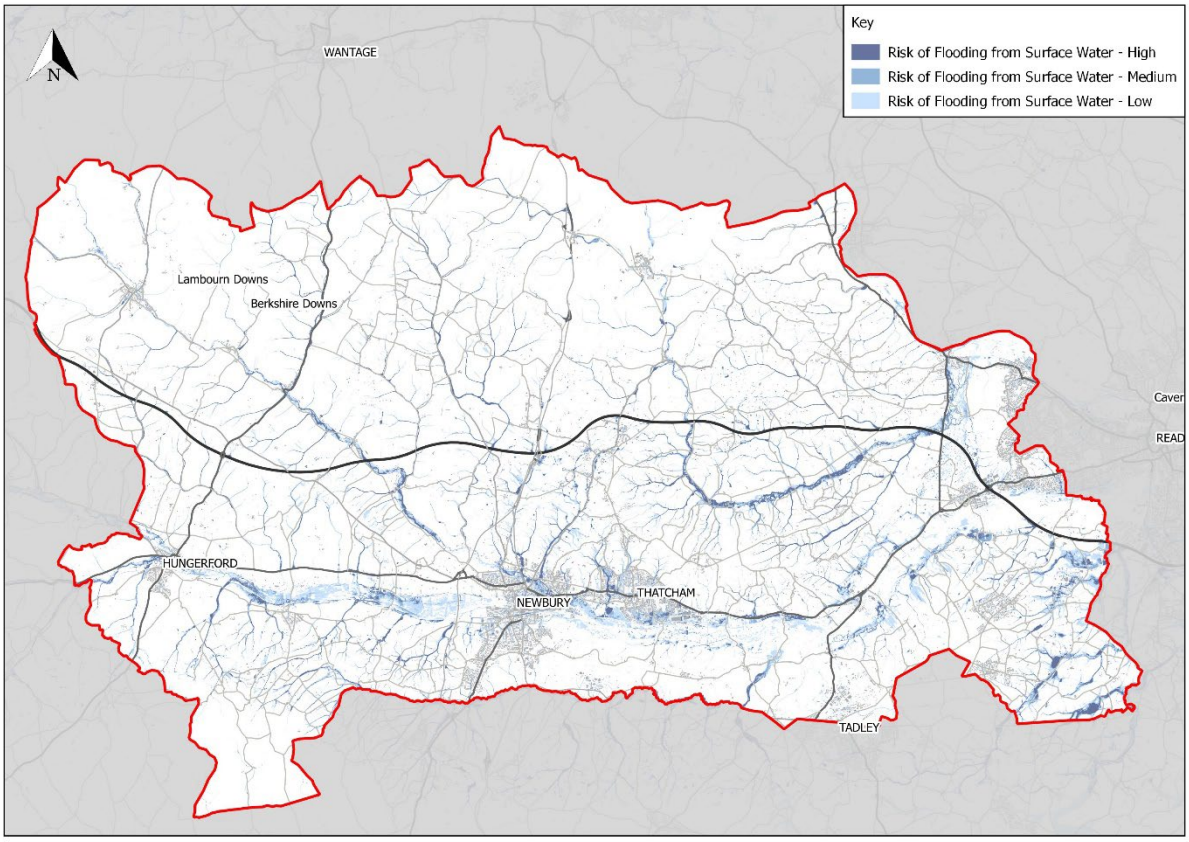
A small number of commercial buildings were also badly flooded in Thatcham and Newbury, although there is no precise information on the resulting economic losses.

Two schools were flooded within the District. Aldermaston Primary School in Aldermaston suffered internal flooding to a depth of 600mm, and Trinity Secondary School in Newbury, where the playing fields and car park were flooded by fast moving surface water flows of up to 300mm in depth.

Flood Map for Surface Water

The Environment Agency produces mapping of the estimated extent of flooding from surface water in its Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) map. The RoFSW provides an overview of the potential for surface water flooding throughout West Berkshire for the 1 in 30 year, 1 in 100 year and 1 in 1000 year storm events (Figure 3-6).

Figure 3-6: Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Map



Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan

The Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) was undertaken in 2010. The SWMP provided more detailed modelled information and identifies options for managing surface water within the Thatcham area. The modelling confirms that the surface water flows in Stoney Lane adjacent to the main entrance into Kennet School, was potentially life threatening. This concurs with anecdotal and photographic evidence from the 2007 flood events.

West Berkshire Council have been working on taking forward the Action Plan from the SWMP since its completion and have implemented several Flood Alleviation Schemes as part of this.

3.2.3 Flooding from the Ground

Flooding from the ground occurs when groundwater levels rise above the ground surface. Flooding of this type tends to occur in the winter and/or spring after long periods of sustained heavy rainfall on catchments with permeable geology (e.g. Chalk) and can last for several days, weeks or even months. The location and extent of groundwater flooding is difficult to predict. The areas most at risk are often low-lying areas where the water table is more likely to be at a shallow depth. Flooding can be experienced through water rising up from the underlying aquifer or from water flowing from springs.

High groundwater levels can also lead to water entering sewers through infiltration which causes them to surcharge potentially exacerbating flooding from the sewer network.

Groundwater Flood History

West Berkshire experiences this type of flooding along the chalk downs where intermittent streams and bournes are activated. Groundwater flooding was experienced in 2000/2001 when sustained periods of heavy rain caused groundwater levels to rise. Flooding was experienced in Great Shefford, Compton and Hampstead Norreys. Landscaping and culverting of groundwater fed watercourses running through Great Shefford and Compton has worsened problems, and blockages and lack of maintenance of the river bed made matters worse in Hampstead Norreys. Groundwater flooding also occurred in Pangbourne in 2000 where the Sulham Brook is also groundwater fed.

Table 3-5: West Berkshire Groundwater Flooding Historical Records

Date	Event
2000	Lambourn Downs flooded due to filling Aquifers. This lasted from Oct 2000 – Mar 2001 (groundwater flooding)
2001	Groundwater flooding of Great Shefford, Compton and Hampstead Norreys (properties affected)
2014	Groundwater flooding across West Berkshire due to persistent winter rain causing internal flooding to properties.

3.2.4 Flooding on the Highway

Highway flooding can be defined as flooding caused by drainage systems being overwhelmed by heavy rainfall. This causes overflowing from blocked drains and gullies causing water to pond on the carriageway.

In accordance with Government guidance (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges), new highway drainage systems are designed to a 1 in 5 year storm. Storms greater these design events may exceed the capacity of the drainage system resulting in overland flows and localised flooding.

3.2.5 Flooding from Sewers and Drains

Sewer flooding occurs when the sewer network is overwhelmed with the volume of water that it is taking. It can happen at times of heavy rainfall when large amounts of surface water overcome the sewer network. It may also occur when the sewer discharges into a watercourse that is already in flood causing a backwater effect in the drainage system. Problems such as blockages, siltation, collapses and equipment or operational failure can also result in sewer flooding.

Given the dense, urban character of larger town centres in West Berkshire, it is inevitable that localised flooding problems will arise from under capacity drainage and sewer systems. In addition, there is mounting pressure on ageing systems as a result of climate change. In accordance with current Government guidance, sewer systems are designed to cater for the 3.33% (1 in 30) storm and highway soakaways are designed for 10% (1 in 10) storms. Storms greater than these design events will overwhelm the drainage system and result in uncontrolled overland flow which may result in localised flooding.

Combined sewer systems or erroneously connected foul drains to surface water sewers can give rise to flood waters contaminated with sewage.

Flooding can also occur by groundwater ingress into the sewer network resulting in overloading and flooding.

Thames Water collect and record incidents of sewer flooding in a DG5 register. Data from the DG5 register presented in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) indicates that sewer flooding has occurred more in the eastern areas of West Berkshire and within Newbury.

3.2.6 Flooding from Canals, Reservoirs and Burst Water Mains

Canal and reservoir flooding occurs when there is a complete or partial failure of the canal or reservoir embankment or structure. This type of flooding may be caused by seepage erosion, overtopping of the canal or reservoir embankment or accidental damage to containment structures.

Burst water mains occur when water supply pipes are either disturbed during excavations or due to the degradation of water supply pipes.

These types of flood event are very rare. Canals, reservoirs and water supply and distribution networks are regularly inspected and maintained in order to ensure their continued safe operation. However, in the event of failure they could give rise to the sudden escape of large volumes of water.

Large areas of Newbury are at risk of flooding from the River Kennet and the Kennet and Avon Canal. Both share a perched channel which sits above the surrounding floodplain in places. The raised channel means that flood water cannot drain back into the river easily; therefore the potential flooding could last for a long time.

In addition, the River Kennet and Kennet and Avon Canal are fed by groundwater from the surrounding chalk which may exacerbate the river flooding. The predicted long flood duration and the raised channel banks mean that even a small amount of overspill into the adjacent floodplain would have the potential to cause flooding to large areas affecting many properties.

There are very few records of the Canal causing flooding. The SFRA reports that the Kennet and Avon canal has flooded during times of very heavy rainfall and the floodwater has inundated the *Cunning Man* public house on Reading Road, Burghfield.

Reservoir flood maps have been produced by the Environment Agency for large reservoirs (>25,000 cubic metres of water). Flood maps are not displayed for smaller reservoirs and details of flood depth and flow are not given. In West Berkshire there is one reservoir identified on the mapping at Aldermaston Court Lake to the south of Aldermaston.

3.3 Assessment of Flood Risk

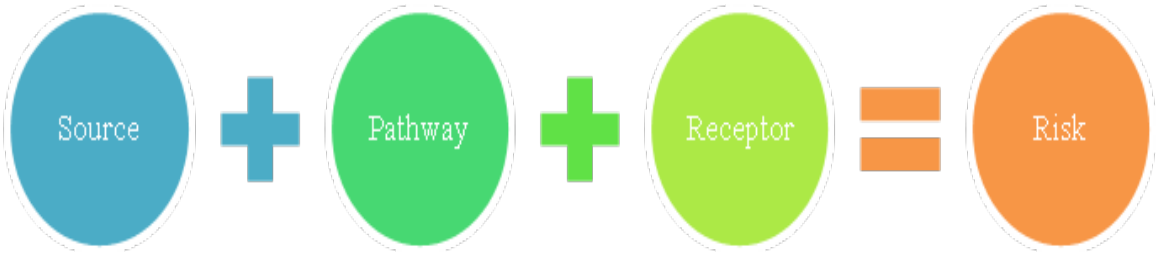
Flooding is a natural phenomenon and process integral to the long term health of river systems. Risk from flooding arises when the probability of a flood results in a consequence for a sensitive receptor.

This is often expressed by the following model:

When assessing risk and determining risk management approaches, flooding is commonly considered in the context of the Source Pathway receptor model.

The Source, Pathway Receptor model specifies that in order for there to be a ‘Risk’ there must be a link (‘pathway’) between a ‘source’ (type of flooding) and a ‘receptor’ (people, homes, businesses).

Furthermore, the model stipulates that the risk can be removed if any one element (the source, pathway or receptor) of the model is removed.



These models can be demonstrated by the example of groundwater flooding in West Berkshire.

Parts of West Berkshire are underlain by a major aquifer in the Chalk which presents a flood source. The probability of flooding occurring from the Chalk is associated with the occurrence of periods of heavy, sustained rainfall giving rise to groundwater levels in the Chalk rising.

The pathway for groundwater flooding is the emergence of groundwater at the ground surface, affecting receptors, which in this case are the homes and residents of West Berkshire.

As can be seen from the information presented in this LFRMS, the risk to residents of West Berkshire from groundwater flooding is not the same. In some areas of West Berkshire there is no Chalk aquifer (i.e. no ***source***), in other areas the Chalk is present but does not appear at the ground surface (i.e. no ***pathway***) and finally across many areas of West Berkshire there is no development and no residents (i.e. no ***receptor***).

Therefore for a risk from groundwater to be realised there must be a ***receptor*** (home and/or resident) located in an area of West Berkshire which is underlain by the Chalk (***source***), which is present at the ground surface and has been subject to prolonged and sustained heavy rainfall leading to rising groundwater levels (***pathway***).

3.4 Factors Influencing Flood Risk

The magnitude and effects of flooding can be made worse by climatic / meteorological factors, hydrological processes and land use / asset management. It is highly unlikely that any single factor will be solely responsible for influencing flood risk however some may be more significant than others. Similarly the influence of a factor will vary according to the type of flooding.

Meteorological Factors

Meteorological factors influencing flooding in West Berkshire include:

- the intensity of rainfall events / storms,
- the duration of rainfall events / storms,
- snowfall and snowmelt
- scale of storm systems

Hydrological Processes

Hydrological processes influencing flooding in West Berkshire include:

- Soil moisture level,
- Groundwater levels,

- Surface infiltration rate which is affected by vegetation, soil texture, density, structure and soil moisture,
- Presence of impervious cover such as snow and ice,
- Channel cross-sectional shape and roughness,
- Presence or absence of over bank flow, channel network, and
- Synchronization of run-offs from various parts of watershed.

Human Factors

Human factors influencing flooding in West Berkshire include:

- Land-use activities such as urbanisation increase run-off volume and rate
- Occupation of the flood plain obstructing flows
- Structural flood control measures such as embankments
- Greenhouse gas emissions which may affect climate change and frequency and magnitude of precipitation events;
- Decrease in conveyance of the river channels owing to build up of river debris, restriction of waterways, dumping of mineral, wastes and rubbish;
- Mining and other industries alter water regimes, pollute water channels and affect ecosystems; can also alter water courses
- Poor or inadequate maintenance of drainage systems and networks

Climate Change

Over the past century the UK has witnessed sea level rise and more of our winter rain falling in intense wet spells. Whilst seasonal rainfall is highly variable and some of the changes might reflect natural variation; the broad trends are in line with projections from climate models.

The UKCP18 (UK Climate Projections) is an update on the previous UKCP09 bringing together predications from the latest climatic modelling from the Met Office and around the world. This offers both an opportunity to understand how the climate has changed but also predicts climatic changes based on a range of climatic futures depending on estimates of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere.

The climatic data shows that within the UK there was an average temperature increase of 0.3°C between 2008-2017. Furthermore, all of the top ten warmest years on record have occurred since 1990. It is projected that this trend will continue with a shift towards warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers, subject to natural variations.

UKCP18 reports that there has been an increase in annual average rainfall over the UK over the past decades. The most recent decade (2008–2017) has been, on average 11% wetter than 1961–1990 and 4% wetter than 1981-2010. It is anticipated that this increase in rainfall will have an impact on flood risk across the country as well as drought conditions.

The findings of the UKCP18 have been incorporated into the Governments climate change allowances which are provided in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

4 Local Flood Risk Management Roles and Responsibilities

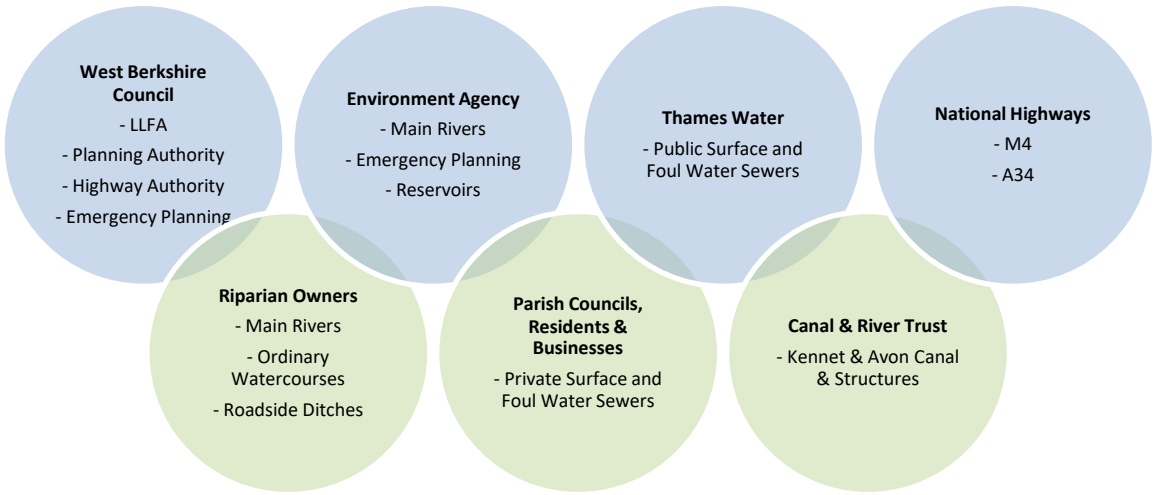
Section 9(a) of the FWMA 2010 requires this Strategy to specify the Risk Management Authorities in West Berkshire and the management functions that those Risk Management Authorities may exercise (Section 9(b)). The FWMA also imposes a duty on Lead Local Flood Authorities to cooperate with other Risk Management Authorities. This section of the LFRMS identifies the roles and responsibilities of the LLFA and Risk Management Authorities in West Berkshire and how they cooperate in the management of local flood risk.

There are several bodies operating within West Berkshire in the delivery of flood risk management. These bodies can be defined as:

- Flood Risk Management Authorities (as defined by the FWMA 2010), and
- Flood Risk Management Partners

These are distinguished in Figure 4-1 with their roles and responsibilities defined in the following sections.

Figure 4-1: West Berkshire Flood Risk Management Authorities and Partners and their responsibilities



4.1 Risk Management Authorities

4.1.1 West Berkshire Council

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 designates West Berkshire Council as a Lead Local Flood Authority, which now has the following responsibilities, duties and powers:

LLFA Responsibilities

- develop, maintain, apply and monitor a Local Flood risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) (Section 9);
- consult the public and local risk management authorities on its LFRMS (Section 9);

- establish and maintain a register of structures or features which, in the opinion of the authority, are likely to have a significant effect on a flood risk in its area (Section 21);

Flood Risk Assets are structures or features which are considered to have a significant effect on flood risk.

The LLFA is required to keep both an asset record (for use by risk management authorities) and an asset register (available for inspection by the public at all reasonable times).

- setup an overview/scrutiny committee to oversee the flood risk management functions or coastal risk management functions of the local authority's area (Schedule 2).

LLFA Duties

- Investigate flooding incidents (Section 19);

The aim of a Flood Investigation Report is to identify the Risk Management Authorities that have relevant functions with respect to the flood and to determine if those functions have been or are proposed to be exercised.

In addition the investigations may collate all useful information, providing an understanding of why and how the incident occurred and outline potential solutions and flood risk management actions.

Investigations will involve consultation with the relevant risk management authorities, landowners and private organisations involved. Details of when WBC will investigate incidents of flooding are provided in Appendix 3.

- Co-operate with other Risk Management Authorities (RMA) (Section 4 & 11).

LLFA Powers

- Consent works on ordinary watercourses (Section 23);

The regulation of ordinary watercourses sits with the LLFA to ensure that flood risk is managed appropriately.

The regulation consists of two elements:

- Issuing of Consents for any changes to ordinary watercourses that might obstruct or alter the flow of an ordinary watercourse;
- Enforcement action to rectify unlawful and potentially damaging work to a watercourse

Riparian owners will now have to apply for consent from the Lead Local Flood Authority for works which may affect the flow of water within an ordinary watercourse.

- Designate 3rd party assets that affect flood risk and give notice to owners that they have been adopted (Schedule 1);

The Flood and Water Management Act enables the LLFA to 'designate' features or structures where the following four conditions are met:

- The designating authority thinks the existence or location of the structure or feature affects a flood risk;
- The designating authority has flood risk management functions in respect of the risk which is affected;
- The structure or feature is not designated by another authority; and
- The owner of the structure or feature is not a designating authority.

If an asset becomes 'designated' its owner cannot alter or remove it without first consulting the designating risk management authority.

The aim of designating flood risk assets is to safeguard them against unchecked works which could increase flood risk in the area. An individual may appeal against a designation notice, refusal of consent, conditions placed on consent or an enforcement notice.

- Request information from Risk Management Authorities (Section 14);
- Do works relating to groundwater and surface water flooding (Schedule 2); and,

In December 2014 the government announced that Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act would not be enacted at this time. Therefore, LLFAs would not be required to establish SuDS Approving Bodies (SABs).

Instead, the government set out changes to planning that would apply for major development from 06 April 2015. This change confirmed that in considering planning applications, Local Planning Authorities (LPA) should consult the relevant Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) on the management of surface water; satisfy themselves that the proposed minimum standards of operation are appropriate and ensure through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations that there are clear arrangements in place for ongoing maintenance over the lifetime of the development.

West Berkshire Council as Highway Authority

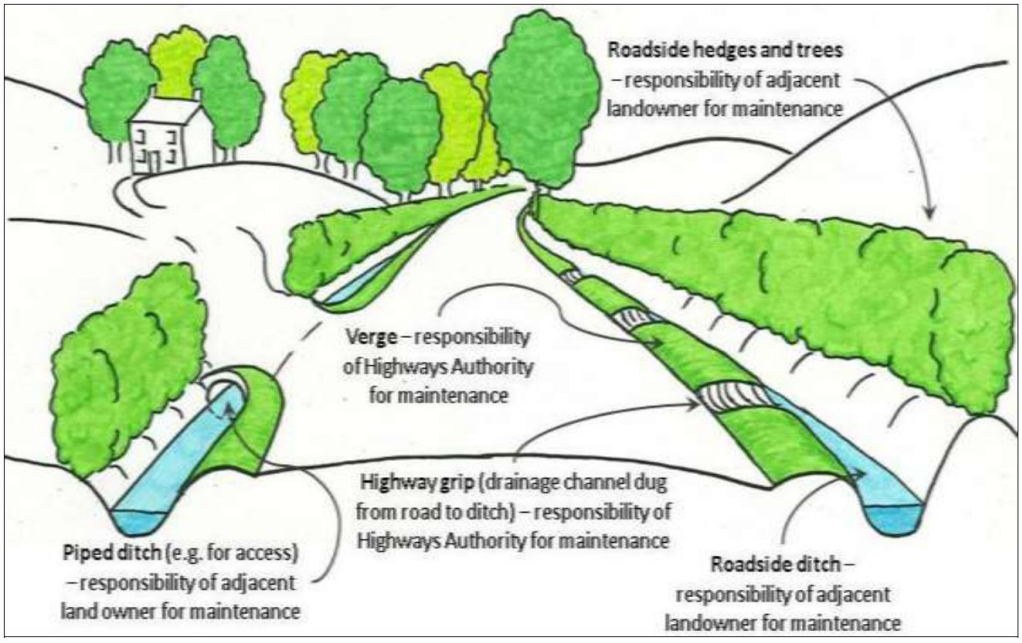
West Berkshire Council is also the Highway Authority and has the following responsibilities:

- Responsibility to maintain highways, including ensuring that highway drainage systems are clear and that blockages on the highway are cleared, this is a duty under the Highways Act.
- Powers to deliver works that they consider necessary to protect the highway from flooding. These works can either be on the highway itself or on land which has been acquired by the Highway Authority in the exercising of highway acquisition powers.

- The Highway Authority may divert parts of watercourses or carry out any other works on any form of watercourse if it is necessary for the construction, improvement or alteration of the highway or provides a new means of access to any premises from the highway.

Figure 4-2 illustrates the division of ownership and maintenance responsibilities for highways drainage in rural areas. Figure 4-3 presents similar information where areas are served by piped systems.

Figure 4-2: Ditch Ownership and Maintenance Responsibilities



As the Highway Authority, WBC's management of highways and their associated drainage could impact on local flood risk. This interaction between the potential runoff from highways or flooding to highways can also be used to improve local flood risk issues by directing water away from properties.

The LLFA and the Highway functions of the Council work together to ensure that their planning functions operate effectively together and consider potential solutions and issues at the local level. This includes sharing information on flood incidents, highway assets and consulting on proposed activities.

West Berkshire as the Planning Authority

West Berkshire Council is also the Planning Authority and is responsible for preparing local development plans and for determining individual planning applications in line with national and local planning policy. WBC has overall responsibility for determining where new development will be located. They have a responsibility to ensure that flood risk is taken into account through the planning process by providing clear guidance and policies in relation to flooding.

As the Planning Authority, WBC has the opportunity to implement strategic development proposals that avoid development in areas of flood risk and ensure adequate and appropriate provision is made as part of new developments for surface water management.

The LLFA and the Planning Authority functions of the Council will need to work together to address some flooding issues. Particularly in the role of West Berkshire Council as a statutory consultee to planning in relation to surface water flood risk.

West Berkshire Council Emergency Planning

West Berkshire Council has a duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to have plans in place with respect to 'Risks in the Community'. Compliance is provided by the Council's Major Incident Plan and with respect to flooding risks through the Adverse Weather Plan and the annex relating to flooding.

The Council also has a duty to warn and inform the community – before, during and after a Major Incident. In the case of flooding, this is normally undertaken by communicating with Community Emergency/Flood Wardens, where they exist, Town and Parish Councils and Ward Members. In addition, the website and other communications means can be used.

Some communities have written Community Emergency Plans with a flood response element in them.

4.1.2 Environment Agency

The Environment Agency has a national strategic role and local operational role in relation to flood risk management.

National Strategic Flood Risk Management Role

The Flood and Water Management Act requires the Environment Agency to publish the National Strategy. The National Strategy is then used by LLFAs as a basis for their LFRMS. The National Strategy aims to define and understand the roles and responsibilities of risk management authorities and to provide information to communities at risk.

The National Strategy identifies the following strategic actions for the Environment Agency:

- Use Strategic Plans such as the Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP) and the Shoreline Management Plan to set the direction of Flood Risk Management;
- Support the creation of Flood Risk Regulation by collating and reviewing the assessments, plans and maps that LLFAs produce;
- Provide data, information and tools to inform government policy and aid risk management authorities in delivering their responsibilities;
- Support collaboration, knowledge-building and sharing of good practice including provision of capacity-building schemes;
- Manage the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees (RFCCs) and support their decisions in allocating funding for flood defence and flood resilience;
- Report and monitor on flood and coastal erosion risk management; and
- Provide grants to risk management authorities to support the implementation of their incidental flooding or environmental powers.

The draft National Strategy will update these strategic overviews to:

- Provide national data, information and tools on flooding and coastal change, to be shared publicly, appropriate for the decisions that risk management authorities need to make in helping everyone understand the risks we're managing;
- Lead effective partnerships that enable place-shaping, to manage flooding and coastal change;
- Provide timely and effective information and warnings;
- Exercise a general supervision of flooding and coastal change in England;

- Leading flooding and coastal change as part of broader climate resilience contributing to integrated solutions to the environmental and societal challenges the nation faces;
- Overseeing the collaboration, sharing and monitoring between flooding and coastal change infrastructure owners; and
- Providing reporting and assurance that the final strategy's objectives and measures are being progressed.

Local Operational Role

The Environment Agency's Local Operational Role includes emergency planning, advising on planning applications and managing flooding from main rivers and reservoirs.

Emergency Planning

The Environment Agency, as part of their role in emergency planning, contributes to the development of multi-agency flood plans. These are developed by local resilience forums to help the organisations involved with responding to a flood work efficiently together.

To help provide better warning to organisations, the media and the public the Environment Agency also works with the Met Office in the Flood Forecasting Centre.

Planning Process

In 2006 the Environment Agency were made statutory consultee for all planning applications in areas where there is a risk of flooding and for any site greater than 1 hectare in size. The Environment Agency will provide advice on flood risk and help the local planning authority to technically interpret developer's Flood Risk Assessments that have been submitted. In April 2015, changes to the planning process changed the responsibility of surface water flooding to the LLFA so the Environment Agency are now only consulted on application within the Flood Zones (flood risk from rivers and the sea) and sites greater than 1ha.

Main Rivers

Main Rivers are watercourses shown on the Statutory Main River Map held by the Environment Agency and Defra. The Environment Agency has permissive powers to carry out works of maintenance and improvement on Main Rivers. This can include any structure or appliance for controlling or regulating flow of water into or out of the channel. The overall responsibility for maintenance of Main Rivers lies with the riparian owner.

The Environment Agency can bring flood defence schemes forward through the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees, and it will work with lead local flood authorities and local communities to shape schemes which respond to local priorities.

The Environment Agency are also the regulating authority with regards to consenting works carried out by others, in, under, over or within 8 metres of a main river in accordance with the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Thames Region Land Drainage Byelaws.

Reservoirs

The Environment Agency enforce the Reservoirs Act 1975, (amended within the FWMA 2010), which is the safety legislation for reservoirs in the United Kingdom. The Environment Agency is responsible as the Enforcement Authority in England and Wales for reservoirs that are greater than 25,000m³ (amended to 10,000m³ in Flood and Water Management Act but is yet to be enacted). As enforcement Authority the Environment Agency must ensure flood plans are produced for specified reservoirs. However the responsibility for carrying out work to manage reservoir safety lies with the reservoir owner/operator who should produce the flood plans.

4.2 Thames Water Utilities

The water industry is highly regulated and the quality of customer service and the prices they are able to charge their customers are regulated by the Water Services Regulation Authority (WSRA), commonly known as Ofwat. Sewerage companies have a general duty (under Section 94 of the Water Industry Act 1991) to provide, extend and improve the public sewer system to ensure that their areas are, and continue to be, effectually drained.

The Water Industry Act 1991 Part IV states:

94 General duty to provide sewerage system.

(1) It shall be the duty of every sewerage undertaker—

*(a) to provide, improve and extend such a system of public sewers (whether inside its area or elsewhere) and so to cleanse and maintain those sewers **[**and any lateral drains which belong to or vest in the undertaker**]** as to ensure that that area is and continues to be effectually drained; and*

(b) to make provision for the emptying of those sewers and such further provision (whether inside its area or elsewhere) as is necessary from time to time for effectually dealing, by means of sewage disposal works or otherwise, with the contents of those sewers.

Ofwat enforces this duty. Ofwat only collects detailed information from companies about internal flooding of properties. This is defined as "…*flooding which enters a building or passes below a suspended floor. For reporting purposes, buildings are restricted to those normally occupied and used for residential, public, commercial, business or industrial purposes….".* This includes garages which are integral to the property but not detached garages.

Companies report annually to Ofwat the number of properties affected by internal flooding from sewers. This is apportioned between:

- properties flooding because of overloaded sewers; and
- properties flooding from other causes, typically blockages, including equipment failures (e.g. pumping stations) and collapsed sewers.

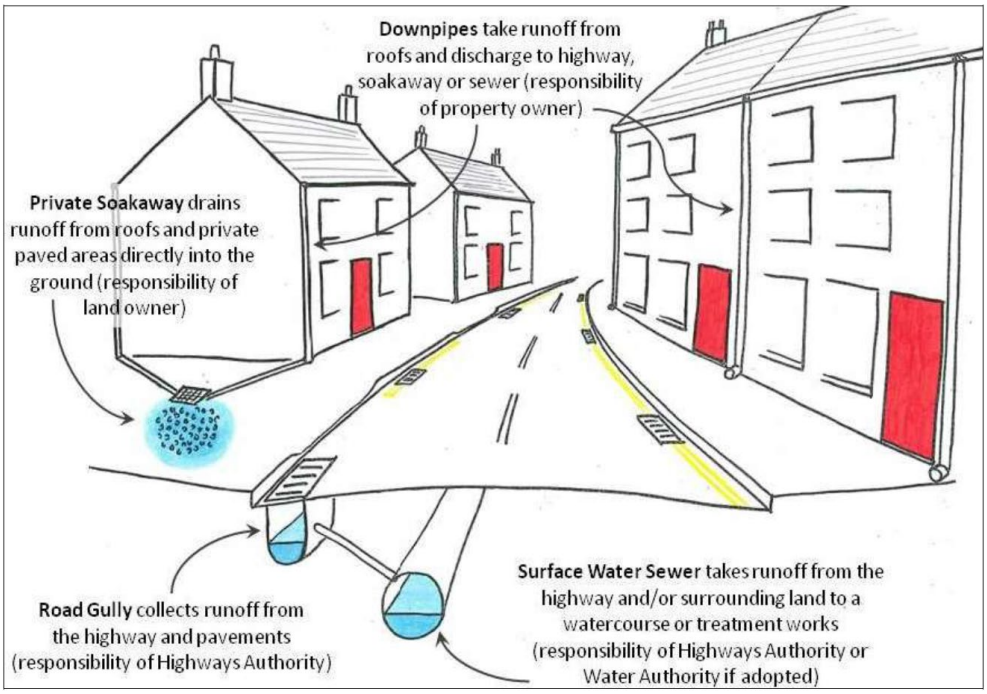
Since 1995 companies have been required to report properties at risk of internal flooding once in every ten years. These are often referred to as the 2 in 10 and 1 in 10 registers. In reporting the numbers on these two registers, companies provide figures showing the numbers added to, and removed from, these registers. Data on external sewer flooding is not routinely collected.

Thames Water has the following responsibilities around flood risk management

- Respond to flooding incidents involving their assets;
- Maintenance of a register of properties at risk of flooding due to hydraulic overload in the sewerage network (DG5 register)
- Provide, maintain and operate systems of public sewers and works for the purpose of draining an area;
- Have a duty to co-operate with other relevant authorities in the exercise of their flood risk management functions;
- Must have a regard to national and local flood risk management strategies; and
- Non-statutory consultee to the planning process when new development may affect existing public sewers.

Figure 4-3 illustrates the complexities associated with ownership and maintenance of the sewer network (both public and private).

Figure 4-3: Drainage Network Ownership and Maintenance Responsibilities



The DG5 Register

All water and sewerage companies maintain a register of properties at risk of flooding due to hydraulic overload in the sewerage network; this is known as the DG5 register and part of the set of Ofwat DG (Director General) Indicators.

The DG5 Register is a register of properties and areas that have suffered or are likely to suffer flooding from public foul, combined or surface water sewers, due to the system being overloaded. For a sewer to be classified as over-loaded the flow of a storm is unable to pass through it due to a permanent problem not due to problems such as blockage, siltation or collapse. When a solution is in place to rectify the overloading a property or area is removed from the register.

Tackling Sewer Flooding

As part of the obligation to Ofwat, sewerage companies are required to undertake capacity improvements to alleviate sewer flooding problems on the DG5 register during the current Asset Management Period (2020 – 2025) with priority being given to more frequent internal flooding problems.

4.3 National Highways

National Highways is an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport (DfT), and is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network in England on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport.

Within West Berkshire National Highways is responsible for highways drainage associated with the M4 and A34.

National Highways has the same obligations to co-operate on flood risk issues as the Highway Authority. It also has the following responsibilities under other legislation:

- Responsibility to maintain highways, including ensuring that highway drainage systems are clear and that blockages on the highway are cleared, this is a duty under the Highways Act and therefore strategic highways are inspected and maintained regularly.

- Powers to deliver works that they consider necessary to protect the highway from flooding. These works can either be on the highway itself or on land which has been acquired by the Highway Authority in the exercise of highway acquisition powers.

- National Highways may divert parts of watercourses or carry out any other works on any form of watercourse if it is necessary for the construction, improvement or alteration of the highway or provides a new means of access to any premises from the highway.

4.4 Flood Risk Management Partners

4.4.1 The Canal and Rivers Trust

The Canal and Rivers Trust is a charity organisation managing the Kennet and Avon Canal which runs through West Berkshire from West to East. The Canal and Rivers Trust is not a risk management authority within the definition of the FWMA. However the Kennet and Avon Canal forms a significant part of the water management system within West Berkshire.

4.4.2 Parish Councils

Parish Councils have no formal duties in the management of flood risk, however they have an important role to play in establishing local groups and developing community flood plans. Parish Councils can recruit Community Flood Wardens who help to support and prepare the community for flood events. They can also assist in identifying and reporting flood risk issues and vulnerable residents that may require special help.

Throughout West Berkshire, Parish Councils have been integral in establishing and contributing to the:

- Thatcham Flood Forum

- Pang Valley Flood Management Plan, and

- Lambourn Valley Flood Management Plan.

Therefore also a number of information flood action groups throughout the district.

4.4.3 Riparian Owners & Landowners

Whilst not designated as Risk Management Authorities; Riparian Owners are integral in ensuring the rivers, streams and ditches throughout West Berkshire operate efficiently to mitigate flooding.

Landowners and householders whose properties are adjacent to or border a river, stream or ditch are likely to be riparian owners with responsibilities for the maintenance of the watercourse to ensure it can receive water from land upstream of their property.

They have the responsibility for maintaining the bed and banks of the watercourse and ensuring there is no obstruction, diversion or pollution to the flow of the watercourse. Any works to the watercourse may need consent from either the Environment Agency (if Main River) or the LLFA (if an Ordinary Watercourse).

Riparian owners have a right to protect their property from flooding but in most cases will need to discuss the methods of doing this with the Environment Agency, LLFA or Local Planning Authority.

4.4.4 Residents and Businesses

Responsibility for protecting individual properties from flooding lies in the first instance with the property owner. While in some circumstances other organisations or property owners may be liable due to neglect of their own responsibilities, there will be many occasions when flooding occurs despite all parties meeting their responsibilities. It is therefore vitally important that householders and businesses whose homes and premises are at risk of flooding, take the following steps to ensure the impact to their home reduced:

- Check whether their property is at risk of flooding from any sources;
- If at risk of flooding, sign up to the Environment Agency Floodline service;
- Ensure that they are prepared in the event of a flood;
- Take measures to ensure that the impact of flooding to their property is reduced, either through permanent measures or temporary measures; and
- Where possible take out flood insurance.

Information on whether households are at risk can be obtained from the Environment Agency and the Local Authority. All households in Flood Zone 2 and 3 (areas at risk from fluvial flooding from a main river) should have been contacted, to notify them of this and, unless they have chosen to opt-out, will receive flood warnings from the Environment Agency when the risk of Main River flooding is high. Information can also be found on the gov.uk website: https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map and https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/ and the Flood Alerts page on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/FloodAlerts/.

Information about surface water flood risk is published by the Environment Agency at the following website: https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk/map.

Environment Agency flood risk data is also published in format that can be downloaded for analysis or combining with other data sources. This is available at: https://data.gov.uk/

The Environment Agency provides information on what to do to prepare a property for emergencies. This includes how to make a flood plan which will help occupants to decide what practical actions to take before and after a flood. Refer to the Environment Agency's Website for further details

Another useful reference for residents and businesses are the National Flood Forum's Blue Pages Directory which provides information and advice on what products are available to help protect homes or businesses against flooding.

4.4.5 Flood Forums

Across West Berkshire a number of Flood Forums have been set up in locations where significant flooding has previously occurred and a risk remains. There are currently active Flood Forums in Thatcham, Lambourn Valley and Pang Valley. Flood Forums are led by the local community and support flood risk management in the district. Each Flood Forums has different priorities and functions and activities can include (but is not limited to);

- Investigating and reporting flood events;
- Creating flood risk management plans;
- Investigating flood mitigation measures, exploring funding opportunities and implementing Natural Flood Management; and
- Distributing information on flood risk and the management of flood risk to the wider community.

West Berkshire Council, as well as the Environment Agency and Thames Water, attend regular meetings with these flood forums to support their activities and liaise with them regarding flood risk and mitigation measures. The council will support the establishment and activities of additional Flood Forum were local interest exists. The council's support will include attending Flood Forum meetings; providing progress reports on the flood risk measures contained in the Local Flood Risk management Strategy; reporting on flood incidents; sharing knowledge and considering opinions with regard to making changes to flood risk policies, if appropriate. The council will also assist Flood Forums in raising public awareness of local flood risk.

4.5 Risk Management Authority Cooperation & Communication

4.5.1 Berkshire Five Strategic & Technical Group

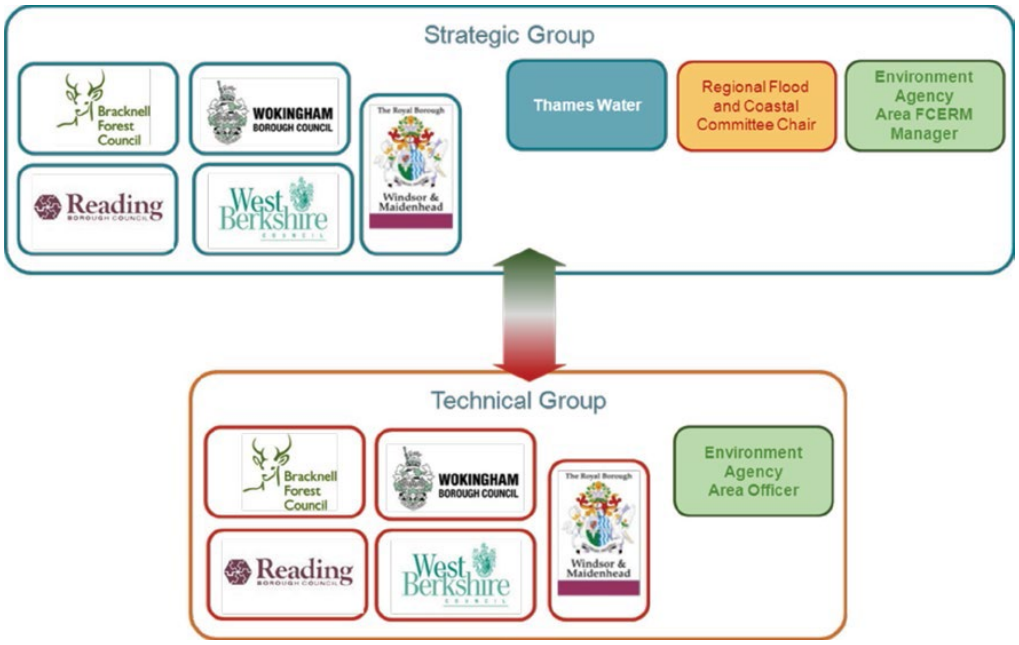
The FWMA requires Risk Management Authorities to work together and cooperate on flood risk management. As part of this commitment to cooperate West Berkshire Council has played an active role in setting up and working with other LLFAs within the Berkshire and Hampshire area.

The Berkshire Five Technical Group was set up to facilitate discussions on the implementation of the FWMA and to share best practice. The Group consists of five of the Berkshire Unitary Authorities, these are:

- Bracknell Forest Council (BFC);
- Reading Borough Council (RBC);
- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM);
- West Berkshire Council (WBC); and
- Wokingham Borough Council (WBC).

N.B. Slough Borough Council has aligned itself with South Buckinghamshire Council due to the local drainage catchments.

Figure 4-4: Berkshire Five Strategic and Technical Group



There are two separate groups (Figure 4-4). The Strategic Group comprises heads of department within the LLFA, Thames Water, the Environment Agency and the Chair whom is a representative of the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. The Strategic Group set the direction and guide the work of the Technical Group.

The Technical Group is comprised of officers within the LLFA which aim to discuss the technical aspects of how the Floods and Water Management Act will be implemented. The Technical Group provides information and suggests approaches to the implementation of the FWMA for decisions at the Strategic Group. The Berkshire Five groups collaborate to identify solutions to cross-boundary issues from all sources of flooding.

4.5.2 West Berkshire Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Engagement and cooperation within WBC to expedite implementation of the requirements of the FWMA is facilitated by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This is comprised of elected Members from within WBC representing the departments / functions considered critical for the successful implementation of the FWMA

5 Measures to Reduce and Manage Flood Risk

Section 9(c) of the Flood and Water Management Act requires a LFRMS to specify the objectives for managing local flood risk. In addition the LFRMS is required to specify the measures proposed to achieve those objectives (Section 9(d)) and how and when those measures are expected to be implemented (Section 9(e)).

This chapter of the LFRMS identifies the local flood risk management measures already identified through various programmes implemented by West Berkshire Council and the progress made towards implementing those measures. The chapter presents a single definitive list of objectives (taking account of objectives identified through other studies), the measures to address those objectives and combines them into an Action Plan for implementation.

5.1 Existing Local Flood Risk Management Measures

Whilst one of the aims of this strategy is to identify what flood measures can be used to manage flood risk it is also important to consider what measures have already been considered and successfully implemented within West Berkshire.

A number of actions have been undertaken within West Berkshire to identify and alleviate future flooding incidents. These include monitoring, communication strategies, assessments and implementation of flood alleviation measures. These actions are identified in the following sections.

5.1.1 Flood Risk Monitoring

A network was set up by the Environment Agency to predict groundwater flooding from Chalk aquifers. When groundwater levels in the boreholes reach a given depth, warnings are triggered and issued to WBC and other agencies. The Environment Agency can use these levels to calculate how many days it will take before a known flood level is reached that could give rise to groundwater flooding.

Despite groundwater flood warning and management procedures being in place for locations with a history of groundwater, there is still some uncertainty about the effectiveness and standards of protection offered across West Berkshire.

The Environment Agency monitoring river levels and flows on main rivers and provide flood warnings to residents and businesses based on this information.

5.1.2 Flood Risk Management Communications

West Berkshire is committed to disseminating data, information and best practice to assist its residents and businesses better prepare for future flood events. To this end West Berkshire Council is engaged in a programme of communications to meet with other Risk Management Authorities, neighbouring local authorities and partners in flood risk management.

Table 5-1 presents a summary of the engagement mechanisms employed by West Berkshire Council.

Table 5-1: Existing Flood Risk Management Engagement Mechanisms

Method of Engagement	Frequency	Description
Environment Agency	Monthly or as required	Discussions with Environment Agency in relation to any flood risk management activities being undertaken in the district, funding for schemes and ongoing projects.
Berkshire 5 Partnership	Quarterly	Forum for discussion and dissemination of data, information and best practices between the 5 Berkshire Local Authorities
Direct parish contact	As required	A contact list for Parish planning groups is maintained and used to disseminate information through email and hardcopy.
'Meet the experts' training events	2 per year	Training sessions that are open to the public, parish planning groups, parish councils and the general public.
District/Parish conference	2 per year	This is a targeted conference for organised by the Council that covers many different issues.
Community planning newsletter	Once a year	This highlight planning successes, but could be used to raise awareness of flood risk issues within a planning context
Community council for Berkshire (CCB)	As required	This supports direct engagement with the community in the form of public meetings, circulating leaflets and support 'champions'
Attendance at Flood Forums	As required	Attendance at meetings for Thatcham, Lambourn Valley and Pang Valley Flood Forums with the Environment Agency and Thames Water to provide updates on flood risk and ongoing projects.

5.1.3 Flood Risk Management Assessments

In order to progress flood alleviation schemes and to obtain funding, studies into the causes and nature of flood risk are normally required. West Berkshire Council is active in developing its understanding of flood risk and using this information to inform the development of plans to alleviate flooding.

To ensure an ongoing programme of flood mitigation schemes West Berkshire identifies 'pipeline' projects as early as possible based on Section 19 Flood Investigations and takes these forward as studies as funding becomes available. Table 5-2 presents pipeline projects and ongoing and completed studies within West Berkshire.

Table 5-2: Current Flood Risk Management Studies

Project Stage	Scheme Name	Description
Pipeline (long term proposal)	Memorial Fields FAS, Thatcham	Part of the Thatcham SWMP Action Plan.
	Colthrop Industrial Estate FAS, Thatcham	Not identified in the Thatcham SWMP. Further scheme to protect industrial areas in East Thatcham.
	Great Shefford FAS	Bypass channel to increase capacity of Great Shefford Stream through village.
	Grazeley Green FAS	Enhancement of watercourse network around Grazeley Green upstream of AWE Burghfield/
	Upper Lambourn FAS	Investigation into flooding from the head of the River Lambourn. Likely to be groundwater influences.

	Pang Valley Flood Study	Investigation into combined surface water and fluvial flood risk in Pangbourne.
	Newbury Railway Station	Investigation into surface water flooding of the Newbury Railway Station
	Thatcham PLP	Property Level Protection scheme to protect any remaining properties at risk of surface water flooding in Thatcham.
Studies (conceptual scheme design underway)	North Thatcham FAS	Study to identify and design a surface water flood alleviation scheme in North Thatcham
	East Thatcham FAS	Study to identify and design a surface water flood alleviation scheme in East Thatcham
Pending (funding allocated, awaiting construction)	Hampstead Norreys FAS	Funding awarded for by-pass channel through Hampstead Norreys to increase capacity of River Pang.
	Stanford Dingley FAS	Funding awarded for by-pass channel through Stanford Dingley to increase capacity of River Pang.
	Lambourn Central FAS	Flood mitigation proposals to dredge silt from the River Lambourn through the village of Lambourn

5.1.4 Completed Flood Alleviation Schemes

Following the completion of studies West Berkshire Council has applied for and/or been successful in its application for funding to implement physical measures to alleviate flooding. Schemes competed since the previous version on the LFRMS across West Berkshire are presented in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3: Flood Alleviation Schemes Pending implementation in West Berkshire

Completed Schemes	Completion date
Newbury Cemetery FAS	2013
Cold Ash Hill Reservoir	2014
Eastbury FAS (Environment Agency)	2015
Lower Padworth PLP scheme	2015
Winterbourne FAS	2016
Boxford PLP scheme	2016
Tull Way Reservoir	2017
Waller Driver PLP scheme	2017
Purley-on-Thames PLP scheme (Environment Agency)	2019
Lambourn East PLP scheme	2020
Floral Way Reservoir	2020
South East Thatcham FAS	2020

5.2 West Berkshire Flood Risk Management Measures

The previous version of the LFRMS was the first to be completed by the Council following the designation of the Council as a Lead Local Flood Authority with responsibility for preparation of a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. The objectives and measures therefore focussed on setting up processes and understanding risk. However, six years on, roles and responsibilities have been more clearly defined and West Berkshire Council have put processes in place for ongoing flood risk management across the district. Therefore, the focus of the objectives and measures set in this LFRMS move towards long term management of flood risk using an adaptive approach.

Specific measures for the Thatcham SWMP, Lambourn SWMP and the Pang and Lambourn Valley Flood Management Plans are contained within the Action Plans for those documents.

The following section identifies the measures to manage flood risk within West Berkshire to achieve the objectives of this strategy. These measures are also presented in Appendix A as an Action Plan for taking forward.

5.2.1 Objective 1 - *Maintain and update understanding of flood risk within West Berkshire and increase public awareness.*

West Berkshire has already collected and captured a lot of data and information on flooding within the district. It is only through continuing to capture information from flood events and using this to obtain a better understanding of where the greatest local risk occur, the causes and who should be involved can WBC identify possible measures to reduce flooding.

Flood Investigations used to update knowledge

Depending on the severity, West Berkshire Council carry out Section 19 Flood Investigations of flood events that occur within the district. These reports have provided information on the local effects of flood events and the mechanisms of flooding and have been used to improve the understanding of local flood risk sources, issues and mechanisms and supplement applications for funding to implement flood alleviation schemes.

The flood investigations policy for West Berkshire is included as Appendix B.

Measure 1 - West Berkshire Council will use information from FWMA Section 19 Flood Investigations to inform their knowledge of flooding within the district.

Flood Records Database

Reports of flooding from residents are currently used as a potential trigger for Section 19 Flood Investigations which provides a record of flooding. However, reports of more common place flooding are not necessarily recorded by the Council. Capturing this will help ensure a thorough understanding of flood risk in West Berkshire, for both Risk Management Authorities and local communities.

Knowledge and understanding on flood risk will improve and change over time as new information comes forward and the effects of climate change are better understood. It is important to consider the types of information available and the limitations of this information in defining flood risk. Data and information of flood events is also held and updated by a number of different organisations.

Measure 2 - West Berkshire Council will create a Flood Records database based on resident reports.

Share Information through Flood Forums

Across West Berkshire there are several Flood Forums covering the highest risk and most populated parts of the district. These groups are led by local residents and provides a forum for sharing information and knowledge within the community. West Berkshire as the LLFA meets regularly with representatives to understand issues and concerns, share information about flood risk and to provide information on works programmes within the area. The Flood Forums are also attended by other RMAs within the district.

Measure 3 - West Berkshire Council will work with Flood Forums to disseminate data and information on flood risk to assist these communities in maintaining up-to-date Flood Plans.

Support Education of Future Workforce

It is important to recognise that as a society we need to adapt to the changing climate and resulting increase in flood risk that this will begin. To achieve this will require a workforce of flood risk professionals equipped with the tools to adapt to this challenge. West Berkshire Council is well placed to support educational establishments in teaching young people about flood risk as part of their studies. This can achieved through visits to schools, where requested, online information and working with Flood Forums.

Measure 4 - Where opportunities arise, West Berkshire Council will provide support to schools and colleges to increase awareness of flood risk to support the next generation of flood risk professionals.

5.2.2 Objective 2 - *Develop plans to reduce existing flood risk taking account of people, communities and the environment.*

Appraisal, Assessment and Design of Flood Alleviation Schemes

Funding available for the implementation of flood alleviation schemes is not guaranteed. However, due to the lower revenues associated with the appraisal, assessment and design of flood alleviation schemes funding can be easier to secure.

West Berkshire Council recognises that the position with regards to funding can change and that the ability to rapidly deploy a scheme to alleviate flooding may be advantageous. The Council identifies potential schemes based on flood investigations at the earliest opportunities and begins reviewing potential funding streams from the outset.

This ensures that schemes are appraised, assessed and designed will result in a suite of schemes that can be 'taken off a shelf' as and when funding becomes available.

Measure 5 - West Berkshire Council will continue progressing the appraisal, assessment and design development of the flood alleviation schemes identified through existing and future investigations.

Securing Funding

In the past, West Berkshire Council has been successful in securing funding for numerous Flood Alleviation Schemes by working with partners across the district and developing a detailed understanding of the funding processes. However, the award of funding to implement flood alleviation schemes is not guaranteed. Schemes seeking government funding compete with each other on the basis of the maximum return provided for every pound invested. Schemes are considered more favourably where it can be demonstrated that additional (i.e. non-government) partnership funding will contribute to the costs of a flood alleviation scheme. This is because it reduces pressure on the funding stream and allows more schemes to go ahead.

In order to ensure all opportunities for partnership funding are explored for schemes; partners, communities and beneficiaries need to be made aware of the scheme and the timeline for the funding application. A coordinated partnership approach will be led by West Berkshire Council in applying for funding.

Measure 6 - West Berkshire Council will work with local RMAs and partners in flood risk management to actively apply for government funding to implement flood alleviation schemes and where necessary property level flood protection measures.

Consider Climate Resilience of Existing Schemes

Where possible, all of West Berkshire Council's Flood Alleviation Schemes are designed to include an allowance for climate change based on the national guidance at the time of design. However, climate change guidance routinely changes based on the latest research and predictions. To ensure that communities maintain continuing resilience to flood risk going forward, West Berkshire Council should consider the implications of evolving climate change predictions on existing flood mitigation infrastructure, within the district, to ensure it is robust. Where practicable, further works may need to be undertaken to infrastructure to improve the climatic resilience.

Measure 7 - West Berkshire will review existing Flood Alleviation Schemes against a range of climate futures, as these emerge, following guidance from central government.

5.2.3 Objective 3 - *Identify and implement measures that aim to reduce existing flood risk*

There are a number of mechanisms which can be used to reduce existing flood risk in West Berkshire. West Berkshire Council has a responsibility to deliver a number of these measures under the FWMA,

including investigating significant flood events, designating structures or features which contribute to flood risk management and maintaining a register of flood risk assets.

Flood Investigations

Flood Investigations will be undertaken in West Berkshire following a flood event which meets the criteria set out in the Council's flood investigation policy (see Appendix B). As part of each investigation a report will be produced detailing, amongst other criteria, the recommendations for future actions to reduce or mitigate flood risk.

Measure 8 - When undertaking Flood Investigations, West Berkshire Council will identify areas that require further studies or where alleviation measures could be used to reduce flood risk.

Designations

Under Schedule 1 of the FWMA West Berkshire Council has the power to designate a privately owned structure or feature which contributes to the management of flood risk at a particular location. Designation prevents a feature or structure being altered or removed without consent, ensuring it continues to perform its flood risk management role.

A designation notice is also a local land charge, which ensures any successive owners or occupiers of land or property where a designation exists are also subject to the existing designation.

Measure 9 - West Berkshire Council will develop and implement a procedure for identifying structures or features that would benefit from being designated.

Residual Risk

Due to the nature of surface water flooding, it is not always possible, or practical, to design schemes that provide protection to all properties within a given area. Furthermore, the additional scheme costs required to protect additional properties may risk jeopardising economic viability and therefore funding potential. Instead, it may be possible to design further schemes that protect remaining properties or implement property level protection (PLP) measures for the most at risk properties.

Measure 10 - West Berkshire Council will review areas where flood mitigation measures have been implemented to confirm their effectiveness and, where necessary, consider further measures to manage any residual risk.

Natural Flood Management and Land Management

In recent years, the flood risk management industry has recognised the benefits of Natural Flood Management (NFM) in providing flood risk benefits where capital schemes are uneconomical or impractical. This may involve targeted felling of trees to create 'leaky dams', naturalising watercourses to create wetlands and/or planting trees to attenuate overland flow and encourage infiltration. This type of measures can be done relatively cheaply as part of existing land management processes. Such measures can not only reduce the risk of flooding but can also provide benefits in terms of enhancing ecology and biodiversity. It should be noted that the benefit and flood risk reduction offered by NFM schemes is difficult to quantify

Measure 11 - In areas of existing flood risk, where capital schemes are inappropriate, West Berkshire Council will look for opportunities to implement Natural Flood Management schemes and amend agricultural land practices to reduce the risk of flooding to communities.

Efficient Partnership Working

West Berkshire Council have carried out numerous Flood Alleviation Schemes in recent years and these have typically been earthworks schemes involving the construction of basins or bunds to attenuate surface water flows. Invariably this can result in a surplus or deficiency of earthworks fill material that needs to be sent to landfill or imported at significant expense. Where possible, RMAs should work together to align workstreams and programmes so that fill material can be shared between projects. This has the potential to offer significant cost savings and enhance the funding potential of schemes.

Measure 12 - West Berkshire Council will work with other RMAs to find opportunities for efficiency savings when implementing Flood Alleviation Schemes (e.g. importing or exporting earthworks fill material).

5.2.4 Objective 4 - *Ensure that planning decisions take full account of flood risk*

Flood risk is an intrinsic consideration in determining planning applications as the location and type of future development can heavily influence flood risk within the catchment, and potentially increase flood risk downstream of the development. In order to plan for flood risk implications, flood risk should be considered at the pre-application stage for all development, and the relevant flood risk management authorities should be involved in these discussions.

As the Local Planning Authority (LPA), WBC is responsible for ensuring flood risk is not increased by new development. WBC as the LLLFA is also a statutory consultee to the planning system on surface water flood risk and sustainable drainage for major development.

Local SuDS Requirements

Since April 2015, West Berkshire Council, as the LLFA, has been a Statutory Consultee to the planning system on surface water flood risk and sustainable drainage for all major development. Under this role, the LLFA advise the LLFA on the adequacy of proposed major development to manage flood risk. To assist with this role, and informing developers of expectations, West Berkshire Council has developed a Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) which provides guidance on design sustainable drainage for new developments.

Measure 13 - West Berkshire Council will ensure that development within the district does not increase surface water flood risk and meets the requirements of national local policy and guidance.

Strategic Land Allocation for Flood Alleviation

Individual developments are only required under national planning policy to manage the flood risk to the development and any flood risk arising from the development. The more strategic flood risk issues in the catchment are therefore not managed. An opportunity exists through the Local Development Plan to manage flood risk more strategically by identifying areas where flood risk management measures could be implemented, which would benefit a greater number of people. This land could then be designated for flood alleviation measures in the future.

Using current and future knowledge of flood risk, West Berkshire Council can identify the best locations for providing flood alleviation measures. These sites can then be ‘safeguarded’ so as to be left clear of development, or if developed that the developer would be expected to address the wider flood risk issues as part of their scheme.

These potential sites can be used to help prioritise which sites West Berkshire Council will look to bring forward first, helping local parishes, wards and residents identify when partnership funding contributions will be sought.

Measure 14 - West Berkshire Council will consider how areas suitable for strategic flood alleviation measures can be safeguarded as development proposals come forward.

Environmental Net Gain

It is anticipated the upcoming Environment Bill will make it mandatory for new developments to demonstrate that they provide Environmental Net Gain. This essentially means developing sites in a way that offers an overall improvement to the environment prior to development. West Berkshire Council

consider that SuDS offer significant opportunities to contribute to Environment Net Gain as part of new developments providing that 'good quality' SuDS are proposed.

Measure 15 - West Berkshire Council will consider how Environmental Net Gain can be contributed to through the implementation of good quality SuDS as part of new developments.

SuDS Approving Body (SAB) Role

In December 2014 the government set out changes to planning that apply for major development from 6 April 2015. This change confirmed that in considering planning applications the LPA should consult the Lead Local Flood Authority on the management of surface water for major developments.

This meant that Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA) was not be enacted at that time and that Lead Local Flood Authorities were not required to establish SuDS Approving Bodies (SABs) as previously envisaged by the FWMA.

This is not to say the Schedule 3 would never be implemented and, whilst there are no current proposals to do so, West Berkshire Council is conscious of the need to be prepared should this happen.

Measure 16 - West Berkshire Council will be aware of its potential duties as a SuDS Approving Body (SAB) should the government implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA).

Implementation of WBC LFRMS Measures

West Berkshire Council acknowledges that the ability to implement the measures they have identified will be dependent on the available of funding and resources.

With this in mind flexible delivery timescales are provided for the measures as opposed to specific dates. As progress towards achieving the measures more specific delivery dates and programmes may be provided for each measure.

West Berkshire Council has opted to specify those measures that will be delivered in the 'short', 'medium' and 'long' term. These are defined as:

- Short Term – less than 3 years
- Medium Term – 3 to 6 years (i.e. within the lifetime of the strategy)
- Long Term – greater than 6 years (i.e. extending beyond the lifetime of the strategy).

Timeframes for delivery of the Measures is presented in the Action Plan in Appendix A.

6 Flood Risk Management Funding

Given the non-structural nature of the identified measures, West Berkshire Council has determined that funding for the measures will be provided centrally. This section sets out the different types of funding that are available to the LLFA and its partners in flood risk management when structural measures to alleviate flooding are established.

6.1 National Funding

There are multiple funding streams available for the delivery of structural flood risk management measures. The following include the possible routes of funding however these may change in the future.

6.1.1 Flood and Coastal Resilience Partnership Fund

In May 2011, Defra introduced a new approach to the way that funding is allocated to flood and coastal defence projects. Instead of meeting the full costs of just a limited number of schemes, the partnership approach to funding flood and coastal resilience means that Government money is potentially available towards the costs of any worthwhile scheme. Funding levels are based on the numbers of households protected, the damages being prevented, and the other benefits a project would deliver. Overall, more schemes are likely to go ahead than under the previous 'all or nothing' approach if contributions from other sources are present.

6.1.2 Payment for Outcomes

The Pitt Review recommended that 'Government should develop a scheme that allows and encourages local communities to invest in flood risk management measures'. This new approach is proposed for all capital maintenance and defence projects seeking funding. The scheme aims to encourage communities to take more responsibility for the flood risk that they face and aims to deliver more benefit by encouraging total investment to increase beyond the levels that Defra alone can afford. The new approach will see funding levels for each scheme (provided by Defra through Flood Defence Grant in Aid) relating directly to benefits, in terms of the number of households protected, the damages being prevented plus other scheme benefits such as environmental benefits, amenity improvements, agricultural productivity and benefits to business.

Under this system some schemes will receive complete funding, if the benefits significantly outweigh the costs, and for others partial funding would be available. It is hoped that this approach would encourage people to find cheaper ways to achieve positive outcomes and/or find other funding mechanisms to pay the remaining costs of the scheme. The Environment Agency is responsible for allocating central government funding to manage flood and coastal erosion risk in England.

The village of Bucklebury has experienced a number of floods since the early 1990's and further back in time there was a significant flood following a snow melt in 1907. The extreme rainfall in July 2007 resulted in the River Pang overtopping and flooding 25 houses, the village hall and a listed Norman church for several days.

Following the 2007 flood the residents of Bucklebury formed a flood committee and worked with the Environment Agency, West Berkshire Council and the Thames Regional Flood Defence Committee to build a flood defence scheme which comprised flood embankments, a dry ford and a bypass channel to divert flood water around the village. In addition a further embankment between Bucklebury and Stanford Dingley was constructed to ensure that the diverted waters do not impact Stanford Dingley downstream

The residents of Bucklebury raised £65,000 towards the defences, while West Berkshire Council contributed £45,000. The remaining funds were provided by the Thames Regional Flood Defence Committee.

6.2 Local Funding

6.2.1 Funding to Lead Local Flood Authorities though Area Based Grants

Funding for the LLFA to meet the responsibilities placed on them by the FWMA has been allocated through Area Based Grants or local services support grants. The money is not ring fenced so individual authorities must decide how much grant to spend, subject to limits on overall budget and the need for investment on other priorities. The amount of money allocated for each LLFA varies based on the overall risk within the relevant area.

6.2.2 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came into force in April 2010 and provides the local authorities with an alternative source of potential funding for flood defence and alleviation schemes, only the charging authority is able to determine what to spend the CIL on. It allows the local authorities to raise funds from new development in their area in order to pay for the impact that the development has on local infrastructure. CIL is based on the concept that all development will have some impact on local infrastructure and services, so it is fair that all development will contribute towards the cost of maintaining or upgrading local infrastructure. Local authorities are required to use this funding for infrastructure needed to support the development; it can be used to construct new infrastructure, increase the capacity of existing infrastructure or repair failing infrastructure. The Localism Act 2011 provides broad definitions of the infrastructure that can be covered by this scheme including transport, flood defence, schools, hospitals and parks.

6.2.3 Section 106 Funding – Developers Contributions

Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into an agreement with a landowner or developer in association with granting of planning permission. A section 106 agreement is used to address issues that are necessary to make a development acceptable, such as supporting provision of services and infrastructure.

It is recommended that local planning authorities should make more use of Section 106 agreements and ensure that there is a strong planning policy to manage flood risk. This means that any flood risk which is caused by, or increased by, new development should be resolved and funded by the developer.

7 Review and Development of the LFRMS

Reviewing and updating this strategy will be essential to ensure it remains fit for purpose and as a way of demonstrating successes in delivering reduced flood risk within West Berkshire.

It is proposed that a brief review should be undertaken after three years. The review will:

- assess our progress towards achieving the objectives of this strategy.
- consider the successes and shortcomings of the risk management authorities and the success and failures of our flood risk management measures.
- identify new objectives and measures to address flood risk issues present at the time and those anticipated over the life of the LFRMS and beyond.
- Collate any new data on flood risk within West Berkshire.

In the meantime, if there any significant changes in relation to flood risk management in the next few years it may be necessary to produce some strategy supplements. For this reason the strategy and the associated Action Plan should be viewed as a 'living' document.

7.1 Action to Reduce and Manage Flood Risk

West Berkshire Council will apply this strategy through the implementation of the Action Plan presented in Appendix A. This sets out activities based on the strategies in the previous chapters. It does not cover all the work that is being undertaken but instead sets out the additional and site-specific schemes that will be undertaken by each flood risk management authority and Parish Councils both individually and in partnership.

The individual actions are intended to be sustainable and centre on a risk-based proportionate approach that reflects the size and complexity of the flood risk and our financial ability to manage these risks. The Action Plan will be supported by other Flood Risk Management Plans and established relationships with local Flood Forums, and will ensure that activities are joined up across the different stakeholders and risk management authorities.

The Action Plan will be reviewed and updated on a monthly basis and a comprehensive refresh will be undertaken annually. This will include reviewing:

- actions to meet the Flood Risk Regulations in the coming year.
- projects which will be submitted to the Environment Agency for entry onto the medium term plan.
- actions from the Surface Water Management Plans and Flood Risk Management Plans which will be delivered in the current year.
- other activities that will be undertaken by the risk management authorities and Parish Councils in the next year.

7.2 Scrutiny

Scrutiny in local government was formally created by the Local Government Act 2000. It is a process of examining and monitoring the activity of councils with the aim of improving the quality of local services. At West Berkshire Council scrutiny is led by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission, which comprises 16 Members that reflect the political makeup of the Council.

The Flood and Water Management Act has made an amendment to the Local Government Act, under Section 21F, introducing powers for Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review and scrutinise the activities of the flood risk management authorities. In addition, under the Flood Risk management Overview and Scrutiny (England) Regulations 2011, the lead local flood authorities Overview and

Scrutiny Committee is empowered to request reports or the attendance at meetings of any flood risk management authority, to enable the scrutiny of the delivery of their flood risk management functions.

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission will be:

- Policy development - the Commission may review current and draft policies and plans on flooding, risk and contingencies.

- Reactive reviews – the Commission may review the flood risk management authorities responses to flooding after it had occurred to find out what happened and where lessons could be lessons.

The combination of these two activities will enable the Council to use a more proactive approach to managing future flood risk by applying the lessons learned to the development of this strategy and other related policies.

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission will receive and annual report on performance and progress over the financial year and plans for the forthcoming financial year. The report will be submitted to the Commission in April every year.

7.3 Regional Flood and Coastal Committees

Regional Flood and Coastal Committees scrutinises the Environment Agency's work. They may also examine documents that West Berkshire Council and other Lead Local Flood Authorities produce under the Flood and water Management Act and the Flood Risk Regulations.

Appendix 1: West Berkshire Council - Strategic Flood Action Plan

Table A1 Progress on measures since previous Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

No.	Measure	Progress since previous LFRMS	Take forward to LFRMS update?
Objective 1 - Provide a clear explanation of the roles and responsibilities of organisations and individuals in the management of Flood Risk and establish how best to increase public awareness of how we will work together to manage this risk.			
1	West Berkshire Council will work with RMAs and Partners in flood risk management to establish definitions of the Roles and Responsibilities of those involved with the management of flood risk.	Completed. WBC attend quarterly meetings with other Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) across Berkshire to discuss flood risk management and best practice. WBC also attend the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to discuss and agree flood risk management measures going forward.	No
2	West Berkshire Council will publish the roles and responsibilities of local RMAs and other identified partners on the Council website to assist residents in identifying who to contact with regards to flooding.	Completed. West Berkshire Council has published which RMA or partner has responsibility for each source of flood risk.	No
3	West Berkshire Council will identify local communities that would benefit from establishing Flood Forums (that include, flood authorities, community leaders and other interested parties) and through those forums encourage the communities to establish flood plans to co-ordinate flood risk management actions with these communities.	Completed. West Berkshire Council have enabling flood forums to be set up for Lambourn Valley and Pang Valley. West Berkshire Council, as well as the Environment Agency and Thames Water, attend regular meetings with these flood forums to support their activities and liaise with them regarding flood risk and mitigation measures. It is not considered that any other areas would benefit from a Flood Forum. However, West Berkshire Council will support the development of additional Flood Forums where local interest exists. There are several informal action groups that West Berkshire Council support where possible.	No
4	West Berkshire Council will establish a communication/engagement plan to inform communications with RMAs and local communities.	Completed. West Berkshire Council communicate with other RMAs across Berkshire at quarterly meetings and disseminate information to the public through the Flood Forums.	No
Objective 2 - Develop a clear understanding of flood risk within West Berkshire			
5	West Berkshire Council will use information from FWMA Section 19 Flood Investigations to inform their knowledge of flooding within the district.	Ongoing. WBC undertake Section 19 reports where necessary and use this information to inform decisions in their role as a Risk Management Authority.	Yes
6	West Berkshire Council will establish a policy and procedure for LLFA investigations of flood events in accordance with Section 19 of the FWMA.	Completed. WBC have prepared a published a "*Duty to Investigate Flooding Incidents Policy Document*" which sets out the triggers and process for carrying out investigations	No
7	West Berkshire Council will create a Flood Records database and pro-forma for recording flood events.	Ongoing. WBC collect flood risk records from resident reports and these are used to inform knowledge of flood risk. WBC will look at improving the existing system to collate this information in a database.	Yes
8	West Berkshire Council will develop a procedure to develop and augment their Asset register, taking account of information that will need to be supplied to the SAB.	No longer relevant following government's decision not to implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act.	No

Objective 3. Develop plans to reduce existing flood risk taking account of people, communities and the environment.			
9	West Berkshire Council will continue progressing the appraisal, assessment and design development of the flood alleviation schemes identified through existing and future investigations.	Ongoing. West Berkshire Council continue to make significant progress in implementing Flood Alleviation Schemes across the district.	Yes
10	West Berkshire Council will work with local RMAs and partners in flood risk management to actively apply for government funding to implement flood alleviation schemes and where necessary property level flood protection measures.	Ongoing. West Berkshire Council continue to make significant progress in implementing Flood Alleviation Schemes across the district.	Yes
11	West Berkshire Council will establish standard 'criteria for viability' for flood alleviation scheme capital works to ensure that proposals take into account the environment and provide multiple benefits where practicable.	Completed. This has been achieved through familiarisation with the Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA) funding system and the mechanisms for demonstrating economical schemes. However, WBC have demonstrated that they are able to implement schemes even where not traditionally viable such as the Winterbourne Flood Alleviation Scheme.	No
Objective 4 - Identify measures that aim to reduce existing flood risk			
12	When undertaking Flood Investigations, West Berkshire Council will identify areas that require further studies or where alleviation measures could be used to reduce flood risk.	Ongoing. West Berkshire Council consider potential mitigation options as part of any flood investigation. These are then identified as 'pipeline projects' and taken forward when funding is available.	Yes
13	West Berkshire Council will develop and implement a procedure for identifying structures or features that would benefit from being designated.	Ongoing. WBC have not determined that any features require designation as yet. However, the Council has constructed numerous flood mitigation schemes which remain within the Council's ownership and maintenance responsibility.	Yes
14	West Berkshire Council will use their Asset Register to develop a system of co-ordinating maintenance activities for significant structures and features. These co-ordinated maintenance activities will be detailed in an operating manual(s).	Completed. WBC use their knowledge and experience of critical structures in combination with input from community flood wardens to coordinate maintenance activities on a regular basis and ahead of any specific storm events.	No
Objective 5 - Ensure that planning decisions take full account of flood risk			
15	West Berkshire Council will develop and publish local standards that must be adhered to when submitting a SuDS application to the SAB. These standards will set out the requirements associated with the technical design, maintenance and legal obligations for SuDS in West Berkshire.	No longer relevant following government's decision not to implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act.	No
16	West Berkshire Council will formulate and implement a procedure for the SAB to process drainage applications taking into account links to the Planning and Building Control Roles that West Berkshire already undertake.	No longer relevant following government's decision not to implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act.	No
17	West Berkshire Council will develop a procedure for how inspection and enforcement of SuDS may be undertaken jointly between planning, building control, Highways and the SAB.	No longer relevant following government's decision not to implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act.	No
18	West Berkshire Council will develop an integrated Flood Management and Development Site Plan in order to identify areas suitable for strategic flood alleviation measures.	Ongoing. WBC identify Flood Alleviation Schemes as 'pipeline projects' following flood investigations. The Local Planning Authority within WBC are made aware of these locations to inform development management planning.	Yes

Objective 6 - Ensure that emergency plans are effective and that individuals and communities understand the risks along with their role in an emergency.			
19	West Berkshire Council will update their Major Incident Plan as further information on flood risk across West Berkshire becomes available.	Completed. WBC updated their Major Incident Plan with input from the LLFA on responding to flood events. It is noted that the LLFA have a role in responding to flood events which is outlined in the Major Incident Plan.	No
20	West Berkshire Council will review and collate local Flood Plans to ensure their flood risk management actions are suitable, appropriate and consistent with the West Berkshire Council Major Incident Plan.	Completed. WBC Emergency Planner is consulted on local flood plans to ensure a consistent approach to flood response.	No
21	West Berkshire Council will use Flood Forums to disseminate data and information on flood risk to assist these communities in maintaining up-to-date Flood Plans.	Ongoing. WBC continue to attend Flood Forums with other Risk Management Authorities to disseminate information about flood risk within the community.	Yes

Table A2 – Summary of Flood Risk Mitigation Measures

Ref. No.	Measures	Lead Authority	WBC Lead Officer	Timescale	Potential Funding
Objective 1 - Maintain and update understanding of flood risk within West Berkshire and increase public awareness.					
1	West Berkshire Council will use information from FWMA Section 19 Flood Investigations to inform their knowledge of flooding within the district.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	Internal officer time
2	West Berkshire Council will create a Flood Records database and pro-forma for recording flood events.	WBC	S Clark	Apr-21	Internal officer time
3	West Berkshire Council will use Flood Forums to disseminate data and information on flood risk to assist these communities in maintaining up-to-date Flood Plans.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	Internal officer time
4	Where opportunities arise, West Berkshire Council will provide support to schools and colleges to increase awareness of flood risk and the measures being undertaken to alleviate this.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	Internal officer time
Objective 2 - Develop plans to reduce existing flood risk taking account of people, communities and the environment.					
5	West Berkshire Council will continue progressing the appraisal, assessment and design development of the flood alleviation schemes identified through existing and future investigations.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	Internal officer time
6	West Berkshire Council will work with local RMAs and partners in flood risk management to actively apply for government funding to implement flood alleviation schemes and where necessary property level flood protection measures.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	FDGiA, Local Levy, Partnership Funding
7	West Berkshire will review existing Flood Alleviation Schemes against a range of climate futures, as these emerge, following guidance from central government.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	FDGiA, Local Levy, Partnership Funding
Objective 3 - Identify measures that aim to reduce existing flood risk					
8	When undertaking Flood Investigations, West Berkshire Council will identify areas that require further studies or where alleviation measures could be used to reduce flood risk.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	Internal officer time
9	West Berkshire Council will develop and implement a procedure for identifying structures or features that would benefit from being designated.	WBC	S Clark	Apr-21	Internal officer time
10	West Berkshire Council will review areas where flood mitigation measures have been implemented to confirm their effectiveness and, where necessary, consider further measures to manage any residual risk.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	Internal officer time
11	In areas of existing flood risk, where capital schemes are inappropriate, West Berkshire Council will look for opportunities to implement Natural Flood Management schemes and amend agricultural land practices to reduce the risk of flooding to communities.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	FDGiA, Local Levy, Partnership Funding
12	West Berkshire Council will work with other RMAs to find opportunities for efficiency savings when implementing Flood Alleviation Schemes (e.g. importing or exporting earthworks fill material).	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	FDGiA, Local Levy, Partnership Funding
Objective 4 - Ensure that planning decisions take full account of flood risk					
13	West Berkshire Council will ensure that development within the district does not increase surface water flood risk and meets the requirements of national local policy and guidance.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	Internal officer time
14	West Berkshire Council will consider how areas suitable for strategic flood alleviation measures can be safeguarded as development proposals come forward.	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	Internal officer time
15	West Berkshire Council will consider how Environmental Net Gain can be contributed to through the implementation of good quality SuDS as part of new developments.	WBC	S Clark	Apr-21	Internal officer time
16	West Berkshire Council will be aware of its potential duties as a SuDS Approving Body (SAB) should the government implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act (FWMA).	WBC	S Clark	Ongoing	Internal officer time

Appendix 2: Glossary

Aquifer	An underground body of permeable rock which can contain or transmit groundwater.
Breach	Flooding caused by the constructional failure of a flood defence or other structure that is acting as a flood defence.
Biodiversity	The diversity of plant and animal life in a particular habitat.
Catchment	The area contributing surface water flow to a point on a drainage or river system.
Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMP)	Catchment Flood Management Plans have been produced by the Environment Agency and are high-level planning tools that set out objectives for flood risk management for each river catchment. They also identify flood risk management policies that are economically practical, have a potential life of 50 to 100 years, and will aid partnership working to put them in place. CFMPs consider flood risk from rivers, surface water, groundwater and tidal flooding but do not consider sewer flooding.
Catchpit (or manhole)	A small chamber incorporating a sediment collection sump which the runoff flows through.
Civil Contingencies Act (2004)	The Civil Contingencies Act establishes a framework for emergency planning and response to large scale emergencies, such as flooding. The Act defines the obligations of different organisations and provides additional powers for the Government during an emergency. The Act designates the County Council as a category one responder, meaning it has a legal responsibility to assess the risk of emergencies and put plans in place to manage them.
Climate Change	A long-term change in the statistical distribution of weather patterns over periods of time that range from decades to millions of years. It may be a change in the average weather conditions or a change in the distribution of weather events with respect to an average, for example, greater or fewer extreme weather events. Climate change may be limited to a specific region, or may occur across the whole planet.
Climate Change Act (2008)	An Act that requires a UK-wide climate change risk assessment every five years, accompanied by a national adaptation programme that is also reviewed every five years. It also requires public bodies and statutory organisations such as water companies to report on how they are adapting to climate change.
Combined Sewer	A sewer designed to carry foul sewage and surface runoff in the same pipe.
Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010)	An Act which transposed the Habitats Directive into UK law. The regulations aim to help maintain and enhance biodiversity throughout the EU, by conserving natural habitats, flora and fauna. The main way it does this is by establishing a coherent network of protected areas and strict protection measures for particularly rare and threatened species.

Critical Infrastructure	A term used to describe the assets that are essential for the functioning of a society and economy. Most commonly associated with the term are facilities for: electricity generation, transmission and distribution; gas production, transport and distribution; oil and oil products production, transport and distribution; telecommunication; water supply (drinking water, waste water/sewage, stemming of surface water (e.g. dikes and sluices)); agriculture, food production and distribution; heating (e.g. natural gas, fuel oil, district heating); public health (hospitals, ambulances); transportation systems (fuel supply, railway network, airports, harbours, inland shipping); financial services (banking, clearing); and security services (police, military).
Culvert	A closed conduit used for the conveyance of water under a road, Railway embankment, canal, property, or similar obstruction.
Defence (Flood Defence)	A structure that alters the natural flow of water or flood water for the purposes of flood defence, thereby reducing the risk of flooding. A defence may be 'formal' (a structure built and maintained specifically for flood defence purposes) or 'informal'/'defacto' (a structure that provides a flood defence function but has not been built and/or maintained for this purpose).
Detention Basin	A vegetated depression that is normally dry except during and after flood events. Constructed to store water temporarily to attenuate flows.
EC Floods Directive	A European Directive that has been transposed to UK law through the Flood Risk Regulations (2009).
Environment Agency	An Executive Non-departmental Public Body responsible to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and an Assembly Sponsored Public Body responsible to the National Assembly for Wales. The Environment Agency's principal aims are to protect and improve the environment, and to promote sustainable development.
Floodplain	Land adjacent to a watercourse that would be subject to repeated flooding under natural conditions.
Flooding	A flood is an overflow of an expanse of water that submerges land. Both the Flood and Water Management Act (2010) and the Flood Risk Regulations (2009) state that it doesn't matter whether a flood is caused by: heavy rainfall; a river overflowing its banks or being breached; a dam overflowing or being breached; tidal waters; groundwater; or anything else including a combination of factors. However, both state that a 'flood' does not include: a flood caused from any part of a sewerage system, unless wholly or partly caused by an increase in the volume of rainwater (including snow and other precipitation) entering or otherwise affecting the system; or a flood caused by a burst water main.
Flood Map	A multi-layered map which provides information on flooding from rivers and the sea for England and Wales. The Flood Map also has information on flood defences and the areas benefiting from those flood defences.
Flood Map for Surface Water	The most recently produced data set developed by the Environment Agency. The Flood Map for Surface Water better represents the mechanisms that cause surface water flooding.

Flood and Water Management Act (2010)	The Act brings together the recommendations of the Pitt review and previous policies, to improve the management of water resources and create a more comprehensive and risk based regime for managing the risk of flooding from all sources. The Act reinforces the need to take an integrated approach to the management of flooding and places a number of new responsibilities on local authorities
Flood Hazard Map	A map that defines flood risk areas and shows: the likely extent (including water level or depth) of possible floods; the likely direction and speed of flow of possible floods; and whether the probability of each possible flood occurring is low, medium or high (in the opinion of the person preparing the map).
Flood Resilience	Actions taken which allow the ingress of flood water through a property but enable swift recovery after the flood event. Flood resilience measures may include (among others) flood-resistant construction materials, raised electricity sockets and water-resistant flooring.
Flood Resistance	Actions taken to prevent the ingress of flood water to a property. See Property Level Protection.
Flood Risk	Flood risk is a combination of the chance (or probability) of a particular flood event and the impact (or consequences) that the event would cause if it took place.
Flood Risk Map	A map showing: the number of people living in the area who are likely to be affected in the event of flooding; the type of economic activity likely to be affected in the event of flooding; any industrial activities in the area that may increase the risk of pollution in the event of flooding; any relevant protected areas that may be affected in the event of flooding; any areas of water subject to specified measures or protection for the purpose of maintaining the water quality that may be affected in the event of flooding; and any other effect on human health, economic activity or the environment (including cultural heritage).
Flood Risk Management (FRM)	A process to reduce the probability of occurrence through the management of land, river systems and flood defences and reduce the impact through influencing development on flood risk areas, flood warning and emergency response.
Flood Risk Management Authority Includes:	(a) the Environment Agency, (b) the Lead Local Flood Authority - West Berkshire Council, (c) a water company - Thames Water Utilities, and (d) the Local Highway Authority - West Berkshire Council.
Flood Risk Management Plan	A plan for the management of a significant flood risk. The plan must include details of: objectives set by the person preparing the plan for the purpose of managing the flood risk; and the proposed measures for achieving those objectives (including measures required by any provision of an Act or subordinate legislation).
The Flood Risk Regulations	The Flood Risk Regulations were enacted in December 2009 to implement the requirements of the EU Floods Directive, which aims to provide a consistent approach to managing flood risk across Europe. The regulations outline the roles and responsibilities of the various authorities consistent with the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and provide for the delivery of the outputs required by the directive. The Directive requires Member States to develop and update a series of tools for managing all sources of flood risk.

Flood Zones	Nationally consistent delineation of ‘high’ and ‘medium’ flood risk, published on a quarterly basis by the Environment Agency
Flood Zone 1 Low Probability	Defined as an area only at risk of flooding from flood events with an Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of less than 0.1% (1 in 1000). The probability of flooding occurring in this area in any one year is less than 0.1%.
Flood Zone 2 Medium Probability	Defined as an area at risk of flooding from flood events with an Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of between 1% (1 in 100) and 0.1% (1 in 1000). The probability of flooding occurring in this area in any one year is between 1% and 0.1%.
Flood Zone 3a High probability	Defined as an area at risk of flooding from flood events with an Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of greater than 1% (1 in 100r). The probability of flooding occurring in this area in any one year is greater than 1%.
Flood Zone 3b Functional Floodplain	Defined as land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood. Usually defined as areas at risk of flooding from flood events with an Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) of greater than 5% (1 in 20) design event. The probability of flooding occurring in this area in any one year is greater than 5%.
Fluvial	The processes associated with rivers and streams and the deposits and landforms created by them.
Foul Drainage	The infrastructure that drains the water and sewage that discharges from within houses.
GIS Geographic Information System	GIS is any system which stores geographical data, such as elevations, location of buildings and extent of flood outlines.
Grip	A shallow channel in the highway verge connecting the edge of the road to a roadside ditch, allowing rainwater to drain off the highway.
Groundwater	Water located beneath the ground surface, either in soil pore spaces or fractures in rock.
Gully	Opening in a road pavement, covered by a cast iron grate, which allows water to drain into a conventional drainage system.
Highway Authority	A local authority responsible for the maintenance and drainage of highways maintainable at the public expense.
Highway Drain	A conduit draining the highway on a highway maintainable at the public expense.
Land Drainage Act (1991)	The Land Drainage Act outlines the duties and powers to manage land drainage for local authorities and Internal Drainage Boards. There is no Internal Drainage Board in West Berkshire. West Berkshire Council is the land drainage authority.
Impermeable Surface	An artificial non-porous surface that generates surface water run-off after rainfall.
Infiltration (into a sewer)	The entry of groundwater into a sewer.

Infiltration (into the ground)	The passage of surface water into the ground.
Main River	All watercourses shown on the statutory main river maps held by the Environment Agency and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). This can include any structure or for controlling or regulating the flow of water into, in or out of the channel. The Environment Agency has permissive power to carry out works of maintenance and improvement on these rivers.
Medium Term Plan	The Medium Term Plan shows flood and coastal management schemes which the Environment Agency Board has allocated Defra grant in aid and have been approved by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees.
National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy	The Environment Agency's National Strategy was published in May 2011 and provides an overview of how flood risk and the risk of coastal erosion will be managed across England. The aims and objectives of the National Strategy have been translated onto a local scale through this Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for West Berkshire.
National Highways	National Highways is an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport (DfT), and is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network in England on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.
Natural Flood Management	Natural flood management is the use of natural processes to reduce the risk of flooding. Examples include: restoring bends in rivers, changing the way land is managed so soil can absorb more water and creating natural dams from fallen trees.
Ordinary Watercourse	Any watercourse (including ditches and streams) that is not identified as a main river on the Defra register.
Pervious Surface	A surface that allows the inflow of rainwater into the underlying construction or soil.
Public Sewer	A sewer that is vested and maintained by the sewage undertaker.
Pitt Review	Sir Michael Pitt carried out an independent review of the 2007 floods and made a number of recommendations for future flood risk management. In particular, he recommended that local authorities should play a more significant role in tackling local problems of flooding and coordinating all relevant agencies. Many of the recommendations of The Pitt Review have been enacted through the Flood and Water Management Act.
Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk, Practice	Sets out the Government's spatial planning policy relating to development and flood risk. Its aims are to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process, to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and to direct

Guide	development away from areas of highest risk. Where new development is, exceptionally, necessary in such areas, policy aims to make it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible, reducing flood risk overall. This practice guide provides guidelines on how to implement development and flood risk policies by the land use planning system. The guide also includes working examples through case studies. This Practice Guide (at Appendix B) contains a checklist to help developers and applicants to prepare an appropriate, site-specific flood risk assessment in accordance with the policy in PPS25, and the advice in the Practice Guide.
Pluvial	Direct runoff as a result of rainfall and the processes associated with it.
Precipitation	Describes rain, sleet, hail, snow and other forms of water falling from the sky.
Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA)	The Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment is a process involving an assessment of past floods and the possible harmful consequences of future floods, leading to the identification of Areas of Significant Risk. All LLFAs must prepare a PFRA report in relation to flooding in the LLFA's area. The LLFA is not required to include information about flooding from the sea, main rivers and reservoirs unless the authority thinks that it may affect flooding from another source. The floods to be included are those which had significant harmful consequences for human health, economic activity or the environment (including cultural heritage), or which would have significant harmful consequences for those matters if they were to occur now. The report may ignore past floods of a kind that are not likely to occur now.
Priority 1 and Priority 2 Roads	The roads within West Berkshire have been prioritised for the purposes of gritting. A roads together with certain B roads and other roads are called the Precautionary Network (P1). The Adverse Network (P2) covers certain links to villages not on the precautionary network as well as certain bus routes and industrial estates. Maps of the P1 and P2 roads within West Berkshire can be found on the Council's web pages. The M4 is gritted by the Highways Agency.
Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC)	RFCCs were set up under the Floods and Water Management Act 2010. The committees have a chair appointed by the Minister, members from Lead Local Flood Authorities (allowing for local democratic input) and independent members recruited by the Environment Agency who have specialist skills or backgrounds. RFCCs play an important local role in guiding flood and coastal risk management activities within catchments and along the coast, advising on and approving programmes of work for their areas as well as raising local levies to fund local priority projects and works in partnership with others.
Reservoir	Artificial lake used to store water. Reservoirs may be created in river valleys by the construction of a dam or may be built by excavation in the ground or by conventional construction techniques such a brickwork or cast concrete. Reservoirs greater than 10,000m3 are governed by the Reservoirs Act.
Residual Risk	The risk which remains after all risk avoidance, reduction and mitigation measures have been implemented.

Retention Pond	A pond where run-off is detained for a sufficient time to allow settlement and biological treatment of some pollutants.
Return Period	The probability of a flood of a given magnitude occurring within any one year e.g. a 1% (1 in 100) flood event has a 1% probability of occurring once in any one year.
Riparian Owner	All landowners whose property is adjoining to a body of water have the right to make reasonable use of it and the responsibility to suitably maintain it.
River Basin Management Plans (RBMP)	River Basin Management Plans have been produced by the Environment Agency for the eleven river basin districts in England and Wales and are the central tool setting out the objectives and actions required to achieve the objectives of the Water Framework Directive. RBMPs describe the main issues for each river basin district and state the environmental objectives for the basin, explain the objectives selected to achieve good ecological status and summarise the actions needed to deliver those objectives. A River Basin District is: a river basin, or several river basins, and the river basin's adjacent coastal waters.
Property Level Protection	Is the process of reducing the risk of flooding entering a home through the use of a range of products, such as air brick covers, flood doors and barriers and non-return valves on the drainage system These are also know as property flood protection.
Run-off	Water flow over the ground surface to the drainage system. This occurs if the ground is impermeable, is saturated or rainfall is particularly intense.
Sequential Test	Informed by a SFRA, a planning authority applies the Sequential Test to demonstrate that there are no reasonably available sites in areas with less risk of flooding that would be appropriate to the type of development or land use proposed.
Sewer	A sewer is a pipe which carries and removes either rainwater (surface) or foul water (or a combination of both) from more than one property. A sewer can also be categorised as being a private of public sewer and can carry surface or foul water. • A Private Sewer is solely the responsibility of the occupiers/owners of the properties that it serves. • A Public Sewer is a sewer that has been adopted and maintained by a Sewerage Undertaker.
Sewer flooding	The consequence of sewer systems exceeding their capacity during a rainfall event.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	An area of land or water notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as being of geological or nature conservation importance in the opinion of Natural England.
Soakaway	An underground structure where collected surface water is held to allow it to pass into the ground over time.
Sluice Gate	A wooden or metal barrier in groves that are set into the sides of a watercourse, commonly used to control water levels and flow rates in rivers and canals.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	An SFRA is used as a tool by a planning authority to assess flood risk for spatial planning, producing development briefs, setting constraints, informing sustainability appraisals and identifying locations of emergency planning measures and requirements for flood risk assessments. The purpose of a SFRA is to assess and map all forms of flood risk from groundwater, surface water, impounded water bodies, sewer and river sources, taking into account future climate change predictions, to allow planning authorities to use this as an evidence base to locate future development primarily in low flood risk areas. The outputs from an SFRA also assist in the production of sustainable policies for the long-term management of flood risk.
Sustainable	A way to describe something that will not restrict the ability of others, now and in the future. It will also stimulate economic growth, maximise well-being and protect the environment, while not impacting future generations to do the same
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).	SuDS are drainage systems which are designed to reduce the impact of urbanisation on the hydrology of a river system.
Surface Runoff	Rainwater (including snow and other precipitation) which: is on the surface of the ground (whether or not it is moving); and has not entered a watercourse, draining system or public sewer. Areas that suffer a depth of greater than 0.1m are considered to be at risk of surface water flooding. Flooding that is greater than 0.3m deep is classed as being at risk of deep surface water flooding.
Surface Water Management Plans (SWMP)	Surface Water Management Plans are produced by local authorities and are described as a framework through which key local partners with a responsibility for surface water and drainage in their area work together to understand the causes of surface water flooding and agree the most cost effective way of managing that risk. The purpose is to make sustainable surface water management decisions that are evidence based, risk based, future proofed and inclusive of stakeholder views. A SWMP should establish a long-term action plan to manage surface water in an area and should influence future capital investment, drainage maintenance, public engagement and understanding, land-use planning, emergency planning and future developments.
The Water Framework Directive	The Water Framework Directive was introduced in December 2000 and became UK law in December 2003. The directive focuses on improving the ecology of our water ecosystems and aims to protect and enhance the quality of surface water, groundwater, estuaries and coastal waters. The Environment Agency are the lead authority responsible for the delivery of these targets, but must work closely with lead local flood authorities, such as the County Council, to ensure that targets are achieved.
Weir	A horizontal structure across a river of predetermined height to control the flow of rivers in order to prevent flooding and help render rivers navigable.

Appendix 3: West Berkshire Council Flood Investigation Report Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (the Act) places a duty on the Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority for its area, to investigate flooding incidents that it becomes aware of, to the extent that it considers necessary or appropriate.

1.2. Section 19 of the Act states:

'Local authorities: investigations

(1) On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a lead local flood authority must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate-

(a) which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and

(b) whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.

(2) Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) it must-

(a) publish the results of its investigation, and

(b) notify any relevant risk management authorities'

2. Threshold for Investigation

2.1. The Council will investigate all flooding incidents reported by the public, or that otherwise come to its attention, that involve:

- Internal flooding of habitable property, excluding garages and out buildings.
- Flooding that breaches or threatens the critical infrastructure e.g electricity sub stations and switching centres, A roads, railways, bridges, flood defences, water treatment works, pumping stations.
- Flooding that directly results in serious injury or death.
- Flooding that incurs a significant economic impact to businesses.

- Flooding that places vulnerable individuals or vulnerable communities at risk e.g. hospitals, care and nursing homes, schools, secure units etc.

- Weight of public interest. The LLFA may consider a flood investigation necessary if deemed important enough by elected members. The weight of public interest should also be taken into consideration when determining if a flood investigation should be carried out.

2.2. The Council may also investigate smaller "near miss" flooding incidents, but will not publish the findings of such investigations in a public forum but will share with the professional partners.

2.3. The Council, as Highway Authority, will continue to investigate smaller scale flooding on the highway, but will not publish the findings of such investigations.

3. Purpose and Scale of Investigations

3.1. Any investigations undertaken will seek to establish the likely causes of the flooding incident, the relevant risk management authorities, and identify any recommended actions to be undertaken by the relevant risk management authorities in order to reduce the risk of a recurrence.

3.2. The investigations will be undertaken during, or as soon as possible after, the flooding incident, and will be appropriate to the scale and nature of the flooding incident.

3.3. Small scale flooding incidents, and incidents where the relevant risk management authorities are immediately apparent or are undertaking actions to alleviate the cause of the flooding incident, are likely to require limited investigations.

3.4. Large scale flooding incidents, incidents where the relevant flood risk management authorities are unclear, and incidents where a number of risk management authorities are involved, are likely to require more detailed investigations. In such circumstances the Council will work closely with the risk management authorities involved and may, where appropriate, prepare a detailed report.

4. Flood Investigation Procedure

1) Flood reported to the LLFA;
2) Flooding log started;
3) Flood investigator appointed;
4) Initial LLFA assessment undertaken as to whether this constitutes a section 19 report;
5) If yes, formal notification issued to partner risk management authorities notifying of the investigation and requesting any relevant information (see Appendix B for formal notification);
6) Flood investigation undertaken and report drafted in consultation with partner risk management authorities;

7) Draft report issued for comment;

8) Report and associated actions approved by the Councillor for, Emergency Planning;

9) Finalised report to be published on the Council's internet as below (section 5).

10) Where a number of flood investigations are needed simultaneously, investigations will be prioritised by the Projects Manager in consultation with the Executive Councillor.

5. Publication of Findings of Investigations

5.1 The findings of all investigations undertaken by the Council will be recorded on a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet, and any detailed reports relating to flooding incidents on the spreadsheet, will be published on the Council's website.

6. Risk management authorities

6.1 The principal flood risk management authorities are:

- The Environment Agency (Risk management authority – Flood and Water Management Act 2010)
- West Berkshire Council (Lead local flood authority – Flood and Water Management Act 2010)
- West Berkshire Council (Highway authority – Highways Act 1980)
- Thames Water Utilities Ltd. (Water company – Water Industry Act 1991)

Appendix 4: West Berkshire Council Sandbag Policy

1.0 Introduction

This document details West Berkshire Council's Policy with regard to the deployment of sand bags or other flood defence equipment, in order to reduce the impact of river flooding and reduce the impact of flash flooding in the area.

2.0 Councils Responsibilities

The Council has no legal duty to provide sandbags to the community unless the flooding is due to flooding from the Highway or other Council owned land and is likely to affect others adversely. However the Council has consciously considered the issues in relation to flooding and the impact it can have on the communities affected. As a result sandbags may be provided on condition that the situation fits the criteria as set out below in 4.0.

3.0 Property Owners Responsibilities

The responsibility for flood protection of property is the sole responsibility of the property owners. As a result all such owners should assess the risk of flooding to their property and take the necessary precautions to protect their own property. Measures may include installing physical flood protection barriers and joining the FLOODLINE Direct Warning (FDW) system. Information regarding the flood risk of properties in relation to river flooding can be found on the Environment Agencies website.

4.0.1 Provision of Sandbags

Sandbags will **only** be deployed having regard to the following priorities:

a) to prevent loss of life or serious injury, including vulnerable people (having regard to the Vulnerable People Plan)

b) to maintain access for emergency services

c) to protect vital facilities within the community, including critical infrastructure e.g. electrical sub stations, sewage works etc.

d) to protect key transport and main access routes

e) to reinforce flood defences preventing the flooding of multiple properties

f) to protect WBC business property (with relevant recharges to services as deemed appropriate)

g) if a privately owned property (not including a garage, garden shed, out building and garden etc.) is in imminent risk of flooding i.e., within the next 2hrs and that the 'fabric' of a building is at risk as a result

h) Mutual aid to other responding agencies.

5. Council Actions in Readiness for Flooding Events

5.1 Sandbag Stocks

In order to facilitate the Council response the Council will:

a. Maintain a stock of 500 sandbags at the depot for flooding purposes

b. Increase the stock to 1000 sandbags at the depot with 2 pallets loaded and ready to move should prior warning be given regarding severe weather that may cause flooding and affect the West Berkshire area. The triggers for this action would normally be an extreme rainfall alert, a severe weather warning and/or a flood watch/warning notification.

5.2 Sandbags Numbers

Where it is decided to supply sandbags in accordance with this policy (4.0) then the number of sandbags delivered to any property will be based on the following:

a. Domestic Properties in imminent risk of internal flooding:

i. 6 per door

ii. 3 per airbrick

b. Commercial Properties protection against internal flooding:

i. 6 per door

ii. 3 per airbrick

5.3 Control of Sandbag Provision

The decisions to deploy sandbags in accordance with this policy will normally be made by the Highways Team in Highways and Transport.

Outside the criteria, (as in 4.0 above) then decisions will be made to deploy sandbags by the Civil Contingencies Team or Duty Emergency Manager in conjunction with Highways and Transport, or the Controller/Highways Co-ordinator if the Emergency Operations Centre is operating.

5.4 Delivery Timings

The Council Highways Contractor who provides this service has a 2hr response time. That is to say that it will take 2 hours from the initial call to the contractor to the delivery being made on site subject to the availability of labour and equipment.

In addition the Council has only a small stock of sandbags and staff that may be deployed to deliver them. The Council should not be relied upon to deliver sandbags. Council resources may be deployed elsewhere in a large geographical area.

6.0 What the Council will NOT provide:

In accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.0, West Berkshire Council **WILL NOT:-**

a. provide sandbags for individual residential properties that do not satisfy the set criteria.

b. provide sandbags to protect gardens.

c. provide sandbags for protecting outbuildings (including garages, whether integral or external).

d. provide sandbags for protecting non-habitable parts of any private dwelling.

e. provide sandbags for protecting commercial premises unless it is deemed to be a critical infrastructure site.

f. provide sandbags as a precautionary measure unless there is a real risk of internal flooding within the next 2hrs.

g. guarantee the supply of sandbags to any premises. Residents are urged to make their own arrangements before flooding occurs.

h. guarantee the effectiveness or adequacy of supply of sandbag products provided by the Authority.

i. accept responsibility for placement of sandbags, except at location where the infirmity or disability of the sole occupant is an issue.

j. collect sandbags free of charge. Once they are delivered they will be deemed to be the responsibility of the premises involved except for where the infirmity or disability of the sole occupant is an issue.

7.0 Charges and Costs

7.1 West Berkshire Council will not normally charge for the delivery of sandbags to the priority categories as detailed in 4.0 (a-d) above.

7.2 Charges will be made for sandbag provision in the following cases:

a) if a property has flooded within the last 6 months, where sandbags have previously been provided by the Council *and* no flood defences have been prepared or installed by the owner of the property.

b) if in accordance with 4.1 (g) the property is found not to be in imminent risk of flooding and is a precautionary request.

c) any business where sandbags are provided including critical infrastructure.

d) other Council buildings, including schools.

7.3 The service charges will normally be a minimum of £118.00 (cost to attend a minor emergency in current contract – subject to annual inflation rise) and will include the cost of the bags, delivery and an admin charge.

8.0 Other Suppliers of Flood Protection Products

8.1 There are other suppliers of property flood protection products which may be more appropriate for the premises. Many such products can be viewed on the National Flood Forum Website.

8.2 In addition, there are other sources of sandbags within the West Berkshire Council and surrounding areas as attached on Annex A. Other suppliers may also be able to provide sand and bags either filled or to be filled in addition prices may vary so it is recommended to shop around.

9.0 Building a Sandbag Defence

9.1 Although new styles of flood protection products have been developed in recent years, sandbags can provide a temporary defence against flood water. However, it is vital they are used correctly if they are to provide full benefit. Annex B gives guidance as to using sandbags.

Appendix 5: LFRMS Data Sources and Limitations

Source	Dataset	Description	Limitations
Environment Agency	Areas Susceptible to Surface Water Flooding	The first generation national mapping, outlining areas of risk from surface water flooding across the country with three susceptibility bandings (less, intermediate and more)	Provides a good understanding of broad locations where areas may be susceptible to surface water flooding.
	Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Map	The national surface water flood mapping which is regularly updated as new data becomes available. This dataset includes three flood events (with a 1 in 30, 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 chance of occurring).	This mapping is indicative only and should not be used as the sole evidence for identifying flood risk.
	Flood Map	Shows the extent of flooding from rivers with a catchment of more than 3km² and from the sea. Based on hydraulic river modelling. The Flood Map gives a good indication of the areas at risk of flooding in England and Wales.	It cannot provide detail on individual properties. Modelling only provides a representation of a flood event.
	Indicative Flood Risk Areas	Nationally identified flood risk areas, based on the definition of 'significant' flood risk described by Defra and the Welsh Assembly Government.	Used for the Preliminary Flood risk Assessment. High-level information of broad areas.
	Reservoir Flood Maps	Inundation mapping from reservoirs above 25,000 cubic metres. They are based on the worst case scenario extent from nationally consistent data.	The mapping is used for emergency planning purposes. The maps are only intended as a guide and are not a prediction of what will happen.

Source	Dataset	Description	Limitations
West Berkshire Council	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	SFRA contains information on historic flooding, including flooding from surface water, groundwater and canals.	Local information is based on people's recollection of the flood event and may contain inaccuracies and lack of detail on source and extent.
	Flooding in West Berkshire 2007	A comprehensive investigation into of the flooding that occurred across West Berkshire in 2007.	Local information is based on people's recollection of the flood event and may contain inaccuracies and lack of detail on source and extent.
	Flooding in West Berkshire 2000/01	A comprehensive investigation into of the flooding that occurred across West Berkshire in 2000/01.	Local information is based on people's recollection of the flood event and may contain inaccuracies and lack of detail on source and extent.
	Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan	A comprehensive study of the flooding at Thatcham in 2007, containing historical flooding records and 2D models.	More detailed modelling to provide detail for flood schemes
Town and Parish Councils	Parish Flood Reports	For each Parish affected by the Flooding and Flood Survey Plans showing the affected properties and flow paths. These use local residents own knowledge and information to map local flood flows and properties flooded	Local information is based on people's recollection of the flood event and may contain inaccuracies and lack of detail on source and extent.
Canal and Rivers Trust	Detailed account of the flooding at each location, problems identified and recommended actions	Local information is based on people's recollection of the flood event and may contain inaccuracies and lack of detail on source and extent	Local information is based on people's recollection of the flood event and may contain inaccuracies and lack of detail on source and extent.
Berkshire Fire and Rescue	Anecdotal information on local flood history and flooding hotspots	Local information is based on people's recollection of the flood event and may contain inaccuracies and lack of detail on source and extent.	Local information is based on people's recollection of the flood event and may contain inaccuracies and lack of detail on source and extent.

Source	Dataset	Description	Limitations
Thames Water	DG5 Register	Records of sewer flooding incidents in the West Berkshire Area	It provides only a broad location of where flood incidents have been reported.

If you require this information in an alternative format or translation, please call 01635 551111 and ask for Transport and Countryside.

West Berkshire Council
Transport and Countryside
Market Street
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 5LD

T 01635 551111
www.westberks.gov.uk

WBC/H&C/SC/1221

Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2022/23

Committee considering report:	Council
Date of Committee:	03.03.2022
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Ross Mackinnon
Date Portfolio Member sent / agreed report:	12.1.2022
Report Author:	Shannon Coleman-Slaughter
Forward Plan Ref:	C4124

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The report seeks to consolidate the investments and borrowing strategy for the year ahead by detailing how and where the Council will invest and borrow in the forthcoming year, within a particular framework. This strategy is monitored throughout the year, with a mid-year report going to the Government and Ethics Committee as well as an annual report being presented to Members.

1.2 The report also has a statutory footing under the Local Government Act 2003. The Council must have an approved (by Full Council) Investment and Borrowing Strategy (or similar) for the forthcoming financial year. The Council is also required to comply with other regulatory requirements as highlighted in this report, for example to be a professional investor the Council must have £10 million of liquid investment funds at any one time; the Council must also detail its compliance with the relevant Treasury Management indicators (as highlighted in this report).

2 Recommendation(s)

That Council is requested to adopt the following recommendation:

(a) To agree and adopt the proposed Investment and Borrowing Strategy for 2022/23.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The Council's budget for investment income for 2022-23 is £120k, and the forecast costs of debt financing is £15.3 million. This strategy aims to maintain spend and income from these

	budgets at this level for the year ahead. This has been taken into account in the Council's proposed budget for 2022-23.			
Human Resource:	Not applicable			
Legal:	Treasury risk management at the Council is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.			
Risk Management:	Treasury management is the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Council has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Council's prudent financial management.			
Property:	Not applicable			
Policy:	The Investment and Borrowing Strategy is closely related to the Capital Strategy, as it governs the criteria for borrowing to fund capital spending.			
	Positive	**Neutral**	**Negative**	**Commentary**
Equalities Impact:		X		
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		Not applicable

B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		Not applicable
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:	Joseph Holmes, Executive Director of Resources, s151 Officer			

4 Executive Summary

4.1 Treasury management is the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Council has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Council's prudent financial management.

4.2 In support of the Capital Strategy and financing the Waste Private Finance Initiative (PFI), the Council expects to borrow up to £22.6 million in 2022/23. The Council may also borrow additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing. The Council has set the authorised limit for borrowing over the duration of the Capital Strategy (2022/23 – 2026/27) as follows:

Authorised Limit & Operational Boundary (Borrowing Limits)	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Authorised Limit - Long Term Borrowing	£277,000	£328,732	£349,621	£358,892
Authorised Limit - PFI and Leases	£12,000	£14,400	£13,200	£12,000
Authorised Limit - Short Term Borrowing	£15,000	£24,000	£24,000	£24,000
Authorised Limit - Total External Debt	**£304,000**	**£367,132**	**£386,821**	**£394,892**
Operational Boundary - Long Term Borrowing	£267,000	£318,732	£339,621	£348,892
Operational Boundary -PFI and Leases	£12,000	£12,000	£11,000	£10,000
Operational Boundary - Short Term Borrowing	£15,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000
Operational Boundary - Total External Debt	**£294,000**	**£350,732**	**£370,621**	**£378,892**

4.3 The Council's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to borrow short-term loans instead. By doing so, the Council is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of short term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly.

4.4 The Council's average forecast treasury investment balances in 2021/22 (as at December 2021), are £55 million split between highly liquid cash balances (forecast balances of £16 million, 29% of total balances) and short term fixed investments of less than 12 months. For 2022/23 the Council has assumed an average fund balance of £27 million for budgeting purposes, taking into account the internal funding of the proposed capital programme. The Council recognises the increasing risk and low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, however, the period for which funds are invested is determined by the cash flow needs of the Council. Funds are invested for as long as possible, in order to maximise the rate of return, while still ensuring that sufficient funds are available to meet the Council's outgoings. The normal maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed is 12 months. If sufficient funds become available, and market conditions are favourable enough to permit secure longer term investment, funds may, from time to time be invested for longer periods which will offer a better rate of return. However, in order to minimise risk and ensure liquidity, as a minimum the Council always maintains £10 million as highly liquid funds.

4.5 In addition to the investment portfolio, the Council has historically invested £62 million in commercial property with a view to generating additional yields to support delivery of Council services. Based on the 2020/21 draft financial accounts investment value of £65.7 million, a budgeted contribution of £900k is made annually to the Council's revenue budget.

4.6 The Council utilises net returns from investments in the support of financing delivery of core services. The table below shows the proportionality of net yields from investments generated against the net revenue budget.

Investment Income as a Percentage of the Revenue Budget	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£m	£m	£m
Revenue Budget	£150.5	£152.8	£156.2
Investment Budgets (Interest Received)	£0.12	£0.12	£0.12
Investment Property Income	£0.90	£0.90	£0.90
Investment Income as a Percentage	**0.68%**	**0.67%**	**0.65%**

4.7 In conclusion the Executive Director for Resources and S151 Officer is confident that the Investment and Borrowing Strategy provide an effective, robust and prudent platform from which to support the Council's strategic objectives as set out in the Capital Strategy and approved Council Strategy.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

5.1 Treasury management is the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Council has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Council's prudent financial management.

Background

5.2 **Economic background**: The ongoing impact on the UK from coronavirus, together with higher inflation, the likelihood of higher interest rates, and the country's trade position post-Brexit, will be major influences on the Council's treasury management strategy for 2022/23.

5.3 Interest rate forecast: The Bank of England (BoE) increased Bank Rate to 0.25% in December 2021 while maintaining its Quantitative Easing programme at £895 billion. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted 8-1 in favour of raising rates, and unanimously to maintain the asset purchase programme. Within the announcement, the MPC noted that the pace of the global recovery was broadly in line with its November Monetary Policy Report. Prior to the emergence of the Omicron coronavirus variant, the Bank also considered the UK economy to be evolving in line with expectations. However in response to the increased uncertainty and risk to activity presented by the new variant, the Bank revised down its estimates for Quarter Four GDP growth to 0.6% from 1.0%. Inflation was projected to be higher than previously forecast, with CPI likely to remain above 5% throughout the winter and peak at 6% in April 2022. The Council's treasury management adviser Arlingclose is forecasting that Bank Rate will continue to rise in calendar Quarter One 2022 to subdue inflationary pressures and the perceived desire by the BoE to move away from emergency levels of interest rates.

5.4 A detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose as at December 2021 is attached at Appendix A. Further updates issued by Arlingclose will be incorporated into this strategy as and when issued.

Proposals

5.5 **Borrowing**: The Council held £197 million of loans at 31.3.2021, with a forecast balance of £191.8 million at 31.3.2022. In financial year 2022/23 the Council expects to borrow up to £22.6 million. The Council may also borrow additional sums and to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing total borrowing does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £367 million.

5.6 The Council's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Council's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

5.7 Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Council's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to borrow short-term loans instead. By doing so, the Council is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of short term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly.

5.8 The Council has previously raised the majority of its long-term borrowing from the PWLB, but will consider long-term loans from other sources including banks, pensions and local authorities, and will investigate the possibility of issuing bonds and similar instruments, in order to lower interest costs and reduce over-reliance on one source of funding in line with the CIPFA Code. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield; however, the Council is not proposing to undertake any activities that require the purchase of assets primarily for yield. In addition, the Council may borrow short-term loans to cover unplanned cash flow shortages.

5.9 The Council's sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

(a) HM Treasury's PWLB lending facility (formerly the Public Works Loan Board)

(b) Any institution approved for investments (see below)

(c) Any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK

(d) Any other UK public sector body

(e) UK public and private sector pension funds (except The Royal Berkshire Pension Fund)

(f) Capital market bond investors

(g) UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other organisations that enable local authority bond issues.

5.10 Other sources of debt finance: In addition, capital finance may be raised by the following methods that are not borrowing, but may be classed as other debt liabilities:

(a) Leasing

(b) Hire purchase

(c) Private Finance Initiative

(d) Sale and leaseback

5.11 Municipal Bonds Agency: UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative to the PWLB. It issues bonds on the capital markets and lends the proceeds to local authorities. This is a more complicated source of finance than the PWLB for two reasons: borrowing authorities will be required to provide bond investors with a guarantee to refund their investment in the event that the agency is unable to for any reason; and there will be a lead time of several months between committing to borrow and knowing the interest rate payable. Any decision to borrow from the Agency will therefore be the subject of a separate report to full Council.

5.12 LOBOs: The Council does not hold any LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate at set dates, following which the Council has the option to either accept the new rate or to repay the loan at no additional cost).

5.13 Short-term and variable rate loans: These loans leave the Council exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the interest rate exposure limits in the treasury management indicators.

5.14 Debt rescheduling: The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Council may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk.

5.15 **Investments**: The Council holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Council's treasury investment balance has been consistently around £40 million, and similar levels are expected to be maintained in the forthcoming year.

5.16 The CIPFA Code requires the Council to invest its treasury funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income. Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Council will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, in order to maintain the spending power of the sum invested.

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

5.18 Business models: Under the IFRS 9 standard, the accounting for certain investments depends on the Council's "business model" for managing them. The Council aims to achieve value from its treasury investments by a business model of collecting the contractual cash flows and therefore, where other criteria are also met, these investments will continue to be accounted for at amortised cost.

5.19 The Council may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types subject to the adopted limits. As a result of the pandemic the Council is holding significant cash balances. The Council has invested significant levels of cash during the financial year within the Debt Management Office facility in order to avoid exceeding the 2021/22 counterparty limits. The current individual county party limits were set at the point the Council became an individual unitary in 1998. It is therefore recommended that the current individual counter party limits are increased to reflect current economic circumstances. Therefore, there is no increased risk from the when the investment policy was originally approved, though of course, this does represent a significant year on year increase in individual counterparty limits of £3m. The historic and proposed individual counterparty limits are detailed in the table below.

Organisations	Credit Ratings	Proposed Individual Counterparty Limit 2022/23	Historic Individual Counterparty Limit	Sector Limit	Time Limit
		£000s	£000s	£000s	
The UK Government (Debt Management Office)		Unlimited	Unlimited	Not applicable	50 Years
UK Local Authorities (including Police, Fire and similar bodies)		£8,000	£5,000	Unlimited	25 Years
UK Building Societies	1 - 11	£8,000	£5,000	£14,000	13 months
UK Building Societies	12 - 21	£6,500	£4,000		13 months
UK Building Societies	22 - 25	£5,000	£3,000		13 months
UK Banks and other financial institutions	Moody's Prime 1 or equivalent	£8,000	£5,000	Unlimited	13 months
UK Banks and other financial institutions	Moody's Prime 2 or equivalent	£6,500	£4,000	Unlimited	13 months
UK Banks and other financial institutions	Moody's Prime 3 or equivalent	£5,000	£3,000	Unlimited	13 months
UK Based Money Market Funds	AAA or equivalent	£8,000	£5,000	Unlimited	Not applicable
Registered Providers, Charities, Public Sector Bodies and Council owned companies, joint Ventures		£8,000	£5,000	Unlimited	50 Years
Strategic pooled funds (including cash plus funds)		£8,000	N/A	£35,000	Not applicable
Real estate investment trusts		£8,000	N/A	£17,500	Not applicable

5.20 Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.

5.21 Government: Loans to, and bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by, national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency,

although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Government are deemed to be zero credit risk due to its ability to create additional currency and therefore may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

5.22 Banks and building societies (unsecured): Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.

5.23 Money market funds: Pooled funds that offer same-day or short notice liquidity and very low or no price volatility by investing in short-term money markets. They have the advantage over bank accounts of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a small fee. Although no sector limit applies to money market funds, the Council will take care to diversify its liquid investments over a variety of providers to ensure access to cash at all times.

5.24 Registered providers (unsecured): Loans to, and bonds issued or guaranteed by, registered providers of social housing or registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (in England), the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Welsh Government and the Department for Communities (in Northern Ireland). As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

5.25 Strategic pooled funds: Bond, equity and property funds that offer enhanced returns over the longer term but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Council to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.

5.26 Real estate investment trusts (REITs): Shares in companies that invest mainly in real estate and pay the majority of their rental income to investors in a similar manner to pooled property funds. As with property funds, REITs offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile especially as the share price reflects changing demand for the shares as well as changes in the value of the underlying properties.

5.27 The Council under section 15(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 can choose to make loans to local enterprises, local charities, wholly owned companies and joint ventures as part of a wider strategy for local economic growth. During financial year 2022/23 it is anticipated that significant financial loans will be incurred in respect of the Council's joint venture with Sovereign Housing (Home for West Berkshire). The revised counterparty limits in section 5.19 make provision for these loans.

5.28 Exposure to Risk: The proposed investment limits represent the maximum values to be invested with individual organisations. The Treasury Management Group may temporarily reduce these amounts and or shorten the time period of investments in order to spread the exposure to loss from institutions failing. The Council manages its exposure to risk via a series of treasury management indicators. Appendix D provides greater detail on the indicators used to monitor and review the performance.

5.29 To ensure that the invested funds can be accessed when they are needed, for example to repay capital borrowed, the Council ensures it has readily available cash balances in accordance with only placing short term investments, and manages capital expenditure on a prudent basis in line with the prudential code indicators.

Non Treasury Investments:

5.30 The definition of investments in CIPFA's revised Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Council as well as other non-financial assets which the Council holds primarily for financial return. This is replicated in the Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, in which the definition of investments is further broadened to also include all such assets held partially for financial return. At the 31st March 2021 the Council held £65.7m of such investments in directly owned property categorised as follows:

(a) Directly owned property (commercial property) £54.2 million, details in appendix C. This is property where the Council has borrowed specifically to fund the purchase.

(b) Directly owned property (investment property) £11.5 million, details included in appendix D. This is property that the Council holds as an investment property but the purchase has not been funded by borrowing. In most cases the property has been inherited from Berkshire County Council or Newbury District Council upon the formation of West Berkshire District Council in 1998.

5.31 The estimated net income for 2022/23 is £900k.

6 Other options considered

Not applicable

7 Conclusion

7.1 The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Council is forecasting an increasing CFR and anticipates an increased borrowing requirement. CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities recommends that the Council's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. The table below demonstrates that the Council expects to comply with this recommendation during 2022/23.

Capital Financing Requirement	31.3.21 Actual £000s	31.3.22 Estimate £000s	31.3.23 Forecast £000s	31.3.24 Forecast £000s	31.3.25 Forecast £000s
Total CFR	**£273,150**	**£284,539**	**£308,732**	**£329,621**	**£338,892**
Less: Other debt liabilities	-£12,249	-£11,483	-£10,670	-£9,807	-£8,892
Loans CFR	**£260,901**	**£273,056**	**£298,062**	**£319,814**	**£330,000**
Less: External borrowing	-£197,470	-£191,862	-£186,905	-£181,988	-£177,256
Internal borrowing	**£63,431**	**£81,194**	**£111,157**	**£137,826**	**£152,744**
Less: Balance sheet resources	£98,511	£98,511	£98,511	£98,511	£101,002
Excess cash Balances / (New Borrowing Requirement)	**£35,080**	**£17,317**	**-£12,646**	**-£39,315**	**-£51,742**

7.2 The Council is forecasting to have gross debt levels of £191.9 million as at 31.3.2022, with an anticipated borrowing requirement of £12.6 million in 2022/23 (funding of the capital programme and Waste PFI obligations). To compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes the same forecasts as the table above, but that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £10 million at each year-end to maintain sufficient liquidity.

Liability Benchmark	31.3.21 Actual £000s	31.3.22 Estimate £000s	31.3.23 Forecast £000s	31.3.24 Forecast £000s	31.3.25 Forecast £000s
Loans CFR	£260,901	£273,056	£298,062	£319,814	£330,000
Less: Balance sheet resources	£98,511	£98,511	£98,511	£98,511	£101,002
Net loans requirement	£162,390	£174,545	£199,551	£221,303	£228,998
Plus: Liquidity allowance	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Liability benchmark	**£172,390**	**£184,545**	**£209,551**	**£231,303**	**£238,998**

7.3 The revised benchmark generates a revised new borrowing requirement for 2022/23 of £22.6 million (Net Loans Requirement £199.6 million less external borrowing £187 million, plus £10 million minimum cash balance requirement). The revenue budget had made provision for the repayment of capital financing costs. Over the duration of the Capital Strategy the Council has set aside a revenue uplift in the capital financing budget of circa £600k annually. The Council is required to ensure that capital financing is reasonable and affordable in the long term.

Percentage Costs as a Percentage of the Revenue Budget	**2022/23 Budget**	**2023/24 Budget**	**2024/25 Budget**
Financing Costs - £m	£15.2	£16.4	£17.9
Revenue Budget - £m	£150.5	£152.8	£156.2
Financing Costs as a Percentage	**10.1%**	**10.7%**	**11.5%**

7.4 In respect of investments, the Council's revenue budget includes net returns from investments in the support of financing delivery of core services. The table below shows the proportionality of net yields from investments generated against the net revenue budget over the duration of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Investment Income as a Percentage of the Revenue Budget	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£m	£m	£m
Revenue Budget	£150.5	£152.8	£156.2
Investment Budgets (Interest Received)	£0.12	£0.12	£0.12
Investment Property Income	£0.90	£0.90	£0.90
Investment Income as a Percentage	**0.68%**	**0.67%**	**0.65%**

7.5 In conclusion the Executive Director for Resources and S151 Officer is confident that the Investment and Borrowing Strategy provide an effective, robust and prudent platform from which to support the Council's strategic objectives as set out in the Capital Strategy and approved Council Strategy.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment

8.2 Appendix B – Data Protection Impact Assessment

8.3 Appendix C – Arlingclose Economic & Interest Rate Forecast – November 2021

8.4 Appendix D – Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

8.5 Appendix E – Treasury Management Indicators

8.6 Appendix F – Non Treasury Investments

Background Papers:

*(add text)

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☐ No: ☒

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

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Document Control

Document Ref:		**Date Created:**	
Version:		**Date Modified:**	
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 the Executive to make:	Approval of the Council's Investment & Borrowing Strategy
Summary of relevant legislation:	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition (the CIPFA Code)
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's priorities for improvement? • 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 ☐ No X** **If yes, please indicate which priority and provide an explanation**
Name of Budget Holder:	**Joseph Holmes**
Name of Service/Directorate:	**Joseph Holmes**
Name of assessor:	Shannon Coleman-Slaughter
Date of assessment:	16.12.2021
Version and release date (if applicable):	

Is this a …. ?		**Is this policy, strategy, function or service … ?**	
Policy	**Yes ☐ No X**	**New or proposed**	**Yes ☐ No X**
Strategy	**Yes X No ☐**	**Already exists and is being reviewed**	**Yes X No ☐**
Function	**Yes ☐ No X**	**Is changing**	**Yes X No ☐**
Service	**Yes ☐ No X**		

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

Aims:	Robust treasury management
Objectives:	Robust treasury management
Outcomes:	Treasury management that is risk appropriate and aids the Council in delivering sustainable services to end users.
Benefits:	Financial sustainability and resilience

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

(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	Not applicable	
Disability		
Gender Reassignment		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Race		
Religion or Belief		
Sex		
Sexual Orientation		

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 ☐ No X**
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	**Yes ☐ No X**

Please provide an explanation for your answer:

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

If an EqIA 2 is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the EqIA guidance and template – http://intranet/index.aspx?articleid=32255.

(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqIA Stage 2 required	Yes ☐ No X
Owner of EqIA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqIA Stage Two:	

Name: **Shannon Coleman-Slaughter** **Date:** **16.12.2021**

Please now forward this completed form to Pamela Voss, Equality and Diversity Officer for publication on the WBC website.

Appendix B

Data Protection Impact Assessment – Stage One

The General Data Protection Regulations require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for certain projects that have a significant impact on the rights of data subjects.

Should you require additional guidance in completing this assessment, please refer to the Information Management Officer via dp@westberks.gov.uk

Directorate:	Resources
Service:	Finance & Property
Team:	Accountancy
Lead Officer:	Shannon Coleman-Slaughter
Title of Project/System:	Treasury Management
Date of Assessment:	16.12.2021

Do you need to do a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)?

	Yes	No
Will you be processing SENSITIVE or "special category" personal data? Note – sensitive personal data is described as "*data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation*"	☐	**X**
Will you be processing data on a large scale? Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both	☐	**X**
Will your project or system have a "social media" dimension? Note – will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?	☐	**X**
Will any decisions be automated? Note – does your system or process involve circumstances where an individual's input is "scored" or assessed without intervention/review/checking by a human being? Will there be any "profiling" of data subjects?	☐	**X**

	Yes	No
Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?	☐	**X**
Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?	☐	**X**
Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes? Note – this could include biometrics, "internet of things" connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised	☐	**X**

If you answer "Yes" to any of the above, you will probably need to complete Data Protection Impact Assessment - Stage Two. If you are unsure, please consult with the Information Management Officer before proceeding.

Appendix C

Arlingclose Economic & Interest Rate Forecast – November 2021

Economic background: The ongoing impact on the UK from coronavirus, together with higher inflation, higher interest rates, and the country's trade position post-Brexit, will be major influences on the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2022/23.

The Bank of England (BoE) increased Bank Rate to 0.25% in December 2021 while maintaining its Quantitative Easing programme at £895 billion. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted 8-1 in favour of raising rates, and unanimously to maintain the asset purchase programme.

Within the announcement the MPC noted that the pace of the global recovery was broadly in line with its November Monetary Policy Report. Prior to the emergence of the Omicron coronavirus variant, the Bank also considered the UK economy to be evolving in line with expectations, however the increased uncertainty and risk to activity the new variant presents, the Bank revised down its estimates for Q4 GDP growth to 0.6% from 1.0%. Inflation was projected to be higher than previously forecast, with CPI likely to remain above 5% throughout the winter and peak at 6% in April 2022. The labour market was generally performing better than previously forecast and the BoE now expects the unemployment rate to fall to 4% compared to 4.5% forecast previously, but notes that Omicron could weaken the demand for labour.

UK CPI for November 2021 registered 5.1% year on year, up from 4.2% in the previous month. Core inflation, which excludes the more volatile components, rose to 4.0% y/y from 3.4%. The most recent labour market data for the three months to October 2021 showed the unemployment rate fell to 4.2% while the employment rate rose to 75.5%.

In October 2021, the headline 3-month average annual growth rate for wages were 4.9% for total pay and 4.3% for regular pay. In real terms, after adjusting for inflation, total pay growth was up 1.7% while regular pay was up 1.0%. The change in pay growth has been affected by a change in composition of employee jobs, where there has been a fall in the number and proportion of lower paid jobs.

Gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 1.3% in the third calendar quarter of 2021 according to the initial estimate, compared to a gain of 5.5% q/q in the previous quarter, with the annual rate slowing to 6.6% from 23.6%. The Q3 gain was modestly below the consensus forecast of a 1.5% q/q rise. During the quarter activity measures were boosted by sectors that reopened following pandemic restrictions, suggesting that wider spending was flat. Looking ahead, while monthly GDP readings suggest there had been some increase in momentum in the latter part of Q3, Q4 growth is expected to be soft.

GDP growth in the euro zone increased by 2.2% in calendar Q3 2021 following a gain of 2.1% in the second quarter and a decline of -0.3% in the first. Headline inflation has been strong, with CPI registering 4.9% year-on-year in November, the fifth successive month of inflation. Core CPI inflation was 2.6% y/y in November, the fourth month of successive increases from July's 0.7% y/y. At these levels, inflation is above the European Central Bank's target of 'below, but close to 2%', putting some pressure on its long-term stance of holding its main interest rate of 0%.

Credit outlook: Since the start of 2021, relatively benign credit conditions have led to credit default swap (CDS) prices for the larger UK banks to remain low and had steadily edged down throughout the year up until mid-November when the emergence of Omicron has caused them to rise modestly. However, the generally improved economic outlook during 2021 helped bank profitability and reduced the level of impairments many had made as provisions for bad loans. However, the relatively recent removal of coronavirus-related business support measures by the government means the full impact on bank balance sheets may not be known for some time.

The improved economic picture during 2021 led the credit rating agencies to reflect this in their assessment of the outlook for the UK sovereign as well as several financial institutions, revising them from negative to stable and even making a handful of rating upgrades.

Looking ahead, while there is still the chance of bank losses from bad loans as government and central bank support is removed, the institutions on the Authority's counterparty list are well-capitalised and general credit conditions across the sector are expected to remain benign. Duration limits for counterparties on the Authority's lending list are under regular review and will continue to reflect economic conditions and the credit outlook.

Interest rate forecast: The Authority's treasury management adviser Arlingclose is forecasting that Bank Rate will continue to rise in calendar Q1 2022 to subdue inflationary pressures and the perceived desire by the BoE to move away from emergency levels of interest rates.

Investors continue to price in multiple rises in Bank Rate over the next forecast horizon, and Arlingclose believes that although interest rates will rise again, the increases will not be to the extent predicted by financial markets. In the near-term, the risks around Arlingclose's central case are to the upside while over the medium-term the risks become more balanced.

Yields are expected to remain broadly at current levels over the medium-term, with the 5, 10 and 20 year gilt yields expected to average around 0.65%, 0.90%, and 1.15% respectively. The risks around for short and medium-term yields are initially to the upside but shifts lower later, while for long-term yields the risk is to the upside. However, as ever there will almost certainly be short-term volatility due to economic and political uncertainty and events.

Underlying assumptions:

- The global recovery from the pandemic has entered a more challenging phase. The resurgence in demand has led to the expected rise in inflationary pressure, but disrupted factors of supply are amplifying the effects, increasing the likelihood of lower growth rates ahead. The advent of the Omicron variant of coronavirus is affecting activity and is also a reminder of the potential downside risks.
- Despite relatively buoyant activity survey data, official GDP data indicates that growth was weakening into Q4 2021. Other data, however, suggested continued momentum, particularly for November. Retail sales volumes rose 1.4%, PMIs increased, and the labour market continued to strengthen. The end of furlough did not appear to have had a significant impact on unemployment. Wage growth is elevated.
- The CPI inflation rate rose to 5.1% for November and will rise higher in the near term. While the transitory factors affecting inflation are expected to unwind over time, policymakers' concern is persistent medium term price pressure.
- These factors prompted the MPC to raise Bank Rate to 0.25% at the December meeting. Short term interest rate expectations remain elevated.
- The outlook, however, appears weaker. Household spending faces pressures from a combination of higher prices and tax rises. In the immediate term, the Omicron variant has already affected growth – Q4 and Q1 activity could be weak at best.
- Longer-term government bond yields remain relatively low despite the more hawkish signals from the BoE and the Federal Reserve. Investors are concerned that significant policy tightening in the near term will slow growth and prompt the need for looser policy later. Geo-political and coronavirus risks are also driving safe haven buying. The result is a much flatter yield curve, as short-term yields rise even as long-term yields fall.
- The rise in Bank Rate despite the Omicron variant signals that the MPC will act to bring inflation down whatever the environment. It has also made clear its intentions to tighten policy further. While the economic outlook will be challenging, the signals from policymakers suggest their preference is to tighten policy unless data indicates a more severe slowdown.

Forecast:

- The MPC will want to build on the strong message it delivered this month by tightening policy despite Omicron uncertainty.

- Arlingclose therefore expects Bank Rate to rise to 0.50% in Q1 2022, but then remain there. Risks to the forecast are initially weighted to the upside, but becoming more balanced over time. The Arlingclose central forecast remains below the market forward curve.
- Gilt yields will remain broadly flat from current levels. Yields have fallen sharply at the longer end of the yield curve, but expectations of a rise in Bank Rate have maintained short term gilt yields at higher levels.
- Easing expectations for Bank Rate over time could prompt the yield curve to steepen, as investors build in higher inflation expectations.
- The risks around the gilt yield forecasts vary. The risk for short and medium term yields is initially on the upside but shifts lower later. The risk for long-term yields is weighted to the upside.

	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24
Official Bank Rate													
Upside risk	0.00	0.00	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Arlingclose Central Case	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Downside risk	0.00	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25
3-month money market ra													
Upside risk	0.05	0.05	0.25	0.35	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Arlingclose Central Case	0.25	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65
Downside risk	0.00	-0.25	-0.25	-0.30	-0.30	-0.30	-0.30	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35
5yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.00	0.35	0.45	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.50	0.50	0.45	0.45
Arlingclose Central Case	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.65	0.70	0.75	0.75
Downside risk	-0.10	-0.20	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.30	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40
10yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.10	0.25	0.35	0.40	0.45	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.55	0.55	0.55
Arlingclose Central Case	0.80	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.90	0.90	0.95	0.95
Downside risk	-0.10	-0.25	-0.30	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40
20yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.30	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Arlingclose Central Case	1.00	1.05	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.15	1.15	1.15	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
Downside risk	-0.15	-0.30	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45
50yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.25	0.30	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Arlingclose Central Case	0.70	0.75	0.80	0.85	0.90	0.95	1.00	1.05	1.05	1.10	1.10	1.15	1.15
Downside risk	-0.15	-0.30	-0.35	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.40	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45	-0.45

PWLB Standard Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 1.00%
PWLB Certainty Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.80%
PWLB Infrastructure Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.60%

Appendix D

Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

Investment & Debt Portfolio Position	30.11.21 Actual portfolio £m	30.11.21 Average rate %
External borrowing:		
Public Works Loan Board	193.3	3.35
Local authorities		
LOBO loans from banks		
Other loans	0.8	1.20
Total external borrowing	**194.1**	**3.34**
Other long-term liabilities:		
Private Finance Initiative	11.7	6.10
Leases		
Transferred Debt		
Total other long-term liabilities	**11.7**	
Total gross external debt	**205.8**	
Treasury investments:		
The UK Government	17.5	0.02
Local authorities	19.0	0.05
Other government entities		
Secured investments		
Banks (unsecured)	12.7	0.02
Building societies (unsecured)		
Registered providers (unsecured)		
Money market funds	7.0	0.02
Strategic pooled funds		
Cash Plus funds		
Real estate investment trusts		
Other investments		
Total treasury investments	**56.2**	**0.03**
Net debt	**149.6**	

Appendix E

Treasury Management Indicators

The Council measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators:

Security: The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average [credit rating / credit score] of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Credit risk indicator	Target
Portfolio average credit [rating / score]	A *or* 6.0

Liquidity: The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three month period, without additional borrowing.

Liquidity risk indicator	Target
Total cash available within 3 months	£11m

Interest rate exposures: This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to interest rate risk. The [upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interest rates] will be:

Interest rate risk indicator	Limit
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	£600,000
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	-£600,000

The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at new market rates.

Maturity structure of borrowing: This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be:

Refinancing rate risk indicator	Upper limit	Lower limit
Under 12 months	30%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	30%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	30%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	30%	0%
10 years and within 15 years	30%	0%
15 years and within 20 years	30%	0%
20 years and within 25 years	30%	0%
25 years and within 30 years	30%	0%
30 years and within 35 years	30%	0%
35 years and within 40 years	30%	0%
40 years and within 45 years	30%	0%
45 years and within 50 years	30%	0%

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year/ Long Term Treasury Management Investments: The purpose of this indicator is to control the Council's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

Price risk indicator	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£10m	£0m	£0m

The indicators will be monitored throughout the financial year and compliance reported via the Mid Term Treasury Report and quarterly reporting updates.

Appendix F

Non Treasury Investments

Directly Owned Property – Purchase Funded via Borrowing

Directly owned property (commercial property) held at 31st March 2021

Names and address of property	Property type	Valuation at 31 March 2021
		£'000
Dudley Port Petrol Filling Station, Tipton	Petrol Filling Station	3,700
79 Bath Road, Chippenham	Retail Warehouse	9,200
Lloyds Bank, 104 Terminus Road, Eastbourne	Retail	1,800
Aldi/Iceland, Cleveland Gate Retail Park, Gainsborough	Retail Warehouse	5,725
303 High Street and 2 Waterside South, Lincoln	Retail	2,850
3&4 The Sector, Newbury Business Park	Office	17,260
Sainsbury's, High Street, North Allerton	Retail	7,050
Ruddington Fields Business Park, Mere Way, Nottingham	Office	6,600
Valuations Total per Draft 2020/21 Financial Statements		**54,185**

Directly owned Property – Purchase not Funded by Borrowing

Directly owned property (investment property) held at 31st March 2021

Names and address of property	Property type	Latest valuation
		£'000
The Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury	Café	25
Pelican Lane Creche, Pelican Lane	Children's Nursery	0
Rainbow Nursery, Priory Road, Hungerford	Children's Nursery	35
Clappers Farm/Beech Hill Farm, Grazely	Tenanted Smallholding	1,700
Bloomfield Hatch Farm, Grazely	Tenanted Smallholding	1,000
Shaw Social Club, Almond Avenue, Shaw	Community Centre	70
Swings n Smiles, Lower Way, Thatcham	Children's Day Centre	375
Units 1 to 7, Kennet Enterprise Centre, Hungerford	Industrial	500
London Road Industrial Estate, Newbury	Industrial	7,800
Valuations Total per Draft 2020/21 Financial Statements		11,505

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Medium Term Financial Strategy

Committee considering report:	Council
Date of Committee:	03.03.2022
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Ross Mackinnon
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	12.1.2022
Report Author:	Joseph Holmes/Melanie Ellis
Forward Plan Ref:	C4125

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is to set out the financial planning assumptions for future years and align these with the Council Strategy to ensure that Council Strategy will be delivered. The MTFS highlights the overarching key issues facing the Council's finances as well as how there are many different scenarios and uncertainty concerning the future revenue streams for the Council in the future.

1.2 The Council is able to commence the next four years of the MTFS from a strong financial base and this position and future projections are highlighted in the report.

1.3 The full MTFS is in the appendix A.

2 Recommendation

For members to approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	All finance information is included within the report
Human Resource:	Some potential longer term implications but none specifically
Legal:	None identified
Risk Management:	Scenario planning is identified within the MTFS

Property:	None identified, though clear link to Capital Strategy			
Policy:	The MTFS purpose is to link financial resources to deliver the Council Strategy.			
	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			See policy comment above – the MTFS should enhance the delivery of the Council Strategy through aligning resources to it.
Core Business:		X		

Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	Portfolio Holder and aligned to the budget simulator; see appendix L to the Revenue Budget.			

4 Executive Summary

The MTFS highlights the Council's medium term financial planning position and is a separate strategy as highlighted in Appendix A.

5 Supporting Information

See the MTFS document set out in the appendix to this covering report.

6 Other options considered

Option of doing nothing and just focussing on the financial position for the year ahead, but this has been disregarded as it would prevent longer term financial planning and have a negative impact on the delivery of the Council Strategy.

7 Conclusion

See the strategy in appendix A.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – MTFS document

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	☐

Officer details:

Name: Joseph Holmes
Job Title: Executive Director (Resources)

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Document Control

Document Ref:		**Date Created:**	
Version:		**Date Modified:**	
Author:	Joseph Holmes/Melanie Ellis		
Owning Service	Finance and Property		

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			

Medium Term Financial Strategy

Document Control

Document Ref:		**Date Created:**	23.11.2021
Version:	0.3	**Date Modified:**	
Revision due			
Author:	Joseph Holmes	**Sign & Date:**	
Owning Service			

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
0.1	23.11.21	Initial Draft from JH	
0.2	21.12.21	Version for Corporate Board January	
0.3	10.1.22	Version for Operations Board January	
0.4	24.1.22	Version for Executive February	
0.5	27.1.22	Amended version for Executive February	

West Berkshire COUNCIL

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Other relevant documentation 12

1. Foreword

1.1 There are a lot of unknowns for Local Government finance in the future. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will be felt for a number of years and is likely to change how public services are delivered in the long term. The Government Spending Review (SR22) that was announced in October 2021 was for a three year period for Local Government overall, but the Local Government finance settlement (LGFS) was only for a one year period, 2022-23. The absence of a longer term financial envelope for Local Government does mean that there remains significant uncertainty over the financial position from 2023-24. This strategy does though provide estimates for future years and sets out a range of scenarios to help understand the impact on future budgets.

1.2 The Council has a history of strong financial management and has a reserves position that, though comparatively remains constrained, is sufficient to allow some flexibility and support in how we can tackle future budgets to avoid having to make knee-jerk responses. The Council has also received continued significant Government financial support for the Covid-19 pandemic and to help protect the in-year financial position of the Council.

1.3 The MTFS does factor in investment for the future. This is included for the Council Strategy delivery plan, social care demand modelling and for capital investment. Further information on capital investment can be found in the capital strategy itself, and this is vital for the future prosperity of our district, and it is incumbent on us to ensure that infrastructure investment takes place to keep West Berkshire as a great place to live. All of these items above will help plan for the long term financial success of the Council in delivering the Council Strategy for our residents and businesses.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) highlights the financial planning, high level proposals, and sensitivity analysis that underpins the financial resources that deliver the Council Strategy (2019-23). The Strategy is in itself subservient to the Council Strategy, but in its own right attempts to provide the financial planning framework for the coming years as well as act as guide to the organisation in developing projects and schemes to deliver financial balance and the Council Strategy.

2.2 The MTFS looks to a four year horizon; enough to provide some stability over an increasingly volatile financial future, but short term enough so that the first year represents the budget proposals for 2022-23, and for the next three years there are a variety of themes included which form the basis of the future savings areas. The MTFS also includes information on financing the capital strategy and how the scale and profile of this strategy has an impact on the overall financial position of the Council.

2.3 The longer term outlook is dominated by three key factors; firstly, the macro-economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact that this will have on the UK economy; secondly the impact on Government reform in Adult Social Care, and thirdly, the long awaited fair funding review and proposed further business rates retention proposals for 2023-24 and beyond which should have a

significant impact on the Council's finances and hopefully provide some longer term financial planning certainty.

3. Introduction

3.1 *Purpose*

3.2 The purpose of the MTFS is to set out the financial planning assumptions and resources available to the Council to deliver the Council Strategy. The MTFS includes both revenue and capital implications. The MTFS attempts to balance the resources known, and estimated, to be available with the ambitions of the Council Strategy. There is always a calculation to make to even out the additional and current investment in the Council Strategy objectives against the cost of doing so and the pressure that puts on the MTFS.

3.3 *Vision*

3.3.1 The Vision of the MTFS is:

"To ensure that the Council has the financial resources available to work together to make West Berkshire an even greater place in which to live, work and learn"

3.4 *Dependencies*

3.4.1 The delivery of the MTFS cannot occur through the Council alone. A significant proportion, 50%, of the Council's budget is delivered through partners in the private, public and voluntary sectors. The Council's proposals for future financial stability will involve all of these partners including where there are proposals to invest in infrastructure, deliver core services and transform how the Council delivers its services in the future.

3.4.2 The delivery of the strategy is also dependent on the Government and most importantly the DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) review of 'fair funding' and further business rates retention.

3.4.3 This fair funding review was originally due to impact on the 2020-21 budget but is now most likely to come into effect from 2023-24 at the earliest. The Review has not been consulted upon yet, so figures included in the MTFS are indicative, but the working assumption in the MTFS is (beyond the known figures for 2022-23):

- No new additional monies are provided to the Council as part of the Spending Review 2022-23 (both the services grant and lower tier services grant are expected to be removed, but their value is assumed to remain in a reworked funding system)
- The notion of no 'negative RSG (Revenue Support Grant) is maintained and incorporated into the new fair funding model
- That there is a hard reset of business rates to a new baseline so growth above the existing baseline is not retained by WBC – at a cost of £4m p.a. – but a transitional funding scheme comes into place to mitigate this impact over a 3 year period

- Extra funds for ASC beyond the £0.3m are provided in 2023-24 and 2024-25 but these are allocated for new costs in Adult Social Care due to the implications of the ASC reforms
- New Homes Bonus is removed and replaced with a funding system that delivers equivalent levels of reward to 2022-23
- Council Tax referendum levels remain at 2% and ASC Council Tax precept levels revert to 1% from 2023-24
- Inflation remains at 2% in the longer term

4. Medium Term Financial Plan

4.1 The MTFS is supported by a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This MTFP sets out the financial planning assumptions and is included below:

Figure 1.1 – MTFS model

1.99%	Line	**Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)**	**2022/23**	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**2025/26**
£m	ref		**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
£m		Council Tax income	**1.00%**	**1.99%**	**1.99%**	**1.99%**
0.00%		Adult Social Care Precept	**3.00%**	**1.00%**	**1.00%**	**1.00%**
104.3	1	Council Tax (incl. ASC)	110.1	114.1	118.2	122.4
23.2	2	Retained Business Rates/rates funding	24.3	23.0	21.9	20.8
3.2	3a	Additional Government Covid Funding	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0.0	3b	2022/23 Services Grant	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
1.1	4	New Homes Bonus	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
0.2	5	Lower tier services grant	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
6.5	6	Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0
2.8	7a	Social Care Grant	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2
	7b	Market Sustainability & Fair Cost of Care Fund	0.3	1.8	2.4	2.4
-2.2	8	Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus	-2.5	-0.8	0.0	0.0
139.1	9	**Funds Available**	**145.5**	**151.5**	**156.1**	**159.4**
130.3	10	Base Budget	133.1	141.1	145.5	149.2
1.7	11	Pay inflation	3.3	2.7	2.7	2.7
0.7	12	Contract inflation and non pay inflation	2.0	1.4	1.4	1.4
1.4	13a	Modelled growth	5.2	3.1	3.1	3.1
	13b	Cost of ASC reforms	0.0	1.8	0.6	0.0
0.8	14	Investment in Council Strategy priorities	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.5
0.0	15	Investment due to Covid-19	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
1.2	16	Other investment	1.4	1.1	0.2	0.2
0.5	17	Increase in capital financing cost	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
-3.7	18	Savings and income requirement	-5.5	-6.6	-5.4	-5.2
133.1	19	**Annual Budget Requirement**	**141.1**	**145.5**	**149.2**	**152.4**
3.7	20	One off investments	2.8	0.5	0.1	0.1
6.5	21	Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.0
143.3	22	**Budget Requirement**	**150.5**	**152.8**	**156.2**	**159.5**
-2.0	23a	Use of reserves to support one off investment	-1.9	-0.5	-0.1	-0.1
	23b	Use of Covid Reserve	-0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
	23c	Use of Transformation Reserve	-0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
	23d	Use of reserves to support 22/23 budget gap	-0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
-2.2	24	Use of Collection Fund and Business Rates reserves	-1.4	-0.8	0.0	0.0
139.1	25	**Budget Requirement after use of reserves**	**145.5**	**151.5**	**156.1**	**159.4**
		£10k roundings may apply				

4.2 The MTFP at 4% highlights the need for cost base reductions of £22.8m over the next four years and is based upon a number of assumptions which are considered below.

Figure 1.2

Ref	Item	Commentary
1a	Council Tax Income	This is the amount of Council Tax (excluding the ASC precept, see below) raised. A 1% change in the Council Tax base[1] or Council Tax levied equals approximately £1m. Council Tax provides 65% of the Council's funding excluding fees and charges (73% with the ASC precept). Any increase of this number above 2% must be the subject of a public referendum.
1b	Adult Social Care Precept	A specific element of Council Tax, with a maximum increase of 4% allowed for 2022-23, to help provide funds for Adult Social Care. It has been assumed the ASC precept is set at a maximum of 1% but no announcements have been made form Government on the future of the precept beyond 2022-23 other than an assumption that 1% will be allowed throughout the MTFS period.
2	Retained Business Rates	The Council collects £93m of business rates, and are allowed to retain some of this through a Government controlled scheme. The amount left over for WBC after payments to the Government is £24m. If business rates increase through new growth in the value of business rates, the Council retains approximately 25%, and 100% of all renewable energy schemes. In 2023-24 there is an expected reset of the business rates baseline which will reduce the amount of retained business rates the Council receives. This line shows the amount of retained business rates after an expected transitional fund is provided – see scenario planning for a 'hard' business rates reset.
3a	Additional Government Covid funding	This is non-ringfenced Government funding for Covid-19 costs in respect of 2022-23 – primarily in respect of Adult Social care and leisure costs.
3b	Services Grant	One off grant in the LG Finance Settlement in 2022-23. It is assumed this level of funding will continue although by other routes.
4	New Homes Bonus/other grants	The New Homes Bonus is a scheme from the Government since 2010 that allows Councils to keep the equivalent band D Council Tax on all additional homes built in the district for one year in 2022-23..
5	Lower Tier Services grant	Grant, non ring-feneced, created in 2021-22.
6	ASC BCF / I-BCF ring-fenced funding	This is the Adult Social Care (ASC) Better Care Fund (BCF) or Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF). This income is exactly matched by expenditure later in the MTFS and is ring-fenced to support the integration of care services with NHS partners.
7	Social Care Grants	In 2020-21 Government provided additional grant funding. This grant funding has been boosted for 2021-22.

[1] the amount of properties in the district adjusted for the Council Tax Reduction scheme and discounts

Ref	Item	Commentary
8	Collection Fund	This is the surplus or deficit on 2021-22 Council Tax and business rates income budget versus the expected actual income. Councils do not account for this in the year it occurred, but in the subsequent year. This has been spread over three years in line with the Government requirement due to Covid-19 support.
9	Funds available	Total non-ring-fenced income available, excluding fees and charges.
10	Base budget	The budget from the previous year including £350m expenditure, £190m ring-fenced grant income and £30m income from fees and charges.
11	Pay inflation	Increased costs due to any pay awards (2% assumption 2022/23), increased employer pension costs and incremental pay changes. It should be noted that inflation looks to be much higher in 2022-23 than the Bank of England's assumed rate of 2% but then is expected from 2023-24 to fall back to this level
12	Contract inflation	The amount of funds set aside for key budgets that have a contractual inflation element; the most significant being the Waste PFI (Private Finance Initiative).
13	Modelled budget growth	Increases to demand led services through estimated increases in client numbers and/or complexity.
14	Investment in Council Strategy priorities	Funding investment to deliver the Council Strategy.
15	Investment – Covid-19	Ongoing future financial pressures relating to the impact of the Covid-19.
16	Investment in other priorities	Investment to ensure the delivery of core services.
17	Increase in capital financing costs	The revenue funding for additional borrowing that supports the delivery of the Capital Strategy.
18	Savings and income requirement	Items that reduce cost via the themes identified.
19	Annual budget requirement	Sub-total of the above.
20	One off investments	Additional costs that net off the Covid-19 income in line 3 and other one off investments.
21	ASC BCF / iBCF funding	Expenditure that equals the income from this funding source in line 6 above.
22	Budget requirement	Sub-total of the above.
23	Use of Reserves	Use of any earmarked or unallocated reserves to support future budgets.
24	Use of collection fund and business rates reserve	Cost of the deficit highlighted in line 8 above.
25	Budget requirement	The new budget that equates to the funds available in line 9.

4.3 The MTFS considers investment as well as savings. The latter is discussed in further detail below but, importantly, the MTFS does have investment set aside over the next four years of in excess of £22m. This includes a wide range of areas and remain in line with the Council Strategy ambitions – i.e. investment to achieve the strategy, continue to build on our strengths and investment in infrastructure to deliver the Council Strategy and other supporting strategies.The savings place for the MTFS is based on the model below:

Figure 1.3

4.4 The model has been considered to drive different strands of activity and reflect that are a variety of different ways of delivering a long term balanced budget. The Council has moved to a more outcomes based budgeting approach for this MTFS.

4.5 Below is a summary of the five key themes and some of the proposals that are included in 2022-23 budget and that are being considered for future financial years. For years beyond 2023-24 worked up proposals will be required for future years and incorporated into the annual budget for that financial year. There is a gap between proposals at present and the total savings requirement in the MTFS, but this highlights that proposals are being considered in advance of their requirement to ensure greater medium term financial planning. At present there is a requirement of £22.8m of which £11.8m has been highlighted in proposals for future budgets.

Cost Avoidance - £2.3m

The projects involving, for example, intervening in service demand early to reduce future modelled costs. This is particularly evident in Adult and Children Social Care where the modelled budget line can be reduced through interventions that either avoid anticipated costs or provide alternative service arrangements at no cost to the Council.

Income Generation - £0.9m

Either new income generating opportunities or through increasing additional revenue from existed income sources from fees and charges.

Service Transformation - £1.4m

Opportunities to transform how services are provided by the Council. Key elements included in this are digital opportunities so that more services are available for those who want to use them online and out of core office hours. The Council is also looking at the physical location of its offices and opportunities to transform how services are delivered and from where to improve customer service and deliver financial savings.

Service Reform - £0.9m

This element is focussed on the improved efficiency and effectiveness of existing services and where incremental adaptations can be made so that they are delivered at a lower cost. Historically, this has been an area of success for the Council but as each year occurs, the scale of the opportunities reduce.

Disinvestment - £0.0m

This is the removal of an existing service or a reduction in the level of service provided without a compensating transformation. This will be the area that the Council prioritises last, but does have to be considered with all other options depending on the overall funding position.

Reserves - £5m

Reserves have been set aside to support the profiling of savings in the MTFS and the delivery of Council Strategy outcomes. The deployment of these reserves will depend on the outcomes of the fair funding review, but they are held to ensure that there is a lesser requirement to make immediate and significant revenue budget changes that would make a deterioration in service delivery without a longer term consideration.

Use of Reserves to support the 2022/23 Budget	**£m**
Covid Reserve	0.7
Transformation Reserve	0.5
Collection Fund Reserves/General Fund	1.4
Council Strategy Reserve	0.2
Outcomes Based Budgeting Reserve	0.5
General Reserve	1.3
Other Reserves	0.4
Total	**5.0**

4.6 It is also important for the MTFS to consider the different scenarios that relate to the MTFP. Appendix A highlights the detail behind these and is summarised below:

Figure 1.4: Scenario planning

Scenario	Best / highest case	Financial impact	Worst Case	Financial impact
Council Tax base changes	1.25% growth p.a.	£0.8m p.a.	0% growth from 2022-25	£0.7m p.a.
Council Tax referendum levels	3%	£1m p.a. from 23/24	0%	£2m p.a. from 23/24
ASC precept	3%	£2m p.a. from 23/24	0%	£1m p.a. from 23/24
Business Rates reset	No reset – keep retaining growth	£1.3m in year 1	Full reset – no transition	£5m drop from 2023-24
Fair Funding review	Additional funding	£3m increase over MTFS	Significant redistribution	£9m loss over the MTFS linked to BRates reset
New Homes Bonus replacement	Replaced to the 2022-23 budgeted level	None	Removal in full with no replacement	£1.2m p.a.
Inflation and pay award	0%	£3.7m p.a.	3% increase	£3m
Capital financing costs	Rates drop by 0.25%	tbc – gilt rates dependent	Increased rates of 1%	£0.2m

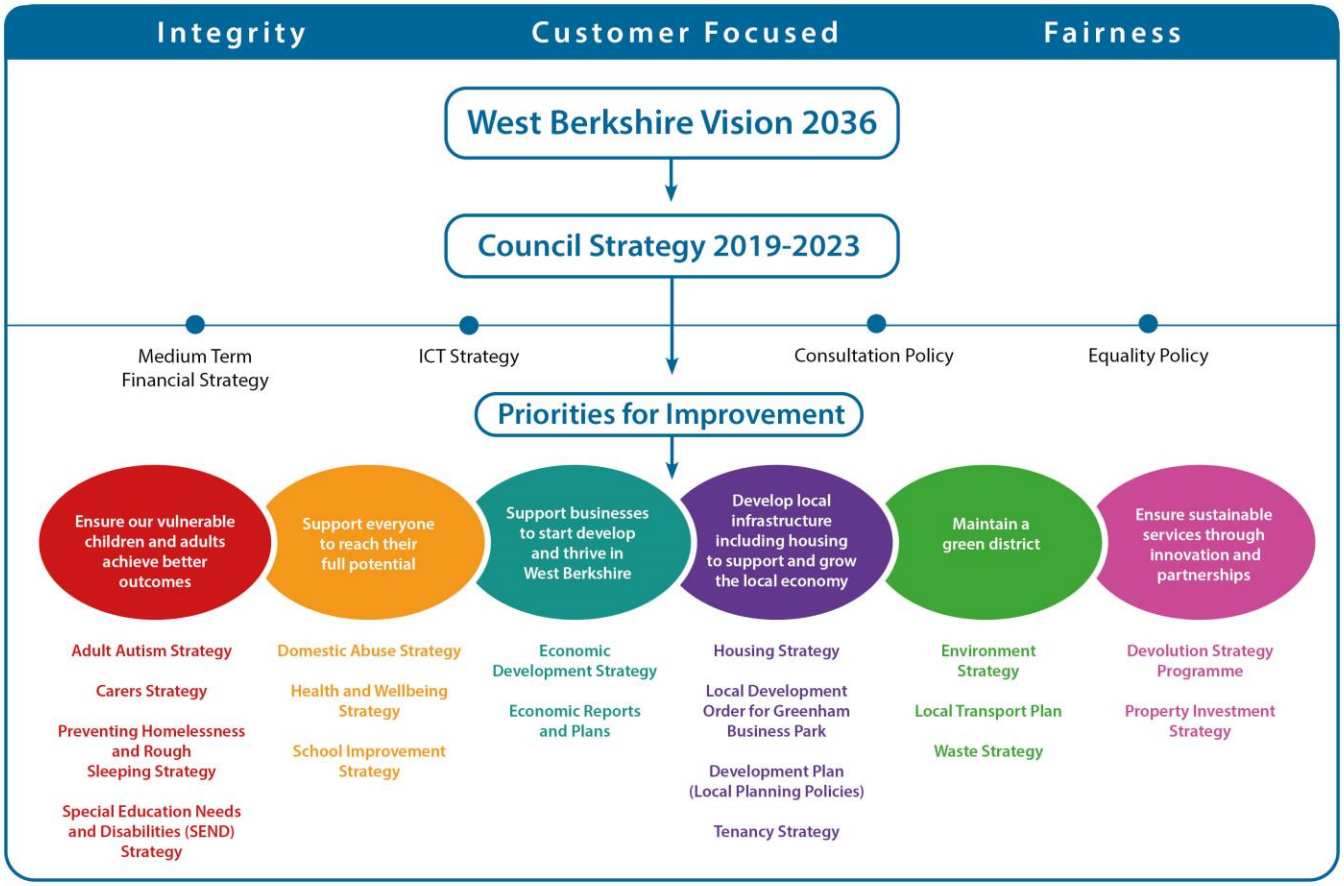
5. Priorities

5.1 The overarching priorities of the MTFS are:

- To ensure a balanced financial position over the medium term
- To ensure that there are sufficient resources to deliver the Council Strategy
- To enable longer term decision making by providing financial planning over a 4 year timeframe

6. Actions

6.1 Unlike other strategies that have a clear action plan, the MTFS is slightly different in that it provides an over-arching view of the financial position and the actions to deliver the strategy are contained in other Council strategies – see interaction below:



6.2 Key actions to take place though include:

- Review of fair funding outcome and future of business rates
- Further savings proposals for years 2 to 4 of the MTFS
- Further review of reserves to highlight further areas to support the MTFS where required
- Investment in preventative work to support long term cost recovery or avoidance where demonstrable

7. Implementation

7.1 The MTFS is implemented through the revenue budget for the year ahead (2022-23) as well through the oversight of the Budget Board, an internal board at the Council, which considers changes to the financial planning assumptions as well as future options for delivering the MTFS.

7.2 The MTFS also provides a steer for officers on the approach to take and the themes articulated above will help to shape future budgets.

8. Conclusion

8.1 There remains significant uncertainty over future years within the MTFS caused by a variety of factors, including the macro economic position due to Covid-19, the local economic impact from covid-19, and Government funding reforms due from 2023-24. To help meet the challenge of this uncertainty, the Council has a balanced

budget proposed for 2022-23 and a range of savings options from 2023-26 that are being developed. Though these do meet the entire savings requirement, the Council does have reserves set aside to help the profiling of budgets as to ensure that immediate impacts of any of severe funding reductions can be met to enable the Council to deliver the Council Strategy.

Glossary

None

Appendices

Appendix A – Scenario planning

Other relevant documentation

Previous Medium Term Financial Strategies
Accompanying budget papers for 2022-23
Local Government Finance Settlement 2022-23 (MHCLG)

Appendix A – Scenario planning

The below sets out some of the potential changes on the specific lines of the MTFP – all of these are estimates. The amounts show the cumulative position over the MTFS (4 years).

Item	Base Case	Best Case	Worst Case	Commentary
Council Taxbase growth	0.21% growth 21/22, 1.5% 22/23 and 0.6% growth thereafter	1.25% growth p.a from 2022/23 = **£2.4m increase**	0% p.a. from 2022/23 = **£2.2m drop**	Historic estimates have been above the actual build rate of properties. Covid-19 has provided a lag in the speed of house building
Council Tax referendum levels	1.99%	3% = **£3.6m increase**	0% = **£7m drop**	Level of Council Tax increases allowed before requiring a referendum
ASC precept	3% 22/23 1% thereafter	3% = **£7.3m increase**	0% = **£3.5m drop**	Allowable level of ASC precept
Business Rates growth	0% growth	1% growth = £0.23m increase	5% fall = £1.1m drop	Estimates - as depends on previous year scheme outturns and interaction with the collection fund position
Business Rates reset	Reset with transitional period	No reset, retain growth = **£6.8m increase over MTFS**	Full reset, no transition **= £4m + p.a. drop from 2022-23**	
Fair funding review	Reduction in net income with transitional impact	More funding applied to the Council **= £3m increase**	Over MTFS period = **£9m drop**	Scheduled in for 2023-24 but has been delayed for number of years. Consultation expected in Spring 2022 on principles.
New Homes Bonus replacement	£1.2m per year	Replaced to 2021/22 budget level = **£0m**	Not replaced **= £3.6m**	
Inflation & pay award	Various % inflation; 2% pay each year	0% inflation = **£3.7m benefit p.a.**	3% increase = **£3m additional cost p.a.**	Based on various inflationary impacts across the Council.
Savings proposals	100% achieved	10% over achieve = **£2.2m benefit**	20% not achieved **= £4.4m cost**	Historically we have a good track record of achieving over 80% of savings
Covid-19 further outbreak at scale of Spring 2020	Not assumed	None	Further loss of income of @**2m**	Depends on Government support, behaviour of individuals for car parking etc
Interest rates changes and PWLB impact	Slow increase per investment strategy	A fall of 1% in PWLB = **£0.2m**	An increase of 1% in PWLB = **£0.2m**	Interest Rates are at lows ates of 0.25%.

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Capital Strategy, Financial Years 2022/23 to 2026/27

Committee considering report:	Council
Date of Committee:	03.03.2022
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Ross Mackinnon
Date Portfolio Member sent/agreed report:	12.1.2022
Report Author:	Shannon Coleman-Slaughter
Forward Plan Ref:	C4126

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To outline the Capital Strategy covering financial years 2022/23 – 2026/27 and the supporting funding framework, providing a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

1.2 Decisions made on capital and treasury management have financial consequences for the Council for many years into the future. Decisions are therefore subject to both a national regulatory framework and to local policy framework.

2 Recommendations

2.1 That Council is requested to adopt the following recommendations:

(a) That the Capital Strategy and supporting Capital Programme for the period 2022/23 – 2026/27 is approved (appendix A).

(b) That the supporting Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (appendix B) for the period 2022/23 – 2026/27 is approved.

(c) That the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy (appendix C) for the period 2022/23 – 2026/27 is approved.

(d) That the proposed CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) Bids for inclusion in the Capital programme 2022/23 – 2026/27 (appendix D) is approved.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	£112.8 million of Council debt funding has been applied to the Capital Strategy and supporting programme of work. This level of investment requires an annual increase in the revenue budget in order to satisfy capital financing requirements. The required annual increases are reflected in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Included within the strategy is £2.2 million of funding allocated for projects at the feasibility stage, inclusive of £868k of funding for the London Road Industrial Estate development (LRIE). Projects at the feasibility stage are currently viewed as capital project forming part of the capital programme and overarching capital strategy. However, if a project does not result in the creation of a capital asset, in accordance with capital regulations set out within the CIPFA Code of Practice the full sum of capital invested will be written back to revenue and be funded through the Council's General Fund. On this basis £2.2 million of proposed expenditure over the life of the proposed Capital Strategy is a potential risk against the General Fund reserve.
Human Resource:	An average of £3.5 million of the Council's establishment is funded directly by the Capital Programme per annum. Salaries are funded from capital where it can be demonstrated that staff directly support and help to deliver the capital programme.
Legal:	The Capital Strategy contains Prudential Indicators that are mandatory under the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. When the final programme has been approved by Council, the budget managers will have the authority to let contracts for the schemes included in the approved programme in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules of Procedure.
Risk Management:	£112.8 million of the programme over the next five financial years is proposed to be funded from external borrowing. Assumptions as to the anticipated cost of external borrowing are aligned to current guidance as set out by the Bank of England and potential interest rate increases. Significant / unanticipated rises in borrowing costs over and above those assumed within the budget setting will impact on the affordability of the overall programme. The proposed programme also relies on £102 million of external funding. External funding relating to later years of the programme has

	yet to be confirmed, programme priorities and the availability of funding will therefore need to be kept under review. The long term impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and resource availability post Brexit are creating issues within existing supply chains. The capital programme is impacted through these economic developments with inflation impacts on existing contracts and contracts subject to negotiation/finalisation. Currently, specifically in respect of long term maintenance contracts, the level of service being supplied for existing contracts is being reduced by third party suppliers. Over the course of the programme there is a high likelihood that inflation and scarcity of resource will create additional financial pressures.			
Property:	The proposed Capital Programme will provide funding for maintenance and improvements to a number of existing Council buildings.			
Policy:	The Capital Strategy is closely aligned to the delivery of the Council Strategy through enabling key projects to be financed and delivered.			
	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?				Any impacts have been assessed and publicly consulted upon where necessary
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?				Any impacts have been assessed and publicly consulted upon where necessary. For example, Disabled Facilities Grants are included as part of this programme.

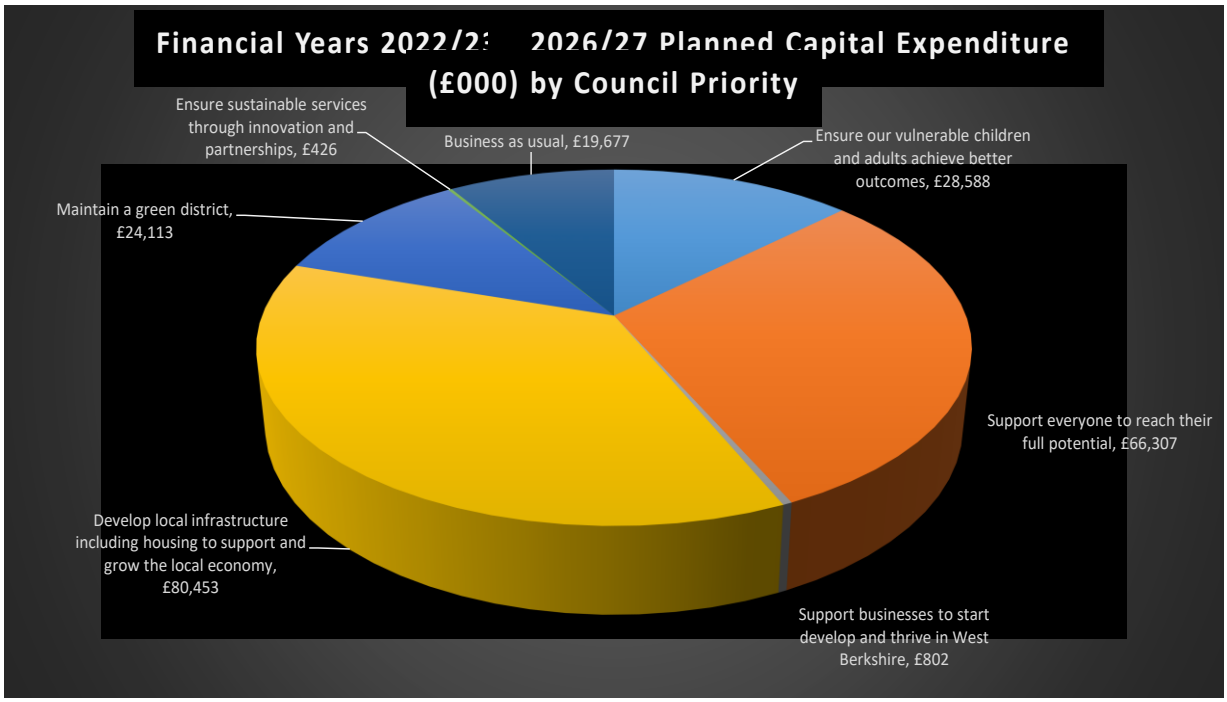
Environmental Impact:	X			There are a number of schemes included to enhance the environmental impact of the Council, for example carbon management, walking and cycling infrastructure and solar energy generation.
Health Impact:	X			Proposals included to encourage more walking and cycling as well as use of the district's environment.
ICT Impact:	X			Opportunities included in the programme for IT projects to enhance efficiency.
Digital Services Impact:	X			Opportunities included in the programme for improved digital access to services.
Council Strategy Priorities:	X			The planned programme is aligned to supporting the Council Strategy. Further details are included in section 5.14 of this report.
Core Business:	X			The planned programme provides funding for projects focused on improving business as usual functions. Section 5.14 details the level of funding supporting core business as usual functions.
Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	Joseph Holmes, Executive Director, S151 Officer Ross Mackinnon, Portfolio Holder for Finance Capital Strategy Group			

4 Executive Summary

4.1 This capital strategy report gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure and capital financing activity contribute to the provision of local public services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. Decisions made regarding capital and capital financing will have financial consequences for the Council for many years into the future. They are therefore subject

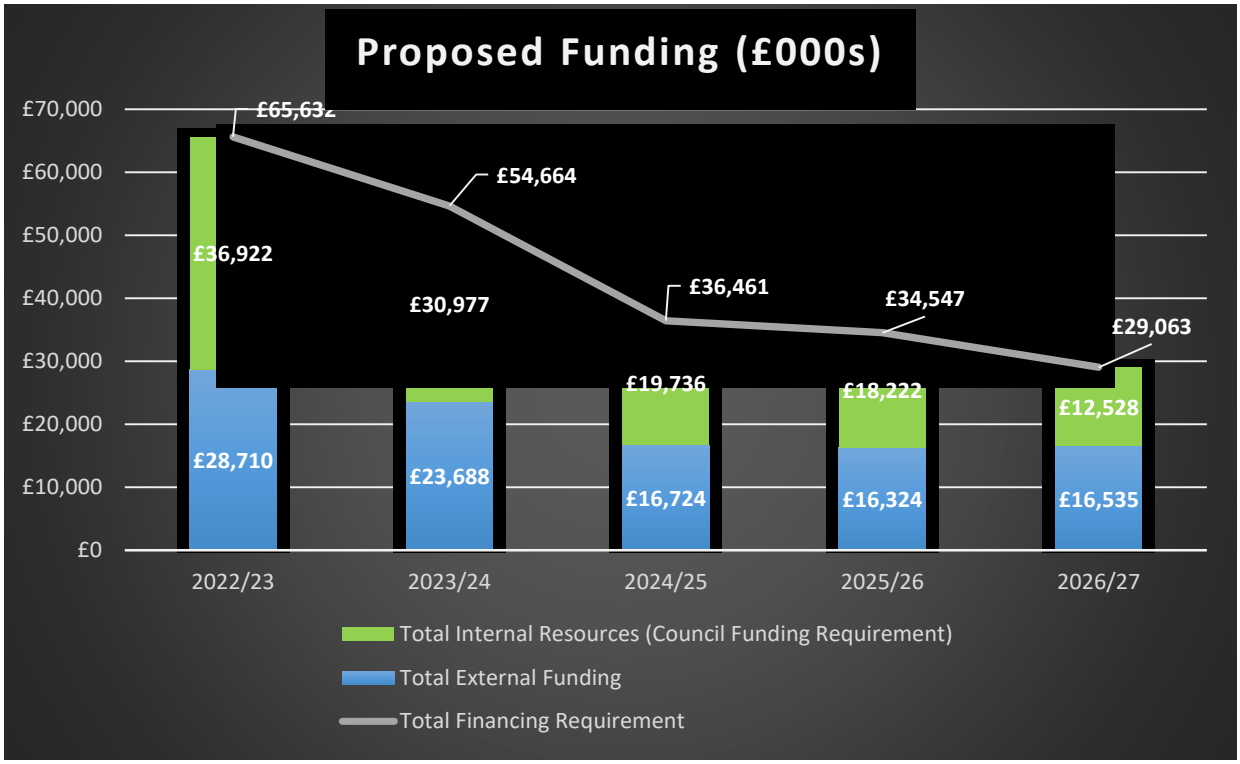
to both a national regulatory framework and to local policy framework, summarised in this report.

4.2 Despite ongoing pressure on the revenue budget, the Council continues to make significant investment in the future of West Berkshire through its Capital Programme. The Capital Strategy and supporting Capital Programme are aligned to the Council Strategy. Appendix A provides a detailed breakdown of the Capital Programme



4.3 Through the application of the strategy and supporting programme, the Council has sought to build on its strengths, focusing on social care, education and enhancements to local infrastructure (including access to superfast broadband, better road and flood prevention and alleviation). The Council has also focused on enhancing the district's leisure provision offering, with significant capital investment in leisure centre facilities and playing pitch provision across the district. In response to the Climate Emergency, the Council has allocated significant funding into projects over the life of the Capital Strategy with a view to enhancing sustainability and assisting the Council's long term objective to move to net zero by 2030.

4.4 The proposed expenditure on the Capital Programme over the five year period amounts to £220.4 million. Proposed expenditure is financed, either from external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Council's own resources (revenue budget, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing, leasing and Private Finance Initiative). The planned financing of the programme is broken down as follows:



4.5 The proposed programme relies on £102 million of external funding (i.e. grants, S106 and Community Infrastructure Levy). The level of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) included in the financing of the programme are forecasts. Regular monitoring of actual levels received and those forecast to be received will be undertaken and reported to Capital Strategy Group (CSG), and the capital programme adjusted accordingly if necessary.

4.6 £112.8 million of debt financing, i.e. external borrowing is required to support delivery of the Capital Programme. Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans, repayments of loans and Minimum Revenue Provision payments are charged to revenue, this is referred to as capital financing. In order to effectively deliver the planned programme and align to the Council Strategy, the revenue capital financing budget has been increased in order to accommodate increases in capitalised salary costs, inflation on contracts and new projects.

4.7 Assumptions as to the anticipated cost of external borrowing are set out in the Council's Investment and Borrowing Strategy, any significant / unanticipated rises in borrowing costs over and above those assumed within the budget setting will impact on the affordability of the overall programme. A particular risk to the capital programme is the long term impacts of both the Covid 19 pandemic and resource availability post Brexit creating issues within existing supply chains. The capital programme is impacted through these economic developments with inflationary impacts on existing contracts and future contracts subject to renegotiation and price increases. Currently, specifically in respect of long term maintenance contracts relating to infrastructure projects, the level of service being supplied for agreed existing contract is being reduced by third party suppliers in order to maintain current pricing levels. Over the course of the programme there is a risk that inflation and scarcity of resource will create additional financial pressures on the proposed programme.

4.8 Due to the very long-term nature of capital expenditure and financing and the revenue budget implications of expenditure incurred, the Executive Director of Resources (s151 Officer) is satisfied that the proposed capital programme is prudent, affordable and sustainable. The Council's Minimum Revenue Provision policy (MRP) is included in Appendix B.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

5.1 Capital expenditure is where the Council spends money on assets, such as property or vehicles that will be used for more than one year. The Prudential Code, requires the Council to look at capital and investment plans in light of overall organisation strategy and resources to ensure that decisions are made with sufficient regard to the long term financing implications and risks to the Council. To demonstrate compliance, the code sets out a number of indicators which are reviewed within this report and in the Council's Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2022/23.

5.2 Prudential Indicator: Estimates of Capital Expenditure. Over the period of the Capital Strategy (2022/23 – 2026/27), the Council is planning capital expenditure of £220.4 million as summarised in the table below.

Planned Capital Expenditure	2022/23 Budget £000s	2023/24 Budget £000s	2024/25 Budget £000s	2025/26 Budget £000s	2026/27 Budget £000s	Totals Budget £000s
People Directorate	£26,341	£23,655	£18,526	£16,921	£11,108	£96,551
Place Directorate	£28,222	£17,989	£11,797	£12,122	£12,187	£82,318
Resources Directorate	£5,938	£4,163	£3,538	£3,004	£3,088	£19,730
Total Expenditure on Operational Assets	**£60,501**	**£45,807**	**£33,861**	**£32,047**	**£26,383**	**£198,599**
Projects at Feasibility Stage	£1,616	£567	£100	£0	£0	£2,283
Invest to Save Schemes	£2,725	£8,000	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£18,225
Capital Investments - New Assets	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Capital Investments (Commercial Property) - Existing Assets	£790	£290	£0	£0	£180	£1,260
Total Planned Capital Expenditure	**£65,632**	**£54,664**	**£36,461**	**£34,547**	**£29,063**	**£220,366**

Note: Projects at Feasibility Stage - these are projects agreed in principle but further investigative works are required. Should the project not result in creation of a capital assets, project costs will be charged back to revenue.

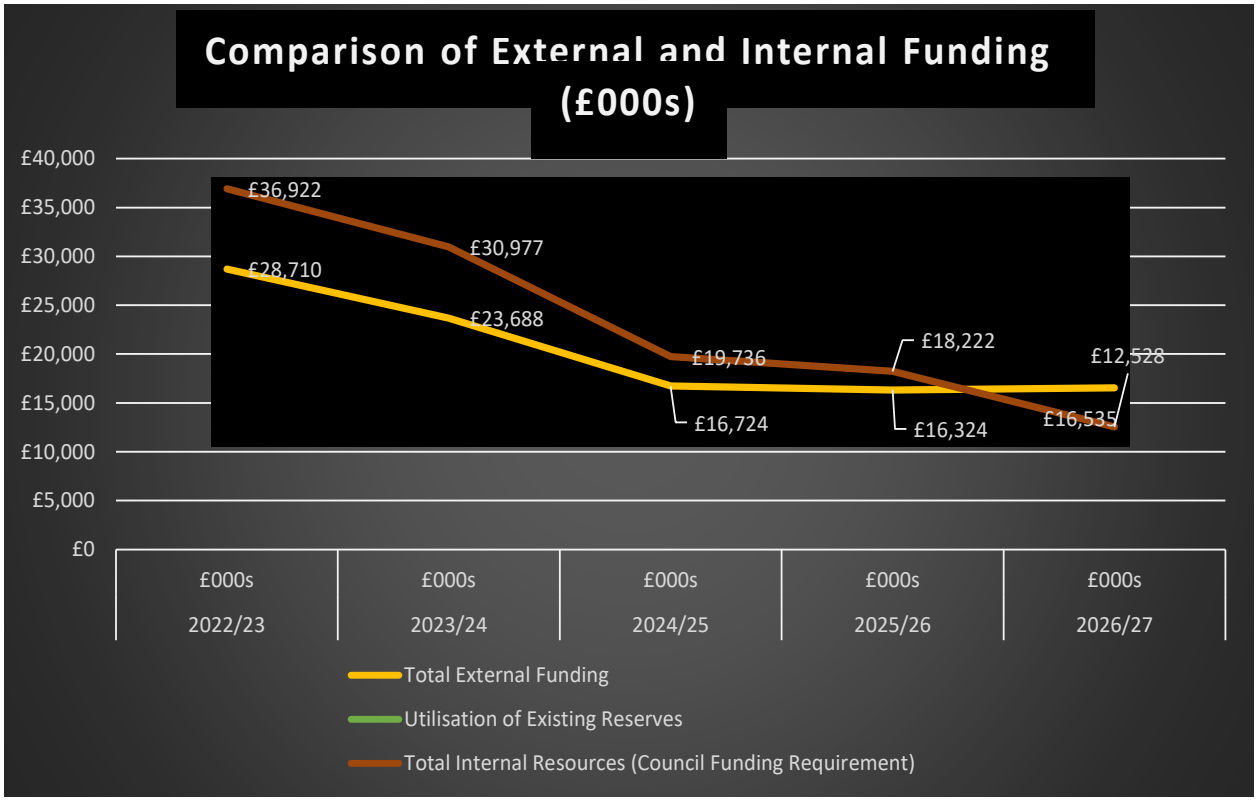
Background

5.3 All capital expenditure must be financed and hence the size of the Capital Programme is determined by the amount of funding the Council can afford either from external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Council's own resources (revenue budget, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing, leasing and Private Finance Initiative). The planned financing of the Capital Programme expenditure is as follows:

Capital Financing	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Proposed Funding 22/23 - 26/27
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
External Grants	£17,475	£14,040	£8,372	£8,372	£8,372	£56,631
Section 106 (s106)	£1,859	£2,941	£2,992	£5,889	£5,957	£19,638
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	£9,376	£6,706	£5,360	£2,064	£2,206	£25,712
Total External Funding	**£28,710**	**£23,688**	**£16,724**	**£16,324**	**£16,535**	**£101,981**
Application of Capital Receipts	£4,635	£866	£0	£0	£0	£5,501
Council Borrowing	£32,287	£30,111	£19,736	£18,222	£12,528	£112,884
Total Internal Resources (Council Funding Requirement)	**£36,922**	**£30,977**	**£19,736**	**£18,222**	**£12,528**	**£118,385**
Total Financing	**£65,632**	**£54,664**	**£36,461**	**£34,547**	**£29,063**	**£220,366**

5.4 The level of external grant funding, Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy included in the financing of the programme are forecasts. The Council assumes that on average £4 million per annum is received in Community Infrastructure Levy and this is applied where applicable to projects that support the Local Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP). Section 106 in contrast is a dwindling funding stream with allocations predominately relating to past payments and ongoing projects where funding has been receipted and is held by the Council. Regular monitoring of actual levels received and those forecast to be received will be undertaken and reported to Capital Strategy Group (CSG), and the capital programme adjusted accordingly if necessary.

5.5 £118.4 million of Council resources are forecast to be applied to the programme of works over the life of the Capital Strategy. £5.5 million relate to existing capital receipts held within the Council's reserves. £1 million is to be funded through additional borrowing, i.e. debt funding.



5.6 Debt is only a temporary source of finance, since loans and leases must be repaid, and this is therefore replaced over time by other financing, usually from revenue which is known as minimum revenue provision (MRP) / loans fund repayments. Planned MRP / repayments over the Capital Strategy are as follows:

Provision for Replacement of Debt (MRP)	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Forecast	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Operational Assets	£6,359	£7,133	£8,225	£9,431	£10,289	£10,375
Waste Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	£278	£295	£313	£333	£353	£374
Commercial Property	£649	£666	£683	£701	£720	£739
Total Provision	**£7,286**	**£8,094**	**£9,221**	**£10,465**	**£11,362**	**£11,488**

5.7 The Council applies MRP on an annuity basis, further details supporting the MRP calculation are detailed within the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy in appendix B.

5.8 The Council's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP / loans fund repayments and capital receipts used to replace debt. The CFR is expected to increase by £24.2 million during 2022/23. Based on the above figures for expenditure and financing, the Council's estimated CFR is as follows:

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	31.3.2021	31.3.2022	31.3.2023	31.3.2024	31.3.2025	31.3.2026	31.3.2027
	Actual	Forecast	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Expenditure on Operational Assets	£37,197	£41,317	£62,117	£46,374	£33,961	£32,047	£26,383
Expenditure on Invest to Save Schemes	£0	£615	£2,725	£8,000	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500
Less Minimum Revenue Provision (exc PFI and Commercial Property)	(£6,188)	(£6,359)	(£7,133)	(£8,225)	(£9,431)	(£10,289)	(£10,375)
Less Minimum Revenue Provision on Waste PFI	(£722)	(£278)	(£295)	(£313)	(£333)	(£353)	(£374)
Less Government Grants and Other Contributions	(£29,693)	(£22,725)	(£28,710)	(£23,688)	(£16,724)	(£16,324)	(£16,535)
Less Applied Capital Receipts	(£1,073)	(£863)	(£4,635)	(£866)	£0	£0	£0
Total General Fund Items	**(£479)**	**£11,706**	**£24,068**	**£21,283**	**£9,973**	**£7,580**	**£1,599**
Expenditure on Capital Investments	£22	£331	£790	£290	£0	£0	£180
Less Minimum Revenue Provision (Commercial Property)	(£450)	(£649)	(£666)	(£683)	(£701)	(£720)	(£739)
Less Applied Capital Receipts	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total Capital Investments	**(£428)**	**(£318)**	**£124**	**(£393)**	**(£701)**	**(£720)**	**(£559)**
Total Capital Financing Requirement	**(£907)**	**£11,389**	**£24,193**	**£20,889**	**£9,272**	**£6,860**	**£1,040**
Opening CFR	£274,057	£273,150	£284,538	£308,731	£329,620	£338,892	£345,752
Closing CFR	£273,150	£284,538	£308,731	£329,620	£338,892	£345,752	£346,792

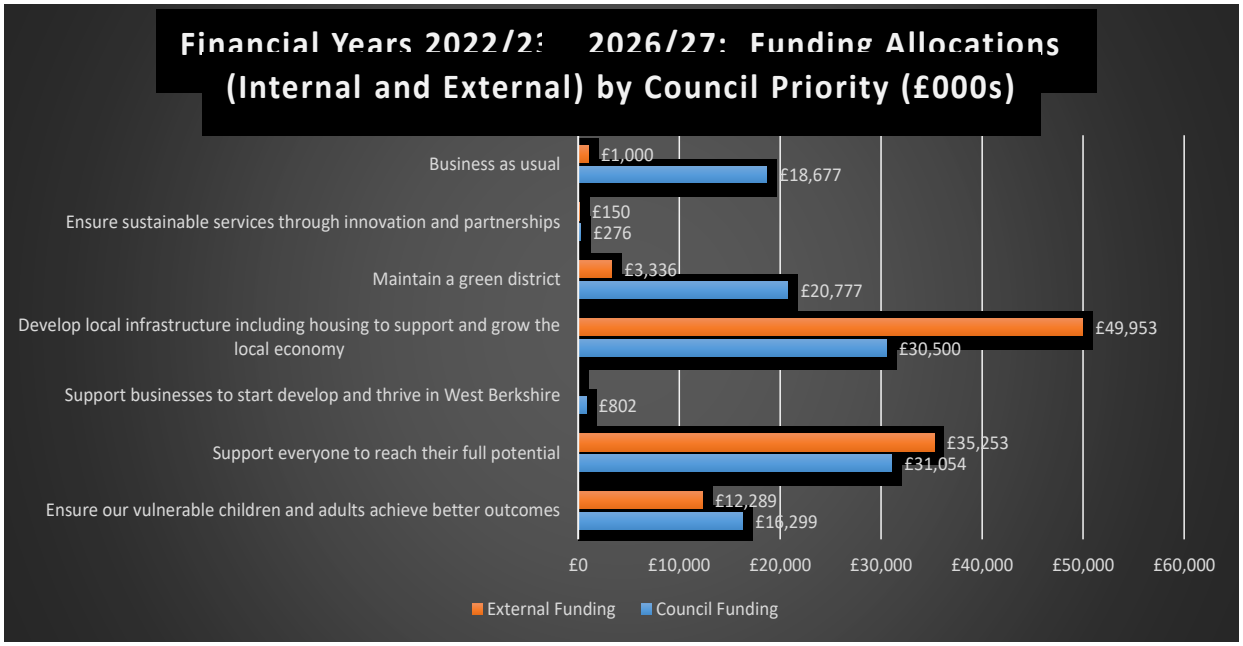
5.9 The Council's main objectives when borrowing are to achieve a low but certain cost of finance while retaining flexibility should plans change in future. These objectives are often conflicting, and the Council therefore seeks to strike a balance between cheap short-term loans and long-term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known but higher. Projected levels of the Council's total outstanding debt (which comprises borrowing, PFI liabilities, and leases) are shown in the table below, compared with the capital financing requirement.

Gross Debt and Capital Financing Requirement	31.3.2021 Actual £000s	31.3.2022 Forecast £000s	31.3.2023 Budget £000s	31.3.2024 Budget £000s	31.3.2025 Budget £000s	31.3.2026 Budget £000s	31.3.2027 Budget £000s
Operational Debt - Existing Loans (Non Commercial Property)	£135,217	£129,609	£124,652	£119,735	£115,003	£110,494	£106,273
Operational Debt - Existing Loans (Commercial Property)	£62,253	£62,253	£62,253	£62,253	£62,253	£62,253	£62,253
Waste PFI	£12,249	£11,483	£10,670	£9,807	£8,892	£7,920	£6,890
Additional Debt from Capital Programme	£0	£0	£22,645	£49,316	£61,743	£71,530	£75,206
Total Debt	**£209,719**	**£203,345**	**£220,220**	**£241,111**	**£247,891**	**£252,197**	**£250,622**
Capital Financing Requirement	**£273,150**	**£284,538**	**£308,731**	**£329,620**	**£338,892**	**£345,752**	**£346,792**

5.10 Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital financing requirement, except in the short-term. As can be seen from the table above, the Council expects to comply with this in the medium term.

Proposals

5.11 The Capital Strategy and supporting Capital Programme propose total gross expenditure of £220.4 million. In respect of the funding of the overall programme, £102 million of funding is forecast to be sourced from a combination of section 106, Community Infrastructure and external grant receipts. The majority of external funding receipted from developers and central government is ring-fenced infrastructure and educational provision. Despite ongoing pressure on the revenue budget, the Council continues to make significant investment in the future of West Berkshire through its Capital Programme. £118.4 million of capital expenditure is proposed to be funded via Council resources, i.e. application of capital receipts and borrowing.



5.12 The Council has sought to build on its strengths, focusing the Capital Strategy on education and enhancements to local infrastructure including:

(a) £52.5 million of investment in Educational facilities across the district, focusing on the provision of school places and enhancements to accessibility.

(b) £38.2 million of investment in local infrastructure, including key enhancement projects to major road networks.

5.13 Further key areas of funding include:

(a) £12.2 million in support of the development of a Leisure Strategy for the district. Investment includes redevelopment of the Northcroft Leisure Centre (both dry side facilities and the Lido), Kennet Leisure Centre and various modernisation projects across the district's current leisure provision offering.

(b) £22.2 million in support of the Council's Environment Strategy in response to the climate emergency, acknowledging the Council's role in facilitating a move to more environmentally sustainable lifestyles and business models across the district. Investment includes developing renewable energy provision and installation of on street electric vehicle charging points across the district.

5.14 Included within the strategy is £2.2 million of projects currently at the feasibility stage, inclusive of £868k of funding for the London Road Industrial Estate (LRIE) development, £868K of leisure enhancement projects and £500k allocated for care development of care home provision. These projects form part of the capital programme and overarching five year Capital Strategy. In respect of expenditure incurred where a project does not result in the creation of a capital asset, in accordance with capital regulations set out within the CIPFA Code of Practice, the full sum of project expenditure will be written back to revenue and be funded through the Council's General Fund provision. Therefore, feasibility and preliminary design works undertaken through application of capital funding are a risk held against future General Fund provision.

5.15 To ensure that capital assets continue to be of long-term use, the Council has an Asset Management Strategy in place. The Strategy seeks to convey both the context of the West Berkshire Council estate and the drivers and deliverables to ensure that Council assets are utilised to their optimum capability, both in delivering quality services and in economic terms, focusing on:

(a) Operational efficiency and effectiveness across the estate with financial efficiency, opportunity to generate income in accordance with related investment strategies, and alignment of the estate with other new or emerging council strategies such as the Housing Strategy 2020 – 2036 and Environment Strategy 2020 – 2030.

(b) Ensuring an efficient estate, continuing to commit to maintaining the condition of assets through the capital programme, developing new income streams through the estate and new opportunities through the 'One Public Estate' programme, the wider Place Making activities, and the devolution of assets to parish and town councils and potential for joint working with partners.

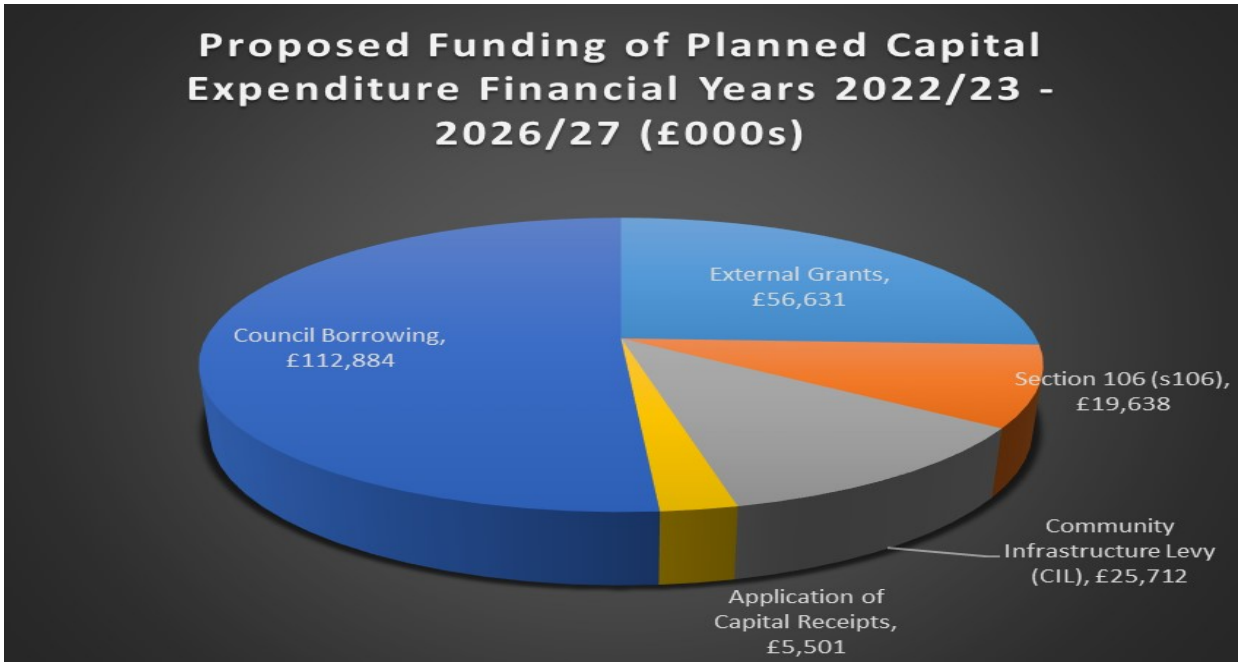
5.16 When a capital asset is no longer needed, it may be sold so that the proceeds, known as capital receipts, can be spent on new assets, repay debt or finance transformation projects. The Council is planning to allocate £5.5 million of existing capital receipts held in reserves in support of the Capital Strategy. The Council is anticipating two new capital receipts over the duration of the proposed Capital Strategy of £669k. The capital receipts are planned to be used to support revenue transformation under the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy in appendix C.

6 Other options considered

6.1 Not applicable

7 Conclusion

7.1 The Capital Strategy proposes £220.4 million of planned capital investment in district wide improvement programme and allocation of resources to make enhancements to the Council's existing business systems in order to deliver long term improvements to services. Funding of planned investment is funded through a combination of internal Council resources (debt financing and capital receipts) and external funding (grants, s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy), 53% of the planned programme is funded through application of Council resources.



7.2 £112.8 million of the programme over the next five financial years is proposed to be funded from external borrowing. Assumptions as to the anticipated cost of external borrowing are aligned to current guidance as set out by the Bank of England and potential interest rate increases. Significant / unanticipated rises in borrowing costs over and above those assumed within the budget setting will impact on the affordability of the overall programme. The proposed programme also relies on £102 million of external funding. External funding relating to later years of the programme has yet to be confirmed, programme priorities and the availability of funding will therefore need to be kept under review.

7.3 Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP / loans fund repayments are charged to revenue, offset by any investment income receivable. The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e. the amount funded from Council Tax, business rates and general government grants. Over the duration of the Capital Strategy the Council has set aside a revenue uplift in the capital financing budget of circa £600k annually. The Council is required to ensure that capital financing is reasonable and affordable in the long term.

Financing Costs as a Percentage of the Revenue Budget	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
Financing Costs - £m	£15.2	£16.4	£17.9	£18.9
Revenue Budget - £m	£150.5	£152.8	£156.2	£159.5
Financing Costs as %	**10.09%**	**10.73%**	**11.47%**	**11.83%**

Note: The Medium Term Financial Strategy covers a four year period to 2025/26 only

7.4 In respect of the economic outlook and potential impacts on the capital programme, the long term impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and resource availability post Brexit are creating issues within existing supply chains. The capital programme is impacted through these economic developments with inflationary impacts on existing contracts and contracts subject to negotiation/finalisation. Currently, specifically in respect of long term maintenance contracts relating to infrastructure projects, the level of service being supplied for agreed existing contract is being reduced by third party suppliers in order to maintain current pricing levels. Over the course of the programme there is a high likelihood that inflation and scarcity of resource will create additional financial pressures on the proposed programme. Due to the very long-term nature of capital expenditure and financing, the revenue budget implications of expenditure incurred in the next few years will extend for up to 50 years into the future. The Executive Director of Resources (s151 Officer) is satisfied that the proposed capital programme is prudent, affordable and sustainable.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – 2022/23 – 2026/27 detailed Capital Programme

8.2 Appendix B – Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

8.3 Appendix C – Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy

8.4 Appendix D - Community Infrastructure Levy Bids for inclusion in the Capital programme 2022/23 – 2026/27

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☐ No: ☒

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

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Document Control

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Version:		**Date Modified:**	
Author:			
Owning Service			

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			

				2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26		2026/27		2022-27
Project No.	Project Title	Description of Project	Council Priority Ref.	Total Planned Expenditure		Total Planned Expenditure		Total Planned Expenditure		Total Planned Expenditure		Total Planned Expenditure		Total Planned Expenditure
1	Occupational Therapy Equipment	Annual provision for essential aids & equipment for vulnerable people.	1	£1,184,170		£1,195,000		£1,206,080		£1,217,380		£1,228,900		£6,031,530
2	Social Services - Planned Maintenance	Maintenance and enhancements of Care Homes and Resource Centres	1	£150,000		£153,750		£157,600		£161,530		£165,590		£788,470
3	Building Work :Fostering	To enable more children to be fostered in West Berkshire	1	£20,000		£20,000		£20,000		£20,000		£20,000		£100,000
4	Education Council Funded Programme	Capital investment to support LA duty under the Childcare Act 2016 to secure sufficient places for the extended entitlement of 30 hours childcare for eligible working parents of 3 and 4 year olds.	2	£55,370		£0		£50,000		£50,000		£50,000		£205,370
5	Additional Places - Secondary Basic Need	Additional primary provision to meet the impact from the Sandleford Park Housing Development.	2	£145,960		£2,159,800		£515,220		£121,140		£0		£2,942,120
6	SEMH/ASD Resourced Provision - Primary	Provision of resourced provision for primary aged pupils with SEMH/ASD to meet demand and reduce pressure on the High Needs Block.	2	£153,360		£1,821,020		£374,140		£58,980		£0		£2,407,500
7	SEMH/ASD Resourced Provision - Secondary	Provision of resourced provision for secondary aged pupils with SEMH/ASD to meet demand and reduce pressure on the High Needs Block.	1	£2,860,070		£1,391,170		£59,050		£0		£0		£4,310,290
8	Calcot Schools Remodelling	The remodelling of accommodation to align with change of PAN to address financial pressures associated with current PAN and deficiencies with current accommodation.	2	£383,850		£2,339,990		£2,722,200		£523,780		£114,960		£6,084,780
9	Wrap around care	Provision of accommodation on school sites to facilitate childcare outside of school hours, via a range of models, that meets these needs of local families and supports school viability.	2	£0		£0		£90,000		£300,000		£300,000		£690,000
10	North Newbury - New primary school	Additional primary provision to meet the impact from the North Newbury Housing Development.	2	£290,970		£2,000,000		£2,731,560		£129,720		£0		£5,152,250
11	Brookfields School - accessibility	Remodelling and refurbishment works to address general; toilet and changing room accessibility and suitability issues.	2	£233,750		£233,750		£12,500		£0		£0		£480,000
12	Project Management - Education	Capital element of the Place Planning & Development Team	2	£301,900		£307,940		£310,670		£319,220		£328,000		£1,567,730
13	Highwood Copse	Provision of a new 1FE Primary school with Nursery class to meet primary basic need across Newbury.	2	£223,330		£0		£0		£0		£0		£223,330
14	Park House - Impact of new housing	Impact at Park House school of additional pupil numbers from Racecourse and Sandleford new housing developments.	2	£386,290		£63,950		£0		£571,710		£4,454,090		£5,476,040
15	Schools Statutory Compliance Surveys	5-year rolling programme to undertake Asbestos, Condition, Fire and Legionella surveys.	2	£39,110		£15,000		£20,000		£20,000		£20,000		£114,110
16	The Willink - Basic Need	To mitigate the impact from secondary basic need and potential further housing developments within the school's catchment area.	2	£67,790		£0		£0		£0		£0		£67,790
17	Speenhamland - 2FE Project	Provision of a nursery class and works to expand and address deficiencies of the Physical Disability Resourced Unit.	2	£157,020		£0		£0		£0		£0		£157,020

18	i-college Alternative Education	Provision of a new accommodation for the iCollege east of area provision to address suitability and sufficiency issues.	2	£1,679,960		£44,510		£0		£0		£0		£1,724,470
19	Parsons Down Rationalisation	Rationalisation of accommodation to align with reduced admission number due to decline in forecast pupil numbers and to create a viable 2FE school.	2	£180,080		£51,800		£1,200		£0		£0		£233,080
20	Aids & Adaptions for special educational needs and disabilities	Provision of special equipment for children with disabilities, including proportion of occupational therapists' time	1	£55,100		£56,610		£58,160		£59,750		£61,380		£291,000
21	Castle Gate - increased capacity	Provision of additional bedrooms and associated support spaces to increase capacity and reduce costs of out of county provision.	1	£0		£36,570		£546,490		£14,060		£0		£597,120
22	Garland School - Nurture Provision	Re-purposing and extension of the on-site caretaker's dwelling to provide a therapeutic support base and facilities for before and after school club provision.	2	£308,760		£3,000		£0		£0		£0		£311,760
23	Downlands Sport Centre - replacement and expansion	Replacement of undersized and poor condition sports hall with suitable and sufficient facilities to meet the needs of increased numbers of pupils at the school.	2	£2,970,240		£80,430		£0		£0		£0		£3,050,670
24	Falkland Primary School - Classroom Replacement	Modular building replacement to address poor condition, poor environmental performance and limited external space.	2	£87,140		£2,572,400		£1,000,000		£75,000		£0		£3,734,540
25	Education - Planned maintenance programme	Rolling maintenance programme formulated for each service using the current condition survey data.	2	£2,280,000		£2,080,000		£2,300,000		£2,350,000		£2,350,000		£11,360,000
26	Home Repair Assist Grant	Grants for emergency home repairs for older/vulnerable people	1	£91,560		£31,250		£51,250		£52,530		£53,850		£280,440
27	Disabled Facilities Grant	Mandatory grant for disabled adaptations, to enable local residents to live independently in their own homes.	1	£1,687,290		£1,699,470		£1,711,960		£1,724,760		£1,737,880		£8,561,360
28	Temp Accommodation Refurbishment	Refurbishment of temporary accommodation	4	£37,500		£37,940		£17,940		£18,390		£18,850		£130,620
29	Playing Pitch Action Plan	Provision to support the development of the Playing Pitch Strategy through provision of additional facilities	4	£4,606,000		£950,000		£0		£0		£0		£5,556,000
30	Refurbishment of Kennet Leisure Centre	Refurbishment of Kennet LC	4	£200,000		£0		£0		£0		£0		£200,000
31	Shaw House. Restoration of disused outbuildings in the gardens.	Restoration of building and development of outdoor cafe to facilitate future revenue streams.	4	£225,000		£150,000		£50,000		£0		£0		£425,000
32	West Berkshire Museum. Reducing the damp in the historic buildings	Review of Cultural Services in 2022 will scope costed options for reducing the damp in the museum buildings.	4	£248,000		£100,000		£0		£0		£0		£348,000

33	West Berkshire Museum. Options for long-term storage of museum collections	Review of Cultural Services in 2022 will scope costed options for improving the storage of museum collections so that they meet the required standards for security and environmental control.	4	£20,000		£150,000		£100,000		£0		£0	£270,000
34	Library Service - self service kiosk replacement	Replacing the current self-service kiosks in libraries when they reach the end of their useful life.	4	£0		£100,000		£0		£0		£0	£100,000
35	Expansion of Berkshire Records Office. Reading	Project to extend the building to increase storage capacity for the county's historic archives. Partner funded with other Berkshire Councils	4	£1,259,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£1,259,000
36	Libraries Book Stock	Replenishing book stock	6	£136,260		£140,000		£0		£0		£0	£276,260
37	Berkshire Records Office Maintenance	Ongoing annual schedule of maintenance to the building and plant. All 6 Berkshire local authorities contribute their share to the Berkshire Records Office.	4	£10,000		£10,000		£10,000		£10,000		£10,000	£50,000
38	Planned maintenance of library buildings	Provision for essential repairs	4	£141,160		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000	£541,160
39	Shaw House Mansion Maintenance	Maintenance Programme as advised by Consultants and under terms of HLF grant (25 year duration)	4	£98,090		£30,000		£30,000		£30,000		£0	£188,090
40	Museum Maintenance & Repair	Maintenance Programme as advised by heritage/conservation contractors and consultants / WBC Conservation Officer and under the terms of the £1.2M Heritage Lottery Fund grant.	4	£159,180		£20,000		£20,000		£0		£20,000	£219,180
41	Core Sites Essential Investment	Capital Investment in Leisure Provision as contractually agreed as part of Parkwood contract.	4	£11,230		£0		£0		£0		£0	£11,230
42	Leisure Centre Compliance & Modernisation	Capital Investment in Leisure Provision required to maintain and enhance existing sites.	4	£396,200		£104,040		£106,120		£108,240		£110,410	£825,010
43	Cultural Services - Planned maintenance programme	Planned Maintenance of Leisure Centres	4	£122,400		£124,850		£127,340		£129,890		£132,490	£636,970
44	Hampstead Norreys Flood Alleviation Scheme	Subject to DEFRA funding - Flood alleviation scheme for Hampstead Norreys.	4	£0		£500,000		£0		£0		£0	£500,000

45	Burger King Junction Improvements	Network capacity improvements at the Burger King Roundabout in Newbury.	4	£0		£440,000		£0		£0		£0		£440,000
46	VMS/Intelligent Traffic Signs	Replace existing and install new variable message signs.	4	£40,000		£460,000		£0		£0		£0		£500,000
47	Kings Road Improvements	Environmental and Traffic Management Improvements to existing road network following completion of the Kings Road Link Road	4	£50,000		£350,000		£0		£0		£0		£400,000
48	Car Park Maintenance	Routine capital maintenance of the Council's public car parks.	4	£15,000		£15,000		£15,000		£15,000		£15,000		£75,000
49	Access Improvements: Visitor Access Improvements	Delivering infrastructure improvements at sites in West Berkshire that will offer improved provision, for able bodied and for those who find access difficult and for people who rely on wheelchairs.	4	£55,430		£55,430		£55,430		£55,430		£55,430		£277,150
50	Environment Strategy - Minor projects and improvements	To develop and deliver a range of projects that will fulfil the aims of the Environment Strategy and the Environment Delivery Plan.	4	£150,000		£150,000		£150,000		£150,000		£150,000		£750,000
51	Village Speed Limits	Assessment and implementation of speed limits resulting from the speed limit review process.	4	£30,000		£30,000		£30,000		£30,000		£30,000		£150,000
52	Accident Reduction Works	Road safety improvements as a result of accident investigations	4	£75,000		£75,000		£75,000		£75,000		£75,000		£375,000
53	Footway Improvements Existing & New	Footway improvement schemes	4	£70,000		£70,000		£70,000		£70,000		£70,000		£350,000
54	Recreational Walk Route	To improve selected pedestrian rights of way in order to increase their recreational value	4	£150,060		£13,890		£13,890		£13,890		£13,890		£205,620
55	Street Lighting	Ongoing capital replacements of lighting columns and lanterns	4	£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£500,000
56	Signing Improvements	Signing improvements in the district.	4	£30,000		£30,000		£30,000		£30,000		£30,000		£150,000

57	Traffic Signal Upgrades	Modernisation and capital maintenance of the Council's traffic signal assets.	4	£440,000		£70,000		£70,000		£70,000		£70,000		£720,000
58	Active Travel Infrastructure	Developing and implementing active travel solutions for West Berkshire	4	£775,000		£640,000		£700,000		£700,000		£700,000		£3,515,000
59	Rights Of Way Volunteer	To undertake rights of way maintenance work by the use of volunteers	4	£2,500		£2,500		£2,500		£2,500		£2,500		£12,500
60	Improvements To Pedestrian Routes	Improve the condition of pedestrian routes	4	£13,890		£13,890		£13,890		£13,890		£13,890		£69,450
61	Disabled Access To Countryside	Improve selected rights of way in order to increase their usability and recreational value for less able users.	4	£45,000		£7,000		£7,000		£7,000		£7,000		£73,000
62	Bridleway Improvement for Pedestrians	To improve selected rideable and cycle able rights of way in order to increase their recreational and/or utilitarian value	4	£13,890		£13,890		£13,890		£13,890		£13,890		£69,450
63	Ridgeway Trail	To maintain the trail at the standard required by Natural England	4	£13,000		£13,000		£13,000		£13,000		£13,000		£65,000
64	Recreational Cycle ways	To improve selected cycle able rights of way in order to increase their recreational and/or utilitarian value.	4	£27,880		£13,880		£13,880		£13,880		£13,880		£83,400
65	Rural Signing	Maintenance & improvement of direction signage on rural rights of way	4	£5,270		£5,270		£5,270		£5,270		£5,270		£26,350
66	Countryside & Environment Capital Salaries	To manage the capital projects the Countryside Service is responsible for under the Local Transport Plan	4	£36,700		£37,400		£37,400		£37,400		£37,400		£186,300
67	Land Drainage	Capital Land Drainage and Flood Risk Management works	4	£400,000		£300,000		£300,000		£300,000		£300,000		£1,600,000
68	Future Programme Development	Assessment and feasibility of works to support bids for grant, S106, CIL, LDF and LTP3.	4	£214,480		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£614,480

69	School Safety Programme	Annual programme of safety improvements in the vicinity of schools.	4	£50,000		£50,000		£50,000		£50,000		£50,000	£250,000
70	Essential Maintenance - Bridges	Capital maintenance of the Council's bridges and other structures.	4	£300,000		£300,000		£300,000		£300,000		£300,000	£1,500,000
71	Preventative Maintenance - Bridges	Routine painting and vegetation clearance from the Council structures to prevent the need for substantive future maintenance.	4	£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000	£500,000
72	Travel Plans (Transport Planning)	Includes transport model and transport policy officer	4	£51,800		£52,800		£52,800		£52,800		£52,800	£263,000
73	Public Transport Infrastructure	Real Time Passenger Information and other public transport infrastructure.	4	£50,000		£50,000		£50,000		£50,000		£50,000	£250,000
74	Highway Improved Programme	Annual Carriageway Treatment Schemes	4	£4,032,970		£3,981,710		£3,981,710		£3,981,710		£3,981,710	£19,959,810
75	Term Maintenance Establishment	Set-up and resources costs for the Term Maintenance contract.	4	£775,500		£775,500		£775,500		£775,500		£775,500	£3,877,500
76	On Street Electrical Charge Point / Decarbonising Transport	Plan and deliver infrastructure for zero emission vehicles (for example placing a requirement on local authorities to allocate 20% of their parking spaces, including on-street, to be converted to electric vehicle charge points by 2025)	5	£289,670		£150,000		£150,000		£500,000		£500,000	£1,589,670
77	Carriageway patching	Annual hand patching programme.	4	£438,000		£438,000		£438,000		£438,000		£438,000	£2,190,000
78	Signs & Road Markings	Annual road sign and road marking replacement programme.	4	£110,000		£110,000		£110,000		£110,000		£110,000	£550,000
79	Capitalised Drainage Maintenance	Annual highway drainage maintenance and improvement work.	4	£175,000		£175,000		£175,000		£175,000		£175,000	£875,000
80	Planned Enhancements	DFT Funded	4	£132,000		£132,000		£132,000		£132,000		£132,000	£660,000
81	Transport Services Fleet Upgrade	Replacement of one fleet minibus each year	5	£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000	£500,000

82	Community Transport	Funding that Community Transport providers can bid for the upkeep of their vehicles. Community Transport providers mainly tend to be voluntary organisations and this funding ensures these essential providers can continue.	6	£50,000		£0		£50,000		£0		£50,000	£150,000
83	Thatcham Nature Discovery	Completely new interpretation space with exhibits to tell visitors about the fascinating history and wildlife of the Kennet valley, the canal and reed beds	4	£125,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£125,000
84	Open Space Improvements	Improvement of Open spaces including Pump Tracks in Goldwell & Linear Parks, improvements to footpaths in Greenham House Gardens, replacement of Snelsmore Common Storage and replacement of Litter and Dog Bins	4	£243,000		£25,000		£25,000		£25,000		£25,000	£343,000
85	Council Carbon Management Plan	Schemes to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in Council buildings, funded from revenue savings from carbon management schemes implemented from 2011/12 to 2013/14	5	£122,070		£52,600		£52,600		£52,600		£52,600	£332,470
86	BBOWT Capital Projects	Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxford Wildlife Trust capital works funded from S106.	5	£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000	£500,000
87	Urban tree fund	Capital required for investigation, design and implementation of urban trees	5	£40,000		£40,000		£40,000		£40,000		£40,000	£200,000
88	Playground Equipment	To refurbish existing children's' play areas that are now reaching the end of their recommended life span to ensure their compliance with relevant modern safety standards	4	£51,880		£140,000		£140,000		£0		£0	£331,880
89	Henwick Worthy Sports Facility	New sports pitch. x 1 possibly 2 pitches if match funding becomes available	4	£175,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£175,000
90	Prevention of Access Works	Measures to prevent undesirable access and occupation of public open spaces.	4	£20,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£20,000
91	Infrastructure Design and Delivery	Annual Salaries for Projects Team - part funded by s.106	4	£1,277,530		£1,277,530		£1,277,530		£1,277,530		£1,277,530	£6,387,650
92	Geographic Information Systems	Funding for the maintenance and development of the Council's GIS infrastructure when the current balance sheet fund has been depleted.	7	£72,730		£80,000		£80,000		£80,000		£80,000	£392,730
93	Corporate IT Replacement	Re-provision of WBC ICT equipment and software (Predominately PCs) on an ongoing basis.	7	£687,980		£685,000		£685,000		£830,000		£840,000	£3,727,980
94	Contact Centre Systems Enhancements	Contact Centre Systems Enhancements	7	£180,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£180,000
95	Upgrade of Print Room	Replace the folding machine/wide format printer and finishing equipment in the print room	7	£25,000		£10,000		£10,000		£0		£0	£45,000
96	Network / App Performance Monitoring	Introduce a network / application performance monitoring tool	7	£20,000		£0		£5,000		£0		£0	£25,000
97	Project Management - ICT	Capitalise proportion of ICT Staff salaries for those who work on Capital projects	7	£452,000		£456,100		£460,210		£464,440		£468,720	£2,301,470
98	VMWare Hardware Refresh	Replace physical servers (hosts) as they reach end of life.	7	£15,000		£100,000		£10,000		£0		£0	£125,000
99	Public Services Network Accreditation Maintenance	Essential security enhancement to maintain compliance with Government Connect requirements.	7	£40,000		£40,000		£40,000		£40,000		£40,000	£200,000
100	Members ICT	Members ICT	7	£80,000		£0		£0		£0		£85,000	£165,000

101	Superfast Broadband	Project Management	4	£280,000	£140,000	£0	£0	£0	£420,000
102	Remote Working Infrastructure Maintenance	Maintenance of WBC's remote working infrastructure (Currently Citrix but may change in future)	7	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£100,000
103	Network Infrastructure (Core Switches)	Replace core switches at end of life	7	£90,000	£0	£0	£0	£30,000	£120,000
104	Network Infrastructure (Wi-Fi Provision)	Increase capacity coverage of Wi-Fi in WBC offices	7	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£30,000	£40,000
105	Planning Service Upgrade	System upgrades for planning systems	7	£11,250	£0	£11,250	£0	£11,250	£33,750
106	Server Windows Licensing	Upgrade Windows Server Operating System to Windows Server 2012(Costs are largely resource to do the work)	7	£75,000	£0	£0	£80,000	£0	£155,000
107	Upgrade Backup Infrastructure	Upgrade / Replace Backup facilities before they reach end of life	7	£15,000	£35,000	£0	£0	£0	£50,000
108	Virtual Private Network Firewall Replacements	IPSEC/ VPN Firewall Replacement	7	£5,000	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£55,000
109	Corporate SAN	Existing Hitachi SAN reaching end of product life.	7	£20,000	£20,000	£150,000	£0	£0	£190,000
110	Telephony Infrastructure (VoIP Corporate Offices)	Migrate telephony from analogue to VoIP	7	£285,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£285,000
111	Maintenance of Disaster Recovery Facility	Replace DR equipment at Turnham's Green when it reaches end of life	7	£100,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£300,000
112	Refresh Multi Functional Device Fleet	Refresh the MFD Fleet as they fail or go end of life	7	£200,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£200,000
113	Corporate Database Server Replacement	Replace the Corporate database server when it goes end of life	7	£85,000	£32,000	£40,000	£20,000	£20,000	£197,000
115	Building Maintenance Total Provision	Annual maintenance provision - will be allocated to individual services in year using Condition Survey data.	7	£388,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£988,000
116	Project Management - Property	Capitation Costs of Property Project Managers	7	£736,820	£751,550	£766,580	£781,910	£797,550	£3,834,410
117	Cond/Asb/Meas Surveys	Condition/Measured Surveys - Annual Programme	7	£38,000	£24,000	£17,000	£10,500	£23,750	£113,250
118	Unallocated Buildings	Planned Maintenance of Other Corporate Buildings PMP	7	£20,000	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£80,000
119	Asbestos - Planned maintenance programme	Health & Safety Compliance	7	£34,000	£8,000	£21,000	£14,000	£26,000	£103,000
120	Corporate Allocation	Contingency for unforeseen capital budget pressures across all services	7	£40,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£40,000
121	Corporate Furniture Replacement	Corporate Furniture Replacement	7	£5,300	£5,300	£5,300	£5,300	£5,300	£26,500
122	CIL community infrastructure funding bids	Funding, via bidding process, for community groups to access funding that supports the IDP using CIL funds top-sliced of between £10k-£100k per scheme	7	£500,000	£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£1,000,000
123	Parish Planning	Grants to Parish Councils and other community groups to support community based capital projects. This programme replaces the Parish Planning and Vibrant Villages programmes which had a combined annual budget of £55k up to 2015/16.	3	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£150,000
124	Digitalisation Infrastructure/ ICT Allocation	Migrate and Upgrade the Council's Digital Platform	7	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£500,000
125	Adaptations for Disabilities	Essential adaptations for WBC staff and service users	7	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£50,000
126	Members Bids	Matched funding to support local community schemes	3	£252,310	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£652,310
127	Renewable energy provision	Provision of green energy infrastructure in line with the Council's Environment Strategy. To develop opportunities and expertise to take advantage of the production, storage and utilisation of green energy	5	£2,650,000	£7,500,000	£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£17,650,000

128	Feasibility studies for options to deliver the Leisure Strategy	Review of leisure offering in line with Leisure Strategy	4	£245,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£245,000
129	Four Houses Corner	The Four Houses Corner improvement programme	4	£1,500,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£1,500,000
130	Agresso Rebuild	Enhancements to the Council's key financial system	7	£250,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£250,000
131	Refurbishment of Notrees	To upgrade Notree's infrastructure and provide a better care home to the residents, this work will enable the following: Enhancement to the garden area, enhancement of external and internal decoration, provide a better infrastructure to the building and the drainage, enhancement of the bedroom and shower/washing facilities.	1	£400,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£400,000
132	Refurbishment of Birchwood	To upgrade Birchwood's infrastructure and provide a better care home to the residents, this work will enable the following: Enhancement to the garden area, enhancement of internal decoration.	1	£400,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£400,000
133	Refurbishment of Willows	To upgrade Willows infrastructure and provide a better care home to the residents, this work will enable the following: Enhancement to the garden area, enhancement of external and internal decoration, provide a better infrastructure to the building and the drainage, enhancement of the bedroom and shower/washing facilities.	1	£500,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£500,000
134	TeleCare	Exploring new smart technology and ensuring it is fit for purpose, increasing smarter technology in our in-home care provision, increasing prevention of falls in ASC. Increasing staffing to increase number of assessments / prescriptions of new technology	1	£75,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£75,000
135	Feasibility Study for ASC Care Home	Feasibility project to understand longer term strategy on a new care home provision, 100K in FY 21/22 to enable a third party company to investigate a non-biased view on the care home market and the potential to place a new care-home and day centre in the Theale area and potential land acquisition, dependant on findings. Remaining 400K in FY 22/23 to provide funding for project work including planning permission and other works needed for the new build in FY 25/26	1	£100,000		£400,000		£0		£0		£0	£500,000
137	Local S106 Highway Improvements	A selection of network and road safety improvements to mitigate the impact of developments throughout the District.	4	£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000		£100,000	£500,000
138	Pay Machine Replacement	Replacement/modernisation of the Pay on Foot Equipment	4	£0		£0		£0		£150,000		£150,000	£300,000
139	Hungerford Footpath Maintenance	Footpath improvements on the main A338 and A4 approaches to Hungerford.	5	£200,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£200,000
140	The Diamond Greenham. Changing facilities improvement.	Replacement and upgrade of changing facilities	4	£0		£50,000		£0		£0		£0	£50,000
141	Wildflower verge treatment	Treatment of additional sites (roundabouts & verges) at key locations around the district.	5	£25,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£25,000
142	Establishment of re-use shop.	Creation of a re-use shop to upcycle items brought to the HWRC's	5	£0		£500,000		£0		£0		£0	£500,000
143	Theale Station Improvements	Upgrade to Theale Rail Station - LEP Funded in partnership with FGW & NR	4	£1,989,290		£1,880,270		£0		£0		£0	£3,869,560

144	Rationalisation of council offices	Capital costs associated with working practices in council offices	7	£100,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£100,000
145	Landlord fitout works in commercial properties	Fitouts linked with commercial property voids (at breaks and lease expiry). Capital expenditure beyond that from tenant delapidation liabilities.	7	£790,000		£290,000		£0		£0		£180,000	£1,260,000
146	Chestnut Walk management	Physical securing of vacant property pending redevelopment.	4	£12,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£12,000
147	Cyber Security Enhancements	Continued existing bid scheme and added allocations to fund new Data Leakage Protection System (Egress), and licencing costs for new Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) system.	7	£30,000		£30,600		£31,200		£31,850		£0	£123,650
148	Web Filtering	Extension of web filtering licences on firewalls and switches (Sonicwalls / Fortigate)	7	£16,000		£0		£0		£16,000		£0	£32,000
149	Backup / Security products for O365 data	Purchase of additional backup protection to a hosted environment to ensure that data will always be retrievable.	7	£25,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£25,000
150	Refresh DC A/C & Generator	Replace chillers and generator supporting the MSO Data Centre	7	£0		£100,000		£0		£0		£0	£100,000
151	Integrated Performance Management, Risk Management and Project Management System	Implementation of system to provide efficiencies and increase effectiveness / coordination of data.	7	£75,000		£75,000		£75,000		£0		£0	£225,000
152	Northcroft Leisure Centre (Dryside Refurbishment)	Refurbishment and remoddelling on the Leisure Centre	2	£0		£2,000,000		£2,500,000		£0		£0	£4,500,000
153	Hungerford LC - Modular exercise studio	Hungerford Leisure Centre - Modular exercise studio	2	£140,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£140,000
154	Northroft Leisure Centre Lido	Redevelopment of the Northcroft Lido	2	£2,650,000		£2,250,000		£0		£0		£0	£4,900,000
155	Care Home Provision	New care home development (subject to outcome of review)	1	£0		£0		£0		£5,500,000		£0	£5,500,000
156	Thatcham Library - New Build	Build a new and larger library in Thatcham as outlined in the council's Infrastructure Development Plan (2022-27).	2	£0		£0		£1,200,000		£0		£0	£1,200,000
157	Building Data Warehouse Capability	Looking to improve data accessibility by creating data warehouses which aenables data to be extracted from various business systems.	7	£50,000		£50,000		£0		£0		£0	£100,000
158	Southend Road Bradfield Footpath Improvements	Construction of a new section of footpath along the busy Southend Road will provide connectivity for residential areas to key recreational walking routes and from residential properties to public transport nodes.	5	£55,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£55,000
159	Robin Hood Roundabout & A4	Network capacity improvements at the Robinhood Roundabout in Newbury.	4	£1,500,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£1,500,000
160	Kings Road Link, Newbury	Design, assessment and construction of the Kings Road Link Road.	4	£1,097,600		£0		£0		£0		£0	£1,097,600
161	A4 Faraday Road Improvements	CIL funded capacity improvements and signals upgrade at the A4/Faraday Road junction.	4	£320,000		£0		£0		£0		£0	£320,000
163	Mortimer St John's Infants School - relocation	Provision of a dedicated hard surfaced area to enable delivery of PE lessons for the full statutory curriculum time each week.	2	£10,000		£120,000		£3,000		£0		£0	£133,000

164	Sandleford Park Development - New Primary school (1)	Provision of additional primary provision to meet the impact from the Sandleford Park Housing Development.	2	£0		£0		£425,250		£4,869,690		£1,217,430		£6,512,370
165	Sandleford Park Development - New Primary school (2)	Provision of additional primary provision to meet the impact from the Sandleford Park Housing Development.	2	£0		£0		£0		£0		£295,160		£295,160
166	Natural Carbon Reduction Measures	Investment in measures to naturally capture and reduce carbon dioxide. Examples of natural measures could include large scale tree planting, natural regeneration, wetland regeneration (subject to feasibility and cost/benefit analysis).	5	£1,205,000		£0		£0		£0		£0		£1,205,000
167	Modernising ASC	0	1	£83,000		£0		£0		£0		£0		£83,000
168	Enterprise Resource Planning System	Streamlining of existing software provision. One system solution in order to generate potential future revenue savings	7	£200,000		£500,000		£500,000		£0		£0		£1,200,000
169	Telephony Infrastructure (SIP and MPLS)	Strategic deployment of SIP and MPLS to save voice and data costs	7	£50,000		£0		£0		£0		£0		£50,000
170	Telephony Infrastructure (VoIP Outlying Offices)	Migrate telephony from analogue to VoIP	7	£20,000		£0		£0		£0		£0		£20,000
171	Blackberry Enterprise Service/Mobile Device Management Infrastructure	Corporate smartphone replacement programme	7	£10,000		£0		£0		£0		£0		£10,000
172	Telephony Infrastructure (Unified Communications Core Infrastructure)	Replace unified communication hardware/infrastructure as it reaches end of life	7	£60,000		£0		£0		£0		£0		£60,000
173	Telephony Infrastructure (Unified Communications Software)	Replace unified communication hardware/infrastructure as it reaches end of life	7	£113,800		£0		£0		£0		£0		£113,800
175	Refurbishment of Northcroft Leisure Centre preliminary works	Refurbishment of Northcroft Leisure Centre preliminary works	2	£151,000		£0		£0		£0		£0		£151,000
176	Phoenix Centre Access Improvements	Upgrade the access to the Pheonix Centre in south Newbury to adoptable standard. This is in support of the development of the site for social houing by the Council's joint Venture with Sovereign	4	£286,000		£0		£0		£0		£0		£286,000
181	Fulke Walwyn Way Resurfacing	Replace current mud surface with tarmac to reduce dust for health benefits to jockeys and public riders accessing the public gallops there. Also helps with road safety by keeping horses off the B4000.	5	£10,000		£0		£0		£0		£0		£10,000
185	Thatcham Park	Expansion of EYs accommodation to meet demand for 3 and 4 year olds and to provide nursery provision for vulnerable two year olds from the local community.	2	£25,000		£34,200		£522,980		£12,820		£0		£595,000
186	Primary MLD Resource	Provision of resourced provision for primary aged pupils with MLD to meet demand; improve outcomes and reduce pressure on the High Needs Block.	2	£0		£27,000		£412,880		£10,130		£0		£450,010
187	Secondary MLD Resource	Provision of resourced provision for secondary aged pupils with MLD to meet demand; improve outcomes and reduce pressure on the High Needs Block.	2	£0		£45,000		£688,130		£16,880		£0		£750,010
188	Castle WoW	Provision of a facliity to provide dedicated post-16 employment support and experience to increase percentage of school leavers gaining employment.	2	£27,000		£412,880		£10,130		£0		£0		£450,010
189	Engaging Potential	Remodelling and extension to provide additional teaching spaces to ensure accommodation is both suitable and sufficient for the needs of the students.	2	£11,100		£169,740		£4,160		£0		£0		£185,000
190	Shop Mobility	Provides electric wheelchairs for use by people with mobility problems visiting Newbury town centre	2	£11,000		£11,000		£11,000		£11,000		£0		£44,000
191	Newbury Town Centre Masterplan	Regeneration of the Town Centre	4	£134,000		£134,000		£0		£0		£0		£268,000

192	London Road Industrial Estate Planning and Development	Planning and consultancy to help deliver LRIE projects	4	£850,500		£17,000		£0		£0		£867,500
193	Education Management Information System	Implementation of new replacement Education Management Informaiton system	7	£250,000		£0		£0		£0		£250,000
196	Crookham Pools Habitat Enhancements	Habitat restoration and creation of new interpretation panels	2	£18,750		£0		£0		£0		£18,750
198	Thatcham Reedbeds Ecological Improvements	BBOWT to carry out a number of access improvements at Thatcham Reedbeds includng installation bridges and reapir of existing bridge.	4	£14,000		£0		£0		£0		£14,000
199	New Vehicle - Home to School Transport	Purchase of wheelchair accessible vehicle to transport SEND Children to and from school.	1	£40,000		£0		£0		£0		£40,000
200	Newbury Rail Station Improvements	Upgrade to Newbury Rail Station - LEP Funded in partnership with FGW & NR	4	£4,210,000		£0		£0		£0		£4,210,000
201	Willows Care Home - Garden Project	Redesign of gardens and outside spaces, making them more accessible to residents with physical and mental illness	1	£50,000		£0		£0		£0		£50,000
202	Birchwood Care Home - Garden Project	Redesign of gardens and outside spaces, making them more accessible to residents with physical and mental illness	1	£50,000		£0		£0		£0		£50,000
203	Notrees Care Home - Garden Project	Redesign of gardens and outside spaces, making them more accessible to residents with physical and mental illness	1	£30,000		£0		£0		£0		£30,000
204	Libraries Public PC Replacement	Replacememt of PCs available for public use	4	£3,290		£0		£0		£0		£3,290
205	Hungerford Primary - UIFSM	Kitchen expansion to enable continued delivery of universal infant free school meals	7	£90,380		£0		£0		£0		£90,380
206	New Oracle Server	Replacement Solaris Server to host a new version of Oracle, which is the operating system of Uniform. ICT has advised that the existing server must be replaced.	7	£8,870		£0		£0		£0		£8,870
207	Solar PV Initiative	Renewable energy initiative	5	£154,190		£0		£0		£0		£154,190
208	Aldermaston Footways	Repair and reconstruction of footpaths	5	£244,270		£0		£0		£0		£244,270
209	Theale Bypass Noise Investigation Feasibility	Road noise reduction scheme	4	£15,000		£0		£0		£0		£15,000
210	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Delivry Plan	Development and cycling and walking infrstructure	5	£25,000		£0		£0		£0		£25,000
211	Separate Food Waste	Separate collection of food waste	5	£900,000		£0		£0		£0		£900,000
212	Pavement to St Mary's School	Repair and reconstruction of footpaths	5	£22,500		£0		£0		£0		£22,500
213	ICT Helpdesk System	Acquisiton of new ICT helpdesk system	7	£35,000		£0		£0		£0		£35,000

214	North Thatcham Flood Alleviation Schemes	Environment Agency Funded flood alleviation works	4	£100,000		£2,500,000		£0	£0	£0	£2,600,000
215	Sovereign Joint Venture	Repayable capital support to Joint Venture with Sovereign Housing to increase supply of affordable housing in the District	4	£669,000		£0		£0	£0	£0	£669,000
216	Digital Infrastructure	Provision of full fibre broadband to schools	4	£0		£140,000		£280,000	£280,000	£280,000	£980,000
				65,631,540		**54,664,170**		**36,460,840**	**34,546,890**	**29,062,850**	**220,366,290**

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Appendix B

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2022/23

Where the Authority finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), although there has been no statutory minimum since 2008. The *Local Government Act 2003* requires the Authority to have regard to the former Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's *Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision* (the MHCLG Guidance) most recently issued in 2018.

The broad aim of the MHCLG Guidance is to ensure that capital expenditure is financed over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits, or, in the case of borrowing supported by Government Revenue Support Grant, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of that grant.

The MHCLG Guidance requires the Authority to approve an Annual MRP Statement each year and recommends a number of options for calculating a prudent amount of MRP. The following statement incorporates options recommended in the Guidance as well as locally determined prudent methods.

- For capital expenditure incurred before 1st April 2008 MRP will be determined by charging the expenditure over a 50-year asset life from 2008/09 as the principal repayment on an annuity with an annual interest rate equal to the average relevant PWLB rate in 2007/08.

  This is a change in policy from 2021/22. The MRP policy published for 2021/22 was for capital expenditure incurred before 1st April 2008 MRP to be determined as 4% of the capital financing requirement in respect of that expenditure.

- For capital expenditure incurred after 31st March 2008 including PFI assets, MRP will be determined by charging the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant asset as the principal repayment on an annuity with an annual interest rate equal to the average relevant PWLB rate for the year of expenditure, starting in the year after the capital expenditure is incurred. MRP on purchases of freehold land will be charged over 50 years. MRP on expenditure not related to fixed assets but which has been capitalised by regulation or direction will be charged over 20 years.

  This is a change in policy from 2021/22. The MRP policy published for 2021/22 was to charge the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant asset on a straight line basis. The change in 2022/23 to charging the expenditure using the annuity method is deemed more prudent as it spreads the financing costs (interest pus MRP) evenly over the asset life. Whereas the straight line method keeps MRP even but since interest costs reduce as the debt is paid off it front loads the total financing cost.

- For assets acquired by leases MRP will be determined as being equal to the element of the rent or charge that goes to write down the balance sheet liability.

- Where former operating leases have been brought onto the balance sheet on 1st April 2022 due to the adoption of the *IFRS 16 Leases* accounting standard, and the asset values have been adjusted for accruals, prepayments, premiums and/or discounts, then the annual MRP charges will be adjusted so that the total charge to revenue remains unaffected by the new standard.

- For capital expenditure loans to third parties that are repaid in annual or more frequent instalments of principal, the Council will make nil MRP, but will instead apply the capital receipts arising from principal repayments to reduce the capital financing requirement instead. In years where there is no principal repayment, MRP will be charged in accordance with the MRP policy for the assets funded by the loan, including where appropriate, delaying MRP until the year after the assets become operational. While this is not one of the options in the MHCLG Guidance, it is thought to be a prudent approach since it ensures that the capital expenditure incurred on the loan is fully funded over the life of the assets.

There is an additional change to the policy published for 2021/22 relating to MRP on assets acquired by the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). In 2021/22 the published policy was that MRP would be determined as being equal to the element of the rent or charge that goes to write down the balance sheet liability. As the asset acquired by the PFI by West Berkshire will remain on the balance sheet after the contract has ended MRP will be charged over the expected useful life of the asset on an annuity basis.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2022/23 will not be subject to a MRP charge until 2023/24.

Based on the Authority's latest estimate of its capital financing requirement (CFR) on 31st March 2022, the budget for MRP has been set as follows:

Minimum Revenue Provision	31.03.2022 Estimated CFR £000s	2022/23 Estimated MRP £000s
Capital expenditure before 01.04.2008	72,063	805
Capital expenditure after 31.03.2008	200,992	6,994
Leases and Private Finance Initiative	11,483	295
Total General Fund	**284,538**	**8,094**

Appendix C

Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy

In the Spending Review 2015, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that to support local authorities to deliver more efficient and sustainable services, the government will allow local authorities to spend up to 100% of their capital receipts on the revenue costs of transformation projects. Initially this flexibility on the use of capital receipts was limited to those receipts received between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2019, however, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), has confirmed this flexibility remains in place for the next three financial years (2022/23 -2024/25).

Commencing in 2017/18 the Council has embarked on a major programme of transformation, covering a number of years, in pursuit of its strategic ambitions and priorities and in order to deliver financial sustainable services to residents in the long term. To deliver this transformation programme the Council has utilised the opportunity provided by government to flexibly utilise capital receipts (with the exception of receipts specifically ring-fenced for Educational purposes). A requirement of this flexibility is that the Council approve a Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy and individual business cases for their use.

Since 1 April 2017, the council has allocated £2.5 million of capital receipts to transformation projects alongside a further £869k of revenue funding (total funding allocation as at 31.3.2021). It is proposed that a further £669k of capital receipts are to be allocated to transformational projects over 2020/21 and the period of the Capital Strategy (2022/23 - 2026/27).

The table below details the projects that will be funded via the transformation programme in 2022/23.

Projects	Funding Agreed
Programme Manager (Engaging and Enabling our Local Communities)	£65,000
Land Charges portal - additional functionality	£56,000
Crematorium - Carbon Neutral feasibility study	£5,500
Corporate Landlord Model – Phase 1	£40,000
Data Technician Apprentice (Chatbots Project)	£24,700
HBSMRE External Hosting (Archaeology)	£2,500
Microsoft 365	£175,000
Electronic Sealing	£10,000
Place Making Review	£50,000
Procurement Strategy	£488,590
Timelord2 (Raedam)	£65,590
Totals	**£982,880**

Note: A number of schemes included in the table above have been funded from revenue contributions, an exercise is currently underway to review application of future funding and savings generation / cost avoidance potential.

Appendix D

Community Infrastructure Levy Bids 2022/23

The Council has set aside £500k to enable local community groups, town and parish Councils to bid for schemes that provide infrastructure to local communities. The bidding process and criteria were included on https://info.westberks.gov.uk/cilbidding

Bids were invited between £10k and £100k that will provide infrastructure.

Total bids of £572k were received with 19 different bids submitted. To enable the spending to be contained within the £500k level set, a group met to consider the bids and apply a threshold for successful bids. If members approve further funding for this scheme to continue in the future, this threshold will continue.

In total, 9 bids totally £350k were approved for proposed inclusion in the Capital budget for the 2022-23 financial year. Some of the bids rejected did not meet the initial criteria, for example they were too small or were enable a pure 'like-for-like' replacement of infrastructure. Other schemes were suggest for inclusion within other elements of the capital programme where they would be more appropriate.

The list of successful bids is included in the table below.

Organisation/Group	Project Title & brief description	CIL Funding required	CIL %
Hungerford Cricket Club	Hungerford Cricket Club Nets - to replace two old existing artificial practice nets with brand new. The third lane is grass rather than artificial and will be retained as is	15,000	50%
Inkpen Memorial Playing Field Trust	Resurfacing of Inkpen Courts & Artificial Cricket Pitch	19,840	50%
Chieveley Recreational Centre	Chieveley Playground Refurbishment - complete refubishments	30,000	19%
Kintbury Parish Council acting as Trustee of Gladstone memorial Recreation Ground	Gladstone Memorial Recreation Ground Car park Extension and Tarmac Surfacing	20,000	50%
Theale Parish Council	New Play area and Multi-use Sports Area	100,000	43%
Falkland Cricket Club	Installation of Falkland Cricket Club car park, bicycle racks and electric vehicle charging points	52,000	72%
Thatcham Memorial Foundation	Jubilee Playground - installation of playground and recreational equipment	75,000	67%
Pangbourne Valley Playgroup	Pangbourne Valley Playgroup Garden Renovation - sensory garden	22,564	50%
Turnfields Recreation Ground Charity	Creation of Sensory Community Garden	15,000	50%
Total CIL Bids Approved		349,404	

Agenda Item 12.

Revenue Budget 2022-23

Committee considering report:	Executive
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Ross Mackinnon
Date Head of Service agreed report *(for Corporate Board)*	27.1.22
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	28.1.22
Report Author:	Melanie Ellis/Joseph Holmes
Forward Plan Ref:	C4127

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to consider and recommend to Council the 2022-23 Revenue Budget, which proposes a Council Tax requirement of £110.1m, requiring a Council Tax increase of 1% and an Adult Social Care precept of 3%. The Council Tax will raise £1.1m and the precept will raise a further £3.2m. At 4%, the budget is balanced, after using £5m of reserves that have been specifically set aside. The overall Council Tax increase is intended to balance the financial impact of the pandemic on residents, mitigating the financial pressures they face, as well as the cost pressures that the Council faces.

1.2 The Council is focussed on delivering services to our residents and businesses that support the overall Health & Wellbeing of the district, and assist in the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, building on our recovery strategy and improving the quality of services that we provide. The revenue budget supports this through the allocation of funds to core investment in the Council's strategies and through making revenue funding available to deliver the Capital Strategy. The budget is supported this year through a new funding settlement from the Government for the first time in many years providing new core funding to the Council. At the same time, the Council faces significant pressures arising from the pandemic as well as the macroeconomic picture. For example, adult social care long term placements have risen by 4% from December 2020 to 2021, with an increase of 5% in children in care. Inflation currently stands at 5.4% putting a significant strain on the Council's finances. The Council must also balance the level of Council Tax levied; in 2021-22 the Council decided not to take the 3% Adult Social Care precept that was available, but this remains available for use in 2022-23, alongside a further 1% Adult Social Care precept as well as a 1.99% Council Tax increase for core services before any referendum principles occur. To support the most vulnerable, it is proposed to provide a one-off £150 reduction in Council Tax for claimants receiving Council Tax Reduction falling within a working age category. The revenue budget seeks manage all of these demands whilst achieving financial balance.

1.3 The budget details the investment for the year ahead to deliver the Council Strategy, the ambitions in the Capital Strategy and support core Council Services. This includes investment in approved strategies e.g. Adult Social Care, the Environment Strategy, the Digital and customer engagement strategies and

prevention work. The paper also includes savings proposals, other income sources and the use of specific reserves to ensure the Council has a sustainable financial footing. The budget also allocates revenue funding to deliver the Capital Strategy (separate paper) that has a substantial amount of investment in infrastructure for the year ahead. The Council is proposing to support the budget with a £5m contribution from reserves; these are largely from specific reserves, for example the residual Covid-19 non-ring-fenced grant, Council Strategy reserve, Transformation Fund and Collection Fund reserves.

1.4 This report also proposes the Fees and Charges for 2022-23 as set out in Appendix F and the Parish Expenses as set out in Appendix G and recommends the level of General Reserves as set out in Appendix E.

2. Recommendations

That the Executive resolves to:

(1) Delegate to the Head of Finance & Property in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for finance and economic development to develop and implement a Covid-19 Additional relief Fund (CARF) scheme to distribute £4,804,377 received from the Government to eligible businesses in the district

The Council is recommended to resolve as follows:

(2) That Council approves the 2022-23 Council Tax requirement of £110.1 million, requiring a Council Tax increase of 1% with a 3% Council Tax Precept ring-fenced for adult social care.

(3) That the Fees and Charges are approved as set out in Appendix F and the appropriate statutory notices be placed where required.

(4) That the Parish Expenses of £xxxx are approved as set out in Appendix G (to be included for Full Council only).

(5) It is proposed to again provide a £150 reduction to Council Tax for claimants receiving Council Tax Reduction falling within a working age category during the 2022-23 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. Any remaining funding from the allocation 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.

(6) That it be noted that the following amounts for the year 2022-23 in accordance with regulations made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (by the Localism Act 2011):-

(a) 66,310.15 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).

(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.

(7) Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2022-23 (excluding Parish precepts) is £xxx,xxx,xxx (to be included at Full Council only).

(8) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2022-23 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, amended by the Localism Act 2011 (to be included at Full Council only):-

(a) £xxx,xxx,xxx 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) £xxx,xxx,xxx 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) £xxx,xxx,xxx 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) £x,xxx.xx 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) £x,xxx,xxx being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per Appendix K).

(f) £xxxx.xx 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.

(9) That it be noted that for the year 2022-23, Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley & 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 (to be included at Full Council only).

(10) That 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 2022-23 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial	These are contained in further detail within the report. The key implication is the proposed 1% increase in Council Tax and a 3% adult social care precept, which leads to a savings and income generation programme of £5.5m in 2022-23. At 4%, the budget is balanced after using £5m of reserves. This use of reserves is planned largely to cover one-off investment and is funded from specific reserves, for example the residual Covid-19 non-ring-fenced grant, Council Strategy reserve, Transformation Fund and Collection Fund reserves The Council has a good track record of delivering past savings programmes and monitors and reports on progress on a regular basis with quarterly reporting to the Executive and OSMC. The Council is proposing a one off use of reserves of £5m to support the revenue budget. The in-year (2021-22) financial position supports this use of funds, as the Q3 forecast is for no use of general reserves, though this does have an implication for the medium term with reduced earmarked reserves available. The Council is proposing the use of a 3% Adult Social Care Precept for 2022-23, as the Government has allowed a maximum 4% rise in the precept over the period 2021-23 (the Council took a 0% ASC precept in 2021-22 to support residents at the height of the pandemic), so the option for the full precept carried forward of 3%, plus a further 1% remains for 2022-23 which would support the medium term financial position.
Human Resource:	The main implications for staff are in respect of investment for service areas and additional workforce capacity. The investment also includes £150 home working allowance for certain staff as part of the 'Timelord 2' project. Any restructures take place in accordance with the Organisational Change Procedure.
Legal:	There is a requirement to produce a Revenue Budget under the various Local Government Finance Acts. The savings proposals have been consulted upon as appropriate, and further consultations may be required prior to implementing certain proposals. The Public Sector Equality Duty (149 (1) requires a Local Authority in exercise of its functions to have due regard to the need to: (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act. (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a

	relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. Decision makers must keep the above requirements in mind when making decisions.			
Risk Management:	As part of the 2022-23 financial monitoring, savings proposals will be kept under monthly review to ensure they are deliverable. Appendix E sets out how the impact of increased volatility in Local Government finance will be managed and considers the impact on levels of reserves.			
Property:	None – significant amendments to the property and infrastructure portfolio are included as part of the capital strategy which is funded through revenue financing.			
Policy:	Specific investment in the Council Strategy is included as part of this budget. These areas are highlighted separately in the budget paper.			
Implication	**Positive**	**Neutral**	**Negative**	**Commentary**
Equalities Impact:				
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	Y			Any impacts have been assessed and publicly consulted upon where necessary. Specific investment in equality and diversity co-ordinator to enhance the Council's responsiveness and commitment to equalities and diversity.
Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		Y		Any impacts have been assessed and publicly consulted upon where necessary.
Environmental Impact:	Y			Investment detailed in this report in delivering the Environmental Strategy
Health Impact:		Y		
ICT or Digital Services Impact:	Y			Additional investment in delivery of the digital strategy.
Council Strategy Priorities or Business as Usual:	Y			As detailed in the report £1.6m of specific investment in priority areas has been identified separately

Other				
Data Impact:		No		
Consultation and Engagement:	See appendix L on the budget simulator exercise where 98 individuals responded to an engagement exercise on the potential budget proposals over November to December 2021. An online Webinar was held on the 18th January 2022. The Newbury BID Board was provided with an overview of the key areas of spend and income for the Council as well as upcoming funding reforms, the amount of Business Rates retained by WBC and in year and future Covid-19 funds applicable to local businesses. Comments were provided on the difference between the Business Rates collected and those retained by WBC; and how Central Government allocated Business Rates income and what, if any, powers WBC have around rate-setting, which were responded to. Town and Parish comments to follow form meeting on xx February 2022 (to be included for Full Council only). As part of the launch of the budget with the Executive papers, a series of questions were asked on social media as well as an online 'Facebook live' event with the portfolio holder for finance and economic development and the Executive Director (Resources) on the 7th Feb 2022. The summary of responses was (to be included for Full Council only):			

4. Executive Summary

4.1 The purpose of this paper is to consider and recommend to Council the 2022-23 Revenue Budget, which proposes a Council Tax requirement of £110.1m, requiring a 1% Council Tax increase and an adult social care precept of 3%. The Council Tax will raise £1.1m and the precept will raise an additional £3.2m. The ASC precept has been levied to reflect the increased demand and financial costs within the Adult Social care system, but a decision not to levy all of 4% precept available has been proposed to try to protect the wider local taxpayer from increases to their household spending at a time of inflationary increases. There are some appendices to be completed that are specifically for the full Council papers, e.g. parish precepts.

4.2 In order to arrive at a balanced budget for 2022-23, £5.5m of savings and income generation proposals have been recommended.

4.3 The Council is forecasting an over spend position of £0.04m in 2021-22 after using £0.5m of earmarked reserves in-year. The ongoing effect of any budget pressures and future investment in the Council Strategy priorities has been factored into the 2022-23 budget. In order to fund this the Council has chosen to increase Council Tax by 1% and levy a 3% adult social care precept and find savings or income

generation of £5.5m. West Berkshire Council has a strong track record of delivering on its savings proposals and of reacting to ongoing pressures in order to minimise the budgetary impact.

4.4 Proposals

(1) That Council approve the 2022-23 Council Tax requirement of £110.1million, requiring a 1% Council Tax increase and a 3% Adult Social Care Council Tax Precept ring-fenced for adult social care.

(2) That the Fees and Charges be approved as set out in Appendix F and the appropriate statutory notices be placed where required.

(3) That the Parish Expenses be approved as set out in Appendix G.

5. Introduction

5.1 The purpose of this paper is to consider and recommend to Council the 2022-23 Revenue Budget, which proposes a Council Tax requirement of £110.1m, requiring a Council Tax increase of 1% and a 3% Adult Social Care (ASC) Council Tax Precept. The Council Tax will raise £1.1m and the ASC precept will raise a further £3.2m.

5.2 In order to arrive at a balanced budget for 2022-23, £5.5m of savings and income generation proposals have been recommended.

5.3 This report also proposes the Fees and Charges for 2022-23 as set out in Appendix F, the Parish Expenses of £xxxxx as set out in Appendix G, and recommends the level of General Reserves as set out in Appendix E (to be included for Full Council only).

6. Implications of Covid-19

6.1 The pandemic has continued to have an impact on the Council's budget setting for 2022-23. The level of non ring-fenced grant has ceased during 2021-22, with the only new assistance for core funding a quarter of the continuation of the income compensation scheme from 2020-21. The Council has received some specific funds for the Contain outbreak Management Framework (COMF) and the residual Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG), but no new funding for core services has been assumed for 2022-23. The budget for the year ahead though does include some impacts from the pandemic, for example, ongoing reduce car parking income, and a recovery in the number of adult social care clients that the Council supports.

6.2 The government has provided support through allowing Councils to spread any forecast collection fund (the account that looks at the amount of council tax and retained business rates collected in year again the budgeted income) deficit over a three year period instead of one year. The positive of this proposal is that it does not immediately burden the taxpayer with all of any deficit in 2021-22 as there would only be a third of the deficit in that year. However, it has meant that for 2022-23 and 2023-24 it does create a longer term financial burden at a time of unknown funding.

6.3 The Council has also recently received some funding for CARF (COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund) of £4.8m. This is for a new scheme to provide business rates relief to those businesses who are not included in the existing schemes

brought in by the Government; overarching scheme guidance has been produced by Government[1]. The key elements of the scheme include:

(i) The business must be a rate-paying business

(ii) There will not be an award of the CARF to ratepayers who for the same period of the relief either are or would have been eligible for the Extended Retail Discount (covering Retail, Hospitality and Leisure), the Nursery Discount or the Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme (AGOSS),

(iii) There will not be an award of the CARF to a hereditament for a period when it is unoccupied (other than hereditaments which have become closed temporarily due to the government's advice on COVID-19, which should be treated as occupied for the purposes of this relief), and

(iv) The scheme will direct support towards ratepayers who have been adversely affected by the pandemic and have been unable to adequately adapt to that impact.

6.4 The Council is producing a scheme and has requested that the Executive delegate the approval of this to ensure the funding can be distributed as fast as possible.

7. 2021-22 In-Year Position

7.1 The 2021-22 forecast year end position is a £0.04m over spend after the use of £0.5m specific earmarked reserves. The People Directorate is forecasting an over spend of £1.3m and Resources an over spend of £0.2m. The Place Directorate is forecasting an under spend of £0.3m and Capital Financing an under spend of £1.2m.

7.2 For the 2022-23 budget setting, provision has been made for the ongoing pressures that have arisen during 2021-22, including anticipated impacts due to Covid-19 as well as to adjust the budget for any known changes to the in-year savings position and the impact that this might have in the longer term.

8. The 2022-23 Local Government Finance Settlement

The final settlement figures are still awaited, with a draft finance settlement announced on the 16th December with subsequent individual notifications of specific grant allocations. The 2022 Spending Round was announced in October 2021. The key points are:

(1) That the increase in Spending Power for West Berkshire is 7.9% and that the government assumes that all Councils take the maximum increase in Council Tax and the Adult Social Care Precept that they can without triggering a referendum (5.99% overall for West Berkshire Council).

[1] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1041468/CARF_LA_Guidance.pdf

(2) That the Spending Review encompasses a three year period from 2022-25 for Local Government but that the finance settlement over covered the 2022-23 financial year.

(3) For Council Tax, a core principle of up to 2% increase was announced, together with a further 1% increase in council tax through the Adult Social Care (ASC) precept, with an option to roll forward the 3% precept not used in 2021-22 which allows the full 5.99% maximum Council Tax and ASC precept increase for 2022-23 before referendum principles apply,

(4) It has been announced that negative Revenue Support Grant will not be charged in 2022-23. Negative RSG is the name given to a downward adjustment of a local authority's business rates tariff, as a consequence of changes to distribution methodology adopted in 2016-17.

(5) There will be a new round of New Homes Bonus payments in 2021-22 which will not attract new legacy payments. All legacy payments associated with previous allocations will be honoured in the 2021-22 allocations. For West Berkshire this amounts to £1.2 compared with £1.1m in the previous year.

(6) The Council is awaiting the Public Health grant allocation.

(7) That the Council must spread any collection fund deficit over a three year period (2021-24).

(8) Share of the £1.6bn new allocation of funding to Local Government of £1.2m through a new 'Services Grant' for 2022-23 only.

(9) Allocation of the existing Lower Tier Support Grant of £0.2m.

(10) Allocation of the existing social care grant of £3.9m.

(11) Share of NHS funding for Local Government to support the Adult Social Care market of £0.3m.

(12) A number of other grants have been announced to combat rough sleeping, homelessness (£0.3m).

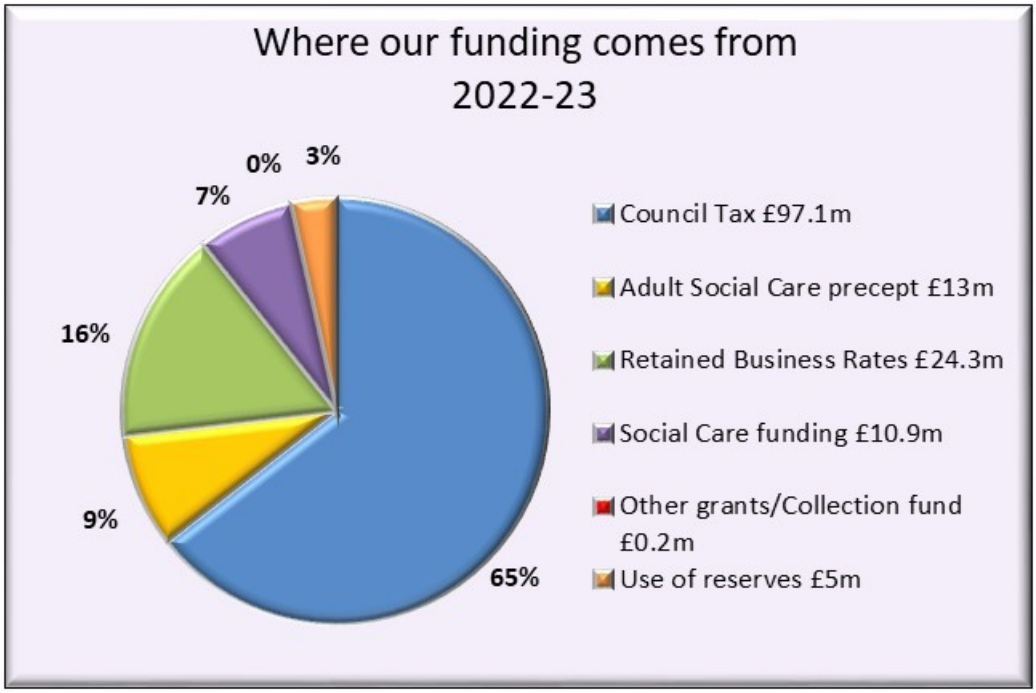
(13) Allocation of £250k for West Berkshire Council to cover the costs of the new duty on the provision of support within domestic abuse safe accommodation services (subject to the successful passage of the Domestic Abuse Bill).

(14) Allocation for external audit fees and transparency arrangements tbc.

(15) New Adult Social Workforce Fund tbc.

9. Revenue Funding

9.1 The main sources of funding for the 2022-23 revenue budget are shown in the following chart.



9.2 West Berkshire Council's main source of funding is from Council Tax (65%). Council Tax is collected from local residents based on the value of the property in which they live. This report recommends a Council Tax increase of 1% for 2022-23 which will raise £1.1m.

9.3 The Council is proposing a 3% Adult Social Care Precept for 2022-23, which will raise £3.2m. The maximum allowed is a 4% precept. The previous precepts now raise annual funds of £9.9m. Adult social care makes up over a third of the Council's net revenue budget. Whilst efficiencies are being made in the way the Council operates this Service, the precept has helped to fund the pressures faced in the areas of learning disability, demographic increases, increased costs and additional staffing requirements. In light of the impact of Covid, where care numbers have dropped and the Adult Social Care Market will take time to rebalance, there continues to be a lot of uncertainty over the long term costs of providing care.

9.4 Income from Council Tax is also expected to increase by a further 1.5% as a result of growth in the tax base (the number of properties paying Council Tax). This is based on a collection rate of 99.6%.

9.5 Retained Business Rates represents the Council's share of the actual business rate collected in West Berkshire. The Government has paused the further retention of business rates to 75% until 2023-24 at the earliest; therefore West Berkshire continues to receive 50% of business rates less a significant tariff to Government meaning the overall amount of business rates retained by the Council is 25% of the total business rates collected.

9.6 Social care funding via the Better Care Fund (BCF) and Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) is to be spent locally on health and care with the aim of achieving closer integration and improved outcomes for patients and service users and carers. A Social Care Grant is also received.

9.7 Other grant funding consists of New Homes Bonus and other non ring-fenced grants. West Berkshire Council has not received any of the non ring-fenced Revenue Support Grant since 2017-18. In addition to the funding above, the Council also receives ring-fenced funding which must be spent on specific areas, and raises fees and charges. These income streams are shown within individual service budgets where the expenditure occurs. The largest of these are detailed below:

(1) **Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).** The DSG is a ring-fenced grant which can only be spent on school/pupil activity. The DSG consists of four funding blocks: Schools, Central Schools Services, Early Years and High Needs.

The DSG settlement for 2022-23 was announced by Government in December 2021. The following table sets out the 2022-23 DSG settlement for each block.

Categories	(£'m)
Schools block	120.07
Central school services block allocation	0.99
High needs block allocation	25.32
Additional high needs allocation	0.91
Early years block	10.02
Total DSG allocation before deductions	**157.31**
Deductions paid directly to settings	**-3.16**
Total DSG allocation	**154.15**

Following the spending review in autumn 2021, an additional £325m was allocated nationally for high needs in 2022/23, to recognise the additional costs that local authorities and schools will face in the coming year, which were not foreseen when the original block allocations were calculated, including the health and social care levy. The additional funding also takes into account that colleges and other providers offering extra hours of study to students with high needs may require extra high needs top-up funding to support those students. The allocations have been distributed as a percentage uplift to the original amount calculated. For West Berkshire this is an additional £910k. The additional funding is subject to the same DSG conditions.

The DSG had a deficit balance of £1.5m as at 31.3.2021, and in 2021-22 the deficit is forecast to increase to £3.1m by 31.3.2022. The deficit has arisen largely in high needs but also in early years. The funding for 2022-23 above together with expected budget requirements will increase the forecast deficit to £5m by 31.3.23.

DSG budgets are discussed in detail at the School Forum. The Forum has agreed to transfer 0.25% of funding to the High Needs Block amounting to £0.3m and this was ratified by Individual Member Decision on 4th February.

(2) **Public Health Grant.** West Berkshire Council receives a ring-fenced grant to fund public health functions. The 2022-23 grant totals are to be confirmed by Government.

(3) **Fees and Charges:** There are generally two types of fees and charges; statutory and discretionary. The rationale behind the proposed increases to each Directorates' fees and charges are included in detail in Appendix F. A review of all fees and charges is to take place by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Council also continues to receive income from its investment in commercial property, which is budgeted to generate £2.1m per year.

10. Revenue Expenditure

The Revenue funding outlined above, funds the 2022-23 revenue budget as follows:

Directorate	Base budget	Growth and inflation	Ongoing Investment	Savings & income generation	Annual budget requirement 2022/23
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
People	76.69	7.16	1.10	-2.16	82.79
Place	30.86	2.54	0.53	-1.14	32.79
Resources/Chief Executive	13.16	0.88	0.69	-1.40	13.33
Capital Financing/Corporate	12.43	0.00	0.55	-0.80	12.18
Total	**133.14**	**10.58**	**2.87**	**-5.50**	**141.08**

10.1 **Base budget £133.14m**: This is the ongoing budget requirement for the three Directorates together with the ongoing revenue cost of the capital programme.

10.2 **Growth and inflation £10.58:** This is the budget increase required for the Council to perform existing services each year. As part of the budget setting process, the Council provides for general inflationary pressures such as salary increases (2% assumption) based on the established number of posts, together with salary increments and increases to National Insurance and pension contributions. Any pay award above the assumptions would need to be funded from reserves.

Budgets are inflated where a contract is in place and is subject to annual inflationary increases. The largest single item of contract inflation is from the waste PFI contract. This contract increase is based on the RPIx measure in January of each year (released mid-February) and has been estimated to be £1.5m (7.7%) for 2022-23. Following the February announcement the actual rate is xxx%, requiring an extra £xxxk. The ongoing impact of this will be included in the 2023-24 budget. Full details of contract inflation and modelled growth are given in Appendix A.

The majority of growth has arisen in supporting social care, and it has been necessary to invest £5.2m into the budget due to rising demand and price increases. Financial modelling has been undertaken in demand led budgets which tracks client numbers, demand for services and pricing. The modelling produces a financial impact range between low cost, most likely and high cost. The growth in the budget has been funded just below most likely with the balance provided for in the Service Risk Reserve. The model inflation is at 2.7%, reflecting increases expected in costs balanced against increases already in place. The Risk Reserve will be increased to cover the risk of higher inflation during 2022/23. The Extracts from the models are shown in Appendix B.

10.3 **Ongoing Investment £2.87m:** Each year new service investment is required to be built into the revenue budget. The Council Strategy will be supported with £0.7m investment into the annual revenue budget. Covid grant funding will support £0.2m ongoing investment into areas impacted by Covid-19. £1.4m ongoing investment will support other areas. Investment in the Council's operational assets is funded from external borrowing and this requires an annual increase of £0.6m in the revenue budget in order to fund the additional revenue costs for the £222.1m capital programme. Key areas of funding include:

a) £52.5 million investment in Educational facilities across the district, focusing on the provision of school places and enhancements to accessibility.

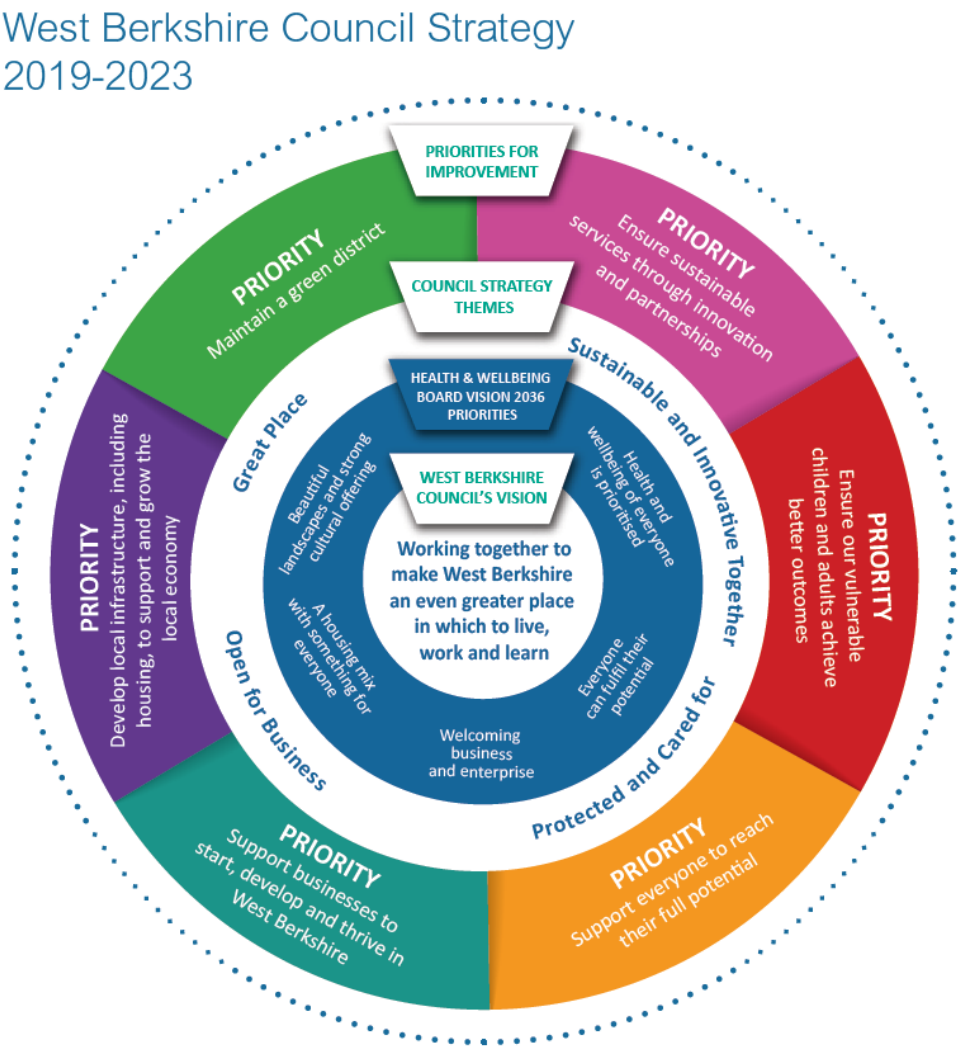
b) £38.2 million investment in local infrastructure, including key enhancement projects to major road networks.

c) £12.2 million in support of the development of a Leisure Strategy for the district. Investment includes redevelopment of the Northcroft Leisure Centre (both dry side facilities and the Lido), Kennet Leisure Centre and various modernisation projects across the district's current leisure provision offering.

d) £22.2 million in support of the Council's Environment Strategy in response to the climate emergency, acknowledging the Council's role in facilitating a move to more environmentally sustainable lifestyles and business models across the district. Investment includes developing renewable energy provision and installation of on street electric vehicle charging points across the district.

Included within the capital strategy is £2.2 million of projects currently at the feasibility stage, inclusive of £868k of funding for the London Road Industrial Estate (LRIE) development, £868K of leisure enhancement projects and £500k allocated for development of care home provision. These projects form part of the capital programme and overarching five year Capital Strategy. In respect of expenditure incurred where a project does not result in the creation of a capital asset, in accordance with capital regulations set out within the CIPFA Code of Practice, the full sum of project expenditure will be written back to revenue and be funded through the Council's General Fund provision. Therefore, feasibility and preliminary design works undertaken through application of capital funding are a risk held against future General Fund provision.

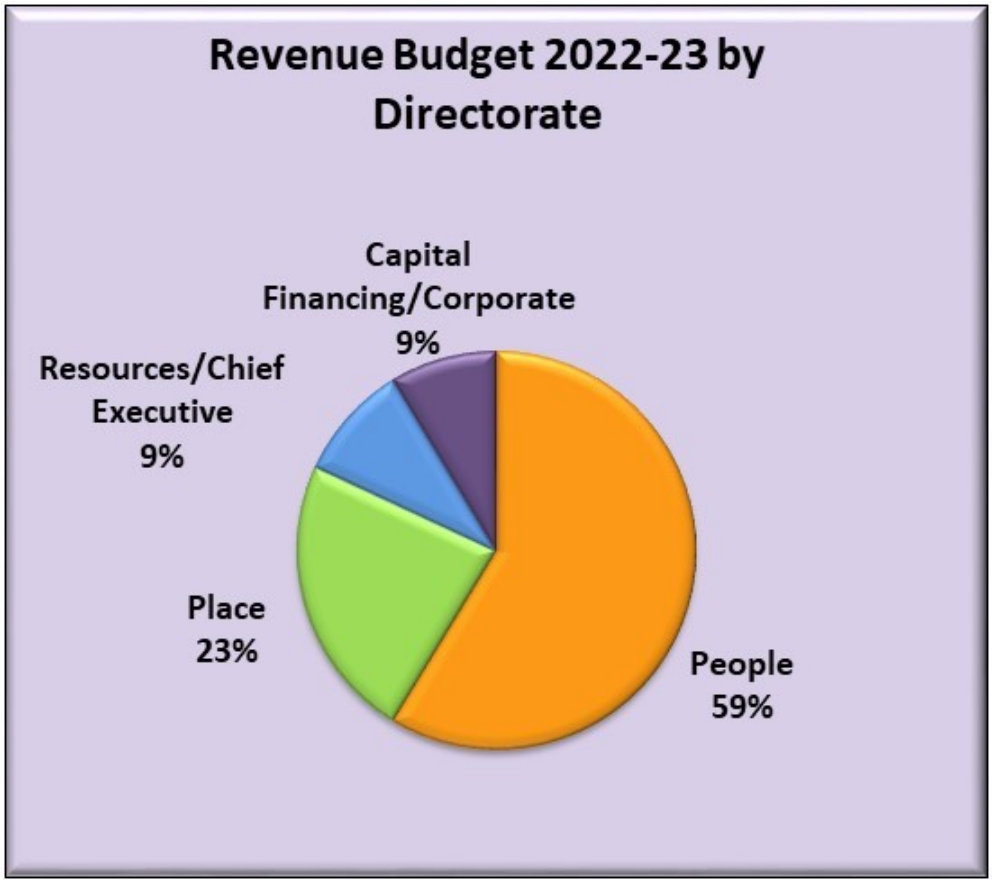
10.4 Full details of the Council revenue investments are given in Appendix C.



10.5 As part of this strategy, the Council is setting to more closely align financial resources to invest in the priority outcomes included in the strategy (see the Medium Term Financial Strategy for an overview). This investment started from 2020-21 with £0.68m of investment, 2021-22 with £0.9m and for 2022-23 further investment of £1.6m is being provided to help deliver the strategy:

No	Council Strategy priority	Item	Amount £k
1	**Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes**	• Earlier intervention and prevention • Family safeguarding • Adoption services • Mental health • SEN team - assessments	200 202 25 43 303
2	**Support everyone to reach their full potential**		
3	**Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire**	• Retaining some of the Local Economic Partnership functions	60
4	**Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy**	• LRIE site investment • Minerals and waste • Local plan	100 250 60
5	**Maintain a green district**	• Enhanced bus partnership • Environment delivery	55 50
6	**Ensure sustainable service through innovation and partnerships**	• Digitise services	225
7	**Business as usual**	• Workforce development	35
	TOTAL COUNCIL STRATEGY INVESTMENT		**1,608**
	Investment into areas impacted by Covid-19	• Car parking loss of income • Contact advice and assessment in children's and families services • Funding for those not in employment, education or training • Learning Disability transition clients delay	200 272 43 250
	TOTAL COUNCIL STRATEGY AND COVID INVESTMENT		**2,373**

10.6 The following chart shows how the budget is split by Directorate.



10.7 In order to achieve a balanced budget, £5.5m of savings and income generation proposals have been made.

11. Reserves

11.1 As part of the financial planning process, the Council considers the establishment and maintenance of reserves. Reserves are categorised into unusable and usable reserves. Unusable reserves includes those reserves which are kept to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, retirement and employee benefits. These do not represent usable resources for the council. Usable Reserves consist of the General Reserve and Earmarked Reserves.

11.2 The General Reserve exists to cover a number of non-specific items and risks. The Council s151 officer recommends that the General Reserve is a minimum £7m. Earmarked Reserves are held for specific future projects or service risks.

Reserve	Balance as at 31.3.2021	Forecast increase during 2021-22	Forecast decrease during 2021-22	Forecast balance as at 31.3.2022	Forecast incease / decrease for 2022-23 budget setting	Forecast balance as at 1.4.2022
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
General Fund (unallocated) including specifc risk reserves	12.12	1.40	-2.93	10.59	-2.33	8.26
Earmarked Reserves	46.53	1.73	-27.37	20.89	-2.68	18.21
Total usable reserves	**58.65**	**3.13**	**-30.30**	**31.48**	**-5.01**	**26.47**

11.3 During 2021-22 the main changes to reserves were where the collection fund deficit from previous years had required specific funding from earmarked reserves, as highlighted in the 2021-22 budget papers. For 2022-23, the Council is proposing to support the budget with a £5m contribution from reserves.

11.4 Further information can be found in Appendix Ei and Eii.

12. Funding Statement

The Funding Statement for 2022-23 shows the funding available to the Council which can be used to fund the budget requirement.

2022-23 Funding Statement			
Income	**£m**	**£m**	**Appendix**
Council Tax	*97.08*		
Adult Social Care precept	*13.01*		
Council Tax income		**110.09**	
Retained Business Rates	*24.33*	**24.33**	
Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF	*6.65*		
Market Sustainability & Fair Cost of Care Fund	*0.34*		
Social Care grant	*3.92*		
Social Care funding		**10.91**	
Other non-ringfenced grants	*0.21*		
Additional government Covid funding	*1.25*		
New Homes Bonus	*1.20*		
Other grant funding		**2.66**	
Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus - Council Tax	*-0.34*		**H**
Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus - NNDR	*-2.15*		
Collection fund deficit		**-2.49**	
Funds Available		**145.49**	
Expenditure	**£m**	**£m**	**Appendix**
Opening base budget*		**133.14**	
Inflation	*3.68*		
Contract inflation	*1.68*		**A**
Modelled growth	*5.22*		**B**
Growth and inflation		**10.58**	
Investment in Council Strategy priorities	*0.74*		
Investment due to Covid-19	*0.20*		
Other investment	*1.38*		
Increase in capital financing costs	*0.55*		
Ongoing Investment		**2.87**	**C**
Savings and income generation		**-5.50**	
Annual Budget Requirement		**141.08**	
One off investments	2.76		**C**
Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF	*6.65*		
2022/23 investment		**9.41**	
Budget Requirement		**150.49**	
Use of reserves to support one off investment	*-1.95*		
Use of Covid Reserve	*-0.75*		
Use of Transformation Reserve	*-0.50*		
Use of reserves to support 22/23 budget gap	*-0.46*		
Use of Collection Fund and Business Rates reserves	*-1.36*		
One off funding		**-5.00**	**E**
Budget Requirement after use of reserves		**145.49**	
£10k roundings may apply			

*** Opening Base budget**		**£m**
Income from fees and charges		-30.28
Ring-fenced grant income		-188.50
Internal recharges and interest received		-1.39
Gross Operating Expenditure		353.30
Base budget		**133.14**

13. Proposals

(1) That Council approve the 2022-23 Council Tax requirement of £110.1 million, requiring a Council Tax increase of 1% with a 3% Council Tax Precept ring-fenced for adult social care.

(2) That the Fees and Charges be approved as set out in Appendix F and the appropriate statutory notices be placed where required.

(3) That the Parish Expenses be approved as set out in Appendix G.

14. Consultation and Engagement

14.1 All savings and income generation proposals have been reviewed and, where required, public consultation has taken place; for 2022-23 there has been no formal EIA on specific savings due to the nature of these not being required. Individual groups affected by specific proposals were consulted as required. If any proposals require consultation at a later stage, this will be undertaken when appropriate.

14.2 Appendix L highlights the outcome of a budget simulator exercise undertaken with the public where 98 responses were received. The key outcome from this was that overall respondents favoured a 4.7% Council Tax rise with the greatest protection offered to social care services and the lowest protection to customer services, economic development & regeneration and cultural & heritage services.

14.3 The Council also met with the Newbury BID Board on the 18th January. The Newbury BID Board was provided with an overview of the key areas of spend and income for the Council as well as upcoming funding reforms, the amount of Business Rates retained by WBC and in year and future Covid-19 funds applicable to local businesses. Comments were provided on the difference between the Business Rates collected and those retained by WBC; and how Central Government allocated Business Rates income and what, if any, powers WBC have around rate-setting, which were responded to.

14.4 There was also feedback received by town and parish Councils at event on the xx February 2022 and can be summarised as:

14.5 Responses were also made to a series of questions on this report from the 7th February to the 16th February as well as at a webinar on the budget hosted by the Portfolio Holder for finance and economic development on the 7th February 2022 and can be summarised as:

15. Other options considered

The budget proposal is contains a blend of savings options and Council Tax changes. The Council could go to a Council Tax referendum to put substantially more money into the budget, though this has been rejected due to the quality of Council services that are able to be provided within the existing budget and that the increased burden on local taxpayers could have a negative local economic impact. The Council could increase the ASC precept by a further 1% but this has been rejected to support residents across the district with the affordability and impact of Council Tax rises at a time of rising inflation.

16. Conclusion

The Council is forecasting an over spend of £0.04m in 2021-22 after using £0.5m of reserves to support service budgets. The ongoing effect of any budget pressures and future investment in the Council Strategy priorities has been factored into the 2022-23 budget. In order to fund this the Executive has chosen to propose an increase in Council Tax by 1%, raise a 3% adult social care Council Tax Precept, use £5m of specific reserves and find savings or income generation of £5.5m. West Berkshire Council has a strong track record of delivering on its savings proposals and of reacting to ongoing pressures in order to minimise the budgetary impact.

17. Appendices

Appendix A – Contract inflation
Appendix B – Modelled growth
Appendix C – Investment
Appendix D – Savings and income proposals
Appendix Ei) – Reserves Statements
Appendix Eii) – Adequacy of reserves and robustness of budget
Appendix F – Fees and charges
Appendix L – Budget simulator

For Full Council March 2022
Appendix G – Parish Expenses
Appendix H – Council Tax Collection Fund
Appendix I – Unison comments (for Council meeting)
Appendix K – Council Tax Resolution
Appendix M – Facebook Live Summary

Officer details:

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Appendix A

Contract Inflation

Contract Inflation			2022/23	Rate used
Directorate	**Service**	**Description**	**£000**	
Corporate		**Total**	**0**	
People	ASC	Birchwood Lease	47	8.50%
People	ASC	Hillcroft Rent	1	1.00%
People		**Total**	**48**	
Place	ENV	Waste contract (at RPIX)	1448	7.70%
Place	ENV	Waste - Tax Base adjustment	73	
Place	ENV	Henwick Worthy sports ground maintenance (CPI)	8	
Place	ENV	Winter service software licence uplift	1	1.60%
Place	ENV	Pay and Display maintenance contract	0	
Place	ENV	BBOWT partnership (CPI)	14	
Place	ENV	Grounds Maintenance (CPI)	14	
Place	ENV	Highways term maintenance contract (set %)	62	
Place	ENV	WPS - Pay on foot parking equipment maintenance	1	
Place	ENV	Metric - Pay & display machine maintenace	1	
Place	ENV	Bus Lane Camera maintenance	5	
Place		**Total**	**1,627**	
Resources	F&P	Corporate insurance	1	
Resources	S&G	JGP contract (Jobs Go Public)	2	
Resources	S&G	Modern.gov licence	1	1.40%
Resources		**Total**	**4**	
		Total contract inflation	**1679**	

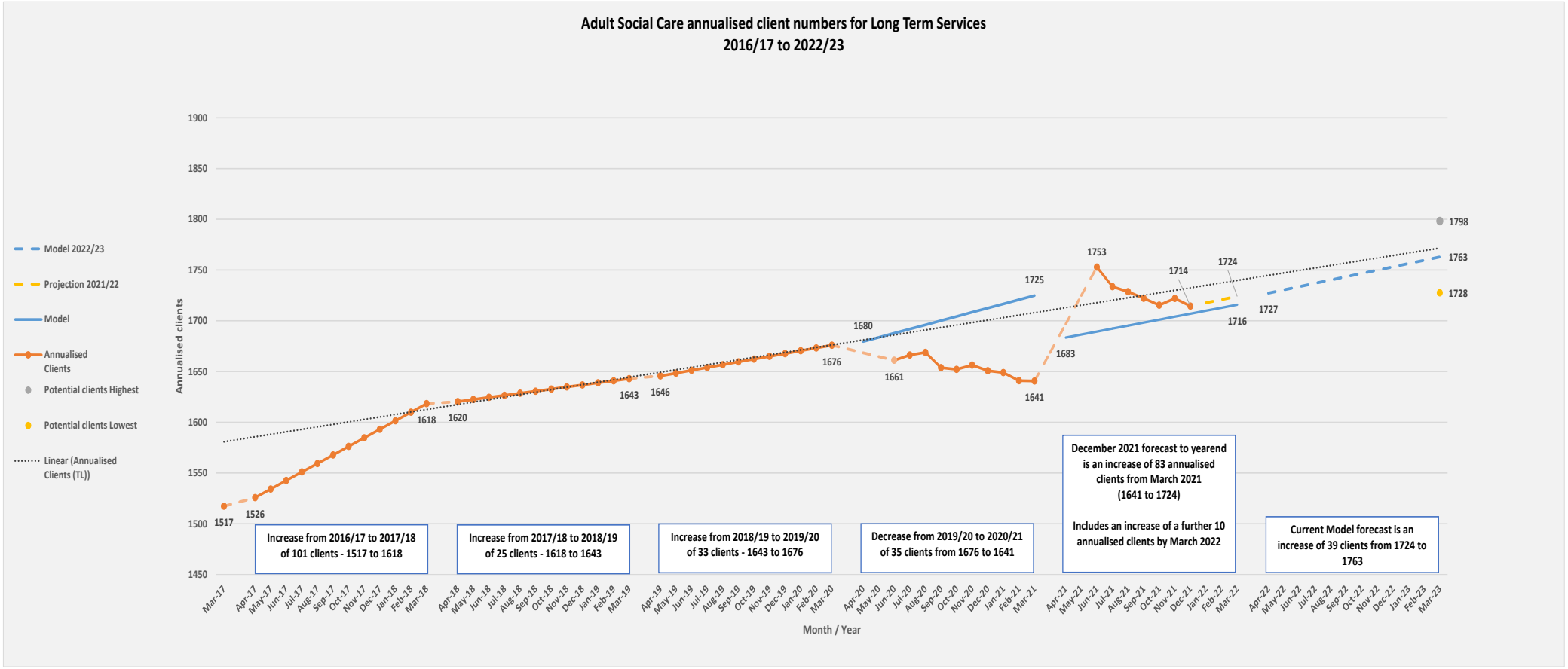
n.b. roundings may apply to £10k

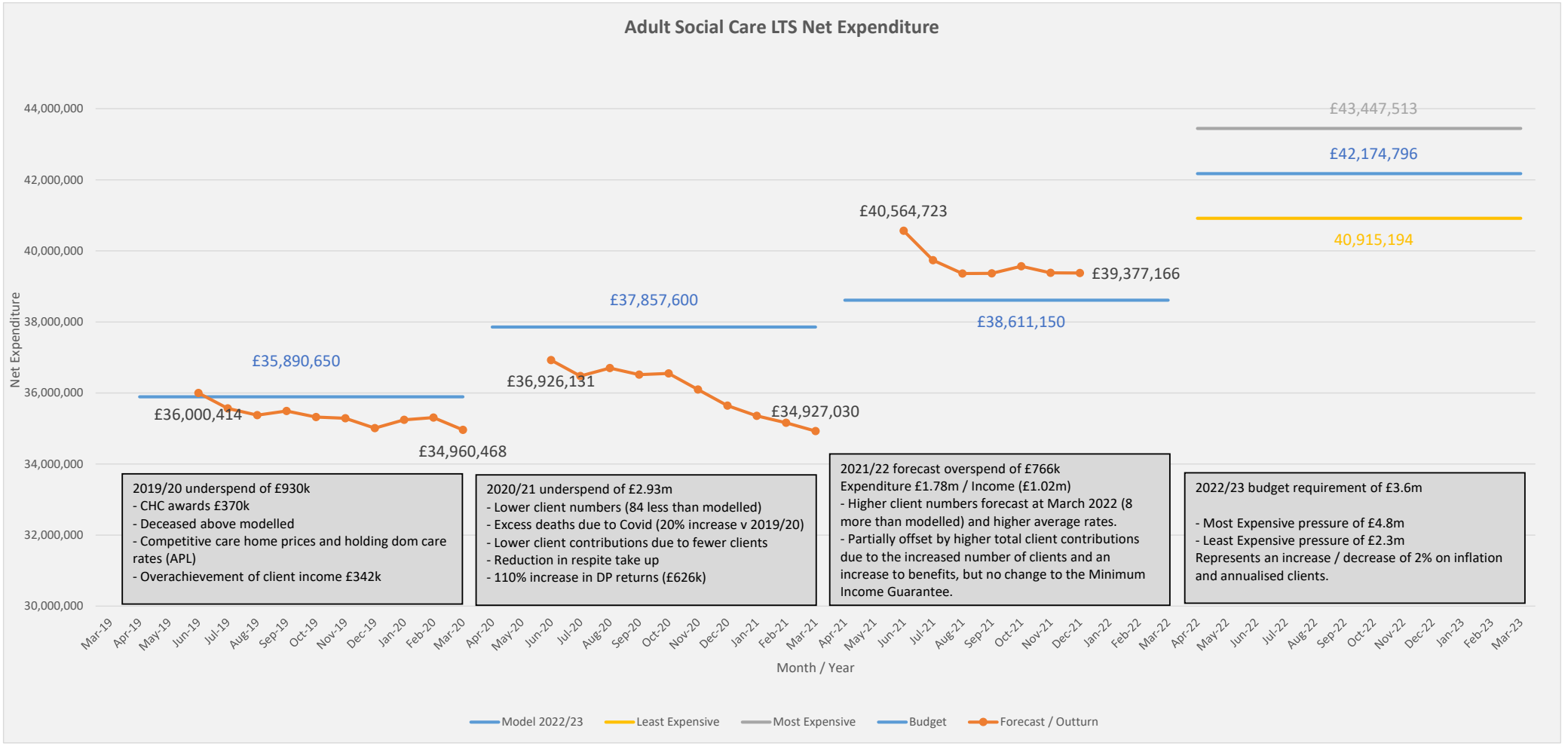
Appendix B

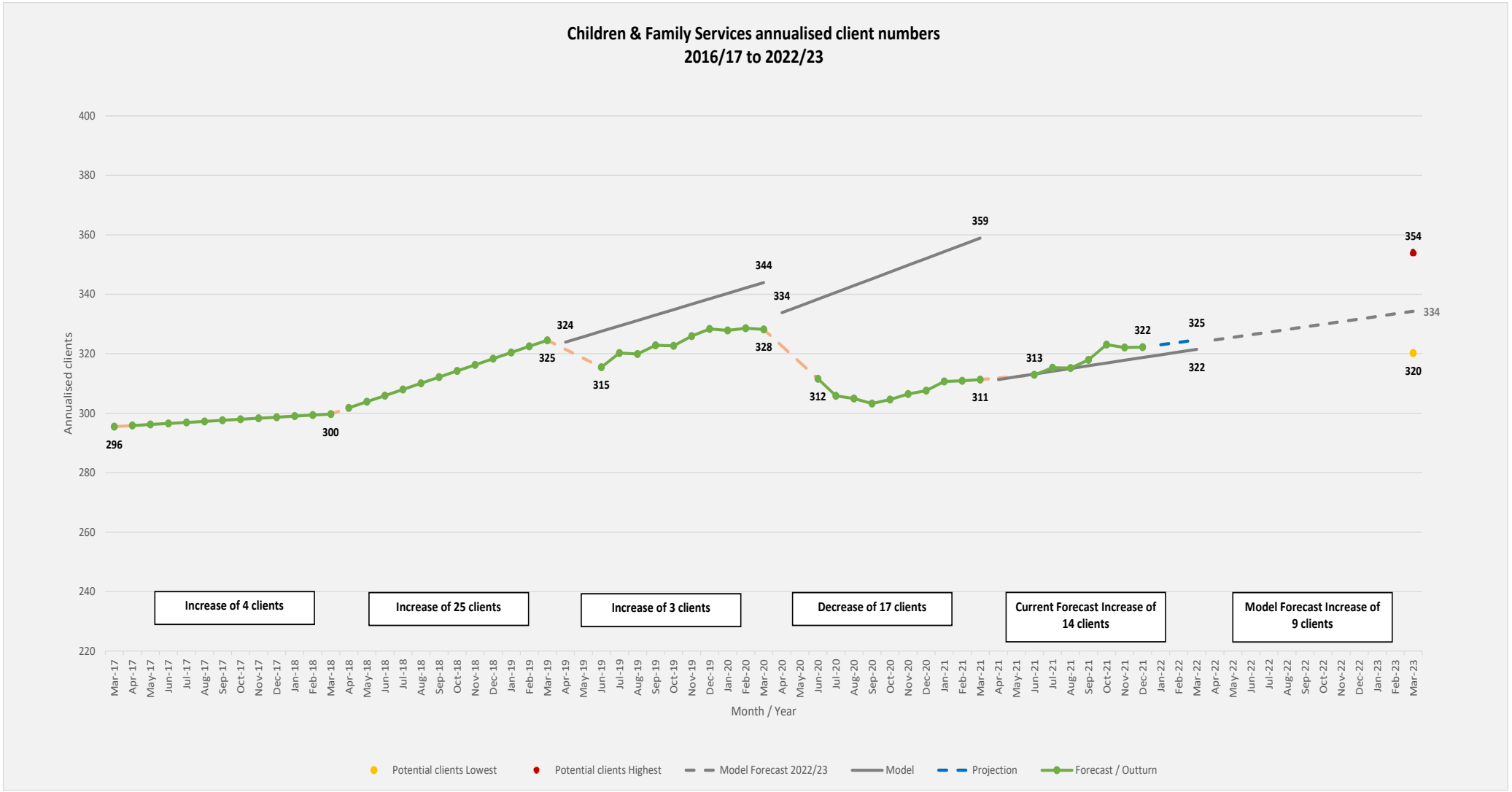
Modelled Growth

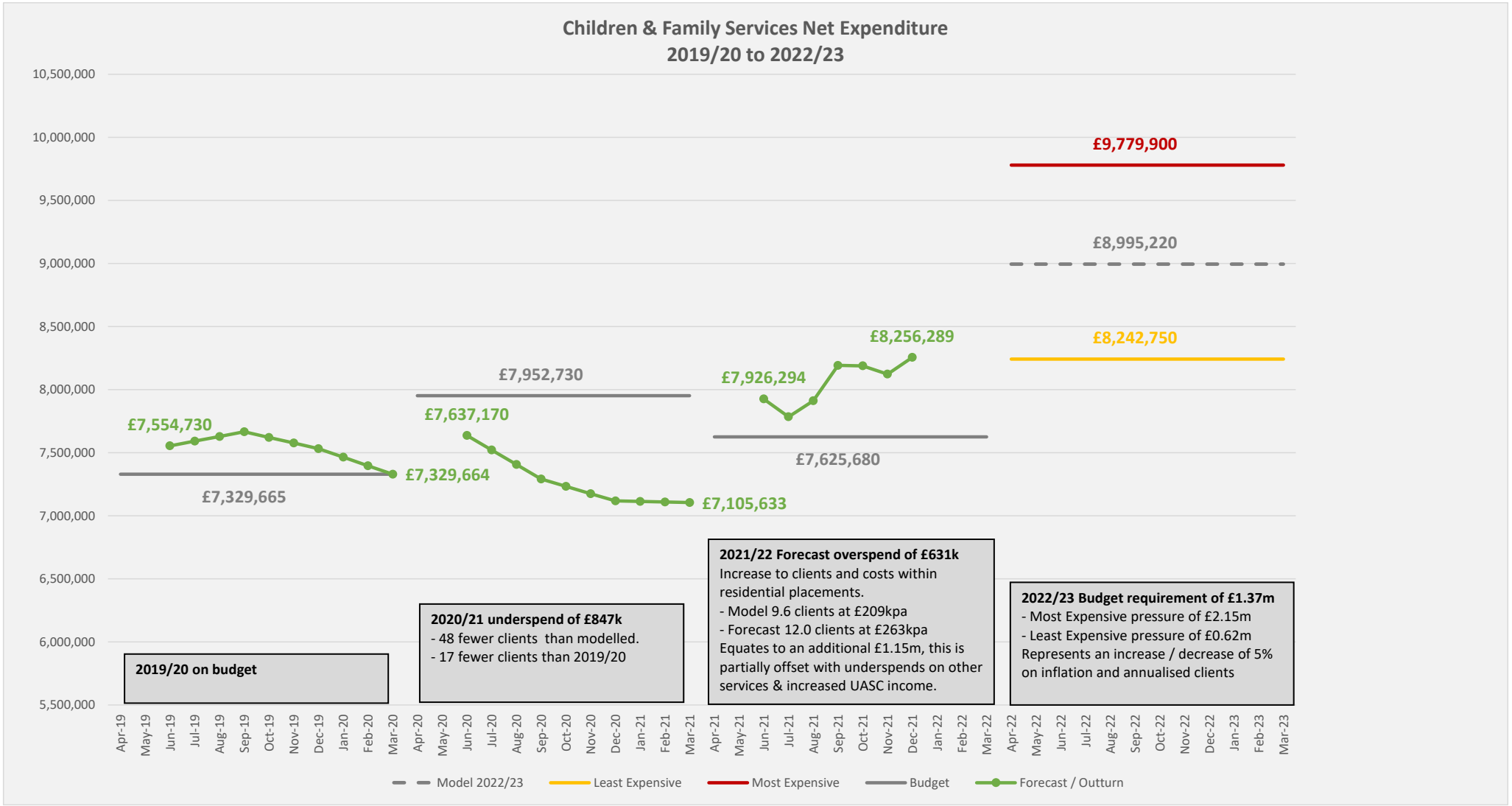
The table below shows the amount of budget growth required for 2022-23 from the modelling undertaken in Adult Social Care, Children & Family Services and Education. Modelling graphs are also shown for the ASC and CFS models.

					2022-23 Modelled Growth
Directorate	**Service**	**Ref**	**Priority**	**Description**	**£000**
People	ASC	**ASC9**	**1**	Learning Disability Transitions	900
People	ASC	**ASC10**	**1**	Commissioning Budgets demographic increases - long term services demand	2,015
People	ASC	**ASC10**	**1**	Commissioning Budgets demographic increases - long term services inflation	1,092
People	ASC	**ASC11**	**1**	Commissioning Budgets demographic increases - short term services	100
People	CFS	**CFS1**	**1**	Placement budgets increased demand	319
People	CFS	**CFS1**	**1**	Placement Budgets inflation	100
People	ES	**ES5**	**1**	Commissioning Budgets residential	440
People	ES	**ES6**	**1**	Commissioning Budgets disability support	250
People	**.**			**Total**	**5,216**

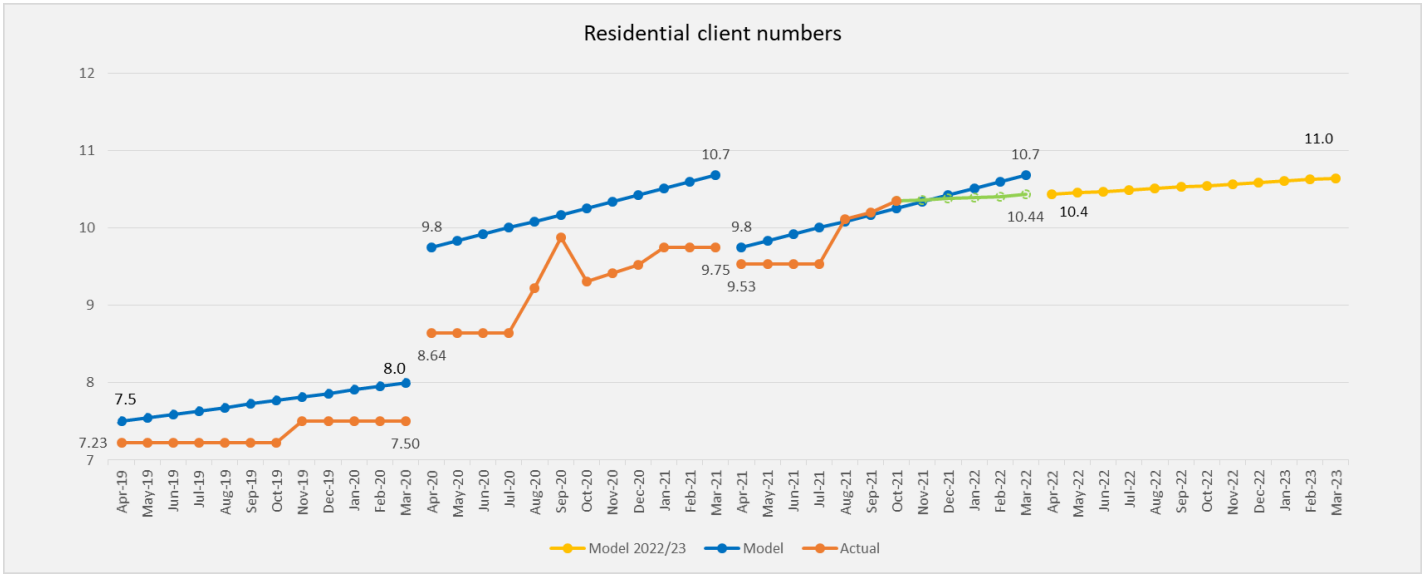

Adult Social Care annualised client numbers for Long Term Services
2016/17 to 2022/23
Model 2022/23
Projection 2021/22
Model
Annualised Clients
Potential clients Highest
Potential clients Lowest
Linear (Annualised Clients (TL))
Annualised clients
Month / Year
1900
1850
1800
1750
1700
1650
1600
1550
1500
1450
1517
1526
1618
1620
1643
1646
1676
1680
1725
1661
1641
1683
1753
1714
1724
1727
1716
1798
1763
1728
Increase from 2016/17 to 2017/18 of 101 clients - 1517 to 1618
Increase from 2017/18 to 2018/19 of 25 clients - 1618 to 1643
Increase from 2018/19 to 2019/20 of 33 clients - 1643 to 1676
Decrease from 2019/20 to 2020/21 of 35 clients from 1676 to 1641
December 2021 forecast to yearend is an increase of 83 annualised clients from March 2021 (1641 to 1724)
Includes an increase of a further 10 annualised clients by March 2022
Current Model forecast is an increase of 39 clients from 1724 to 1763

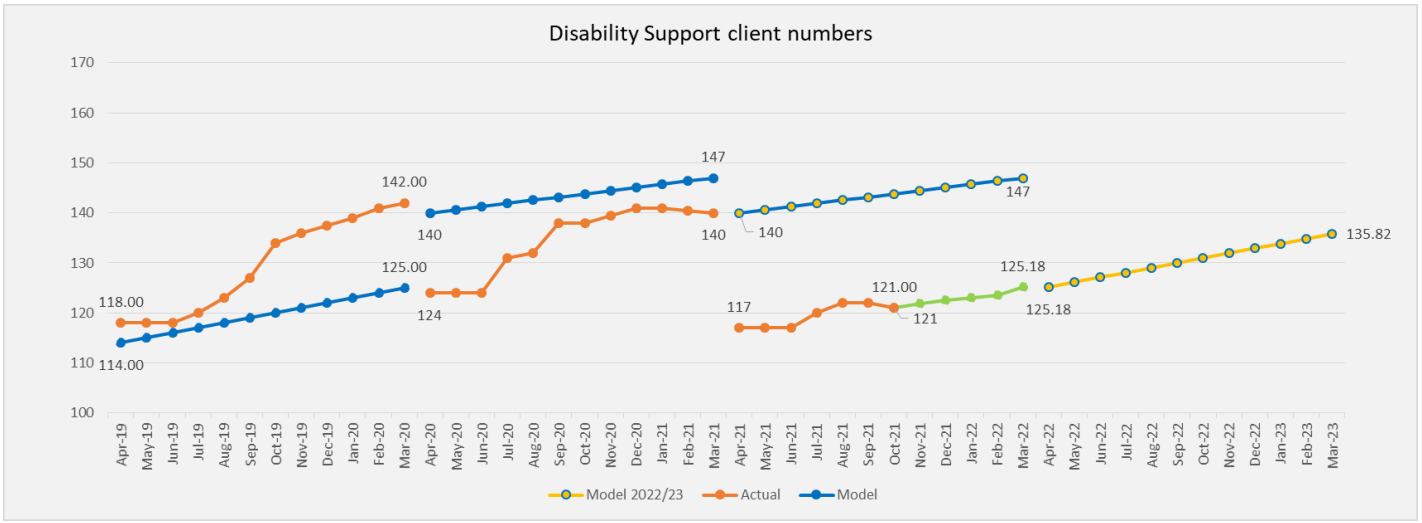

Adult Social Care LTS Net Expenditure
Net Expenditure
44,000,000
42,000,000
40,000,000
38,000,000
36,000,000
34,000,000
32,000,000
30,000,000
£43,447,513
£42,174,796
£40,915,194
£40,564,723
£39,377,166
£38,611,150
£37,857,600
£36,926,131
£35,890,650
£36,000,414
£34,960,468
£34,927,030
2019/20 underspend of £930k
- CHC awards £370k
- Deceased above modelled
- Competitive care home prices and holding dom care rates (APL)
- Overachievement of client income £342k
2020/21 underspend of £2.93m
- Lower client numbers (84 less than modelled)
- Excess deaths due to Covid (20% increase v 2019/20)
- Lower client contributions due to fewer clients
- Reduction in respite take up
- 110% increase in DP returns (£626k)
2021/22 forecast overspend of £766k
Expenditure £1.78m / Income (£1.02m)
- Higher client numbers forecast at March 2022 (8 more than modelled) and higher average rates.
- Partially offset by higher total client contributions due to the increased number of clients and an increase to benefits, but no change to the Minimum Income Guarantee.
2022/23 budget requirement of £3.6m
- Most Expensive pressure of £4.8m
- Least Expensive pressure of £2.3m
Represents an increase / decrease of 2% on inflation and annualised clients.
Mar-19 Apr-19 May-19 Jun-19 Jul-19 Aug-19 Sep-19 Oct-19 Nov-19 Dec-19 Jan-20 Feb-20 Mar-20 Apr-20 May-20 Jun-20 Jul-20 Aug-20 Sep-20 Oct-20 Nov-20 Dec-20 Jan-21 Feb-21 Mar-21 Apr-21 May-21 Jun-21 Jul-21 Aug-21 Sep-21 Oct-21 Nov-21 Dec-21 Jan-22 Feb-22 Mar-22 Apr-22 May-22 Jun-22 Jul-22 Aug-22 Sep-22 Oct-22 Nov-22 Dec-22 Jan-23 Feb-23 Mar-23
Month / Year
Model 2022/23
Least Expensive
Most Expensive
Budget
Forecast / Outturn

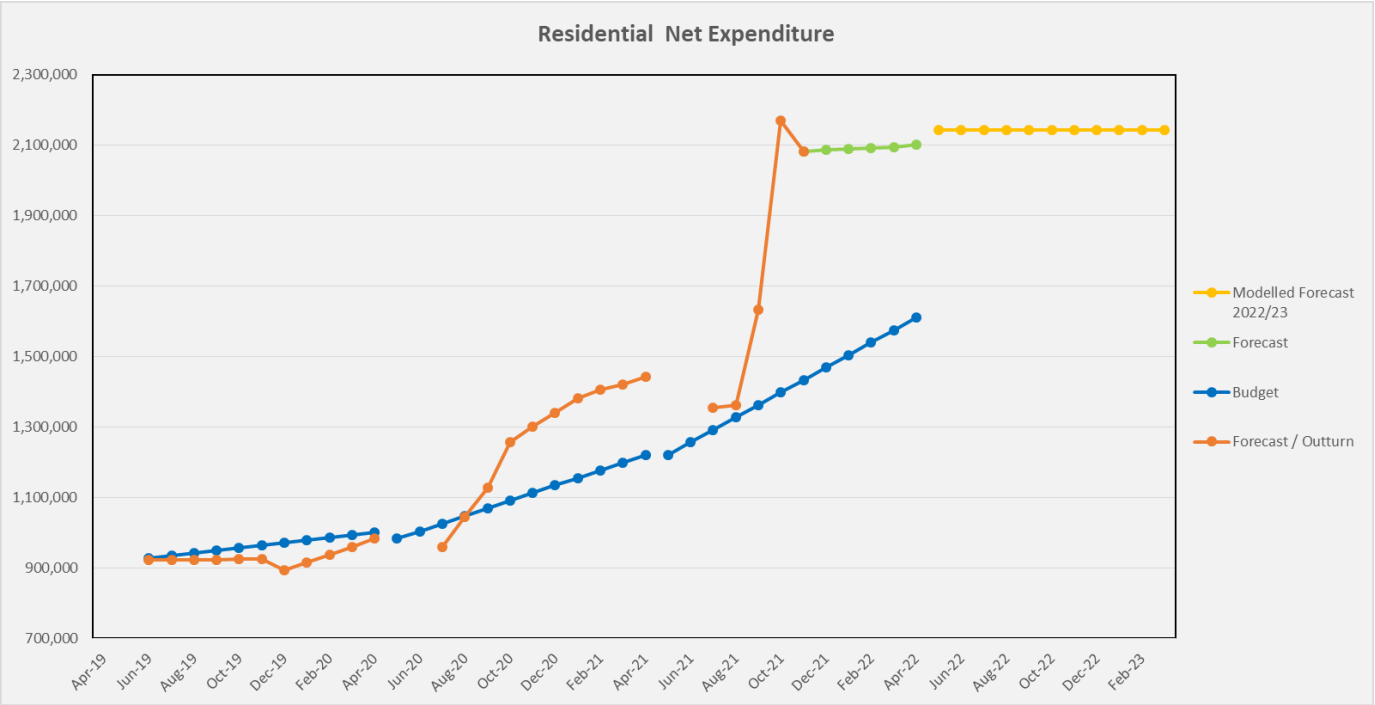

Children & Family Services annualised client numbers
2016/17 to 2022/23
Annualised clients
Month / Year
Increase of 4 clients
Increase of 25 clients
Increase of 3 clients
Decrease of 17 clients
Current Forecast Increase of 14 clients
Model Forecast Increase of 9 clients
296
300
324
325
315
344
328
334
359
312
311
313
322
325
322
334
354
320
Potential clients Lowest
Potential clients Highest
Model Forecast 2022/23
Model
Projection
Forecast / Outturn

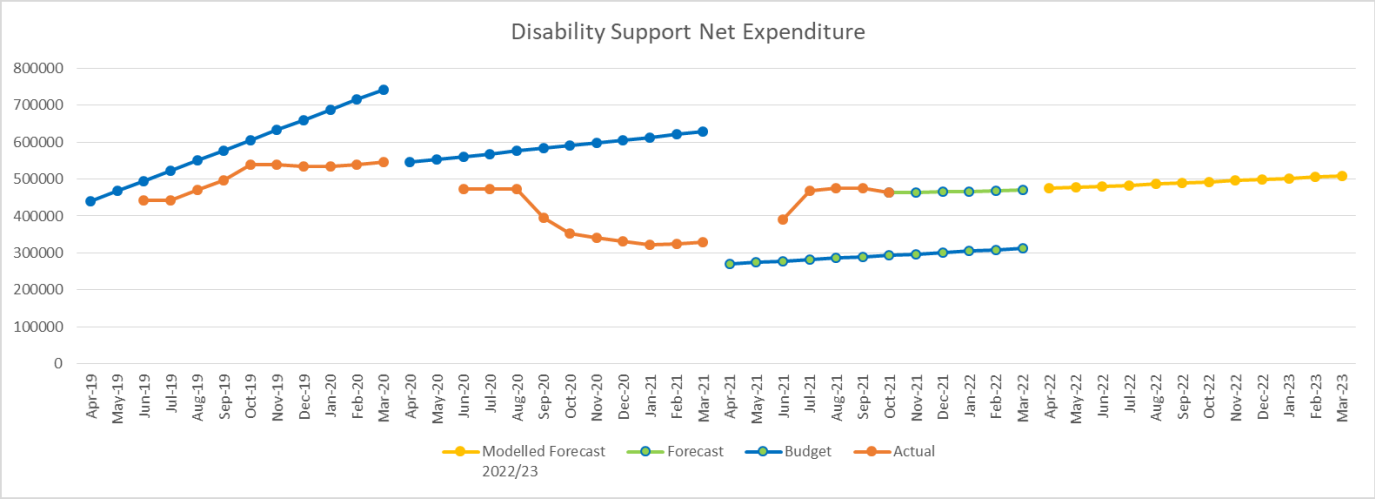

Children & Family Services Net Expenditure
2019/20 to 2022/23
10,500,000
10,000,000
9,500,000
9,000,000
8,500,000
8,000,000
7,500,000
7,000,000
6,500,000
6,000,000
5,500,000
£9,779,900
£8,995,220
£8,242,750
£8,256,289
£7,926,294
£7,952,730
£7,637,170
£7,554,730
£7,329,664
£7,625,680
£7,329,665
£7,105,633
2019/20 on budget
2020/21 underspend of £847k
- 48 fewer clients than modelled.
- 17 fewer clients than 2019/20
2021/22 Forecast overspend of £631k
Increase to clients and costs within residential placements.
- Model 9.6 clients at £209kpa
- Forecast 12.0 clients at £263kpa
Equates to an additional £1.15m, this is partially offset with underspends on other services & increased UASC income.
2022/23 Budget requirement of £1.37m
- Most Expensive pressure of £2.15m
- Least Expensive pressure of £0.62m
Represents an increase / decrease of 5% on inflation and annualised clients
Apr-19 May-19 Jun-19 Jul-19 Aug-19 Sep-19 Oct-19 Nov-19 Dec-19 Jan-20 Feb-20 Mar-20 Apr-20 May-20 Jun-20 Jul-20 Aug-20 Sep-20 Oct-20 Nov-20 Dec-20 Jan-21 Feb-21 Mar-21 Apr-21 May-21 Jun-21 Jul-21 Aug-21 Sep-21 Oct-21 Nov-21 Dec-21 Jan-22 Feb-22 Mar-22 Apr-22 May-22 Jun-22 Jul-22 Aug-22 Sep-22 Oct-22 Nov-22 Dec-22 Jan-23 Feb-23 Mar-23
Model 2022/23
Least Expensive
Most Expensive
Budget
Forecast / Outturn

Education:


Residential client numbers
12
11
10
9
8
7
7.5
8.0
7.23
7.50
9.8
10.7
8.64
9.75
9.53
10.44
10.4
11.0
Apr-19 May-19 Jun-19 Jul-19 Aug-19 Sep-19 Oct-19 Nov-19 Dec-19 Jan-20 Feb-20 Mar-20 Apr-20 May-20 Jun-20 Jul-20 Aug-20 Sep-20 Oct-20 Nov-20 Dec-20 Jan-21 Feb-21 Mar-21 Apr-21 May-21 Jun-21 Jul-21 Aug-21 Sep-21 Oct-21 Nov-21 Dec-21 Jan-22 Feb-22 Mar-22 Apr-22 May-22 Jun-22 Jul-22 Aug-22 Sep-22 Oct-22 Nov-22 Dec-22 Jan-23 Feb-23 Mar-23
Model 2022/23
Model
Actual


Disability Support client numbers
170
160
150
140
130
120
110
100
118.00
114.00
142.00
125.00
124
140
147
117
121.00
121
125.18
135.82
Apr-19 May-19 Jun-19 Jul-19 Aug-19 Sep-19 Oct-19 Nov-19 Dec-19 Jan-20 Feb-20 Mar-20 Apr-20 May-20 Jun-20 Jul-20 Aug-20 Sep-20 Oct-20 Nov-20 Dec-20 Jan-21 Feb-21 Mar-21 Apr-21 May-21 Jun-21 Jul-21 Aug-21 Sep-21 Oct-21 Nov-21 Dec-21 Jan-22 Feb-22 Mar-22 Apr-22 May-22 Jun-22 Jul-22 Aug-22 Sep-22 Oct-22 Nov-22 Dec-22 Jan-23 Feb-23 Mar-23
Model 2022/23
Actual
Model


Residential Net Expenditure
2,300,000
2,100,000
1,900,000
1,700,000
1,500,000
1,300,000
1,100,000
900,000
700,000
Apr-19
Jun-19
Aug-19
Oct-19
Dec-19
Feb-20
Apr-20
Jun-20
Aug-20
Oct-20
Dec-20
Feb-21
Apr-21
Jun-21
Aug-21
Oct-21
Dec-21
Feb-22
Apr-22
Jun-22
Aug-22
Oct-22
Dec-22
Feb-23
Modelled Forecast 2022/23
Forecast
Budget
Forecast / Outturn


Disability Support Net Expenditure
800000
700000
600000
500000
400000
300000
200000
100000
0
Apr-19
May-19
Jun-19
Jul-19
Aug-19
Sep-19
Oct-19
Nov-19
Dec-19
Jan-20
Feb-20
Mar-20
Apr-20
May-20
Jun-20
Jul-20
Aug-20
Sep-20
Oct-20
Nov-20
Dec-20
Jan-21
Feb-21
Mar-21
Apr-21
May-21
Jun-21
Jul-21
Aug-21
Sep-21
Oct-21
Nov-21
Dec-21
Jan-22
Feb-22
Mar-22
Apr-22
May-22
Jun-22
Jul-22
Aug-22
Sep-22
Oct-22
Nov-22
Dec-22
Jan-23
Feb-23
Mar-23
Modelled Forecast 2022/23
Forecast
Budget
Actual

Appendix C

Investment

					2022-23 Ongoing Investment					2022-23 One-off Investment					
											Transformation		Other Reserves		
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description	Investment in Council Strategy	Covid 19	Core service improvement	Budget realignment	TOTAL ONGOING INVESTMENT	Covid 19 Reserve	Council Strategy	Core Service	Council Strategy	Core Service	TOTAL ONE-OFF INVESTMENT
					£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
People	ASC	ASC1 & ASC14	1	Prevention: Earlier intervention leading to reduced demand on long term services Invest to save					0		200				200
People	ASC	ASC12	1	Domiciliary Care marketing					0			50			50
People	ASC	ASC13	6	Telecare smart technology			78		78						0
People	ASC	ASC15	1	Notrees Care Home additional nightime staffing			51		51						0
People	ASC	ASC16	1	Reablement service - loss of footcare income				31	31						0
People	ASC	ASC18	1	Review of care packages Relates to ASC6			95		95						0
People	CFS	CFS1	1	Placement budgets increased demand					0					850	850
People	CFS	CFS4	1	Family Safeguarding Service - additional capacity			213		213						0
People	CFS	CFS5	BAU	Mainstream funding Contact Advice & Assessment Service					0	272					272
People	CFS	CFS6	1	Family Safeguarding Model	159				159						0
People	CFS	CFS7	1	Family Safeguarding Model	43				43						0
People	CFS	CFS10	1	Adoption Services	25				25						0
People	CFS	CFS11	1	Emergency Duty Service				61	61						0
People	ES/ PHW	PHW2/ES1	1	Mental Health Worker public health funding	43				43						0
People	ES	ES2	1	NEET post extension					0	43					43
People	ES	ES3	1	SEN team restructure to meet increase in demand	303				303						0
People	**.**			**Total**	**573**	**0**	**436**	**92**	**1,101**	**315**	**200**	**50**	**0**	**850**	**1,415**

					2022-23 Ongoing Investment					2022-23 One-off Investment					
											Transformation		Other Reserves		
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description	Invest-ment in Council Strategy	Covid 19	Core service improve-ment	Budget realign-ment	TOTAL ONGOING INVEST-MENT	Covid 19 Reserve	Council Strategy	Core Service	Council Strategy	Core Service	TOTAL ONE-OFF INVEST-MENT
					£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Place	D&R	D&R8	4	LRIE Site Investment					0				100		100
Place	D&R	D&R9	BAU	Public Protection: Private Sector Housing Officers			90		90						0
Place	D&R	D&R14	5	Place shaping and Delivery. Invest to save against bio diversity net gain.					0					265	265
Place	D&R	D&Rxxx M&W'	4	Minerals & Waste Local Plan Examination					0				250		250
Place	D&R	D&Rxxx4H C	4	Security 4 Houses Corner					0					158	158
Place	D&R	D&RxxxLP PC'	4	Local Plan Project Co-Ordinator					0				60		60
Place	D&R	D&R15	3	Funding to ensure short term continuation of some of the activities undertaken by Thames Valley Local Economic Partnership (LEP) until the outcome of the Government review into LEPs.					0				60		60
Place	ENV	ENV11	5	Newbury Bus Contract extension				35	35						0
Place	ENV	ENV13	5	Senior Transport Officer re Enhanced Bus Partnership	55				55						0
Place	ENV	ENV15	4	Highways Development Control staffing			60		60						0
Place	ENV	ENV19	5	Re-writing Grounds Maintenance contract and specification					0					40	40
Place	ENV	ENV20	5	Ash die back pressure (Funded from T&C Reserve 22/23)					0					100	100
Place	ENV	ENV21	5	Canal and Rivers Trust Grant				5	5						0
Place	ENV	ENV22	5	Revenue studies, projects and initiatives for Environment Delivery					0		50				50
Place	ENV	ENV28	4	Car Parking loss of income		200			200						0
Place	ENV	ENV29	BAU	Fleet Driver Salary increase but dependent on completed appraisal			80		80						0
Place	.			**Total**	**55**	**200**	**230**	**40**	**525**	**0**	**50**	**0**	**470**	**563**	**1,083**
Resources	CSI	CSI2 / CSI6	BAU	Timelord2			150		150						0
Resources	CSI	CSI3	6	Digitise Customer Services	75				75		150				150
Resources	CSI	CSI5	6	ICT Service enhancement - additional staffing			80		80			45			45
Resources	CSI	CSI7	BAU	ICT Disaster Recovery			30		30						0
Resources	F&P	F&P1	6	HR/Payroll solution					0					65	65
Resources	F&P	F&P4	BAU	Schools Insurance DfE change				250	250						0
Resources	F&P	F&P6	BAU	Lone Worker Software Application			50		50						0
Resources	RES	RES XXX1'	BAU	Workforce development	35				35						0
Resources	COM	COM1	BAU	Schools Kitchen Helpdesk				8	8						0
Resources	COM	COM3	BAU	Domiciliary care commissioning loss of income				10	10						0
Resources	.			**Total**	**110**	**0**	**310**	**268**	**688**	**0**	**150**	**45**	**0**	**65**	**260**
.	.			**Total**	**738**	**200**	**976**	**400**	**2,314**	**315**	**400**	**95**	**470**	**1,478**	**2,758**

Appendix D

Savings and Income Generation

					2022-23 Savings and Income Proposals		
					Proposal	Theme	Implications
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description	£000		
People	ASC	ASC1 & ASC14	1	Prevention: Earlier intervention leading to reduced demand on long term services Invest to save	(200)	Cost Avoidance	The ASC model indicates rising costs; this saving is in effect seeking to limit the extent of the growth by taking a more preventative approach. It will require investment in staffing provision (alongside the implementation of the Resource Allocation System (RAS))
People	ASC	ASC2	1	Supported Living accommodation for Learning Disability clients.	(36)	Service Reform	Will require work with, and agreement from, colleagues within Benefits Team.
People	ASC	ASC3	1	Health funding: Review shared funding for clients with Mental Health needs (S117) and Continuing Healthcare (CHC).	(450)	Cost Avoidance	Requires some cooperation from the Clinical Commissioning Group and may lead to wider challenge on other areas of shared funding.
People	ASC	ASC4	1	Resource Allocation System (RAS) software	(26)	Cost Avoidance	This saving assumes that there is currently some over-provision. There is already a Good Practice Forum designed to reduce that, and so the saving is likely to be limited. The use of the RAS is dependent upon the implementation of Care Director Version 6. Ensuring that care is 'right-sized' will help to address the challenge regarding the care workforce.
People	ASC	ASC5	1	Market Management	(175)	Cost Avoidance	The care market requires careful management. Excessive downward pressure on costs can store up problems for the future. The Local Authority has statutory duties (Care Act 2014) to manage the market and consequently actions will need to be taken based on up-to-date market information.
People	ASC	ASC6	1	Review of care packages	(345)	Cost Avoidance	May impact some provider services/ clients/ families.
People	ASC	ASC7	1	Digital Pathway	(43)	Transform	The saving relies on the digital pathway providing a demonstrably effective self-service option. The pathway will connect to Care Director version 6 and is dependent on the implementation of Care Director Version 6.
People	ASC	ASC19	1	Efficiency re utilisation of workforce reform grant	(100)	Cost Avoidance	None
People	CFS	CFS2	1	Placements - actions leading to reduced demand	(135)	Cost Avoidance	The impact of covid, particularly on those more vulnerable households, is considerable and is likely to have long lasting implications. This makes it hard to predict with confidence future demand. Even so, the principle of effective earlier help is clear, and done well will reduce future costly demand.
People	CFS	CFS3	1	Staffing capacity savings Relates to CFS4 and CFS5	(133)	Service Reform	The challenge is being able to confidently predict when complex demand will noticeably reduce and capacity becoming surplus to requirements. Furthermore, care will need to be taken to ensure we do not reduce (lower cost) staff capacity which results in more costly staff undertaking the work. When demand (numbers and complexity) reduces we will be able to delete these posts safely and confidently.
People	CFS	CFS12	1	Centre for Skills and Professional Development surplus budget	(40)	Cost Avoidance	None
People	CFS	CFS13	1	Substance misuse contract saving	(24)	Cost Avoidance	None
People	ES/ PHW	PHW1	1	Family hubs public health funding	(250)	Service Reform	None
People	ES/ PHW	PHW2/ES1	1	Mental Health Worker public health funding	(43)	Service Reform	None
People	ES	ES7	2	Traded income increase based on prior levels achieved	(80)	Income	None
People	ES	ES8	2	Home to School Transport inflationary increases	(20)	Income	None
People	C&W	CW1	2	Northcroft expansion	(42)	Income	Savings currently assumed to be as per the business case taken to Capital Stategy Group in February 2020
People	C&W	CW4	2	Contract uplift re leisure based on increases already in place but not budgeted for	(21)	Income	None
People	.			**Total**	**(2,163)**		**0**

					2022-23 Savings and Income Proposals		
					Proposal	Theme	Implications
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description	£000		
Place	D&R	D&R1	4	Financial contribution from registered providers	(5)	Income	None
Place	D&R	D&R2	4	Home improvement agency income	(25)	Income	None
Place	D&R	D&R3	4	Digital Housing	(20)	Transform	None
Place	D&R	D&R4	4	Reduction in temporary accommodation maintenance	(15)	Disinvest	None
Place	D&R	D&R11	1	Disabled Facilities Grant fees	(10)	Income	Only implication relates to the impact of the pandemic on returning to Business As Usual and generating the income from this work
Place	D&R	D&R16	4	Economic Development	(40)	Cost Avoidance	West Berkshire Consortium budget no longer required
Place	ENV	ENV1	5	Food Waste Diversion from Landfill	(100)	Service Reform	This saving is a consequence of the introduction of a new service which will enable residents to dispose of food waste every week compared to the current fortnightly collection within the garden waste service.
Place	ENV	ENV3	4	Street Naming and Numbering policy for charging developers	(10)	Income	Staff need time to re-write the policy
Place	ENV	ENV4	4	Cashless Parking	(20)	Transform	Removing the ability to pay by cash may result in equalities issues. To mitigate this the role-out of cashless has been gradual and some local cash alternatives have been retained.
Place	ENV	ENV5	4	Parking Team Review	(30)	Transform	None
Place	ENV	ENV7	5	Further deployment of Solar PV Projects	(100)	Transform	None
Place	ENV	ENV9	4	Improving functionality of ELM system [Highway Asset Digitisation]	(25)	Transform	None. Assumed reduction by 1 FTE by digitisation of reporting highways problems
Place	ENV	ENV24	5	Waste Management - Dry Recycling increase	(250)	Income	The extremely volatile nature of this income requires a risk reserve for the full amount to cover any possibility of a sudden reduction in market prices.
Place	ENV	ENV26	4	Traffic Network Management Income	(300)	Income	Assumes current level of income does not reduce.
Place	ENV	ENV27	5	Garden waste income: increased numbers and inflationary increase	(110)	Income	Assumes current level of take up does not reduce.
Place	ENV	ENV30	4	Transport planning	(20)	Service Reform	None
Place	ENV	ENV32	BAU	Efficiency savings	(48)	Service Reform	None
Place	ENV	ENV33	BAU	Review of fees and charges	(15)	Income	None
Place	.			**Total**	**(1,143)**		

					2022-23 Savings and Income Proposals		
					Proposal	Theme	Implications
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description	£000		
Corporate	All	CORP1	BAU	Essential Car User allowances	(10)	Service Reform	Budget re-alignment
Corporate	All	CORP2	BAU	Comensura corporate savings	(100)	Transform	Additional income through agency cost rebate
Corporate	All	CORP3	BAU	Timelord2 reduced mileage	(250)	Cost Avoidance	Additional savings through revised working arrangements
Corporate	All	CORP4	BAU	Efficiency savings across unused budget lines	(138)	Cost Avoidance	Efficiency review through various cost centres
Corporate	All	CORP6	BAU	Recruitment lag for staffing investment	(300)	Cost Avoidance	Delayed start to new posts in 2022-23, requires £300k investment in 2023-24
Corporate	.			**Total**	**(798)**		
Resources	CSI	CSI1	BAU	Print and Postage Savings	(85)	Service Reform	Reduced rates of printing and postage to reflect changed service provision a
Resources	CSI	CSI2 / CSI6	BAU	Timelord2	(75)	Transform	Further savings once Timelord2 is implemented
Resources	CSI	CSI3	6	Digitise Customer Services	(25)	Transform	Staff reduction through greater use of online support rather than telephone based response in customer services.
Resources	F&P	F&P3	BAU	Use of alternative borrowing strategies	(1,000)	Transform	Review of investment decision timings, and alternative borrowing strategies over different timescales. Using an increased blend of short as well as long term borrowing, and investigating other borrowing sources, eg. CMIs, infrastructure bond, Municipal Bond agency to reduce costs.
Resources	F&P	F&P7	BAU	Alarm maintenance contract saving	(18)	Cost Avoidance	None
Resources	F&P	F&P8	BAU	Property savings from disposals	(32)	Cost Avoidance	None
Resources	RES	RES XXX2'	BAU	Directorate efficiency review	(36)	Cost Avoidance	None
Resources	S&G	S&G3	BAU	Apprenticeship investment funded by specific reserves	(125)	Service Reform	Was for a 3 year period, remaining years to be funded from Council strategy reserve
Resources	.			**Total**	**(1,396)**		**0**
.	.			**Total**	**(5,500)**		

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Appendix Ei)

Reserves Statements

The Statement of Accounts that are produced each year details all the Council's reserves and explains why they are held. Reserves are reported in two categories: unusable and usable reserves. Unusable reserves include those reserves which are kept to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, retirement and employee benefits. Unusable reserves cannot be used to provide Council services. Usable reserves are those reserves that a Council may use to provide services or reduce local taxation, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use.

The level of usable reserves the Council holds is reviewed each year as part of the budgetary process. Consideration is given to the current financial standing of the Council, the funding outlook into the medium term and the financial risk environment the Council is operating in.

Councils generally hold usable reserves for a number of reasons:

- To use at a later date to support investment projects
- To temporarily hold unused portions of grants that can be legally used at a later date
- To insure themselves against major unexpected events such as flooding
- To guard against general risk
- To smooth the impact of funding reductions
- To guard against emergent specific risks, such as business rate appeals, increased demand, and the impact of social care reform.

The Council's usable reserves are as follows:

- General Reserve: held for non-specific items and risks
- Earmarked Reserves: amounts held for specific schemes and for specific purposes e.g. self-insurance

During 2021-22, earmarked reserves are expected to reduce by £6m, with a further £20m flowing through the Collection Fund from last year. A further £5m will be used to support the 2022-23 budget. This will fund investment in the Council Strategy, use remaining Covid-19 grants, and fund the Collection Fund deficit.

A summary is shown in the following table:

Reserve	Balance as at 31.3.2021	Forecast increase during 2021-22	Forecast decrease during 2021-22	Forecast balance as at 31.3.2022	Forecast incease / decrease for 2022-23 budget setting	Forecast balance as at 1.4.2022
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
General Fund (unallocated) including specifc risk reserves	12.12	1.40	-2.93	10.59	-2.33	8.26
Earmarked Reserves	46.53	1.73	-27.37	20.89	-2.68	18.21
Total usable reserves	**58.65**	**3.13**	**-30.30**	**31.48**	**-5.01**	**26.47**

The General Reserve

The purpose of the General Reserve is to act as a fund to be used in emergencies and to protect council taxpayers from any steep rises in future Council Tax if the Council over spends against its budget. The s151 officer, Executive Director (Resources) recommends that the General Reserve totals, as a minimum, £7m of the Council's net revenue expenditure.

The calculation of the £7m is based on the below. It is very unlikely that all of these risks would occur at the same time. However, there is cumulative risk of a number of these factors taking place over a short period of time. The purpose of the general reserve is enable the Council to continue to function and perform its services without significant impediment:

Item	Rationale	Amount
Pressure on demand and significant income budgets	A 5% movement on demand budgets and on reduced income	£5.5m
Pressure on traded budgets	A 10% movement on traded budgets,	£0.2m
General risks to cover the items below	See items below	£1.3m
Total *minimum* required General Reserve		**£7m**
Forecast General Reserve (including service specific risks)	Service specific risks are part of general reserves	**£8.3m**

The General Reserve is expected to cover any of the following risks should they arise:

- The impact of significant increases in demand
- Lack of delivery of all savings targets
- Economy measures and service reductions always contain some degree of uncertainty as to whether their full effects will be achieved
- Unforeseen events such as the flooding during January 2014 or Covid-19 in 2020-21
- Litigation
- Changes from specific grants to the non ring fenced government grants
- Grants being introduced or removed mid-year
- Unforeseen circumstances
- General day to day cash flow needs and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing
- Reduced income due to deferred income and social care clients' property decreasing in value

Earmarked Reserves

The Council has other reserves which are earmarked for specific purposes.

Reserve	Balance as at 31.3.2021	Forecast increase during 2021-22	Forecast decrease during 2021-22	Forecast balance as at 31.3.2022	Forecast incease / decrease for 2022-23 budget setting	Forecast balance as at 1.4.2022
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Schools balances	8.02			8.02		8.02
Parish special expenses	0.01			0.01		0.01
Self-insurance fund	1.14		-0.21	0.93		0.93
Specific Earmarked Reserves	37.36	1.73	-27.16	11.93	-2.68	9.24
Total Earmarked Reserves	**46.53**	**1.73**	**-27.37**	**20.89**	**-2.68**	**18.21**

Schools balances
This is an amalgamation of unspent and overspent balances.

Parish special expenses
These are explained in detail in Appendix G.

Self-insurance fund
This fund has been established to ensure that costs to the Council in relation to claims, can be met whilst limiting the impact of higher premiums on the Council's revenue budget. The fund is used to pay the first £250k of any property claim and the first £100k of other claims. External insurance covers the balance of claims.

Specific earmarked reserves
Funds set aside to cover specific future liabilities. The main items in here are:

Reserve	Balance as at 31.3.2021	Forecast increase during 2021-22	Forecast decrease during 2021-22	Forecast balance as at 31.3.2022	Forecast incease / decrease for 2022-23 budget setting	Forecast balance as at 1.4.2022
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Covid Reserves	5.91		-4.63	1.28	-1.28	0.00
Collection Fund volatility reserves	20.83		-19.70	1.13	0.17	1.30
Transformation Fund	0.89		-0.39	0.50	-0.50	0.01
Public Health	0.84			0.84		0.84
Outcomes Based Budgeting equalisation	2.00			2.00	-0.46	1.54
Council Strategy investment	0.22			0.22	-0.22	0.00
Future town centre studies	0.15		-0.05	0.10	-0.10	0.00
ASC risk reserve	0.82		-0.39	0.43	1.50	1.93
Legal risk reserve	0.10			0.10		0.10
Education risk reserve	0.12		-0.04	0.08	0.17	0.25
Children's & families risk reserve	0.36	0.23	-0.40	0.19	0.10	0.29
Commercial property risk reserve	0.84		-0.31	0.54		0.54
Transport and Countryside risk reserve	0.10			0.10	-0.10	0.00
Elections	0.06			0.06		0.06
Waste Management	0.15		-0.08	0.07		0.07
Schools in financial difficulty	0.50			0.50		0.50
Local Development Framework	0.20			0.20	-0.2	0.00
Restructuring reserve	0.59		-0.38	0.21		0.21
Community Solutions Fund	0.20			0.20		0.20
Future budget requirement	1.01	1.50	-0.74	1.77	-1.77	0.00
Promotion of Integrated Transportation (street works)	0.53			0.53		0.53
Commuted sums	0.65		-0.06	0.59		0.59
Other	0.28			0.28		0.28
Total Specific Earmarked Reserves	**37.36**	**1.73**	**-27.16**	**11.93**	**-2.68**	**9.24**

Collection Fund volatility - to support the volatility associated with taxbase estimates upon which the Council Tax is collected, and business rates in relation to estimates, appeals and timing. As per other elements of the budget papers, there has been significant volatility in the collection fund, especially in respect of business rates, and a three year spread of the deficit from 2021-22 across the period 2021-24 has been taken.

Transformation - In order to support the Medium Term Financial Strategy to deliver its transformation plans, the Executive established a Transformation Reserve. This will ensure that the Council has the resources to pursue plans outlined in the MTFS and to invest in strategies that will bring future benefits to the organisation. The reserve was increased during 2019-20 to support future transformation projects.

Outcomes based budgeting – to support the re-profiling of savings *if* required as part of the MTFS; see the MTFS document.

Council Strategy investment – to enable delivery of measures to support the Council Strategy as referenced elsewhere in the budget papers. Expect to deplete to £0m at the end of 2022-23.

Future town centre studies – funding set aside to deliver town centre studies to support local centres in a similar manner to Newbury town centre piece of work undertaken. Spend is expected to commence late in 2021-22 so these reserves will likely deplete to £0 in 2022-23.

Service risk reserves: Within the Earmarked Reserves are Service Specific Risk Funds for:

- Adult Social Care £2m,

There are significant risks in ASC at present for 2022-23; rising inflation over 5% could have an impact with further pressures on staffing and placement costs; some of this can be mitigated through specific Government Grants, as yet determined, from the £1.7bn nationally set aside by Government for the ASC market.

- Children & Family Services £290k,
- Education £250k and
- Legal Disbursements £100k.

Commercial property - established to cover risks associated with the investment in commercial property. The Council may need to use £300k of this to support lower than expected income during 2021-22.

Waste management - to support the transition to a new model of waste management.

Schools in financial difficulty - to fund any additional support that the Council may need to provide to schools in financial difficulty.

Restructuring - used to cover the exit costs associated with some of the savings proposals. The balance remaining in the restructuring reserve at the end of the financial year will be rolled forward to fund any future restructuring costs to the Council.

Commuted sums: Ring-fenced for specific schemes and cannot be added into general fund reserves.

Other
Other specific earmarked reserves are in place to support specific service requirements or projects.

A full list of the Council's reserves are disclosed in the Council's financial statements 2010-21 available on our website. Please note that these reserves estimates are before any changes from the 2021-22 financial year end which will be reported in the Council's financial statements for 2021-22 in draft form by the end of June 2022.

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Appendix Eii)

Adequacy of Reserves and Robustness of Budget Estimates
s151 Officer Statement

1. Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Section 151 Officer, Executive Director (Resources) to formally report to Council as part of the tax setting report his view of the robustness of estimates and the adequacy of reserves. The Council is required to take these views into account when setting the Council Tax at its meeting on 2 March 2021.

2 Adequacy of Reserves

2.1 This statement focuses upon the unallocated general reserve and excludes schools' budgets and schools' unspent balances, which will be reviewed by the schools funding forum when Governing Bodies have submitted their budgets. The minimum prudent level of reserves that the Council should maintain is a matter of judgement and cannot be judged merely against the current risks facing the Council as these can and will change over time.

2.2 The consequences of not keeping a prudent minimum level of reserves can be serious. In the event of a major problem or a series of events, the Council would run a serious risk of a deficit or of being forced to cut spending during the year in a damaging and arbitrary way.

2.3 CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) have issued a notification from the LAAP (Local Authority Accounting Panel) stating that there should be no imposed limit on the level or nature of balances required to be held by an individual Council (except under section 26 where this has been imposed by ministers). West Berkshire Council policy had consistently kept a prudent historic minimum level of balances of 5% of net revenue expenditure (NRE); this analysis has been updated for more specific demand and general risks with a minimum level set out for the 2022-23 budget, see further below.

It is recommended that general reserve balances be set at a minimum of £7m.

Before the 2021-22 outturn is completed, the general reserves stood at just over £10m based on estimated use of reserves for the 2021-22 budget and in year movements, and this ensures that the Council has a sufficient level of reserves to support it in the immediate future. These reserves are expected to reduce to just over £8m by the end of the 2022-23 financial year.

3 Robustness of Estimates

3.1 <u>The treatment of inflation and interest rates</u>

The 2022-23 pay award for staff has been estimated in at the Government's prevailing inflation rate target of 2%; there remains a risk around the assumptions for the 2021-22 pay award. This was originally assumed to be 0% for those earning over £24,000 in line with the Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcements on public sector pay. There have been subsequent negotiations between the Local Government employers and unions, with an offer made of 1.75%. The 1.75% offer has not been accepted by the unions and at the time of preparing this budget is the current position. This offer has been assumed in the base budget build as the latest

information available. Any pay award above the assumptions would need to be funded from reserves. Non pay related budgets have been inflated at the contractually committed rate of inflation or where services can demonstrate a requirement to do so to maintain service delivery levels. Interest rates for 2022-23 have been assumed to remain at current levels (0.25%) for new long term borrowing; the Investment Strategy also on this agenda covers this in more detail. Increases to fees and charges have been set in line with inflation where appropriate based on the October 2021 level of CPI in the main (4.2%).

Social Care provide costs remain an area of significant financial pressure. The budget takes into account some inflationary pressures, and t some relief in the form of Adult Social Care workforce reform grant as well as other ASC grants, though details on these have not been released for 2022-23 yet. This will remain an area of financial pressure; workforce costs, with the living wage and wider inflationary pressures on a social care market already under pressure, especially with Covid impacts, remains a high risk. There is a specific ASC risk reserve to support the service and allow for future base budget adjustments to be made if further pressures emerge.

3.2 Efficiency savings, productivity gains and Adult Social Care reform

The budget contains proposals to deliver £5.5m of savings or income. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) includes a four year savings or income programme to ensure that future revenue budgets remain in financial balance to ensure the Council has adequate resources to deliver its Council Strategy outcomes.

The forthcoming Adult Social Care reforms 'build back better' do present a challenge to the authority's future financial arrangements. Though in place for the 2023-24 financial year, there is an impact on the 2022-23 budget with preparations to be made for these changes. The Government have provided some funding (£0.3m) to help in preparations for this, but based on forecasts, this is unlikely to be sufficient for the future; this is discussed further at the end of this appendix looking beyond 2023.

3.3 Budget and Financial management and the impact of Covid-19

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

Year	Over/ -under spend £m	% of net budget
2011/12	-0.49	0.39%
2012/13	-0.62	0.50%
2013/14	-0.45	0.37%
2014/15	0.03	0.02%
2015/16	0.12	0.10%
2016/17	0.01	0.01%
2017/18	0.28	0.23%
2018/19	-0.08	0.15%
2019/20	-1.50	-1.16%
2020/21	*-4.60*	*-3.54%*
2021/22 est	*-0.10*	*-0.08%*

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

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

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the Council's financial position. Government funding in 2021-22 year has continued with a one off non-ringfenced grant and one quarter of partial compensation for income losses. There have also been some extra specific grants e.g. Contain Outbreak Management Funds (COMF) and Business Grants, but no further new funding is expected for the 2022-23 budget.

There has also been a significant impact on business rates. In 2020-21 the Council passported almost £40m of business rates reliefs to businesses across the district, with further business rates relief provided in 2021-22 as well as for the future financial year. The accounting for this will mean a significant move through reserves on the NNDR1 (government return for business rates) and on the collection fund. The collection of the residual business rates in 2020-21 and 2021-22 remained constrained and the estimates in the NNDR1 reflect this. The Council is spreading the Collection Fund deficit (for business rates and Council Tax) over a three year period, and so the estimates assumed for collection fund deficits will have ramification for future financial years as well. Significant uncertainty remains around, especially on business rates but to a lesser extent Council Tax, the amount of tax collected and what will need to be written off in future years.

3.4 Adequacy of insurance and risk management

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

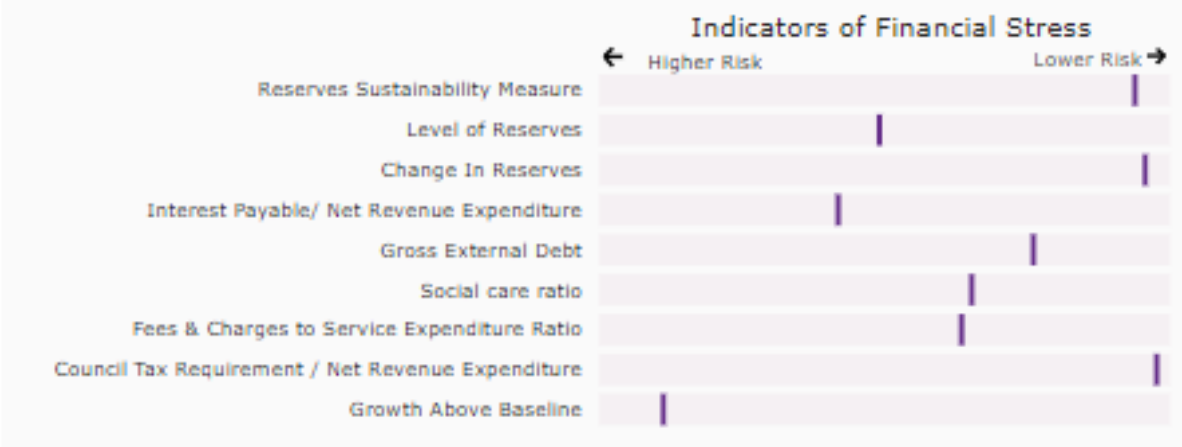
3.5 Overall financial standing of the authority

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

The Council can increase Council Tax (including the ASC precept) by 5.99% in the current year but is proposing to do so by only 4%. The Government have not clarified

the carry forward rules, but imply that there will be no carry forward of unused flexibilities from 2022-23 budget setting into the future (unlike the 3% flexibility carried forward from 2021-22 to 2022-23). By not taking 2% of a Council Tax rise, the Council is forgoing £2m of additional income which would support future budgets and provide additional protection against future financial uncertainties and / or Government reforms, as well as providing additional funding for Council services.

As part of the consideration of the financial standing of the Council, CIPFA have released a financial resilience index. The indicators included are relatively small in number, they do provide a comparative (versus other unitary councils) snapshot of the previous year's position. The summary below (for 2019-20) is highlighting that the Council's reserve position has continued to strengthen and improve its financial resilience, as well as see comparable levels of debt financing and social care rations as other unitary authorities. As part the above, general fund reserves are above the minimum level set out. The below also highlights some risk around taxbase growth and this has been adjusted for across the financial papers in this budget cycle.



4 Maintaining balances

4.1 The balance of the in year budgetary position against the proposed budget will be managed against the General Reserve and service specific reserves. If budget pressures emerge then it is first for the Service to contain, then the Directorate and finally a corporate issue. If there is still a pressure at year end then General Reserves and service specific reserves will reduce. If the General Reserve falls below the minimum recommended level, it would need to be replenished to restore the minimum level. This helps ensure that the Council is in a position to maintain its service provision without drastic actions.

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

5 Future risks

5.1 The analysis above, is solely focussed on what the current position and looking to the 2022-23 budget. Major pressures are emerging though on the some of the underlying assumptions that will be made beyond 2022-23. There are three key areas of focus and increasing concern:

- Adult Social Care Reform – initial reviews put the additional cost at many millions of pounds of additional cost; the Government have yet to release the exact funding that the Council will receive for future years, including through the new levy, but this will require substantial new investment from Government and likely beyond the increase in the future on the social care grant and the ASC precept. Additional new funding will be available (£600m nationally in 23-24 and 24-25). The Government has issued guidance from the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), [1] about the four funding conditions for local authorities to prepare their ASC markets for reform as well as three conditions for receiving further grant from 2023-24; a cost of care exercise, a provision market sustainability plan and a spend report. Returns are due in September 2022 and guidance has yet to be released.

- Government funding reforms – the 2022-23 Local Government Finance Settlement included a new grant 'services grant' that was allocated much more towards deprivation. The Government have also implied a wholesale change to Local Government funding through a review in 2022 for 2023-24. If funding is allocated based on deprivation levels West Berkshire will lose out comparatively. Given the ASC reforms above, and that many costs the council faces are based on more generic cost factors e.g. planning and waste services costs are much more representative of population levels and local wage costs, this reform could have a significant impact on the Councils future funding. The Government have previous focussed on a business rates reset as well which would see an immediate £4m+ loss to the Council with no transitional scheme in place.

- High Needs Block Deficit – at present the Council is allowed, along with all other upper tier Councils, to treat any overspends on the High Needs Block (HNB) within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) as an accumulated deficit that does not count towards the General Fund reserve until 2022-23. This accounting rule changes in 2023-24 and this would see an immediate reduction in the Council's General Fund reserve of the equivalent deficit amount (estimated at approximately £3m). The local taxpayer would be funding directly school specific spend. Unless either extra funding is found from Government or this accounting treatment is extended, the Council would likely need to contribute more money to General Fund reserves in 2023-24.

Joseph Holmes
Executive Director (Resources)
January 2022

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/market-sustainability-and-fair-cost-of-care-fund-2022-to-2023/market-sustainability-and-fair-cost-of-care-fund-purpose-and-conditions-2022-to-2023)

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Appendix F 1

People Directorate Fees & Charges Proposals 2022/23

1 Adult Social Care

1.1 Councils have the power to charge for certain social care services, and are required to have a charging policy that is demonstrably fair and does not undermine the overall objectives of social care – that is, to promote both independence and social inclusion of service users. It is recognised that the level of fees and charges can have a direct impact on usage and take up, and in some instances work against the Council's social inclusion agenda by effectively discriminating against those who are less able to pay.

1.2 The Council's policy is therefore to charge service users an 'affordable' amount, which is uplifted by inflation each year where appropriate. However, where other local authorities, or Health organisations, are purchasing Council services on behalf of their service users, the charges made to these organisations are designed to reflect the actual costs of the service.

1.3 West Berkshire Council's Charging Policy for Adult Social Care services, introduced in 2015, states the individual will have one assessed charge for all services. All services will be added together before a service user is financially assessed.

1.4 The guidance allows for a prescribed list of allowances, for example, rent, mortgage, council tax, buildings insurance etc plus disability related costs, for example, community alarm system, extra heating costs that meet an individuals presenting care needs.

1.5 These allowances are then deducted from the total income to give an assessable income when an individual is receiving care in a non-residential setting.

1.6 From April 2012 any new or reviewed eligible individual requiring support from Adult Social Care receives this in the form of a Personal Budget through which they can arrange their support. As of 1st April 2011 individuals have been charged for each day they have booked at a Resource Centre and only in exceptional circumstances will charges be waived for non-attendance.

1.7 There are generally two types of charges – discretionary and statutory:

- **Discretionary Charges**

  Unless otherwise stated, the fee increase for 2022/23 is by the annual October CPI of 4.2%. The charge to other local authorities and Health organisations for places in West Berkshire Resource Centres will also be increased by 4.2% for 2022/23.

  Community Based Services will be charged at the actual cost of the service, including administration costs.

  Other Day Centre and Transport will be charged at the actual cost.

  Some fees have been increased by more than CPI to ensure that the cost covers the work being undertaken.

- **Statutory Charges**

  The method of assessing contributions from clients in long-term residential care is covered by section 14 of the Care Act 2014, the Care and Support (Charging and Assessment of Resources) Regulations 2014, the Care and Support Statutory Guidance and the Council's ASC Charging Policy 2015.

  The charges to full cost payers in WBC Homes, and to other local authorities who access services run by West Berkshire Council, are based on current information in respect of cost and the estimated number of clients using the service. The proposed full standard charge for WBC Homes is to increase by 4.2%.

  Deputyship Fees are set by the Court of Protection.

Adult Social Care		
Description	**Fees 2021/22**	**Proposed Fee 2022/23**
Residential care independent sector homes - full cost per week *	Actual cost	Actual cost
Residential care WBC Homes - full cost per week *	Willows Edge £839 Notrees £839 Walnut Close – Home closed Birchwood £870	Willows Edge £874 Notrees £874 Birchwood £907
Nursing care WBC Homes - full cost per week *	Birchwood £870 excludes Funded Nursing Care	Birchwood £907 excludes Funded Nursing Care
Meals provided in WBC Resource Centres *	£5.30	£5.50
WBC Resource Centre outreach workers per hour *	£19.80	£20.60
WBC Transport - maximum charge per journey *	£8.90	£9.30
WBC Foot Care service regular appointment *	£21.40	Service ceased
WBC Foot Care Equipment *	£13.00	Service ceased
External day activities *	Actual cost	Actual cost
WBC Resource Centres - charge to other Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups per day - Older People - Learning Disability - Physical Disability	 £69.30 £112.60 £104.50	 £72.20 £117.30 £108.90
Charges to any organisation using WBC Resource Centres per day Greenfield, Hungerford & Phoenix	Actual cost	Actual cost
WBC Resource Centres - charge per day *	£49.80	£51.90
Administration fee for commissioning care for full cost clients *	£231 per annum	£241 per annum

Set up fee for deferred payers *	£151	£157
Administration fee for deferred payers *	£251 per annum	£262 per annum
Next of kin support administration following the death of a Deputyship client	£103.50 per hour	£107.80 per hour
Support in making a Lasting Power of Attorney application	£156	£163
Support in making a Deputyship application	£352	£367
Residential and Nursing care WBC Homes - charge the assessed contribution whilst in hospital if bed retained at the home *	Assessed charge	Assessed charge
Residential and Nursing care WBC Homes - charge the assessed contribution from date of admission even if client subsequently decides to leave the home during the review period *	Assessed charge from date of admission	Assessed charge from date of admission
Transporting clients from care homes to resource centres (charge to provider) *	Actual cost	Actual cost
Shared Lives – management fee *	£109.50 per week for a full time placement. £32.80 per week for an overnight respite session. £4.30 per hour for day support.	£114.10 per week for a full time placement. £34.20 per week for an overnight respite session. £4.50 per hour for day support.

Statutory Charge *

Resource Centre - Rental Charges						
	Fees 2021/22			Proposed Fees 2022/23		
Room	Daily Rate	Half Day Rate	Hourly Rate	Daily Rate	Half Day Rate	Hourly Rate
Phoenix Resource Centre						
Ground floor woodwork room	£58.00	£29.60	£10.40	Not available		
External car washing facility	£58.00	£29.60	£10.40	Not available		
Ground floor Theatre (with lighting and audio system)	From £87.70 to £153.50	From £45.90 to £82.20	From £21.80 To £39.40	From £91.40 to £159.90	From £47.80 to £85.70	From £22.70 To £41.10
Audience seating (setting up and taking down)	£82.20	£82.20	£82.20	£75.00	£75.00	£75.00
First floor Theatre office	£16.40	£16.40	£16.40	£17.10	£17.10	£17.10
Ground floor frailty and dementia suite (Lilac Lounge)	£60.30	£32.80	£12.10	£90.90	£47.70	£15.90
Ground floor physical disability suite (Sunshine Room)	£58.00	£29.60	£10.40	£60.40	£30.80	£10.80
Ground floor sensory cooking room	£58.00	£29.60	£10.40	£60.40	£30.80	£10.80
Ground floor sensory room	£58.00	£29.60	£10.40	£60.40	£30.80	£10.80
Ground floor optimusic room	£58.00	£29.60	£10.40	£60.40	£30.80	£10.80
Ground floor dining room	£87.70	£45.90	N/a	£91.40	£47.80	N/a
Ground floor dining room and kitchen	£98.60	£51.50	N/a	£102.70	£53.70	N/a
Ground floor small activity room	£28.80	£14.80	£6.50	£30.00	£15.40	£6.80
First floor Craft activity room	£58.00	£29.60	£10.40	£60.40	£30.80	£10.80
First floor computer suite	£58.00	£29.60	£10.40	Not available		
First floor Moving and Handling training room 1	N/a	N/a	N/a	£134.10	£109.00	£37.10
First floor training room 1 – room only	N/a	N/a	N/a	£67.00	£55.70	£19.30
First floor activity / office space - full space (large)	£114.00	£58.00	£20.80	Not available		
First floor activity / office space – (medium)	£87.70	£45.90	£16.40	Not available		
First floor Art room	£58.00	£29.60	£10.40	Not available		
First floor large meeting room without equipment	£36.20	£18.60	£7.60	£37.70	£19.40	£7.90
First floor large meeting room with equipment	£47.10	£22.90	£9.10	£49.10	£23.90	£9.50
First floor small meeting rooms	£21.80	£11.40	£4.20	£22.70	£11.90	£4.40
Accessible shower facility and personal care rooms	N/a	N/a	£9.80	N/a	N/a	£10.20

Statutory Charge *

Room	Fees 2021/22			Proposed Fees 2022/23		
	Daily Rate	Half Day Rate	Hourly Rate	Daily Rate	Half Day Rate	Hourly Rate
Hungerford Resource Centre						
Ground floor main activity room	£101.90	£51.50	£18.00	£106.20	£53.70	£18.80
Ground floor computer suite	£52.00	£26.20	£9.10	£54.20	£27.30	£9.50
Ground floor quiet room	£26.20	£13.60	£5.40	£27.30	£14.20	£5.60
Ground floor hairdressing salon	£26.20	£13.60	£5.40	£27.30	£14.20	£5.60
First floor meeting room 1	£52.00	£26.20	£9.10	£54.20	£27.30	£9.50
First floor meeting room 2	£52.00	£26.20	£9.10	£54.20	£27.30	£9.50
Accessible shower facility and personal care rooms	N/a	N/a	£9.80	N/a	N/a	£10.20

Room	Fees 2021/22			Proposed Fees 2022/23		
	Daily Rate	Half Day Rate	Hourly Rate	Daily Rate	Half Day Rate	Hourly Rate
Greenfield Resource Centre						
Atrium	£101.90	£51.50	£18.00	£106.20	£53.70	£18.80
Computer suite	£52.00	£26.20	£9.10	£54.20	£27.30	£9.50
Frailty and dementia suite	£76.70	£38.90	£13.60	£79.90	£40.50	£14.20
Physical disability suite	£76.70	£38.90	£13.60	£79.90	£40.50	£14.20
Learning disability suite	£52.00	£26.20	£9.10	£54.20	£27.30	£9.50
Optimusic / sensory room	£52.00	£26.20	£9.10	£54.20	£27.30	£9.50
Small office	£26.20	£13.60	£5.40	£27.30	£14.20	£5.60
Accessible bath facility and personal care rooms	N/a	N/a	£9.80	N/a	N/a	£10.20
Security opening and locking building at weekends	£18.60	N/a	N/a	£19.40	N/a	N/a

Hourly rate applies for bookings of between 1 and 2.5 hours, all bookings over this time duration are charged as a half day.

Statutory Charge *

2 Education: Family Hubs

2.1 The Family Hubs may enter into hire agreements in order to deliver services to children, young people, families and the local community. Family Hubs are non-profit making organisations and as such it is agreed that West Berkshire Family Hubs have a reduced charge for statutory providers for use of the Centres' facilities where they are delivering services for families with children 0-5 years that fall within the remit of Family Hubs e.g.

- Family Groups and contact visits held by Children Services
- Clinics and drop-in's held by Health Professionals

2.2 The Family Hubs started to charge for activity sessions provided to the general public in 2018/19. These activities are pre-booked via an online booking system. Activities are allocated to a pricing band, depending on their nature.

2.3 The Family Hubs increased the room hire charges for 2019/20, which is the first increase for a number of years. It has therefore been decided to not increase the charges in 2022/23 in recognition of the challenges our hirers have had since the Covid pandemic.

Family Hubs Fees and Charges (charges per hour)

Family Hubs						
	Fees 2021/22			Proposed Fees 2022/23		
Room Hire	**Non profit Organisation**	**Profit Organisation**	**Statutory Services**	**Non profit Organisation**	**Profit Organisation**	**Statutory Services**
East District - Calcot	£10	£20	£6	£10	£20	£6
Central District - Thatcham Park Lane	£10	£20	£6	£10	£20	£6

Note: contributions are accepted for Stay and Play activities towards refreshments.

Family Hubs Additional Fees and Charges (Out of hours)
**Charges after 6pm Weekdays and on Saturdays

	Fees 2021/22		Proposed Fees 2022/23	
Room Hire	****Caretaker Opening Charge**	****Caretaker Waiting Time Charge**	****Caretaker Opening Charge**	****Caretaker Waiting Time Charge**
1 Hour	£10.00	N/A	£10.00	N/A
2 Hours	£10.00	£7.00	£10.00	£7.00
3 Hours	£10.00	£10.50	£10.00	£10.50
4 Hours	£10.00	£14.00	£10.00	£14.00
5 Hours	£10.00	£17.50	£10.00	£17.50
6 Hours	£10.00	£21.00	£10.00	£21.00

Family Hubs Activity Sessions

	Fees 2021/22	Proposed Fees 2022/23
Band	**£**	**£**
A	£0 - £3	£0 - £3
B	£3.01 - £10	£3.01 - £10
C	£10.01 - £20	£10.01 - £20

Name of session/Group	Charging Band	Basis
All Stay, Play & Learn Groups	A	Per family per session
Messy Play	A	Per family per session
All Baby Groups	A	Per family per session
Post Natal Group	A	Per family per session
Family Learning Courses	B	Per learner per session
Paediatric First Aid	B	Per adult one off session
Baby massage	B	Per family per session
Little Stars	C	Per family per 6 week course

3 Education: Home to School Transport

The Standard Rate has increased by £33 per year from £804 (academic year 2021/22) to £837 (academic year 2022/23) to reflect increasing transport cost. The Rate represents £4.41 for a return journey per school day. The Rate applies across West Berkshire so that rural communities are not disadvantaged with a higher price.

Home to School Transport Fees and Charges

Home to School Transport		
Banding	**Fees 2021/22**	**Fees 20212/23**
Standard rate	£804	£837
Replacement bus pass admin fee	£15	£15
Rail pass admin fee	£20	£20

4 Communities & Wellbeing: Culture

Culture			
Description		**Fees and Charges 2021/22**	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23**
Shaw House			
		Fees and Charges 2021/22	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23**
Shaw House - Room Hire Charges:			
Registered Charity	per hour	£20 - £32	£20 - £32
Public Sector and Community use	per hour	£26 - £39	£26 - £39
Commercial use	per hour	£33 - £51	£33 - £51
Museum			
		Fees and Charges 2021/22	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23**
West Berkshire - Archaeological Archive Box Fee			
Fieldwork Fee This charge covers the fieldwork notification and processing of the Archaeological deposit and includes issuing of an accession number and subsequent administration. Non-refundable.		£50	£50
Deposit Fee This charge includes the provision of up to three standard size boxes and the ongoing care and management of the archaeological deposit. Non-refundable.		£101	£101
Additional Boxes			
Full Box 0.4 x 0.25 x 0.22m =0.022m3		£71	£71
Half Box 0.4 x 0.25 x 0.11 =0.011 m3		£31	£31
Quarter Box 0.4 x 0.125 x 0.11 =0.00275 m3		£20	£20
Eighth Box 0.2x 0.125 x 0.11 m= 0.00275m3		£10	£10
Sixteenth Box 0.1 x 0.125 x 0.11 m oe 0.2x0.63x0.11 = 0.001375m3		£0	£0
Skull Box = 1/2 Box 0.2 x 0.2 x0.25 = 0.012m3		£34	£34
Human Bone = 1 1/2 Box 0.6 x 0.25 x 0.25 = 0.039m2		£103	£103
Map Rolls per 100 grams3		£2	£2
Archive Box deposit charges		£0	£0
Full Box 0.4 x 0.075 x 0.27m =0.0081m3		£25	£25
Half Box 0.4 x 0.045 x 0.27 =0.0049 m3		£15	£15
Heritage Service - Use of Image Collection			
If supplied for private personal use only the image production fee is payable. Images supplied for publication incur both an image production fee and a reproduction charge.			
Image Production Fee			
Photo Print - up to A6		£5.20	£5.20
Photo Print - up to A5		£10.00	£10.00
Photo Print - up to A4		£16.00	£16.00
Laser Scan - up to A4		£5.20	£5.20
Digital Scan - to CD		£16.00	£16.00
Digital Scan - to CD - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations		Free	Free

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Reproduction Charges			
Commercial Publication:			
Up to full page, B&W or Colour		£42	£42
Up to Full Page B&W or Colour - Discounted rate for the promotion of culture in West Berkshire		£15 one image; £5 for all subsequent images	£15 one image; £5 for all subsequent images
Cover (front or back)		£78	£78
Cover (front or back) - Discounted rate for the promotion of culture in West Berkshire		£30 one image	£30 one image
Local Publication		£16	£16
Local Publication - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations		£15 one image; £5 for all subsequent images	£15 one image; £5 for all subsequent images
Academic Publication		£31	£31
Academic Publication, etc. - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations		£15 one image; £5 for all subsequent images	£15 one image; £5 for all subsequent images
Magazine or Newspaper		£42	£42
Advertising or Brochure		£78	£78
Exhibition Use		£42	£42
Exhibition Use - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations		£30 one image £10 for all subsequent images	£30 one image £10 for all subsequent images
Website (3 year use)	Per 3 Years	£78	£78
Website (3 year use) - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations	Per 3 Years	£30 one image £10 for all subsequent images	£30 one image £10 for all subsequent images
Supply fee			
Image already in our catalogue and supplied in a physical format	Plus Postage	£15	£15
New photograph required taken in-house and supplied digitally	Per Object	£50	£50
New photograph required taken in-house and supplied in a physical format	Per Object, plus postage	£65	£65
Copying and laminating charges			
These charges are common with the library service			
A4 Photocopy b/w		£0.10	£0.10
A4 Photocopy colour		£0.60	£0.60
A3 Photocopy b/w		£0.30	£0.30
A3 Photocopy – colour		£1.00	£1.00

Libraries			
Description		**Fees and Charges 2021/22**	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23**
Request Charges			
Items available in SELMS libraries		£3.00	£3.00
Overdue Charges			
Overdue Books for children	per day	£0.10	£0.10
Overdue Books for Adults	per day	£0.25	£0.25
DVDs	per day	£0.25	£0.25
Admin fee for debt recovery process		£12.00	£13.00
Printing and Photocopying charges			
A4 B&W		£0.10	£0.10
A4 Colour		£0.60	£0.60
A3 B&W		£0.30	£0.30
A3 Colour		£1.00	£1.00
Microfilm Copying		£0.20	£0.20
Other Charges for Library Services			
Lost Tickets		£3.00	£3.00
Reference and Research enquiry charges		NWN enquiries: £20 per half hour, (WB library members get first half hour free). Copying charges are additional and there is a £3 admin charge for postage.	NWN enquiries: £20 per half hour, (WB library members get first half hour free). Copying charges are additional and there is a £3 admin charge for postage.
Book group service (per annum)		£26	£27
Vocal Scores		£6 per month per set of 20 scores from SE region. (Loans in multiples of 20.)	£6 per month per set of 20 scores from SE region. (Loans in multiples of 20.)
Orchestral sets from SE region	per month	£15	£16
Play sets from SE region	per month	£6	£6
Hire charges			
U Cert DVDs	per week	£1	£1
Other Cert DVDs	per week	£2	£2
Room Hire			
Newbury Library - Carnegie Lounge (reduced rate available for charities/ local non-profit organisations).	per hour	£18	£19
Newbury Library - Advice point -small meeting room (reduced rate available for charities/ local non-profit organisations).	per hour	£10	£10
Theale Library (reduced rate available for charities/ local non-profit organisations).	per hour	£18	£19
All other libraries	per hour	£10	£10

Culture for the purposes above, includes the arts in all its forms, events and festivals, tourist attractions, the historic and “natural” landscape (buildings, places, open spaces), parks and gardens, libraries, museums and museum collections, local customs and folklore, the culture of food and the diversity of the people who live here.

Appendix F ii

Place and Resources Fees & Charges Proposals – 2022/23

1. Introduction

1.1 The starting point for the base budget for the 2022/23 budget build is that fees and charges should increase at least in line with inflation in order to maximise income accepting that:

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

1.2 Statutory fees are not set by the council and may be subject to change during the year.

1.3 Fees below are correct at the time of publication, some may change during the year for operational reasons, subject to the appropriate authorisations.

2. Proposals – Place Directorate

2.1 Development and Regulation

(1) Housing

Temporary accommodation is charged in line with Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates which have not yet been released for 2022/23. Do It Yourself Shared Ownership (DIYSO) leases will be increased in line with the rate of CPI inflation as at October 2021 (4.2%); the rental costs of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation owned or let by West Berkshire Council are also to be increased in line with CPI.

The Council also charge for homeless households placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Households will need to claim Housing Benefit, or will be charged up to the amount Housing Benefit would pay, if they were eligible. In addition households will need to pay the ineligible charges, mainly breakfast. These charges are proposed to increase in line with inflation at 4.2% for 2022/23.

The Council may also charge applicants placed in emergency bed provision at Two Saints Hostel. Applicants are unable to claim Housing Benefit when placed in an emergency bed. A charge of £1 a night may be made for emergency bed provision for people who are not employed and £5 a night for people who full or part time employment. However the process for charging for emergency accommodation at Two Saints Hostel is under review with a view to bringing the process in line with that for other types of temporary accommodation.

In some instances, the Council provides transport to temporary accommodation for households who have no other means of getting to that accommodation. The cost of providing the transport will be recharged, in full to the client.

The Council can assist with providing removals and/or storage for homeless applicants. The full cost of providing this service will be recharged to the client.

The Council can assist with securing cattery or kennel provision for homeless applicants in temporary accommodation, as pets are not permitted in temporary accommodation. The full cost of providing this service will be recharged to the client.

The Council provides repairs and maintenance to a small supply of temporary accommodation, including an out-of-hours service. In the event that a tenant or licensee uses the emergency service for a non-emergency repair, or fails to attend an appointment for a contractor to attend to a repair, a charge will be made to the tenant to cover the call-out costs. Where repairs arise as a result of neglect or damage caused by the tenant or licensee, or a member of their household, or a visitor to their home, the full cost of the repair will be recharged to the tenant or licensee.

Housing related support services will be charged at the actual cost of the service received.

For 2022/23 the council will charge an agency fee of 12% to any application for grants or loan where these are overseen and managed by the Home Improvement Agency.

Description	**Fees and Charges 2021/22**	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23**
Copy of housing assessment	No Charge	No Charge
Average rent for temporary accommodation per week	In Line with Local Housing Allowance	In Line with Local Housing Allowance
Do It Yourself Ownership rent (DIYSO) rent	0.5 % increase on individual contracts	4.2 % increase on individual contracts
Transport costs to temporary accommodation (TA)	Actual cost	Actual cost
Gypsy Traveller rent (Per week, per plot)	£94.00	£98.00
Home Improvement Agency (HIA) fee for private adaption work	12% of total cost of works to eligible clients	12% of total cost of works to eligible clients
Failed call out charges	Actual cost	Actual cost
B&B charging		
Ineligible Charges for Bed and Breakfast Accommodation		
Heating, lighting and hot water per week **per Family Unit****	£40.20	£41.90
Breakfast per person, per week	£3.50	£3.60
*** Statutory fee**		
**** Family Units Include:** Single person, Couple - no children, Couple with 1-4 children, Single person with 1-4 children.		

(2) Development Control

Fees for planning applications are set centrally by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. For invalid applications, 25% of the set fee will be retained by the service after the 3rd failed attempt.

A new fee structure for Pre-application planning fees is proposed for 2022/23 to better reflect costs to the Council and nature of advice provided, as shown below. The more detailed charging structure for 2022/23 does not have a direct equivalent from 2021/22 and so no comparative chares are shown here.

	Fees and Charges 2022/23
Planning Applications	*Government set fees*
Invalid applications charge	*25% of Government set fee after 3 failed attempts*

Pre-Application Advice: Minor Operations		
Application Type	**Type of Advice**	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23 – including VAT**
Householder	Written Advice Only	£160
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£257
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£257
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£349
Adverts	Written Advice Only	£250
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£347
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£347
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£444
Works/Extns to Listed Buildings	Written Advice Only	£178
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£275
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£275
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£365

Application Type	Type of Advice	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23 – including VAT
General LB or Conservation Advice	Written Advice Only	£120
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£180
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£180
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£290
Change of Use (Land)	Written Advice Only	£178
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£300
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£300
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£406
Telecommunications	Written Advice Only	£186
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£283
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£283
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£396
Shopfronts	Written Advice Only	£221
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£294
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£294
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£366
Agricultural Notification	Written Advice Only	£222
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£444
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£444
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£554

Pre-Application Advice: Residential Development		
Application Type	**Type of Advice**	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23 – including VAT**
1 new residential dwelling	Written Advice Only	£240
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£300
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£300
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£380
	Advice in Principle only	£120
2-4 new residential dwellings	Written Advice Only	£480
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£540
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£540
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£640
	Advice in Principle only	£240
5-9 new residential dwellings	Written Advice Only	£960
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£1,080
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£1,080
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£1,300
	Advice in Principle only	£480
10-25 new residential dwellings	Written Advice Only	£1,680
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£1,860
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£1,860
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£2,020
	Advice in Principle only	£840

Application Type	Type of Advice	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23 – including VAT
26-49 new residential dwellings	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit	£3,300
	Advice in Principle only	£960
50-99 new residential dwelling	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit – Based on maximum of 30hrs work, additional hours charged at £150 per hour	Initial payment of £4,500
	Advice in Principle only	£1200
100-199 new residential dwelling	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit – Based on maximum of 30hrs work, additional hours charged at £150 per hour	Initial payment of £5,500
	Advice in Principle only	£2000
200-499 new residential dwelling	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit – Based on maximum of 30hrs work, additional hours charged at £150 per hour	Initial payment of £7,500
	Advice in Principle only	£2500
500+ new residential dwelling	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit – Based on maximum of 30hrs work, additional hours charged at £150 per hour	Initial payment of £8,500
	Advice in Principle only	£3000

Pre-Application Advice: Non-residential Development		
Application Type	**Type of Advice**	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23 – including VAT**
Less than 249sqm	Written Advice Only	£265
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£350
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	£350
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£496
	Advice in Principle only	£128
Between 250 – 499 sqm	Written Advice Only	£480
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£540
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£820
	Advice in Principle only	£240
Between 500 - 1000sqm	Written Advice Only	£960
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£1,080
	Written Advice with a follow up meeting – No SV	
	Written Advice after S/Visit + Follow Up meeting	£1,200
	Advice in Principle only	£360
Between 1000 - 2,499sqm	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit	£2,400
	Advice in Principle only	£480
Between 2,500 – 4,999sqm	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit	£3,300
	Advice in Principle only	£540
Between 5000 – 9999 sqm	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit	£4,400
	Advice in Principle only	£680

Application Type	Type of Advice	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23 – including VAT
Greater than 10,000sqm	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit	£5,500
	Advice in Principle only	£810

Charge	Cost (including VAT)
Basic Enquiries Charge (including, but not limited to (i) planning history searches, (ii) advice on how to check our records to establish whether permitted development rights have been removed from a residential dwelling, (iii) general advice on the procedure for discharge of conditions or non-material amendments to existing permissions, (iv) advice on how to seek pre-application advice, fill out application forms and fees)	£50 - £150 (covers up to an hour of an Officer's time) For more complex requests which will take more than one hour to complete, a bespoke fee will be agreed in advance based on the likely time taken and the level of experience of the Officer required to provide any such advice.
General Planning Policy Advice	£150 (covers up to an hour of an Officer's time) For more complex requests which will take more than one hour to complete, a bespoke fee will be agreed in advance based on the likely time taken and the level of experience of the Officer required to provide any such advice.
Ecology Advice	£150 (covers up to an hour of an Officer's time) For more complex requests which will take more than one hour to complete, a bespoke fee will be agreed in advance based on the likely time taken and the level of experience of the Officer required to provide any such advice.

Senior Manager attendance	The involvement of a more senor manager to assist with negotiations where a request has been made by the applicant/agent and is not included in a Planning Performance Agreement. Development & Regulation Service Director - £200 per hour DM Service Manager - £150 per hour DM Team Leader - £100 per hour
Confirmation of compliance with a S106 /compliance with a notice	£150 (covers up to an hour of an Officer's time) For more complex requests which will take more than one hour to complete, a bespoke fee will be agreed in advance based on the likely time taken and the level of experience of the Officer required to provide any such advice.
Pre-Validation Checking Service: A technical officer will check the following for common errors, omissions or disclaimers: • Application Form • Certificate(s) • Location/Block Plan • Cil Form • Plan(s)	£60 (covers up to an hour of officer's time) Each additional hour charged at £60 • Householder, advertisement and prior notification applications – 1 hour • Minor and similar applications – 2 hours • Major and similar complex applications – 4 hours
Two Strikes – Invalid submissions (if an application is not validated in two successive submissions)	25% of Application fee
Charging for invalid applications (that have not been made valid within 28 days)	• Householder, advertisement and prior notification applications – £60 • Minor and similar applications – £110 • Major and similar complex applications – £250
Advice which is not covered by any of the above Categories	£150 (covers up to an hour of an Officer's time) For more complex requests which will take more than one hour to complete, a bespoke fee will be agreed in advance based on the likely time taken and the level of experience of the Officer required to provide any such advice.
Copy of Decision Notice, TPO, Appeal Decision Notice, Enforcement Notice	£30

(3) Public Protection Partnership

The Public Protection Partnership (PPP) provides chargeable services on behalf of West Berkshire Council and Bracknell Forest Council. The proposed fees for 2022/23 have been agreed by the Joint Public Protection Committee and the relevant licensing committees of the two councils.

- All statutory fees and those linked to national schemes are based on fees published on 16 August 2021 and may be subject to change by Central Government or the management of the schemes.
- Statutory fees are as marked below.
- The chargeable hourly rate for PPP is £59 per hour (ph), which is unchanged from 2021/22.
- Fees for taxi and private hire vehicles, drivers and operators will be reviewed in January 2022 by the Council's Licensing Committee.

LICENCES, REGISTRATIONS AND CONSENTS

Pre Application Advice

We provide chargeable pre-application advice for the following licences and consents:

License/Consents	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Gambling Act	£59 ph	£59 ph
Licensed Premises Notifications	£59 ph	£59 ph
Licensing Act 2003	£59 ph	£59 ph
Scrap Metal	£59 ph	£59 ph
Sex Establishments	£59 ph	£59 ph
Skin Piercing & Dermal Treatments	£59 ph	£59 ph
Street Trading Consents	£59 ph	£59 ph

Animal Licences

Animal Licences – (Class A – Fee Discretionary)			
*****The granting fee includes initial inspection and mid-term inspection totalling 4 hours (unless stated differently). Inspections required beyond this due to additional visits, aborted visits will be charged at an additional fee. **Additional vets fee payable**		**Fees and Charges 2021/22**	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23**
NEW - Animal Boarding Establishment - combined (dogs and cats)	Application Fee	£236	£177
	Granting Fee	£354	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£590	**£413 minimum**
RENEWAL - Animal Boarding Establishment - combined (dogs and cats)	Application Fee	£177	£148
	Granting Fee	£354	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£531	**£384 minimum**
NEW - Animal Boarding Establishment - single species (dogs or cats))	Application Fee	£177	£118
	Granting Fee	£295	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£472	**£354 minimum**

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
RENEWAL - Animal Boarding Establishment - single species (dogs or cats))	Application Fee	£177	£89
	Granting Fee	£295	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£472	**£325 minimum**
NEW - Home boarder (midterm inspections to be charged in addition to revisits and aborted visit charges)	Application Fee	£118	£118
	Granting Fee	£153.85	Minimum 2 hours at £118***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£271.85	**£236 minimum**
RENEWAL - Home boarder (midterm inspections to be charged in addition to revisits and aborted visit charges)	Application Fee	£118	£89
	Granting Fee	£123.85	Minimum 2 hours at £118***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£241.85	**£207 minimum**
NEW - Home Boarder - Franchisee arrangers licence (excludes inspection fee per host)	Application Fee	£147.50	£118
	Granting Fee	£59	Per inspection at hourly rate
	Total Fee (minimum)	£206.50	**£118 + host inspection fee**
RENEWAL - Home Boarder - Franchisee arrangers licence (excludes inspection fee per host)	Application Fee	£118	£89
	Granting Fee	£59	Per inspection at hourly rate
	Total Fee (minimum)	£177	**£89 + host inspection fee**
Assessment of hobby host as part of a franchisee licence	Host inspection fee	£118	£118
NEW - Dog Day Care	Application Fee	£236	£177
	Granting Fee	£354	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£590	**£413 minimum**
RENEWAL - Dog Day Care	Application Fee	£177	£148
	Granting Fee	£354	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£531	**£384 minimum**
NEW - Dog Breeding Establishment **(**excluding vet fee)**	Application Fee	£236	£177
	Granting Fee	£354	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£590	**£413 minimum**

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
RENEWAL - Dog Breeding Establishment	Application Fee	£177	£148
	Granting Fee	£354	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£531	**£384 minimum**
NEW - Dog Breeding Establishment (in domestic dwelling)**(**excluding vet fee)**	Application Fee	£177	£118
	Granting Fee	£295	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£472	**£354 minimum****
RENEWAL - Dog Breeding Establishment (in domestic dwelling)	Application Fee	£118	£89
	Granting Fee	£295	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£413	**£325 minimum**
NEW - Pet Vending / Sale of pets	Application Fee	£177	£118
	Granting Fee	£295	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£472	**£354 minimum**
RENEWAL - Pet Vending / Sale of pets	Application Fee	£118	£89
	Granting Fee	£295	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£413	**£325 minimum**
NEW - Animal for Exhibition	Application Fee	£236	£177
	Granting Fee	£354	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£590	**£413 minimum**
RENEWAL - Animal for Exhibition	Application Fee	£177	£148
	Granting Fee	£354	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£531	**£384 minimum**
Riding Establishment - Inspections are carried out annually, regardless of the star rating or length of licence, by a qualified Veterinarian Officer. **Vets fees will be recharged separately.			
NEW - Main inspection fee, plus fee per horse **(**excluding vets fee)**	Application Fee	£177	£118
	Renewal Fee	£295	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£472	**£354 minimum****

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
RENEWAL - Main inspection fee, plus fee per horse **(**excluding vets fee)**	Application Fee	£118	£89
	Renewal Fee	£295	Minimum 4 hours at £236***
	Total Fee (minimum)	£413	**£325 minimum****
Fee per horse, for the first 10 horses		£15	£15
Fee per horse, for next 11-50 horses		£10	£10
Fee per horse, for every horse 51 & over		£8	£8
Other Fees			
Additional mid licence visit		-	£118
Variation to the licence fee (inclusive of one visit)		£224	£177
Replacement licence fee (lost or stolen paperwork, change of name, etc.)		£59	£30
Re-evaluation of star rating (inclusive of one visit)		£112	£118
Transfer due to death of licensee	Admin cost	£56	£30

Wild Animals and Zoos

	Duration	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Dangerous Wild Animal Consent	2 years	£460	N/A
Dangerous Wild Animal Consent – New (** excluding vets fee)	2 years	N/A	£472
Dangerous Wild Animal Consent - Renewal	2 years	N/A	£295
Zoo Licences (new & renewals) Periodical inspections (** excluding Vets Fees)	Up to 6 years	£2,066	£2,066

Explosives Licences – Statutory*

Description	Duration	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
New licence for explosives below 250kg Net Explosive Content (NEC) *	1 year	£111
	2 years	£144
	3 years	£177
	4 years	£211
	5 years	£243
Renewal of licence for explosives below 250kg Net Explosive Content (NEC) *	1 year	£55
	2 years	£88
	3 years	£123
	4 years	£155
	5 years	£189
New licence for explosives above 250kg Net Explosive Content (NEC) *	1 year	£189
	2 years	£248
	3 years	£311
	4 years	£382
	5 years	£432
Renewal of licence for explosives above 250kg Net Explosive Content (NEC) *	1 year	£88
	2 years	£150
	3 years	£211
	4 years	£272
	5 years	£333
Varying the name of licensee or address of site *		£37
Any other kind of variation *		Cost Recovery
Transfer of licence *		£37
Replacement Licence *		£37
Full year registration for sale of fireworks (capped fee) *		£500

Gambling Act 2005 – Statutory*

Description	Type	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Casinos (regional) *	New Application	£15,000
	Provisional Statement	£15,000
	Application with Provisional Statement	£8,000
	Variation	£7,500
	Transfer/Reinstatement	£6,500
	Annual Fee	£15,000
Casinos (large) *	New Application	£10,000
	Provisional Statement	£10,000
	Application with Provisional Statement	£5,000
	Variation	£5,000
	Transfer/Reinstatement	£2,150
	Annual Fee	£10,000
Casinos (small) *	New Application	£8,000
	Provisional Statement	£8,000
	Application with Provisional Statement	£3,000
	Variation	£4,000
	Transfer/Reinstatement	£1,800
	Annual Fee	£5,000
Bingo Clubs *	New Application	£3,500
	Provisional Statement	£3,500
	Application with Provisional Statement	£1,200
	Variation	£1,750
	Transfer/Reinstatement	£1,200
	Annual Fee	£1,000

Description	Type	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Betting Premises *	New Application	£3,000
	Provisional Statement	£3,000
	Application with Provisional Statement	£1,200
	Variation	£1,500
	Transfer/Reinstatement	£1,200
	Annual Fee	£600
Tracks *	New Application	£2,500
	Provisional Statement	£2,500
	Application with Provisional Statement	£950
	Variation	£1,250
	Transfer/Reinstatement	£950
	Annual Fee	£1,000
Family Entertainment Centres *	New Application	£2,000
	Provisional Statement	£2,000
	Application with Provisional Statement	£950
	Variation	£1,000
	Transfer/Reinstatement	£950
	Annual Fee	£750
Adult Gaming Centres *	New Application	£2,000
	Provisional Statement	£2,000
	Application with Provisional Statement	£1,200
	Variation	£1,000
	Transfer/Reinstatement	£1,200
	Annual Fee	£1,000
Lotteries & Amusements *	New Application	£40
	Annual Fee	£20
All licences *	Notification of change	£50
	Copy of licence	£25
Club gaming or machine permit *	New Application	£200
	Existing holder	£100
	Renewal	£200
	Annual Fee	£50
	Variation	£100
	Copy of licence	£15
Club Gaming or Machine Permit (holds a club Premises Certificate under Licensing Act 2003) *	New Application	£100
	Renewal	£100
Licensed Premises Notifications *		
To make available up to 2 gaming machines on premises which hold on-premises alcohol licence *	Notification of intention	£50
Gaming Machine Permit (more than 2 machines) on-premises which hold on premises alcohol licence *	Application (existing holder)	£100
	New Application	£150
	Annual Fee	£50
	First Annual Fee (payable within 30 days of date permit takes effect)	£50
	Variation	£100
	Transfer	£25
	Change of name	£25
	Copy of permit	£15

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences

Vehicle Licences		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Hackney Carriage Vehicle – New		£288	£266
Hackney Carriage Vehicle – Renewal		£288	£236
Private Hire Vehicle – New		£288	£266
Private Hire Vehicle – Renewal		£288	£236
Private Hire Vehicle with Dispensation - New		£288	£266
Private Hire Vehicle with Dispensation – New - Renewal		£288	£236
Temporary Vehicle Licence	Up to 3 months	£232	£236
Driver Licences			
Driver – New	3 year Includes initial tests, safeguarding and disability trainings	£271	£301
Driver –Renewal		£271	£272
Conversion of driver licence to another type	1.5hrs (inc retaking tests)	£80	£89

Private Hire Operators (PHO)

Private Hire Operator	Number of Vehicles	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
NEW Per vehicle calculation of 3.5 hours (at £59.00 hourly rate) plus an hour per year (years 2-5) for first vehicle, plus 15 minutes per additional vehicle per years (years 1-5) up to a maximum of 20 vehicles (2021/22 based on 4 hours initial vehicle)	1	£472	£443
	2	£545.75	£516
	3	£619.50	£590
	4	£693.25	£664
	5	£767	£738
	6	£840.75	£811
	7	£914.50	£885
	8	£988.25	£959
	9	£1,062	£1,033
	10	£1,135.75	£1,106
	11	£1,209.50	£1,180
	12	£1,283.25	£1,254
	13	£1,357	£1,328
	14	£1,430.75	£1,401
	15	£1,504.50	£1,475
	16	£1,578.25	£1,549
	17	£1,652	£1,623
	18	£1,725.75	£1,696
	19	£1,799.50	£1,770
	20	£1,873.25	£1,844
	20+	£1,873.25	£1,844

Private Hire Operator	Number of Vehicles	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £59.00 hourly rate) plus an hour per year (years 2-5) for first vehicle, plus 15 minutes per additional vehicle per years (years 1-5) up to a maximum of 20 vehicles (2021/22 based on 2 hours initial vehicle)	1	£342	£325
	2	£413.25	£398
	3	£484.50	£472
	4	£555.75	£546
	5	£627	£620
	6	£698.25	£693
	7	£769.50	£767
	8	£840.75	£841
	9	£912	£915
	10	£983.25	£988
	11	£1,054.50	£1,062
	12	£1,125.75	£1,136
	13	£1,197	£1,210
	14	£1,268.25	£1,283
	15	£1,339.50	£1,357
	16	£1,410.75	£1,431
	17	£1,482	£1,505
	18	£1,553.25	£1,578
	19	£1,624.50	£1,652
	20	£1,695.75	£1,726
	20+	£1,695.75	£1,726

Other Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Charges

Other charges		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Variation to PHO licence	To include reissue of licence with additional vehicle registration added plus extra fees for these for length of licence	£59	£59
Transfer of vehicle to new owner		£118	£59
Change of vehicle		£74	£74
Replacement Licence		£41	£30
Replacement Badge		£41	£30 + Badge Costs
Replacement Vehicle Licence Plate		£59	£30 + Plate Costs (£26)
Knowledge Test		£74	£74
Missed Appointment		£37	£30
Disclosure and Barring Service Check (DBS)		£89.50	£79
Change of address (PH & HC)		£14	£10.50
Backing Plate		£26	£26 at cost
Medical Exemption		£22	£30
Refund Processing Fee		£59	£30
Change of vehicle registration	Including	£57	£30 + sticker and licence costs
Pre-application advice, hourly rate	Min 1 hour	£59	£59
Disability Awareness Training		POA	Included in driver application fee
Safeguarding Training		POA	Included in driver application fee

Licensing Act 2003 – Statutory*

Premises Licence – "one off" fees set by statute based upon rateable value (RV) of premises (Class B – Statutory Fee)	**Proposed 2022/23 Fee**
Band A – RV up to 4,300 *	£100
Band B – RV 4,300 to 33,000 *	£190
Band C – RV 33,001 to 87,000 *	£315
Band D – RV 87,001 to 125,000 *	£450
Band E – RV 125,001 and above *	£635
Pre-application advice, hourly rate *	£59
Premises Licence – Annual Fee (Class B – Statutory Fee)	
Band A *	£70
Band B *	£180
Band C *	£295
Band D *	£320
Band E *	£350
Personal Licence - (Class B – Statutory Fee) *	£37
Temporary Event Notices (TENs) - (Class B – Statutory Fee) *	£21
Application for copy licence *	£10.50
Application to vary DPS/transfer licence/interim notice *	£23
Application for making a provisional statement *	£315
Minor variation *	£89
Application to disapply mandatory DPS condition *	£23
Pre-application work, hourly rate	£59

Petroleum Licences – Statutory*

Petroleum Licences		**Proposed 2022/23 Fee**
Not exceeding 2,500 litres *		£45
Not exceeding 50,000 litres *		£61
Exceeding 50,000 litres *		£128

Scrap Metal

Description		**Fees and Charges 2021/22**	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23**
Scrap Metal site –New	3 Years	£501	£472
Scrap Metal site - Renewal	3 Years	£501	£443
Scrap Metal mobile collector - new	3 Years	£267	£236
Scrap Metal mobile collector - renewal	3 Years	£267	£207
Scrap Metal - Variation of Licence		£368	£236
Scrap Metal - change of site manager		£68	£59
Scrap Metal - copy of licence		£11	£11
Scrap Metal - Change of Name		£36	£30

Sex Establishments – Statutory*

Description	Type	Proposed 2022/23 Fee
Sex Establishments - (Class A – Fee Discretionary)	Cinema *	min £3,100 to max £5,150
	Shop *	min £3,100 to max £5,150
	Entertainment Venue *	min £3,100 to max £5,150

Skin Piercing and Dermal Treatments

Description	Type	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Skin piercing Registrations (one off registration) - (Class A – Fee Discretionary)	Individual (4hrs)	£180	£236
	Premises (5hrs)	£282	£295
	Joint application (7hrs)	£451	£423
Pre-application work, hourly rate	**Min. 1 hour**	£59	£59

Street Trading Consents

Description	Type	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Street Trading Consents - (Class A – Fee Discretionary)	1 Week	N/A	£144
	Monthly Rate	£228	£241
	3 months	N/A	£642
	6 months	£805	£803
	Annual Fee	£1,378	£1,365
Variation fee		£91	£89
Pre-application work, hourly rate	Min. 1 hour	£59	£59
Refund for Street Traders	In the event that following consultation the application is refused or deemed withdrawn by officers, a sum of 50% of the application fee is payable as a refund. If the application is refused by a Panel, no refund of the application fee is payable.		

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Anti-Social Behaviour Act

Description		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Anti-Social Behaviour Act	High Hedges Fee (Class A – Fee Discretionary)	£1,206	£1,206

Dog Warden Services

Description	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Stray Dogs – not taken to kennel	£73	£73
Stray Dogs – taken to kennel	Fees based on charges & cost recovery. Vet fees separate as applicable	£73 plus Cost recovery and Vets fees separate.
Kennels cost	Recharge based on cost	Recharge based on cost
Dog fouling fixed penalty charge [Statutory] *	£75	£75
Miscellaneous stray dog activities e.g. taxi, relocating, microchipping	Cost recovery charged at £59	Cost recovery charged at £59

Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 – Statutory*

Scheduled Processes – (Class B – statutory Fee)		Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Standard Process *		£1,650
Service Stations (PVI &PVII *		£257
Dry Cleaners *		£155
Vehicle Refinishers *		£362
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant		£1,650
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for the 3rd to 7th applications *		£985
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for the 8th and subsequent applications *		£498
Substantial changes		
Standard Process *		£1,050
Reduced Activities *		£102
Annual Subsistence Charge (Statutory)		
Standard Process *	Low	£772
	Medium	£1,161
	High	£1,747
Service stations PVR2 *	Low	£113
	Medium	£226
	High	£341
VR and other reduced fees *	Low	£228
	Medium	£365
	High	£548
Dry cleaners/PVR1 *	Low	£79
	Medium	£158
	High	£237
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant	Low	£646
	Medium	£1,034
	High	£1,506
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for 2nd permit *	Low	£646
	Medium	£1,034
	High	£1,506

		Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for 3rd to 7th permit *	Low	£385
	Medium	£617
	High	£924
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for the 8th and subsequent permits *	Low	£198
	Medium	£316
	High	£473
Late payment charge *	If invoice issued & not paid within 8 weeks	£52
Transfer and Surrender		
Transfer *		£169
Partial Transfer *		£497
Surrender *		£0
Transfer Reduced fees *		£0
Partial Transfer Reduced Fees *		£47

Private Sector Housing

Description	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Inspection of Housing Premises for Immigration purposes (Class A – Fee Discretionary)	£402	£404
Enforcement Notices served under Housing Act 2004	£116	£118
HMO Licence NEW - assisted application	£1,204	£1,180
HMO Licence RENEWAL	£805	£79
Caravan Site Licences		
Site licence new (plus additional fee per pitch)	£440	£443
New licence additional fee per pitch	£14	£16
Transfer of licence	£186	£187
Alteration of conditions	£341	Hrly Rate
Annual inspection fee	£14	Hrly Rate
Enforcement action -per hour	£59	£59
Deposit, vary or deleting site rules	£117	£118
Mobile Homes Regulations 2020		
Application Fee – Fit and Proper Test (any application taking more than two hours to process will be charged at an additional hourly rate of £59/ph or part thereof)	£118	£118
Annual Check Fee – Fit and Proper Test	£59/hour	£59/hour
Where the authority has to assist with appointing a site manager the costs will be specified in the agreement between the parties		

Private Water Supplies (Statutory Cap)

Description		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Risk assessment	Every 5 years. Min. charge 1 hour, simple risk assessment and report typically 5 hours	£59/hour	£59 hourly rate
Sampling	Charge for a visit, taking a sample and delivery to the laboratory. Typically 2.5 hours	£59/hour	£59 hourly rate
Private water and pool samples	Includes cost of testing	£60	£59
Investigation	Carried out in the event of a test failure, can be substituted by the risk assessment - this does not include any required analysis costs.	£109	£118
Analysis – Regulation 10	Where a supply provides <10m^3/day or serves <50 people and is used for domestic purposes	£28	£28
Analysis of Group A Parameters		Cost of laboratory analysis will be recovered and will depend on type of suite being analysed. Customer will be advised of cost.	Hourly Rate + Laboratory Costs
Analysis of Group B Parameters		Additional parameters sampled less often to ensure the water complies with all safety standards - Hourly rate applies	Hourly Rate + Laboratory Costs
Hourly charge		£59	

Other Fees

	Hourly rate applies minimum of 2 hours	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Environmental Information Request - Individual, Non-Commercial	Hourly rate applies minimum of 2 hours	£118	£118 minimum
Environmental Information Request - Commercial and Government	Hourly rate applies minimum of 2 hours	£118	£118 minimum
Civil Actions (Class A – Fee Discretionary)		£118	£118 minimum
Safety Certification and administration	Hourly rate applies minimum of 2 hours	£118	£118 minimum
Pre-Application Advice, hourly charge		£59	£59

TRADING STANDARDS

Buy With Confidence

Description	Employee numbers	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Application Fee (set nationally by Buy with Confidence scheme)	1-5 employees	£125	£125
	6-20 employees	£167	£167
	21-49 employees	£208	£208
	50+ employees	POA	POA
Annual fee (set nationally by Buy with Confidence scheme)	1-5 employees	£250	£250
	6-20 employees	£375	£375
	21-49 employees	£500	£500
	50+ employees	POA	POA
Members before 2017/18 Annual Fee (Bracknell Forest legacy members only)	1-5 employees	£125	£125
	6-20 employees	£189	£189
	21-49 employees	£252	£252

** Administered by Hampshire County Council

Primary Authority

Description	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Primary Authority Work hourly chargeable rate	£59	£59 Hrly Rate
Annual charge - previous year usage 10 hours or less	£516	£531
Annual charge - previous year usage 20 hours	£1,031	£1,062
Anything likely to be in excess of 20 hours	Full recovery of costs - Individually assessed	Individually assessed

Support With Confidence

Description	Employee numbers	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Application fee	1-5 employees	£59	£59
	6-20 employees	£120	£120
	21+ employees	£300	£300

Weights and Measures

Description		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Weights and Measures Fees	Includes the cost of maintaining calibration of equipment annually (Based on ACTSO guidance)	£64	£64

Other Fees

Description		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Food export certificates	Full cost recovery based on hourly rate	£59	£59 minimum
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme rescore	2 hours	£118	£118
General Business Advice (Non-Primary Authority)	Hourly rate (first 30 minutes free)	£57	£59
Resident Request for Advice	Hourly rate	£57	£59

(4) Registration Services

Registration fees are largely controlled by statute. It is proposed to increase all other discretionary fees by 4.2%, in line with CPI inflation at October 2021.

Registrars			
		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Shaw House Ceremony Room			
	Tues- Fri	£266	£277
	Sat	£296	£308
Ceremonies at approved premises	Mon-Fri	£466	£485
	Sat	£496	£516
	Sun & Bank Holiday	£566	£590
Approved Premise Licence - any number of rooms		£2,136	£2,136
Celebratory Services - Baby Naming/Affirmation of vows - Shaw House	Monday to Friday	£262 VAT	£273 + VAT
	Saturday	£332 + VAT	£346 + VAT
Celebratory Services - Baby Naming/Affirmation of vows - At approved premises	Mon- Fri	£312 + VAT	£325 + VAT
	Sat	£373 + VAT	£389 + VAT
	Sun & Bank Holiday	£418 + VAT	£436 + VAT
Private Citizenship ceremony Mon to Sat		£123	£128
European Passport Return Service		N/A	N/A
Marriages & Civil Partnerships Booking Fee (non refundable)		£25	£26
Marriages & Civil Partnerships Cancellation Fee	More than 4 months before ceremony	Fees refunded minus £100	Fees refunded minus £100
	1-4 months before ceremony	50% refund	50% refund
	Less than 1 month before ceremony	No refund	No refund

(5) Archaeology

Historic Environment Record (HER)	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Research charges for staff time providing HER data	Hourly rate of £120 + VAT with a minimum of £75 + VAT for the first half hour	Hourly rate of £125 + VAT with a minimum of £75 + VAT for the first half hour
Providing archaeological information and advice for agri-environment schemes in line with nationally agreed service standards	Scale of charges, depending on the type of scheme and the area covered	Scale of charges, depending on the type of scheme and the area covered
A4 computer print out (b/w) HER report	£0.20	£0.20
A4 computer print out (colour) HER report	£0.60	£0.60
A3 computer print out (colour) HER report	£1.00	£1.00

2.2 Environment

(1) **Car Park Charges** – There are no proposed increases for existing car park charges for 2022/23.

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Newbury - Car Park Charges (Mon to Sun inc Bank Holidays):			
Newbury Station Multi-storey Car Park (Saturday & Sunday)	Up to 2 hours	-	£2.00
	Up to 4 hours	-	£3.50
	Daily Charge	-	£4.40
Newbury Station Multi-storey Car Park (Monday – Friday)	Up to 1 hour	-	£1.00
	Up to 2 hours	-	£2.00
	Up to 3 hours	-	£3.00
	Up to 4 hours	-	£4.00
	Peak daily charge (arrive before 10am) Ticket expires 23:59	-	£7.30
	Off Peak daily charge (arrive after 10am) Ticket expires 23:59	-	£4.40
Kennet Centre Multi-storey Car Park	Up to 1 hour	£1.50	£1.50
	Up to 2 hours	£2.70	£2.70
	Up to 3 hours	£3.90	£3.90
	Up to 4 hours	£5.20	£5.20
	Up to 6 hours	£7.20	£7.20
	Up to 8 hours	£8.70	£8.70
	Over 8 hours	£12.00	£12.00
	Evening Charge	£2.00	£2.00
Northbrook Multi-storey Car Park	Up to 1 hour	£1.50	£1.00
	Up to 2 hours	£2.70	£2.00
	Up to 3 hours	£3.90	£3.00
	Up to 4 hours	£5.20	£4.00
	Up to 6 hours	£7.20	-
	Up to 8 hours	£8.70	-
	Over 4 hours	£12.00	£5.00
	Evening Charge	£2.00	£2.00
Short and Long Stay Car Parks - Pelican Lane, West Street, 8 Bells, Market Street , Bear Lane, Central and Library	Up to 1 hour	£1.50	£1.50
	Up to 2 hours	£2.70	£2.70
	Up to 3 hours	£3.90	£3.90
	Up to 4 hours	£5.20	£5.20
	Up to 6 hours	£7.20	£7.20
	Up to 8 hours	£8.70	£8.70
	Over 8 hours	£12.00	£12.00
	Evening Charge	£2.00	£2.00
Short Stay Car Parks – Northcroft Lane and The Wharf	Up to 1 hour	£1.50	£1.50
	Up to 2 hours	£2.70	£2.70
	Up to 3 hours	£3.90	£3.90
	Up to 4 hours	£5.20	£5.20
	Over 4 hours	£12.00	£12.00
	Evening Charge	£2.00	£2.00
Long Stay Car Parks – Northcroft Lane West 08:00 am to 10:00pm	Up to 2 hours	£1.70	£1.70
	Up to 4 hours	£3.20	£3.20
	Over 4 hours	£5.20	£5.20
Long Stay Car Parks – Newbury Football Club and Market Street staff car park. Market Street (Saturday's only).	Up to 4 hours	£1.00	£1.00
	Over 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	no evening charge		
Goldwell Park	Up to 4 hours	£1.00	£1.00
	Over 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	No Evening Charge	Free	Free
Newbury Car Park Charges (Sunday) - All car Parks	Daily charge up to 6.00pm	Same as Mon to Sat	Same as Mon to Sat
	Evening charge from 6.00pm	£2.00	£2.00

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23	
Newbury on-street Charges (Mon to Sat inc Bank Holidays):				
Northbrook Street (west side) - either side of Albert Road Broadway (east side)- near Clock Tower Cheap Street (west side) Bartholomew Street	30 Mins	Free	Free	
	1 hour	£1.00	£1.00	
Kings Road West	30 Mins	Free	Free	
	1 Hour	£1.00	£1.00	
	2 Hours	£1.50	£1.50	
	4 Hours	£3.00	£3.00	
Newtown Road (north of St John's Road) West Mills	30 Mins	Free	Free	
	2 hours	£1.00	£1.00	
	4 hours	£2.00	£2.00	
Pelican Lane (west side)	30 mins	Free	Free	
	1 hour	£1.00	£1.00	
	2 hours	£2.20	£2.20	
Newbury on-street Charges (Mon to Sat inc Bank Holidays) continued:				
Newtown Road (south of St John's Road) -west side	4 hours	£1.00	£1.00	
	over 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00	
Catherine Road and Link Road	2 hours	£1.00	£1.00	
	4 hours	£2.00	£2.00	
	over 4 hours	£3.80	£3.80	
Station Road	2 hours	£1.00	£1.00	
	4 hours	£2.00	£2.00	
	over 4 hours	£3.80	£3.80	
Old Bath Road (south side) west of Leys Gardens	2 hours	£0.50	£0.50	
	4 hours	£1.00	£1.00	
	over 4 hours	£1.50	£1.50	
Faraday Road area	30 mins	Free	Free	
	2 hours	£0.50	£0.50	
	4 hours	£1.00	£1.00	
	over 4 hours	£1.50	£1.50	
Newbury On-Street Charges (Sunday)				
Standard daily charge of £1.00 at all locations where on-street charging applies. The 30 minutes free parking will be retained at all locations where it applies Monday to Saturday as will the £0.50 charge for up to 2 hours parking at the two locations where it applies (Old Bath Road and Faraday Road).		£1.00	£1.00	
Newbury Season Ticket Prices:				
Kennet Centre:	Per Quarter	£350.00	£350.00	
Northbrook MSCP:	Per Quarter	£350.00	£350.00	
	Per Annum	£1,150.00	£1,150.00	
Newbury "General":	Per Quarter	£350.00	£350.00	
	Per Annum	£1,150.00	£1,150.00	

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Out of Newbury Car Park Hourly Rates:			
Hungerford: Church St	Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80
	Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30
	Up to 3 Hours	£1.70	£1.70
	Up to 4 Hours	£2.00	£2.00
	Up to 10 hours	£4.00	£4.00
	Over 10 hours	£10.00	£10.00
Hungerford: Station Road	Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80
	Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30
	Up to 3 Hours	£1.70	£1.70
	Up to 4 Hours	£2.00	£2.00
	Up to 10 hours	£4.00	£4.00
	Over 10 hours	£6.00	£6.00
Hungerford High Street (On-Street)	Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80
	Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30
	Up to 4 hours	£3.80	£3.80
	Up to 8 hours	£6.00	£6.00
	Over 8 hours	£10.00	£10.00
Pangbourne Station Road:	Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80
	Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30
	Up to 3 hours	£1.70	£1.70
	Over 3 hours	£5.50	£5.50
Pangbourne River Meadow	Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80
	Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30
	Up to 3 hours	£1.70	£1.70
	Up to 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	Up to 8 hours	£2.50	£2.50
	Over 8 hours	£5.50	£5.50
Out of Newbury Car Park Hourly Rates continued:			
Thatcham Kennet Leisure Centre - Monday to Friday 8:30 to 17:30	Up to 2 hours (no return within 4 hours)	Free - (a ticket must be displayed)	Free - (a ticket must be displayed)
	Up to 3 hours	£1.00	£1.00
	Over 3 hours	£10.00	£10.00
Thatcham Kingsland Centre	Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80
	Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30
	Up to 3 hours	£1.70	£1.70
	Over 3 hours	£3.00	£3.00
Thatcham Gilbert Court	Up to 1 hour	Free	Free
	Up to 2 hours	£0.60	£0.60
	Up to 3 hours	£0.90	£0.90
	Over 3 hours	£2.00	£2.00
Thatcham Burdwood Centre	Up to 2 hours	Free	Free
	Up to 3 hours	£0.90	£0.90
	Over 3 hours	£2.00	£2.00
Thatcham Station (Monday - Friday)	Peak daily charge (arrive before 10am) Ticket expires 23:59	£3.40	£3.40
	Off Peak daily charge (arrive after 10am) Ticket expires 23:59	£2.00	£2.00
Thatcham Station (Saturday & Sunday)	Daily charge	£2.00	£2.00
Thatcham On-Street:			
Pipers Lane (Monday to Sunday at all times)	Up to 4 hours	£1.00	£1.00
	Over 4 hours	£1.50	£1.50
Ayleford Way (Monday to Sunday 8.00am to 6.00pm)	Up to 4 hours	£1.00	£1.00
	Over 4 hours	£1.50	£1.50
Theale Main	Up to 2 hours	£0.80	£0.80
	Over 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30
Theale West	Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80
	Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30
	Over 2 hours	£5.50	£5.50

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Out of Newbury Season Tickets			
Hungerford	Annual	£425.00	£425.00
Pangbourne	Per Quarter	£160.00	£160.00
	½ year	£315.00	£315.00
	Annual	£500.00	£500.00
Theale	Annual	£160.00	£160.00
West Berkshire Residents Parking Permits		£30.00	£30.00
West Berkshire Visitor Parking Permits		£1.00	£1.00
Hungerford High Street (Zone HHS)		£70.00	£70.00
Park Terrace		£70.00	£70.00
Blue Badge (new application)		£10.00	£10.00
Replacement Blue Badge		£10.00	£10.00
Parking Dispensation	Per Day	£15.00	£15.00
Parking Suspensions	Per application	£15.00	£15.00
	Per 5m bay per day	£10.00	£10.00
Council owned EV Charge Points (these are the base charges and will be subject to increase/decrease in line with the Council's 2022/23 electricity costs).			
Slow (7kWh) Charger	per kWh		£0.25
Fast (22kW AC) Charger	per kWh	-	£0.30
Rapid (50kW DC) Charger	per kWh	-	£0.39
Overstay fee (for Rapid charger).	per hour after 2 hours	-	£10.00

(2) Licence Fees, Permits and Other Charges

Fees are charged for a range of services e.g. where Highway Authority approval is required to place items or to work on the public highway. These include vehicular crossings, skips, scaffolds, table and chairs on the highway, issuing permits for and inspecting utility operations, temporary or permanent traffic regulation orders. It is proposed to increase these charges by 4.2%, in line with CPI inflation at October 2021. Fees for Michaelmas Fair have been adjusted to reflect actual costs to the Council.

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Tree Preservation Order		£27	£28
Michaelmas Fair		£3,020	£4,000
Public Rights of Way	Search fees	£75	£78
	Path order fees	£1,500-£3770	£1,530-£3,850
Statutory Declarations		£205 flat rate with rights to increase if the work required is onerous	£210 flat rate with rights to increase if the work required is onerous
Highways Act Charges:			
Land charges		£52	£54
Vehicular Crossing (S.184)	Approval	£150	£156
Skips on the Highway (S.139)	Initial fee	£46	£48
	per week	£54	£56
Scaffold/hoarding on the Highway (S.169/172)	Initial fee	£93	£97
	per week	£53	£55
Tables and Chairs on the Highway (based on number of Chairs) (S.115)	1 to 10	£233	£243
	10 to 27	£383	£399
	27+	£766	£798
Storing Materials on the Highways (S.171)	Initial fee	£87	£91
	per week	£29	£30
EV charging duct across footpath (S.171)	Approval		£153
Temporary Excavation in the highway (S.171)		£116	£121
Cranes, machinery, structure on the highway (S.178)		£168	£175
Per Necessary inspection		£63	£66
S142 Licence to plant in the highway		£139	£145

Permits under SI 2014 No. 3110 Highways, England and the Traffic Management (West Berkshire Council) Permit Scheme Order 2014 (Maximum Permissible Charge)	**Main Roads**			**Minor Roads**
These are maximum charges, pending consultation on changes to the West Berkshire Permit Scheme. 2021/22 fees are shown in brackets.				
Reinstatement category of street	0, 1 and 2	3 and 4		3 and 4
Street designated as traffic sensitive or not	All streets	Traffic sensitive at some times/locations		Non traffic sensitive at any time or location
Time and location of activity	Any time and location	Any part within traffic sensitive times / locations	Wholly within non traffic sensitive times / locations	Any time and location
Provisional Advance Authorisation	£105 (£77)	£105 (£77)	£75 (£62)	£75 (£62)
Major Works - over 10 days and all major works requiring a traffic regulation order	£240 (£199)	£240 (£199)	£150 (£125)	£150 (£125)
Major works - 4 to 10 days	£130 (£130)	£130 (£130)	£75 (£0)	£75 (£0)
Major works - up to 3 days	£65 (£65)	£65 (£65)	£45 (£0)	£45 (£0)
Standard Activity	£130 (£111)	£130 (£111)	£75 (£0)	£75 (£0)
Minor Activity	£65 (£52)	£65 (£52)	£45 (£0)	£45 (£0)
Immediate Activity	£60 (£47)	£60 (£47)	£40 (£0)	£40 (£0)
Permit Variation	£45 (£45)	£45 (£45)	£35 (£35)	£35 (£35)

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	**Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23**
Other Licences and Charges:			
Licence to place advertising sign on public highway (A board or similar) in Newbury Town Centre		£55	£57
Streetworks licence (S.50 NRSWA)		£262	£273
Utility Works Inspection (NRSWA/TMA)		£55	£57
Fixed Penalty Charge (Utility Companies) NRSWA/TMA		£120/£80	£120/£80
Working on the highway without a valid permit		£500 (£300 if paid within 29 days)	£500 (£300 if paid within 29 days)
Defect inspection fee for third party apparatus		£68	£68
Permanent Traffic Regulation Order for Developer		£880 plus actual costs of signage, road markings, agency & advertising	£900 plus actual costs of signage, road markings, agency & advertising
Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Section 14(1)		£891	£928
Emergency Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Section 14(2)		£461	£480
Retrospective Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Section 14(2)		£665	£693
Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Section 16A where appropriate & Section 21 of PTCA		£81	£84
Cutting through signal loops and not informing LA		£505 plus cost of recutting loops	£515 plus cost of recutting loops
Tourist / Direction signs		£534	£556
Traffic Signs / Signals Equipment damaged by Road Traffic Accident or other event		10% of cost of repairs	10% of cost of repairs
Use of permanent Traffic Regulation Order for railway crossing works		£81	£84
Access Protection Marking (single standard width dropped kerb driveway)		£128	£133
Sewerage treatment property charge		£389	£405
Events/Promotions on the Public Highway		£120 to £1,210 per day	£120 to £1,235 per day
Cycle Training		£40	£42
Recovery and storage of unauthorised signs		£139	£145
Street Works Core Sampling - Charge per failed core test		N/A	£185 (this is an average cost - actual cost calculated from the Coring Advice Note published by SEHAUC

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Provision of Data:			
Highway search enquiries	One A4 plan covering 100 metres of highway	£52	£54
	Additional 100 metres	£14	£15
	Additional question	£14	£15
Provision of recorded injury accident Data		£145 + £47 per additional block of up to 10 accidents	£145 + £47 per additional block of up to 10 accidents
Provision of Traffic Data, per request per site:	data up to 1 year old	£139	£145
	data up to 3 years old	£111	£116
	data over 3 years old	£82	£85

Charges in relation to works occupying the carriageway during period of overrun			
Item	**Description of street**	**Amount (£) (each of first three days)**	**Amount (£) (each subsequent day)**
1	Traffic-sensitive or protected street not in road categories 2,3 or 4	5,000	10,000
2	Other street not in road categories 2,3 or 4	2,500	2,500
3	Traffic-sensitive or protected street in road categories 3 or 4	3,000	8,000
4	Other street in road category 2	2,000	2,000
5	Traffic-sensitive or protected street in road category 3 or 4	750	750
6	Other street in road category 3 or 4	250	250

Charges in relation to works outside the carriageway during period of overrun		
Item	**Description of street**	**Amount (£)**
1	Street not in road category 2, 3 or 4	2,500
2	Street in road category 2	2,000
3	Street in road category 3 or 4	250

(3) Public Transport

Use of public transport has been affected by the impact of the Covid pandemic. No increases are proposed for 2022/23 in charges to bus operators and passengers.

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Charge per departure		£0.60	£0.60
Bus stands 0400-1800	up to 20 minutes	£0.00	£0.00
	20 minutes to 1 hour (max stay)	£1.20	£1.20
Coach stands 0400-1800	up to 90 mins (max stay)	£4.00	£4.00
Bus/coach stand and Bays B-F Mon-Sat 1800-0400 and all day Sunday	up to 3 hours	£3.00	£3.00
	over 3 hours	£6.00	£6.00
Additional charge for breaches		£25.00-£50.00	£25.00-£50.00
Temporary bus stop closure	Per stop	£150.00	£150.00
	Per pair of opposite stops	£180.00	£180.00
Provision of information at bus stops for services not subsidised by WBC	Per stop	£11.20	£11.20
Concession bus pass replacement fee		£16.50	£16.50

(4) Highways Development Control Fees

Fees are charged to developers for design checking, supervision and inspection of new roads under construction and off site highway improvements. The charges proposed have been benchmarked with other authorities. It is proposed to increase these charges by 4.2%, in line with CPI inflation at October 2021.

Highways Development Control Fees			
		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Street naming and numbering - Property name change		£87	£91
Changes to new addresses due to the development changing after the schedule has been issued.	Per plot	£87	£91
Street Naming and Numbering - New Developments	One address/plot	-	£87
	2 - 5 addresses/plots	-	£141
	6 - 10 addresses/plots	-	£252
	11 - 20 addresses/plots	-	£403
	21 or more addresses/plots	-	£20
Provision of Pre-Planning Application Advice			
Transport Assessment Scoping Note		£162	£169
Draft Transport Assessment		£549	£572
Provision of Private Access		£101	£105
Highway Advice for New Developments	Less than 5 Dwellings	£162	£169
	5 to 25 dwellings	£367	£382
	26 to 79 dwellings	£476	£496
	80 to 200 dwellings	£549	£572
	More than 200 dwellings	£621	£647
	0 to 249 sqm	£133	£139
	250 sqm to 999 sqm	£234	£244
	1,000 to 9,999 sqm	£367	£382
	over 10,000 sqm	£476	£496
Meeting charge	per hour per officer	£135	£141

(5) Hire of sports facilities

Sports facilities at Henwick Worthy, Holy Brook, Northcroft, Moorside and The Diamond at Greenham. It is proposed to increase the charges for use of our sports facilities by 4.2%, in line with CPI inflation at October 2021.

		Fees and Charges 2021/22		Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23	
		Single Booking	**Block Booking**	**Single Booking**	**Block Booking**
Henwick Worthy Sports Ground:					
Cricket – 1st Hand Wicket (per match)	Adult	£104.60	£87.10	£109.00	£90.80
	Junior	£48.20	£40.20	£50.20	£41.90
Cricket – 2nd Hand Wicket (used grass)	Adult	£77.40	£64.50	£80.70	£67.20
	Junior	£37.60	£31.40	£39.20	£32.70
Cricket – Artificial Wicket	Adult	£69.60	£58.00	£72.50	£60.40
	Junior	£35.50	£29.60	£37.00	£30.80
Cricket – 2nd (Reserve) Artificial Wicket	Adult	Free	Free	Free	Free
	Junior	Free	Free	Free	Free
Football – Grass (per game)	Adult	£79.20	£66.00	£82.50	£68.80
	Junior	£38.80	£32.30	£40.40	£33.70
Football - Mini Pitch	Adult	£44.80	£37.30	£46.70	£38.90
	Junior	£22.40	£18.70	£23.30	£19.50
Rugby – Grass (per game)	Adult	£79.20	£66.00	£82.50	£68.80
	Junior	£38.80	£32.30	£40.40	£33.70
Rugby Training	Cost per Hour	£21.50	£17.90	£22.40	£18.70
Use of Portable Lights	Cost Per Hour	£21.50	£17.90	£22.40	£18.70
Full Pitch Artificial Grass - peak	30 Mins	£42.90	£35.80	£44.70	£37.30
	1hr Only	£85.80	£71.50	£89.40	£74.50
	1hr 30mins (11 a side)	£128.80	£107.30	£134.20	£111.80
Half Pitch Artificial Grass - peak	30 Mins	£24.00	£20.00	£25.00	£20.80
	1hr Only (5 a side)	£48.00	£40.00	£50.00	£41.70
	1hr 30mins	£72.00	£60.00	£75.00	£62.50
Full Pitch Artificial Grass – off-peak	30 Mins	£20.00	£16.70	£20.80	£17.40
	1hr Only	£40.00	£33.40	£41.70	£34.80
	1hr 30mins (11 a side)	£60.00	£50.00	£62.50	£52.10
Half Pitch Artificial Grass – off-peak	30 Mins	£10.40	£8.70	£10.80	£9.10
	1hr Only (5 a side)	£20.90	£17.40	£21.80	£18.10
	1hr 30mins	£31.30	£26.10	£32.60	£27.20
Hardcourt Activities:					
Netball (per court per hr) (OUT OF ORDER AT TIME OF PUBLICATION)	Adult	£22.40	£18.60	£23.30	£19.40
	Junior	£11.20	£9.30	£11.70	£9.70
Tennis (per court per hr) (OUT OF ORDER AT TIME OF PUBLICATION)	Adult	£6.70	£5.60	£7.00	£5.80
	Junior	£3.60	£3.00	£3.80	£3.10
Basketball Hardcout and BMX Pump Track	Adult	Free	Free	Free	Free
	Junior	Free	Free	Free	Free
Moorside:					
Football - Grass (Per Game)	Adult	£66.30	£55.20	£69.10	£57.50
	Junior	£32.80	£27.40	£34.20	£28.60
The Diamond -Greenham:					
Football - Grass (Per Game)	Adult	£66.30	£55.20	£69.10	£57.50
	Junior	£32.80	£27.40	£34.20	£28.60
Holybrook Park:					
Football – Grass (per game)	Adult	£66.30	£55.20	£69.10	£57.50
	Junior	£32.80	£27.40	£34.20	£28.60
Northcroft Recreation Ground:					
Football - Grass (per game)	Adult	£66.30	£55.20	£69.10	£57.50
	Junior	£32.80	£27.40	£34.20	£28.60
Open space hire for coaching/ community use/festivals/other entertainment.		P.O.A		P.O.A	

***Peak Rate** – Weekday evenings after 6pm and all day Saturday; Off-Peak Rate – Weekdays before 6pm and all day Sunday; **Block Booking**:10 games and over; **Schools Rate**: £19.30 Per Hour (£23.16 inc vat if applicable)*

(6) Charges to Householders for Sewage Treatment

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

(7) Waste

Fees include bulky household collection, garden waste collection and provision of additional wheelie bins for garden waste collection. An increase to the garden waste service is proposed in line with inflation. No increases are proposed for other waste charges in 2022/23.

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Special Collection Charges (Bulky Household Collection)	Normal (within 7 days)	£45	£45
	Within 7 days by appointment outside property	£60	£60
	Within 7 days by appointment inside property	£70	£70
Provision of wheelie bin		£27	£27
Collection of garden waste for year (scheduled) - for 1st green bin (new subscriptions or renewals).		£50	£52
Garden Waste service charge for 2nd to 5th green bins (For renewals only where one off set up payment has already been made).		£40	£40
Removal of fly tipping on private land		P.O.A	P.O.A
Removal of graffiti up to $2m^2$ area		P.O.A	P.O.A
HWRC non-household waste charges:			
Soil and Rubble	Per 25L bag or equivalent/ single item	£2.50	£2.50
	Standard Car/Hatchback	£14.30	£14.30
	Trailer	£23.80	£23.80
	Small Van /Estate Car	£28.60	£28.60
	Transit van or similar	£95.20	£95.20
Plasterboard	Per 25L bag or equivalent	£2.10	£2.10
	Standard car / Hatchback	£12.90	£12.90
	Trailer	£21.40	£21.40
	Small Van / Estate car	£25.80	£25.80
	Transit Van or similar	£85.60	£85.60
Tyres	Motorised mini bike / motorised go-kart	£2.50	£2.50
	Standard tyre off rim (car/motorcycle)	£5.00	£5.00
	Standard tyre on rim (car motor cycle)	£7.00	£7.00
	Medium tyre off rim (large 4 x4 / large van)	£9.00	£9.00
	Medium tyre on rim (large 4 x 4 / large van)	£11.00	£11.00
	Miscellaneous tyres	£2.50	£2.50
Gas canisters		£6.00	£6.00
Charges for Non WBC Residents' Use of HWRCs	New charge per visit TBC	£7.00	£7.00

(8) Sustainable Drainage Pre-Application Advice Fees

Fees for sustainable drainage advice and meeting charges are being introduced from 2022/23, as follows:

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
SuDS advice for Major sites (written responses only).	Up to 20 dwellings	-	£250
	Over 20 dwellings	-	£450
Meeting charge	Per hour per officer	-	£141

3. Proposals – Resources Directorate

3.1 Electoral Services

These charges are statutory and the Council has no discretion to vary.

3.2 Local Land Charges

Local Land Charges are set in line with legislation, which requires the Council only to recover costs incurred in service delivery. An increase of 4.2% in line with CPI at October 2021 is proposed for 2022/23 where appropriate.

	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
LLC1	£75	£54
Con29 PT1	£52	£78
Con29PT11	£26	£27
Additional Questions	£47	£49
Con29 additional parcel	£41	£43
LLC1 additional parcel	£56	£58

3.3 Legal Fees

Proposed recharges of staff time have been inflated by 4.2% for 2022/23, in line with CPI at October 2021. No uplift is proposed to other charges for legal services.

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Managers	Hourly	£150	£156
Team Leader	Hourly	£142	£148
Solicitor / Barrister	Hourly	£137	£143
Legal Executive/Senior Legal	Hourly	£127	£132
Trainee Solicitor	Hourly	£107	£111
Landowners Statements		£1,140	£1,140
Registration of new town or Village Green by Landowner by Owner		No Fee	No Fee
Correction for the purpose of section 19 (2)(a) of a mistake made by the Registration Authority		No Fee	No Fee
Correction for a purpose described in section 19(2)(b)(C) or (e)		£200	£200
Correction for a purpose described in section 19(2)(d) - payable per register unit		£30	£30

3.4 Social Care Training

The Government provides funding for care sector training and we use this funding to deliver a comprehensive joint training programme for staff and people working in the private and voluntary care sector. Anyone can access the training. The grant funding enables charges to local and accredited social care providers to be subsidised, hence the lower rate fee. Charging is essential to make the funding go further and ensure people book on courses and turn up. An increase of 4.2% has been applied to these charges for 2022/23, in line with CPI inflation at October 2021.

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

		Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23
Adult and Children's			
Personal Assistants	Full Day	£45	£47
	Half Day	£27	£28
Private social Care and All Others	Full Day	£94	£94
	Half Day	£52	£54
Voluntary / Associated Social Care	Full Day	£52	£54
	Half Day	£27	£28
Corporate Courses			
Personal Assistants	Full Day	£45	£47
	Half Day	£27	£28
Private social Care and All Others	Full Day	£94	£94
	Half Day	£52	£54
Voluntary / Associated Social Care	Full Day	£94	£94
	Half Day	£52	£54
Foster Care Courses			
Personal Assistants	Full Day	£45	£47
	Half Day	£27	£28
Private social Care and All Others	Full Day	£94	£94
	Half Day	£52	£54
Voluntary / Associated Social Care	Full Day	£52	£54
	Half Day	£27	£28
Other Course for the Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector			
Associated Organisations	Full Day	£163	£170
Non Associated Organisations	Full Day	£422	£422

3.5 Council Tax Fees

Fees relating to recovery of unpaid Council tax are set in consultation with the Ministry of Justice. No increase in fees is proposed for 2022/23.

	Fees and Charges 2021/22	Proposed Fees and Charges 2022/23	
Summons cost	£57.50	£57.50	**
Liability Order cost	£50.00	£50.00	**
Penalty charge	£70.00	£70.00	*
Enforcement Agent compliance fee	£75.00	£75.00	*
Enforcement Agent visit fee	£235.00 + if debt is above £1,500 then 7.5% of the amount above £1,500 is added	£235.00 + if debt is above £1,500 then 7.5% of the amount above £1,500 is added	*
Committal fee	£330.00	£330.00	*

* level of fees / charge set by government

** level set by Local Authority.

Summary of responses to the budget challenge

To further engage with residents, the council launched the budget challenge again for 2022/23. The simulator allowed residents to increase or decrease budgets for various services, to amend Council tax (up to referenda levels), the Adult Social Care Precept, and to look at specific investments.

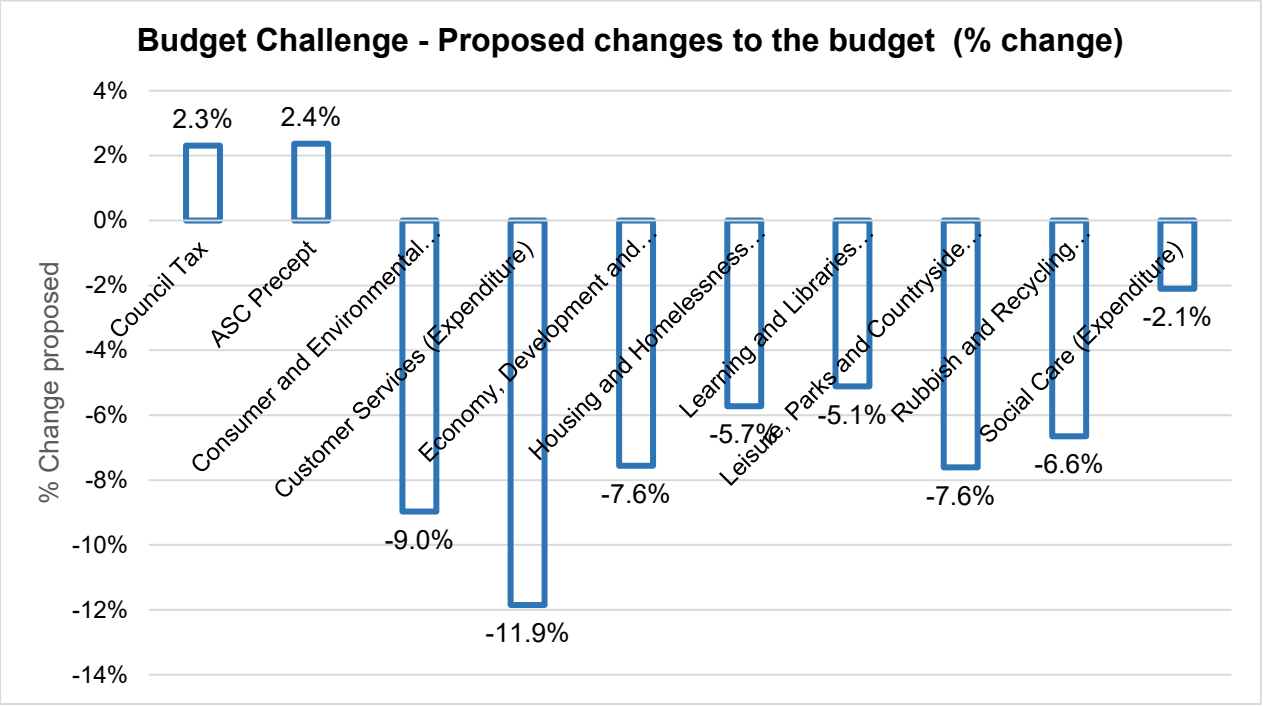
We published the Challenge online on our Consultation and Engagement Hub on 18 October 2021, with feedback requested by midnight on Sunday, 28 November 2021. (https://info.westberks.gov.uk/budgetchallenge)

We emailed members of the West Berkshire Community Panel (around 1,173 people), local stakeholder charities, representative groups and partner organisations notifying them of the exercise and inviting their contributions.

Finally, we issued a press release on 19 October 2021, and further publicised our consultations through our Facebook and Twitter accounts. We also placed posters in our main offices and libraries, and made them available to WBC Councillors and Parish and Town Councils to put up in the wards/parishes.

98 people took the challenge and the summary of their choices is as follows:

Chart 1.1: Summary of responses to the budget challenge



Overall, the average Council Tax rise proposed was 4.7%, split between Council Tax income and the Adult Social Care precept. The summary of the proposals in service areas was for a higher area of budget protection for 'People' services, Adult and Children Social Care, and to a lesser extent Education, with the least amount of protection for customer services.

In more detail, the top three individual services within the above headings that were the most and least protected are highlighted below:

Chart 1.2: Specific services changes

Most protected	Least protected
Children's social care -1.2%	Customer services -11.9%
Family Support -1.7%	Economic Development and Regeneration -10.7%
Youth Services -1.8%	Culture and Heritage -9.9%

Comparison versus the proposed budget

The responses have been considered at a summary level, and broadly align with the council's proposals. Since the budget challenge was launched, there was additional funding through the draft Local Government Finance Settlement that would have made it easier to balance the budget.

Some of the key areas of alignment and difference with the proposed budget include:

- Proposed Council Tax increase in the challenge of 4.7% vs the Council's proposal of 3.99%
- Relative protection for 'people' services is in line with the council's proposals; indeed this is an area which will receive significant investment, especially through the financial model for growth in children's, adult's and education services
- The move to more services being provided online and making them increasingly accessible will generate further savings, though it is important for the Council to maintain access for all as highlighted through its Communications and Engagement Strategy
- One of the least protected areas was economic development and regeneration. This area has been enhanced in recent years as it has been one of the Council's priorities in the Council Strategy 2019-23. Growth in this area supports businesses in the district and help to make West Berkshire a great place to live, with additional funds support local masterplan work in Newbury town centre and forthcoming with Thatcham and Hungerford.

Further individual comments were made and include the below on themes such as:

Mergers and shared services

"To be perfectly honest, West Berkshire Council is no longer viable as a council in its own right. Full merger with surrounding councils should be sought urgently".

"Fundamentally more income is required, and hence an increase in council tax if critical services are to meet citizens' needs. What is the council doing to reduce its back office operations (HR, Finance, Procurement, Payroll, etc.), perhaps by looking for opportunities to outsource to established providers of these services, or to join with

another council to achieve economic efficiencies? Central Government is already doing this on a major scale, as are a number of UK police forces".

"We need to get much more realistic about the costs of the public expected services and stop being capped by central government. Perhaps a larger combined authority could be more cost effective".

"West Berks should explore opportunities to collaborate and share services/investment (eg new technology)/procurement with neighbouring councils to achieve efficiencies/cost reductions/service level improvements".

Environment

"Regarding climate change and ecological protection, there should be a separate budget for this so that services that contribute to carbon zero and biodiversity are protected from budget cuts. Eg. Tree planting or electric car charging points".

"…reduce rubbish collection - black bins to once a month keep recycling at alternative weeks".

"Increasing the capacity of the recycling centres and increasing what can be recycled at kerbside would alleviate fly tipping issues".

"Grass cutting - I think there are a lot more opportunities for doing meadow cutting in open space and highways areas - such as leaving meadow margins to public green space, or mown edges to grass areas which are only cut once or twice a year".

Libraries

"The Library budget must be increased to keep this service open and contributing to the above childhood programmes".

"Libraries are the precious resource for the future of this nation".

"…We also need to balance who and how services are being used. For instance,we as a family would never use a library, however recognise the older generation might but to what extent/frequency? Libraries should be kept open in pivotal areas and a mobile service upheld for outlying villages and communities".

Changing services

"I enjoy culture but really don't feel Shaw House and the museum need to be open several days a week - it would make total sense to me if the museum was only open 3 or 4 days a week if it meant they could expand their schools programme".

"Cash reduction is not the way to review this - streamlining services to save cash, more emphasis on technology and greater efficiencies through day-to-day operational activities is the way I'd like to see cost savings (rather than clicking a button and being told it would reduce the number of FTEs). How about looking at the salaries of those in the upper echelons?".

"The Council needs to review how they are being contacted…very rarely need to call the council or visit in person".

"Within current budgets we already have:
potholes, limited gritting, delays to London Road development (3 years), limited urban landscaping, a household waste centre operating a restricted timetable for the last 18 months, suspension of green services x 2, limited action from Environmental Health on pollution/nuisance matters, waiting lists for special needs schools whose children struggle and cause disruption in mainstream school. Why not dispose of Council building assets/rents which have not been and are not being used with employees working from home?"

"Open space budget - Not sure why cutting the budget resulted in dog bins being removed but increasing the budget did not mean that more were provided!! Locally there is increased need for dog bins. Perhaps the Council can think of way to get dog owners to contribute to the cost of them? Parking levies at popular dog walking spots perhaps".

London Road

"…just stop wasting money on unwanted vanity political projects such as LRIE and moving the Football Club".

"No mention of money wasted that now needs to be cut from the budget. No mention of money wasted in contracts to companies that do poor work. The 9 million that needs to be save could have been done more or less in one go just by cancelling the movement of the football pitch".

General comments

"A complex exercise. I would have preferred smaller percentages to enable the budget to be balanced with less impact".

"What a complete waste of time and money. This "survey" is the first thing I would cut. Both the time and effort to set it up, the cost of distributing it, as well as the cost of analysing the results. If the purpose is to demonstrate how difficult it is, then show leadership and don't as the public questions that they have little insight into their overall impact. It is superficial and disingenuous to suggest that people have sufficient insights to make such decisions".

"I work in adult social care, so my priorities lie there. It is a difficult thing to do. But it is only for a year. My theory being that the areas that have taken a hit will then be balanced out".

"Run a public competition to get ideas about other ways to raise funds. Any winning ideas which are implemented get the idea or a refund on council for X years, depending on savings made.

Offer bursaries to people to do up there house to enable an elderly relative to stay there. An investment in bribing people to look after their relatives in multi-generational house, and reduce the ASC bill".

"As I said last year, it is appalling that you have to make so many cuts. I, and I hope many others, would be happy to pay more in council tax to fund the work you do. It's a shame the govt doesn't feel the country deserves much investment".

"Adult social care and roads and transport spending seem to be the biggest areas of spending but should not take budgets away from other equally important services. Local Authorities need to work with central government/NHS to come up with genuine sustainable solutions to the Adult Social Care problem and send a clear message to this affect by cutting services. Local Authorities should not prioritise the vulnerable elderly at the expense of other vulnerable people such as the homeless, people suffering with mental health, SEN children, struggling families".

Further information can be found at https://info.westberks.gov.uk/budgetchallenge

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2021/22 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter Three

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	10 February 2022
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Ross Mackinnon
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	27 January 2022
Report Author:	Melanie Ellis
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4016

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To report on the financial performance of the Council's revenue budgets and provide a year-end forecast. This report is Quarter Three 2021/22.

2 Recommendations

2.1 To note the year-end forecast £0.04m overspend, after taking account of provision that was made in reserves for specific risks at the time of budget setting. Without this provision, the forecast would be an overspend of £0.6m.

2.2 To note the ongoing impact that Covid will have on the 2021/22 budget as the Council sees increased demand for some services, but continues to be supported by external funding.

2.3 To approve the transfer of capital financing interest budgets from within individual services to Capital Finance.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	£0.04m forecast overspend, after taking account of provision in reserves. Without this provision, £0.6m overspend.
Human Resource:	None
Legal:	None

Risk Management:	Risks to next years' budget are included where relevant in the report. Where identified these will form part of the budget build process for 2022/23.			
Property:	Impact on income due to commercial property.			
Policy:	No			
	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?		Y		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		Y		
Environmental Impact:		Y		
Health Impact:		Y		
ICT Impact:		y		
Digital Services Impact:		y		
Council Strategy Priorities:		y		Business as usual
Core Business:		y		

Data Impact:		y		
Consultation and Engagement:	Budget holders, Heads of Service and Directors.			

4 Executive Summary

4.1 This report is to inform members of the financial performance of the Council's revenue budgets. This report is the forecast position for 2021/22 as at Quarter Three.

4.2 The 2021/22 net revenue budget of £137m was set on 2nd March 2021. Since then the Council has continued to play a significant part in responding to the pandemic, from helping to coordinate the community response, supporting local businesses and working with schools. The overall forecast is interlinked to the impact of the pandemic and the use of Covid resources provided by central government and the Clinical Commissioning Group. The Council is seeing increased demand for some services which will have an impact on the 2021/22 financial position.

4.3 The year-end forecast is a £0.04m overspend, after taking account of provision that was made in reserves for specific risks at the time of budget setting. Without this provision, the forecast would be an overspend of £0.6m.

			(Under)/over spend						
			Quarter One	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Quarter Three	Quarter Three	Quarter Four	Change to Service Forecast from Last Quarter
Directorate Summary	Current Net Budget	Forecast Outturn	Year end forecast	Year end forecast	Forecast	Provided in Reserves	Year end forecast	Final	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
People	79,426	81,268	59	1,153	1,842	(520)	1,322	0	169
Place	29,808	29,533	231	(654)	(275)	0	(275)	0	379
Resources	13,009	13,299	405	364	291	(72)	219	0	(145)
Chief Executive	561	575	0	18	15	0	15	0	(4)
Capital Financing	15,058	13,821	(1,000)	(1,222)	(1,236)	0	(1,236)	0	(15)
Total	**137,861**	**138,497**	**(305)**	**(341)**	**636**	**(592)**	**44**	**0**	**385**

4.4 The People Directorate forecast is an overspend of £1.8m. The Directorate is experiencing increased demand and higher level of care package requirements, which have been supported in-year by one off Covid grant funding. If the overspend remains at year end, it could be reduced to £1.3m by accessing specific reserves which were set aside for risks that have arisen.

(a) The Adult Social Care (ASC) forecast overspend is £43k. The 2021/22 budget was built using £2.3m of one-off Covid emergency grant, of which £1.2m is supporting the general budget pressures in ASC such as increased client numbers, and £1.1m is supporting specific Covid pressures.

- Long term services (LTS) are £0.7m over spent, after the allocation of Covid funding against specific pressures. There are 1,707 clients at December 2021 compared to

1,698 modelled, with the rise attributable clients being discharged from hospital earlier through the Covid Hospital Discharge Scheme and requiring more care and increasing the number of clients moving onto a long term service.

- There is lower occupancy within Council owned care homes, resulting in unmet savings. The budget was set at 95% occupancy across the three homes and is currently at 78%. As clients are discharged from hospital earlier, their needs are often too high for the provision available, and so are placed externally.

- Short term services are £0.5m over spent, after the allocation of Covid funding against specific pressures, due to an increase in short term commissioning due to the uncertainty that Covid brings.

- The service continues to take action to suppress market demand by reinforcing the three conversations model, strategic review of in-house care home provision and use of technology enabled care. Market Management works with local providers to ensure supply and demand are better aligned and offer better value for money. Net weekly spend on long term services is carefully monitored, with requests for long term services scrutinised weekly at Good Practice Forum. The ongoing budget pressures will be addressed as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process.

(b) In Children & Family Services (CFS), the forecast overspend is £1.1m. The risk reserve for residential placements of £0.4m could be used if the overspend remains at year end, which would reduce the overspend to £0.7m.

- Placements are £0.6m over spent, comprising a £1.2m overspend in residential care offset by underspends in areas including fostering and UASC. Whilst the children in care population has been stable, there is increasing complexity in the needs of children who have entered care and an increase in associated costs. This has meant the planned saving from the placements budget is no longer possible.

- The Family Safeguarding Model had a saving target of £209k for income from partner agencies to support this model. The partner decision not to contribute has resulted in a pressure as this saving will not be met.

- Additional Child Care Lawyer Fees have been incurred in relation to two investigations. The savings target of £150k against Child Care Lawyers is therefore no longer forecast to be achieved in full.

- The service is forecasting £188k overspend in other areas, most notably staffing. This is due to current demands on staff from higher demand coupled with vacancies, maternity leave and sickness absence being covered by agency staff.

(c) Education is reporting a £0.8m overspend, predominantly due to an exceptional residential placement which started in the autumn term, together with pressures on Home to School Transport. There is £81k set aside in reserves which if used, would reduce the overspend to £0.7m.

4.5 The Place Directorate forecast under spend is £0.3m arising in Environment largely due to additional income from dry recycling and diversion of waste from landfill to ‘energy from waste’ sites.

4.6 The Resources Directorate forecast overspend is £0.2m arising from:

- A number of schools leaving the Council insurance in favour of cheaper Risk Protection Arrangements offered by the Department for Education. The self-insurance reserve requirement has been reduced to support this.
- Timing of office moves and demand for temporary storage has led to an unmet saving from rationalisation of office space.
- Forecast overspends from covering staff with agency in Finance, ICT and S&G.

4.7 The Capital Financing forecast is an underspend of £1.2m from lower capital expenditure during the pandemic and savings through utilisation of short term borrowing and cash flow as opposed to longer term financing. Savings have also been achieved through the prepayment of pension contributions.

4.8 The 2021/22 savings and income generation programme of £3.6m is 68% Green.

Conclusion

4.9 The 2021/22 financial year continues to present financial challenges for the Council in supporting our residents and business. Grant funding has helped the Council to cover additional costs and lost income and to enable us to continue to support a range of activities within our district.

4.10 The forecast is interlinked to the impact of the pandemic and the use of Covid resources provided by central government. The funding received from Government to date, and the Council's level of general fund reserves mean that the Council is well placed to continue its efforts on response and recovery from Covid-19. The Covid-19 grant underspend from 2020/21 has been used to fund the ongoing pandemic response. The Council is seeing increased demand for some services and the longer term position will require further analysis and announcements from Central Government on the funding position before the full impact on 2021/22 and beyond is known.

4.11 The £3.6m savings and income generation programme is 74% achieved to date, and will be reported on each quarter.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

5.2 The 2021/22 net revenue budget of £137m was set on 2nd March 2021. Since then the Council has continued to play a significant part in responding to the pandemic, from helping to coordinate the community response, supporting local businesses and working with schools. The overall forecast is interlinked to the impact of the pandemic and the use of Covid resources provided by central government and the Clinical Commissioning Group.

Quarter Three 2021/22

5.3 The table below shows the year-end forecast of £0.04m overspend, after taking account of provision that was made in reserves for specific risks at the time of budget setting. Without this provision, the forecast would be a £0.6m overspend.

Directorate Summary	Current Net Budget	Forecast Outturn	(Under)/over spend						Change to Service Forecast from Last Quarter
			Quarter One	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Quarter Three	Quarter Three	Quarter Four	
			Year end forecast	Year end forecast	Forecast	Provided in Reserves	Year end forecast	Final	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
People	79,426	81,268	59	1,153	1,842	(520)	1,322	0	169
Place	29,808	29,533	231	(654)	(275)	0	(275)	0	379
Resources	13,009	13,299	405	364	291	(72)	219	0	(145)
Chief Executive	561	575	0	18	15	0	15	0	(4)
Capital Financing	15,058	13,821	(1,000)	(1,222)	(1,236)	0	(1,236)	0	(15)
Total	**137,861**	**138,497**	**(305)**	**(341)**	**636**	**(592)**	**44**	**0**	**385**

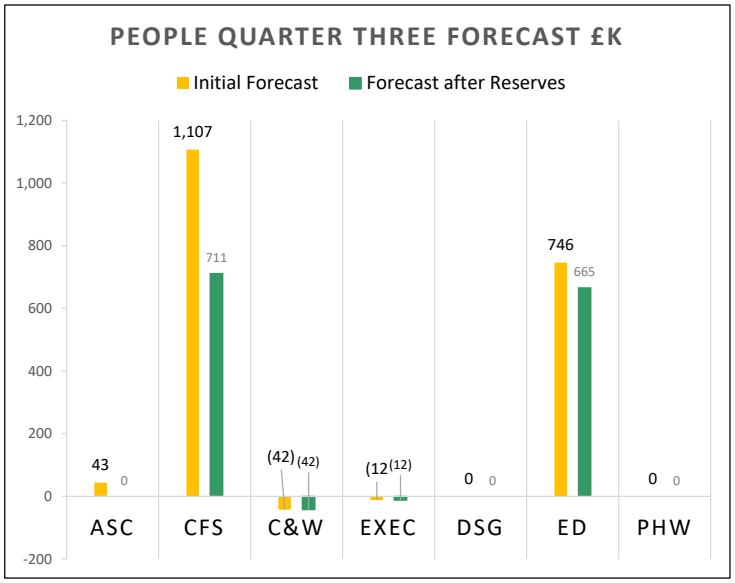
5.4 Forecasting remains challenging this year due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19. The forecasts by service are shown in the following chart:

	Current Net Budget	Net Forecast	(Under)/over spend					Change to Service Forecast from Last Quarter
			Quarter One	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Quarter Three	Quarter Three	
			Year end forecast	Year end forecast	Forecast	Provided in Reserves	Year end forecast	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adult Social Care	51,172	51,216	0	0	43	(43)	0	0
Children & Family Services	16,901	18,008	67	444	1,107	(396)	711	267
Communities & Wellbeing	2,419	2,377	0	(29)	(42)	0	(42)	(13)
Executive Director	320	308	(7)	(9)	(12)	0	(12)	(3)
Education DSG funded	(441)	(441)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Education	9,135	9,881	0	747	746	(81)	665	(82)
Public Health & Wellbeing	(80)	(80)	0	0	0	0	0	0
People	**79,426**	**81,268**	**59**	**1,153**	**1,842**	**(520)**	**1,322**	**169**
Executive Director	198	198	0	0	0	0	0	0
Development & Regulation	5,900	5,959	87	(46)	58	0	58	104
Environment	23,710	23,377	144	(608)	(333)	0	(333)	275
Place	**29,808**	**29,533**	**231**	**(654)**	**(275)**	**0**	**(275)**	**379**
Commissioning & Procurement	802	564	(40)	(190)	(238)	0	(238)	(48)
ICT	2,135	2,314	64	88	179	(72)	107	19
Executive Director	301	310	1	6	9	0	9	3
Finance & Property	3,352	3,702	343	357	349	0	349	(8)
Strategy & Governance	6,418	6,409	36	103	(8)	0	(8)	(112)
Resources	**13,009**	**13,299**	**405**	**364**	**291**	**(72)**	**219**	**(145)**
Chief Executive	**561**	**575**	**0**	**18**	**15**	**0**	**15**	**(4)**
Capital Financing	15,058	13,821	(1,000)	(1,222)	(1,236)	0	(1,236)	(15)
Capital Financing	**15,058**	**13,821**	**(1,000)**	**(1,222)**	**(1,236)**	**0**	**(1,236)**	**(15)**
Total	**137,861**	**138,497**	**(305)**	**(341)**	**636**	**(592)**	**44**	**385**

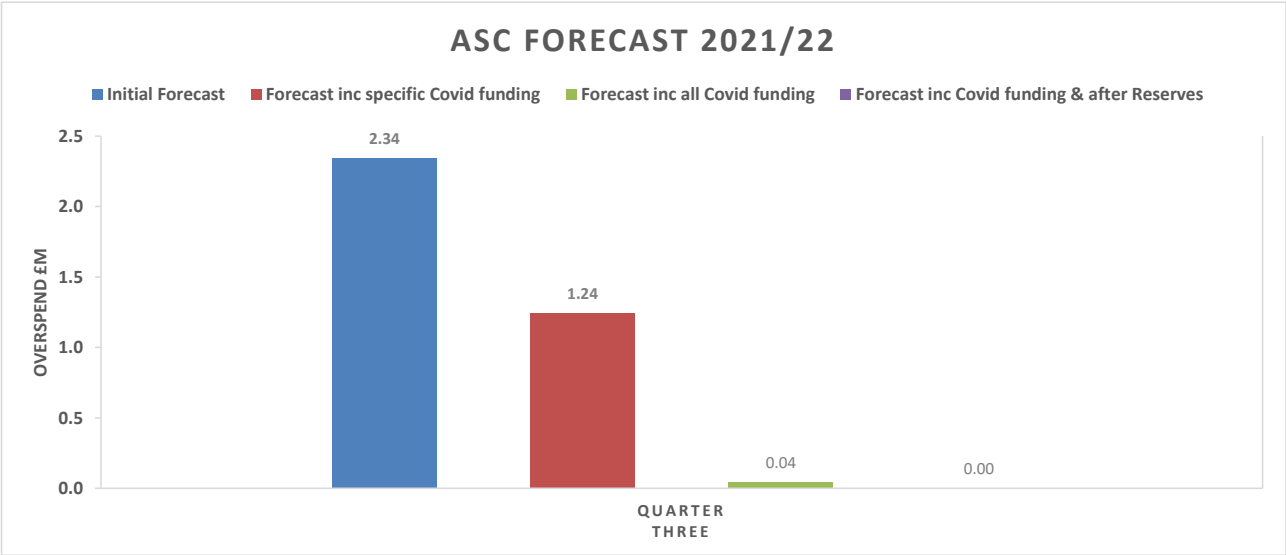
NB: Rounding differences may apply to the nearest £k.

People Directorate

5.5 The Directorate Quarter Three forecast is an overspend of £1.8m. If the overspend remains at year end, it could be reduced to £1.3m by accessing specific reserves which were set aside for risks that have arisen.



5.6 In ASC, the forecast overspend is £43k. The 2021/22 budget was built using £2.3m of one-off Covid emergency grant, of which £1.2m is supporting general budget pressures in ASC such as increased client numbers and their costs, and £1.1m is being used to support specific Covid pressures. The ongoing budget pressures will be addressed as part of the 2022-23 budget build process. The £43k overspend could be fully mitigated if required at year-end by using some of the £0.9m identified as a risk against the General Fund during the budget build process.



5.7 Long term services (LTS) are £0.7m over spent, after the allocation of Covid funding against specific pressures. There are higher client numbers than modelled, 1714 at December 2021 compared to 1698 modelled. The rise in clients is attributable the impact of clients being discharged from hospital earlier through the Covid Hospital

Discharge Scheme and requiring more care and therefore increasing the number of clients moving onto a long term service. This is also increasing the cost of care packages due to the amount of care required, including an increase in double up care at home.

5.8 There is lower than modelled occupancy within Council owned care homes, which has resulted in unmet savings. The budget was set at 95% occupancy across the three homes and is currently at 78%. As clients are discharged from hospital earlier, their needs are often too high for the provision available, and so are placed externally, resulting in higher costs.

5.9 Short term services are £0.5m over spent after the allocation of Covid funding against specific pressures. The overspend is due to an increase in services being commissioned short term due to the uncertainty that Covid brings. ASC have proactively claimed for Continuing Health Care (CHC) and Covid funding to help mitigate this.

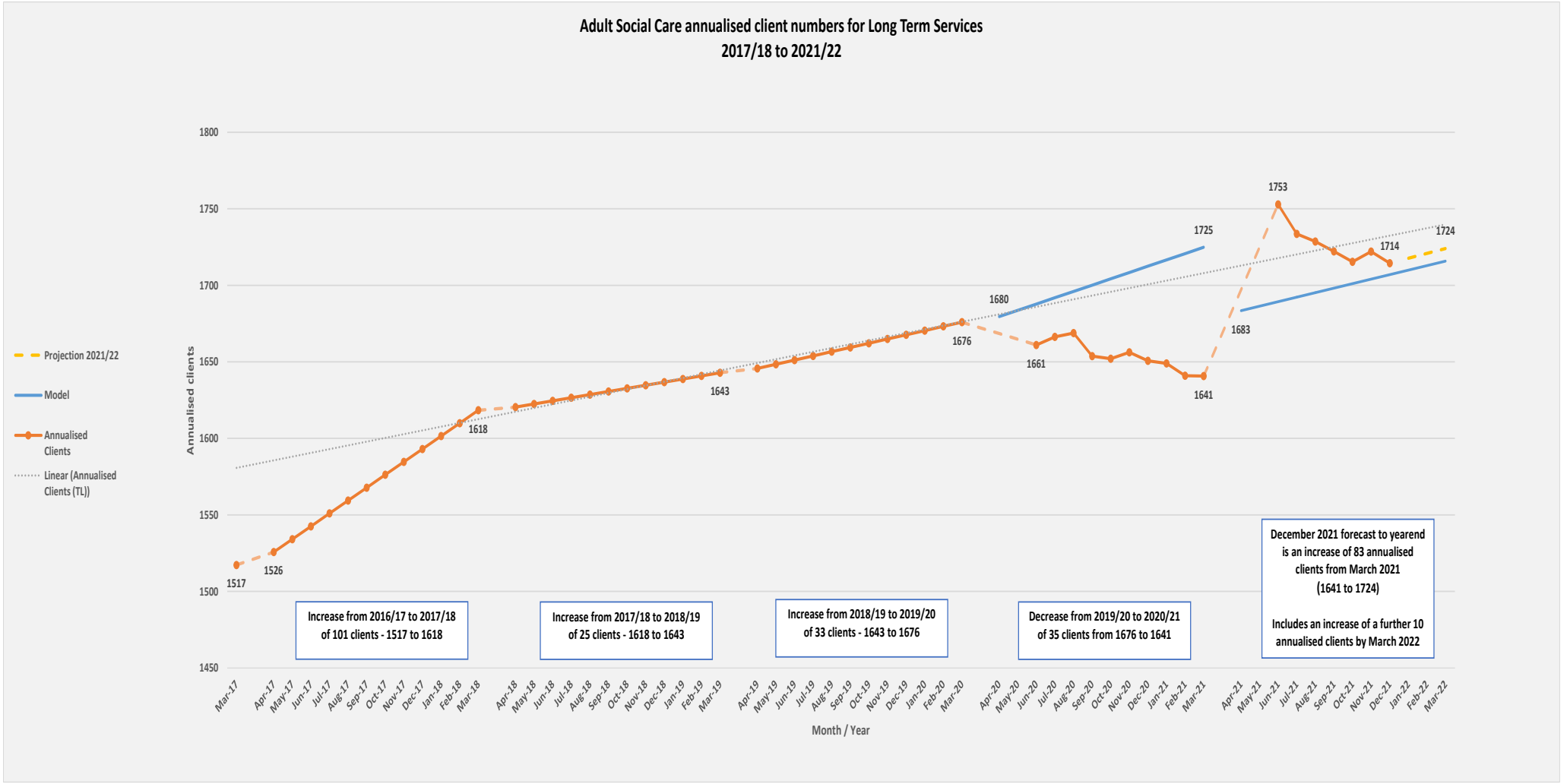
5.10 There is a forecast overspend of £195k due to agency costs and reduced income in our own care homes, but Shared Lives is forecasting an underspend of £155k due to vacant carer posts which are being recruited to.

5.11 The forecast overspend is being mitigated through the use of Covid funding and discussions are being held with Health for additional funding due to the impact of the Covid Hospital Discharge Scheme. A number of options are being explored with HR to recruit to the staff vacancies.

5.12 The service continues to take action to suppress market demand such as reinforcing the three conversations model suppressing the need for long term services, strategic review of in-house care home provision, use of technology enabled care and maximising external funding streams. Market Management is working with local providers to ensure supply and demand are better aligned and offering better value for money. Net weekly spend on long term services is carefully monitored. All requests for long term services are scrutinised weekly at Good Practice Forum by senior management to ensure Care Act compliance and also make best uses of resources.

5.13 The ASC Model for long term services will be updated monthly throughout this financial year to inform the 2022-23 budget. The assumptions are reviewed and agreed by the ASC Financial Planning Steering group and reported at the ASC Financial Planning meeting on a monthly basis. The modelling produces a financial impact range between low cost, most likely and high cost. The model inflation is at 2.7%, reflecting increases expected in costs balanced against increases already in place. The Risk Reserve will be increased to cover the risk of higher inflation during 2022/23. The funding for this will be from the release of invoice provisions made at 31.3.2021 that are no longer required.

5.14 The graph below shows client numbers from March 2017.


Adult Social Care annualised client numbers for Long Term Services
2017/18 to 2021/22
Projection 2021/22
Model
Annualised Clients
Linear (Annualised Clients (TL))
Annualised clients
Month / Year
1517
1526
1618
1643
1676
1680
1661
1641
1683
1753
1725
1714
1724
Increase from 2016/17 to 2017/18 of 101 clients - 1517 to 1618
Increase from 2017/18 to 2018/19 of 25 clients - 1618 to 1643
Increase from 2018/19 to 2019/20 of 33 clients - 1643 to 1676
Decrease from 2019/20 to 2020/21 of 35 clients from 1676 to 1641
December 2021 forecast to yearend is an increase of 83 annualised clients from March 2021 (1641 to 1724)
Includes an increase of a further 10 annualised clients by March 2022

5.15 In CFS, the forecast is a £1.1m overspend. The risk reserve for residential placements of £0.4m could be used if the overspend remains at year end, which would reduce the overspend to £0.7m.

5.16 There is a forecast £0.6m overspend in placements, comprising an overspend of £1.2m in residential care offset by underspends in most other areas including fostering and UASC. Whilst the children in care population has generally been stable, we are seeing increasing complexity in the needs of children who have recently entered care. Addressing this level of complexity successfully relies on many specialist services and effective coordination. Nevertheless, there is a very strong level of stability in children's placements currently.

5.17 There is a particular cohort of young people with very high care needs, requiring specialist residential provision. We have 5 young people placed in residential homes who are incurring costs considerably more than the typical price we would wish to pay. A standard residential provision will typically cost between £3,500 and £4,500 per week. Children with higher support needs require increased staffing ratios or solo occupancy of a home which will lead to a cost of more than double this sum. In total these 5 children are costing the service £45,600 per week to provide safe care.

5.18 This has contributed to the majority of the CFS projected overspend, and has meant the saving we were hoping to achieve from the placements budget is no longer possible.

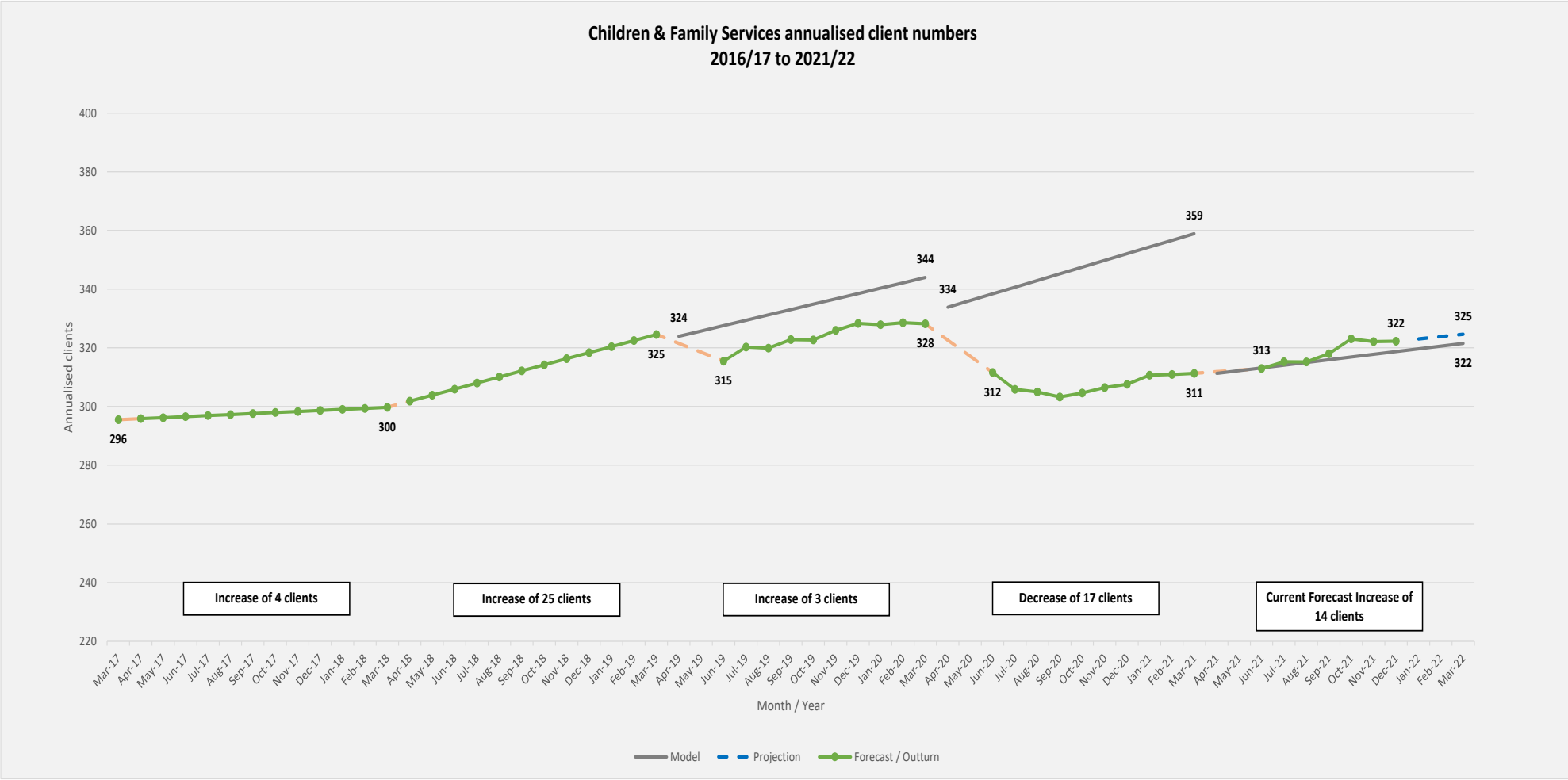
5.19 The Family Safeguarding Model had a saving target of £209k for income from partner agencies to support this model. The partner decision not to contribute has resulted in a pressure as this saving will not be met.

5.20 Additional Child Care Lawyer Fees have been incurred in relation to an investigation regarding the death of a child. There is also a particularly complex case involving a child with a disability. The savings target of £150k against Child Care Lawyers is therefore no longer forecast to be achieved in full, and the overspend in this area is forecast to be £100k.

5.21 The service is forecasting £188k overspend in other areas, most notably staffing. This is due to current demands on staff from higher demand coupled with vacancies, maternity leave and sickness absence. Many of these are being covered by agency staff and have been extended since the Quarter Two forecast.

5.22 Covid funding has been used to cover £0.4m of additional staffing costs supporting the Ofsted response to increased caseloads within the teams.

5.23 The model for placements has been refined and will be updated monthly. The graph below shows an increase in client numbers up to 2019/20, but 2020/21 saw a significant reduction. Although the projected client numbers for 2021/22 are very close to those budgeted, it is the number of clients in higher cost provision generating the in-year pressure.


Children & Family Services annualised client numbers
2016/17 to 2021/22
Annualised clients
Month / Year
Increase of 4 clients
Increase of 25 clients
Increase of 3 clients
Decrease of 17 clients
Current Forecast Increase of 14 clients
Model
Projection
Forecast / Outturn

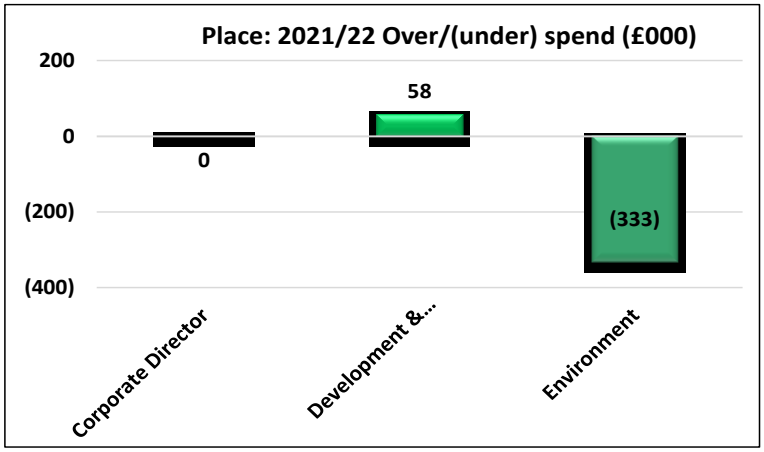
5.24 Education is reporting a £0.8m overspend. The overspend is predominantly due to an exceptional residential placement which started in the autumn term costing £16k per week, together with a forecast pressure on Home to School Transport of £237k. There is £81k set aside in reserves which would reduce the overspend to £0.7m

5.25 Communities and Wellbeing is reporting a £42k underspend from Building Communities Together and Leisure.

5.26 The Public Health grant forecast is on line, and any variances to budget will be transferred to the Public Health Reserve at year end. There is currently an estimated £0.6m underspend which will transfer to the reserve. This is mainly due to staff projects being supported from COMF funding.

Place Directorate

5.27 The Place Directorate is forecasting an underspend of £0.3m against a budget of £30m.



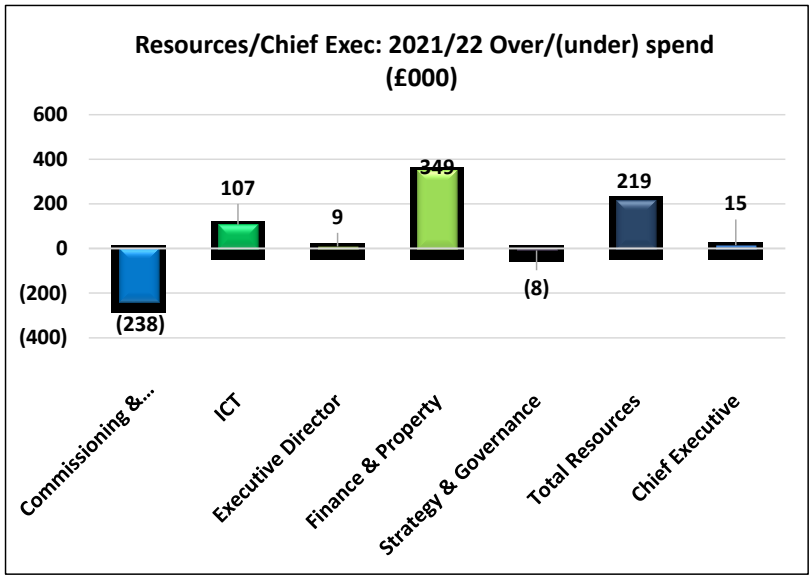
5.28 In Development and Regulation, there is a £58k forecast overspend. There are adverse variances of £110k for delivery of the Local Plan and £30k consultancy, £74k on interim Director costs, £26k under achievement of Development Control income, and smaller pressures against Gypsy sites and Ecology for Sandleford Park. There are favourable variances in the Housing Service largely due to higher grant levels, increased income and salary underspends.

5.29 In Environment, there is a £333k forecast underspend. There is additional income of £550k from dry recycling sales and diversion of waste from landfill to 'energy from waste' sites, and additional income of £140k from the garden waste subscription. Public Transport budgets are expected to be £325k under spent from lower vehicle costs and receipt of Covid grant funding to support income and social distancing requirements.

5.30 Pressures in the Environment service include £240k overspend on Ash Dieback remedial work required to ensure safety on the highway. It was previously agreed to treat this is a risk, however, ongoing investment will need to be made, unless funding becomes available to mitigate the costs. There are £200k pressures in Transport Services from Streetworks IT, testing costs and permit income, consultancy, and car parks. The majority of losses have been covered by Covid grants, but this pressure relates to residual amounts that aren't funded.

Resources Directorate/Chief Executive

5.31 The Directorate is forecasting an overspend of £0.2m against a budget of £13m.



5.32 In Commissioning, there is a £238k surplus income largely from the agency contract rebate, as a result of the increased agency usage for Covid cover during the year.

5.33 In ICT the forecast overspend of £107k is from covering staff absence (after accounting for New Burdens funding of £72k), income shortfall from school buy back/print room and loss of print and reprographic income. Savings continue to be seen from postage costs.

5.34 In Finance and Property, the £349k forecast overspend has arisen as follows:

- A number of schools have left the Council insurance in favour of cheaper Risk Protection Arrangements offered by the Department for Education. This has resulted in loss of income of £265k, although a lower self-insurance reserve requirement has reduced this impact by £100k.

- A £158k saving was expected from rationalisation of office space, however, the timing of office moves and demand for temporary storage means it is unlikely this saving will be realised.

- Temporary staff costs covering vacancies in the Financial Reporting Team is expected to lead to an overspend of £80k. The forecast has increased as temporary cover has had to be extended due to recruitment difficulties.

- Commercial Property has a shortfall in net income for the year of around £305k in light of ongoing vacancy at one of the Council's Commercial Property assets. The shortfall against budget can be accommodated from earmarked balances and will not impact General Fund reserves, so has been report as online at Quarter Three.

- Strategy and Governance is forecasting an £8k underspend.

Capital Financing

5.35 The Capital Financing forecast is an underspend of £1.2m. Capital financing costs are lower than expected due to less capital expenditure than expected during the pandemic and savings on capital financing through utilisation of short term borrowing and cash flow as opposed to longer term financing. Savings have also been achieved through the prepayment of pension contributions.

5.36 Some capital financing interest costs were previously budgeted for within services. These budgets have now all been moved to within the Capital Financing budget area. This can be seen at Appendix B and requires Executive approval.

Covid-19 impact on the 2021/22 budget

5.37 In 2020/21, the Council was awarded £9.6m of un-ringfenced emergency expenditure grant from Central Government and claimed £2.8m of emergency funding for lost income. Overall emergency grant funding totalled £12.4m and losses totalled £9.5m, so the balance of £2.9m was put to an earmarked Covid reserve to use during 2021/22.

5.38 In 2021/22, the Council has received a further £3.2m emergency grant and is expecting to claim £1.1m in lost income. Forecasts in this report are after allocation of grant funding.

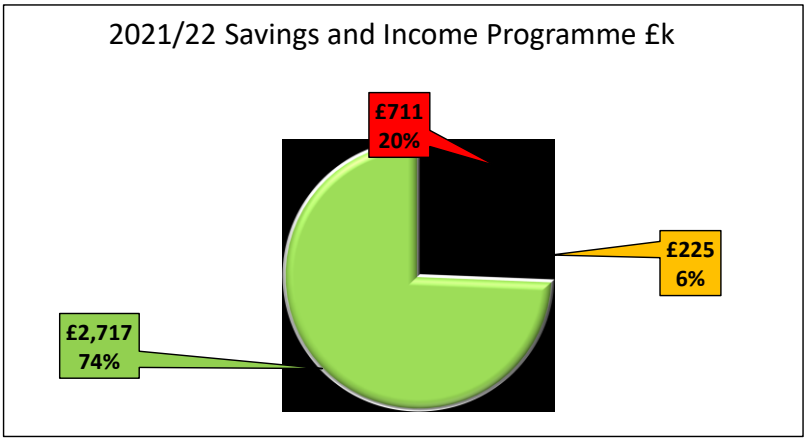
Covid Funding 2021/22	General Grants 2021/22		
	Emergency Expenditure Grant	Income compensation Scheme	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Grants brought forward	**(2,878)**		**(2,878)**
Grants 2021/22	**(3,257)**	**(911)**	**(4,168)**
Total grants available	**(6,134)**	**(911)**	**(7,046)**
To be awarded to services:			
Adult Social Care	2,063	156	**2,219**
Children & Family Services	393	0	**393**
Education	217	10	**227**
Communities & Wellbeing	483	70	**553**
People	**3,156**	**236**	**3,392**
Development & Planning	(19)	48	**29**
Public Protection	128	4	**132**
Environment	687	273	**961**
Place	**796**	**326**	**1,122**
Finance & Property	444	76	**520**
Commissioning	0	0	**0**
ICT	259	0	**259**
Strategy & Governance	155	5	**159**
Resources	**858**	**81**	**939**
CEX	**0**		**0**
Recovery	**198**		**198**
Total to be awarded to services	**5,008**	**643**	**5,651**
Grant Remaining	**(1,126)**	**(268)**	**(1,395)**
Commitments 2022/23			**866**
Collection fund support			**529**
Grant Remaining			**0**

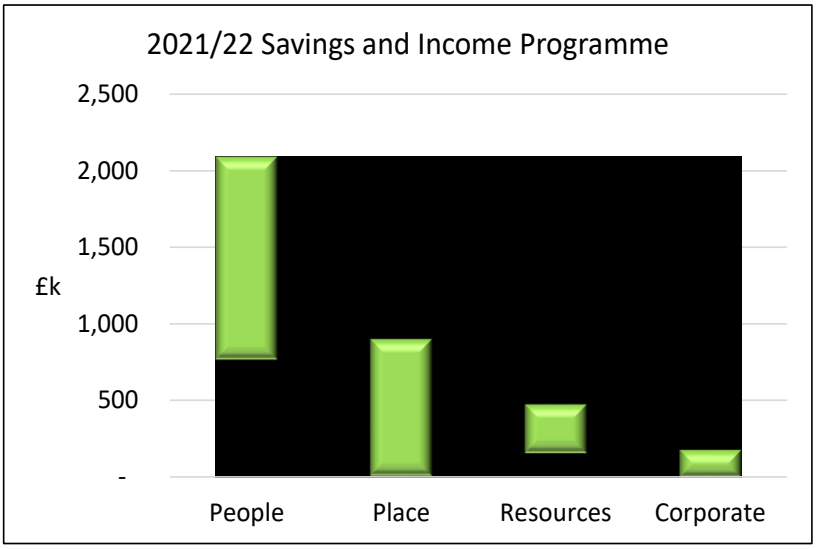
5.39 Further non-ringfenced grants were received during 2020/21 for New Burdens, Control Outbreak Management Fund (COMF), Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) and Test & Trace. At year end, £3.3m of this was put to the Covid reserve.

5.40 The funding received from Government to date, and the Council's level of general fund reserves mean that the Council is well placed to focus its efforts on response and recovery from the Covid-19 in the current financial year.

2021/22 Savings and income generation programme

5.41 In order to meet the funding available, the 2021/22 revenue budget was built with a £3.6m savings and income generation programme. The programme is monitored using the RAG traffic light system. The status is shown in the following charts:





5.42 Red items are as follows:

- £50k for ASC Supported Accommodation unit for learning as this is not due to open until 1.8.2022.
- £25k ASC Resource Allocation System, which will be implemented with Care Director V6 scheduled for 1.4.2022.
- £9k from ASC Hillcroft rent reduction.

- £250k CFS placement savings. Currently placements are reporting an overspend due to increased demand for most costly placements to meet complex needs (particularly mental health).
- £209k CFS Family Safeguarding Model income from third parties who have indicated that they will not be contributing. This forms part of the forecast overspend in this area.
- £10k in Environment from street naming and numbering. The policy document needs to be reviewed and amended before charging can commence, and extra resource is needed for this.
- £158k in Finance & Property from accommodation savings: Delay in vacating corporate buildings and need for temporary storage will dilute saving achievable in 2021/22. Savings are expected to made in full in future financial years.

5.43 Amber items are as follows:

- £150k from CFS reduced legal costs. If currently monthly costs continue to year end, this saving will be achieved, although court delays have led to cases taking longer to complete.
- £20k saving on Education premature retirement costs joint arrangement. Current forecast suggests this won't be achieved.
- £23k for cost avoidance in the Disabled Children's Team, as agency costs have exceeded current budget.
- £32k CHC income generation in Education, as there have been few new cases that have attracted health funding.

Proposals

5.44 To note the year-end forecast £0.04m overspend, after taking account of provision that was made in reserves for specific risks at the time of budget setting. Without this provision, the forecast would be an overspend of £0.6m.

5.45 To note the ongoing impact that Covid will have on the 2021/22 budget as the Council sees increased demand for some services, but continues to be supported by external funding.

5.46 To approve the transfer of capital financing interest budgets from within individual services to Capital Finance.

6 Other options considered

6.1 None.

7 Conclusion

7.1 The 2021/22 financial year continues to present financial challenges for the Council in supporting our residents and business. Grant funding has helped the Council to cover additional costs and lost income and to enable us to support a range of activities within our district.

7.2 The Quarter Three forecast is interlinked to the impact of the pandemic and the use of Covid resources provided by central government. The Covid-19 grant funding received from Government to date, and the Council's level of general fund reserves mean that

the Council is well placed to focus its efforts on response and recovery from the Covid-19 during the financial year. The Covid-19 grant underspend from 2020/21 has been used in 2021/22 to fund the ongoing pandemic response. The Council continues to be supported by external funding but is now seeing increased demand for some services. The longer term position will require further analysis and announcements from Central Government on the funding position for Local Government, before the full impact on 2021/22 and beyond is known.

7.3 The £3.6m savings and income generation programme is 74% achieved to date, and will be reported on each quarter.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Quarter Three position

8.2 Appendix B – Budget changes

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	☒

Document Control

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

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
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Appendix A – Quarter Three position

	Budget				Forecasted Performance								
					Expenditure			Income			Forecast		
	Original Budget 2021/22 £	Changes in year 2021/22 £	Funding Released from Reserves 2021/22 £	Revised Budget 2021/22 £	Annual Expenditure Budget for 2021/22 £	Annual Expenditure Forecast for 2021/22 £	Expenditure Variance for 2021/22 £	Annual Income Budget for 2021/22 £	Annual Income Forecast for 2021/22 £	Income Variance for 2021/22 £	Forecast £	Provided in Reserves £	Year end Forecast £
Adult Social Care	51,172,220	0	0	51,172,220	69,789,870	76,571,020	6,781,150	-18,617,650	-25,355,390	-6,737,740	43,410	-43,410	0
Childrens and Family Services	16,718,350	23,320	159,000	16,900,670	18,987,250	20,200,070	1,212,820	-2,086,580	-2,192,440	-105,860	1,106,960	-396,000	710,960
Executive Director - People	320,270	0	0	320,270	320,270	780,980	460,710	0	-472,780	-472,780	-12,070		-12,070
Education (DSG Funded)	-444,000	0	2,880	-441,120	116,209,170	116,353,520	144,350	-116,650,290	-116,794,640	-144,350	0		0
Education	9,026,100	0	108,570	9,134,670	13,046,030	12,991,730	-54,300	-3,911,360	-3,110,690	800,670	746,370	-81,000	665,370
Public Health & Wellbeing	-80,000	0	0	-80,000	5,954,930	8,402,972	2,448,042	-6,034,930	-8,482,972	-2,448,042	0		0
Communities and Wellbeing	2,352,530	12,140	54,300	2,418,970	3,839,400	3,732,800	-106,600	-1,420,430	-1,356,160	64,270	-42,330		-42,330
People	**79,065,470**	**35,460**	**324,750**	**79,425,680**	**228,146,920**	**239,033,092**	**10,886,172**	**-148,721,240**	**-157,765,072**	**-9,043,832**	**1,842,340**	**-520,410**	**1,321,930**
Development and Regulation	5,560,180	0	340,190	5,900,370	12,692,740	14,481,000	1,788,260	-6,792,370	-8,522,440	-1,730,070	58,190		58,190
Executive Director – Place	197,790	0	0	197,790	197,790	197,790	0	0	0	0	0		0
Environment	24,337,330	-766,300	138,630	23,709,660	34,295,630	34,515,920	220,290	-10,585,970	-11,139,130	-553,160	-332,870		-332,870
Place	**30,095,300**	**-766,300**	**478,820**	**29,807,820**	**47,186,160**	**49,194,710**	**2,008,550**	**-17,378,340**	**-19,661,570**	**-2,283,230**	**-274,680**	**0**	**-274,680**
ICT	2,162,970	-28,040	0	2,134,930	2,989,340	3,120,940	131,600	-854,410	-807,040	47,370	178,970	-72,000	106,970
Executive Director - Resources	203,910	-5,000	102,570	301,480	301,480	310,450	8,970	0	0	0	8,970		8,970
Commissioning and Procurement	802,460	0	0	802,460	10,283,490	10,238,990	-44,500	-9,481,030	-9,674,870	-193,840	-238,340		-238,340
Finance and Property	5,077,040	-1,832,450	107,560	3,352,150	46,720,260	46,705,220	-15,040	-43,368,110	-43,003,400	364,710	349,670		349,670
Strategy and Governance	6,437,480	-30,460	10,480	6,417,500	7,483,070	7,837,000	353,930	-1,065,570	-1,427,740	-362,170	-8,240		-8,240
Resources	**14,683,860**	**-1,895,950**	**220,610**	**13,008,520**	**67,777,640**	**68,212,600**	**434,960**	**-54,769,120**	**-54,913,050**	**-143,930**	**291,030**	**-72,000**	**219,030**
Chief Executive	552,850	0	7,890	560,740	560,740	575,240	14,500	0	0	0	14,500		14,500
Chief Executive	**552,850**	**0**	**7,890**	**560,740**	**560,740**	**575,240**	**14,500**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**14,500**	**0**	**14,500**
Capital Financing & Management	12,430,960	2,626,790	0	15,057,750	15,177,750	13,964,650	-1,213,100	-120,000	-143,320	-23,320	-1,236,420		-1,236,420
Risk Management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Capital Financing and Management	**12,430,960**	**2,626,790**	**0**	**15,057,750**	**15,177,750**	**13,964,650**	**-1,213,100**	**-120,000**	**-143,320**	**-23,320**	**-1,236,420**	**0**	**-1,236,420**
Total	**136,828,440**	**0**	**1,032,070**	**137,860,510**	**358,849,210**	**370,980,292**	**12,131,082**	**-220,988,700**	**-232,483,012**	**-11,494,312**	**636,770**	**-592,410**	**44,360**

Appendix B – Budget Changes

Service	Original Net Budget	Approved Budget B/F from 2020/21	Budget changes not requiring approval	FAGG approved release from reserves	Approved by S151 & Portfolio Holder	Requiring Executive Approval	Budget C/F to 2022/23	Final Net Budget
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adult Social Care	51,172							51,172
Children and Family Services	16,718		23	159				16,901
Communities & Wellbeing	2,353			66				2,419
Executive Director	320							320
Education DSG funded	(444)			3				(441)
Education	9,026			109				9,135
Public Health & Wellbeing	(80)							(80)
People	**79,065**	**0**	**23**	**337**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**79,426**
Executive Director	198							198
Development & Planning	5,560		238	103				5,900
Environment	24,337			139		(766)		23,710
Place	**30,095**	**0**	**238**	**241**	**0**	**(766)**	**0**	**29,808**
Commissioning	802							802
Customer Services & ICT	2,163					(28)		2,135
Executive Director	204			98				301
Finance & Property	5,077		60	108		(1,892)		3,352
Strategy & Governance	6,437		(35)	15				6,418
Resources	**14,684**	**0**	**25**	**221**	**0**	**(1,920)**	**0**	**13,009**
Chief Executive	**553**		**8**					**561**
Capital Financing	**12,431**		**(60)**			**2,686**		**15,058**
Total	**136,828**	**0**	**234**	**799**	**0**	**(0)**	**0**	**137,861**
Quarter One	**136,828**	**0**	**0**	**353**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**137,181**
Quarter Two	**136,828**	**0**	**0**	**434**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**137,615**
Quarter Three	**136,828**	**0**	**234**	**12**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**137,861**
Quarter Four								
Total	**136,828**	**0**	**234**	**799**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**137,861**

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Item 14:

Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 10/02/2022.

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

A. **Question submitted by Councillor Tony Vickers to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport & Countryside:**

"Can we see how much use each and every on-street EV charging point has had and some indication of how and when at least some of these can have dedicated parking spaces to enable existing and would-be EV vehicle owners to be confident that they will be able to use them?""

B. **Question submitted by Councillor Adrian Abbs to the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture:**

"Given the huge difference between a step 6 facility and a step 4 one, why did the Executive ask for a step 6 planning application at Western Area Planning, when they intend to build a set 4 capable facility?"

C. **Question submitted by Councillor Phil Barnett to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste:**

"Dog ownership in the last few years has increased dramatically and most dog owners responsibly dispose of dog waste. Unfortunately, several dog waste bins in the district have become noticeably overflowing, resulting in dog waste bags being left on pavements and splitting open. Can the Executive Member identify whether all the bins are emptied on a fixed schedule, or only when various residents or parish councils notify West Berkshire Council that they need to be emptied?"

D. **Question submitted by Councillor Owen Jeffery to the Leader of the Council:**

"Can the Leader explain why the Chairman's statement at the last Full Council that questions unanswered would be given written answers has not been fulfilled in the expected time-frame, at least with regards to my question?"

E. **Question submitted by Councillor Alan Macro to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside:**

"What was the original purpose for inserting the gagging clause in the service level agreement with Readibus?"

F. **Question submitted by Councillor Tony Vickers to the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Economic Development:**

"What, if any, indication has the Executive Member leading the LRIE development project been given to justify the assumption contained within the Avison Young Master Plan that housing will be permitted on the Council land there?"

Item 14:

Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 10/02/2022.

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

G. **Question submitted by Councillor Tony Vickers to the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Economic Development:**

"When does the Executive Member for LRIE redevelopment now expect to be able to submit an outline planning application for the whole site?"