Notice of Meeting



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Executive

Thursday 9th February, 2023 at 5.00 pm

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

Note: This meeting can be streamed live here: https://www.westberks.gov.uk/executivelive

Date of despatch of Agenda: Wednesday, 1 February 2023

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



То:	Councillors Lynne Doherty (Chairman), Steve Ardagh-Walter, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Ross Mackinnon, Thomas Marino, Richard Somner, Joanne Stewart and Howard Woollaston
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Agenda

Par	t I	Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).	5 - 6
2.	Minutes To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 12 January 2023.	7 - 12
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 .	13 - 14
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.	15 - 16
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.	17 - 18

Items as timetabled in the Forward Plan

		Pages
6.	Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2023/24 (C4320) Purpose: 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.	19 - 44



7. Medium Term Financial Strategy (C4303)

45 - 62

Purpose: 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.

8. Capital Strategy, Financial Years 2023/24 to 2032/33 (C4315)

63 - 104

Purpose: to outline the Capital Strategy covering financial years 2023/24 - 2032/33 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.

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.

9. Revenue Budget 2023-24 (C4314)

105 - 216

Purpose: to consider and recommend to Council the 2023-24 Revenue Budget, which proposes a Council Tax requirement of £117.5m, requiring a Council Tax increase of 2.99% and an Adult Social Care precept of 2%. The Council Tax will raise £3.3m, the precept will raise a further £2.2m, and an increased taxbase will raise a further £1.8m. At a 4.99% Council tax increase, the budget is balanced, after using £1.8m 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.

10. Capital Financial Performance Report Quarter Three 2022/23 (EX4301)

217 - 234

Purpose: to report on the forecast under or over spends against the Council's approved capital budget. This report presents the forecast outturn position for financial year 2022/23 as at Quarter Three.

11. 2022/23 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter Three (EX4300)

235 - 256

Purpose: to report on the financial performance of the Council's revenue budgets and provide a year-end forecast. This report is Quarter Three 2022/23.



Contract Award for the North and East Thatcham Flood Alleviation 12. 257 - 264 Schemes (EX4266) Purpose: to report on the outcome of the tender for the North and East Thatcham Flood Alleviation Schemes. This follows the procurement strategy agreed at Procurement Board in September 2022. **West Berkshire Council Central Energy Contract Procurement** 13. 265 - 272 Strategy (EX4299) Purpose: to provide a summary of the Council's current procurement the Central Energy Contract and put forward recommendations for changes that would improve the management of risks associated with the current volatile wholesale market and rising energy costs. 14. **Libraries Review Report (EX4106)** 273 - 390 Purpose: to present the findings of the 2021/22 Libraries Review. This follow-up review sets out to ensure that the service remains fit for purpose and meets community needs after the library transformation work which took place in 2016/17. 15. **Members' Questions** 391 - 392 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.

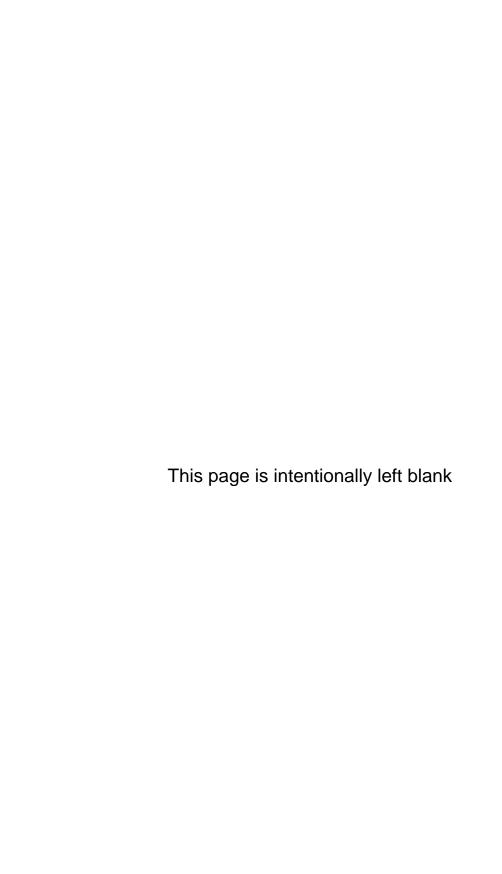


Agenda Item 1.

Executive – 9 February 2023

Item 1 – Apologies for absence

Verbal Item



Agenda Item 2.

DRAFT

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

EXECUTIVE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2023

Councillors Present: Lynne Doherty (Chairman), Steve Ardagh-Walter, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Ross Mackinnon, Thomas Marino, Joanne Stewart and Howard Woollaston

Also Present: Councillors Lee Dillon, Adrian Abbs, Jeff Brooks, Alan Macro and Erik Pattenden.

Members and Officers Present Remotely: Councillor Carolyne Culver

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Richard Somner

Officers Present: Sarah Clarke (Service Director Strategy & Governance), Paul Coe (Service Director Adult Social Care), Joseph Holmes (Executive Director – Resources), Nigel Lynn (Chief Executive), Sadie Owen (Principal Democratic Services Officer) Eric Owens (Executive Director – Place), Lizzie Reeves (Project Manager - MC, OS), Andy Sharp (Executive Director – People) and Nicola Thomas (Service Lead – Legal & Democratic)

69. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Richard Somner.

70. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 December were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Leader.

71. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

72. Public Questions

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

73. Petitions

Councillor Lee Dillon presented a petition containing 1,208 signatures requesting that the Council review its decision on funding the ReadiBus Service. The petition was referred to Officers for a response.

74. Draft Council Strategy 2023-2027 (EX4312)

Councillor Lynne Doherty introduced and proposed the report (Agenda Item 6), which provided an overview of the draft Council Strategy 2023-2027 (the Strategy), and sought approval for public consultation in early 2023. Councillor Doherty explained that the Strategy proposed a number of outcomes that the Council would focus on delivering in the next four years, which had been grouped into five priority areas.

In response to a query from Councillor Jeff Brooks, Sarah Clarke, the Monitoring Officer, explained that the paper was not subject to call-in as the proposals would be subject to Council, not Executive, approval in May.

Councillor Lee Dillon suggested that the timing of the Strategy and its consultation should be deferred to after May 2023, to allow for alternative priorities in the event of a new

administration. Councillor Doherty stressed the importance of having a seamless plan and strategy in place and commented that as it was both evidence and resident based, it was likely to be the same, whichever party was in administration.

Councillor Graham Bridgman welcomed the ambition of the Strategy and seconded approval of the report.

RESOLVED that: Executive

 Consider the draft strategy, recommend amendments to its content and approve it for public consultation.

75. West Berkshire Council Customer Charter (EX4311)

Councillor Lynne Doherty introduced the report (Agenda Item 7), which set out a Customer Charter detailing a number of proposed service standards which customers could expect when dealing with the Council, regardless of the contact channel chosen.

Councillor Lee Dillon queried customer recourse in the event that a commitment was not met. Councillor Dillon further queried whether there should be an out of hours service provision. Councillor Doherty clarified that the complaints process was included on the Charter, and that this was in line with other local authorities.

Councillor Doherty agreed to include a response commitment for out of hours emergencies within the Charter.

Councillor Adrian Abbs referred to his membership of the OSMC Customer Journey Task Group (the Group), and commented that it was surprising that the Group had not had the opportunity to review the Charter, suggesting that it would have benefitted from the scrutiny.

Councillor Doherty agreed to Councillor Macro's request to remove the use of acronyms from the Charter.

Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter seconded the paper and highlighted the second proposal within the report which referred to adopting the Charter in tandem with a concerted internal effort towards a culture whereby good customer service was seen to be the responsibility of all within the organisation. Councillor Ardagh-Walter felt that the Council already provided good customer service to residents but commented that parallel work would need to be undertaken to train new joiners to adapt and interpret the Charter to specific and varied situations, with the overall core aim of providing a quality service for residents.

RESOLVED that: Executive

Approve the draft Customer Charter.

76. 2022/23 Performance Report Quarter Two (EX4210)

Councillor Tom Marino introduced the report (Agenda Item 8), which provided assurance that the core business and council priorities for improvement measures in the Council Strategy 2019-2023 were being managed effectively.

Councillor Graham Bridgman noted that there had been an increase in recorded crime and non-crime domestic abuse cases. Councillor Bridgman clarified that the Council were reporting on the figures recorded by Thames Valley Police and commented that he had received a report from the Superintendent. Councillor Bridgman read the statement which reported that the local policing authority had been working hard to prioritise violence against women and girls, providing increased training to officers and scrutiny from supervisors to improve all forms of domestic crimes. There had been evidence that

officers were failing to recognise offences and so missing a number of crimes. The Superintendent's report confirmed that greater scrutiny had been placed on the domestic risk assessment to ensure broader questions were asked by attending officers. It was noted that the Policing Authority had also introduced a Domestic Abuse Champion whose role was to re-engage on an ongoing basis with victims of domestic abuse, and to support medium risk and vulnerable victims. The Superintendent had noted that as a consequence of these initiatives, there was evidence to show that victims felt much more supported and confident to report further incidents and crimes. Concluding the statement, Councillor Bridgman commented that he felt assured that the police were aware of the issues and taking actions to address.

Councillor Erik Pattenden referred to Table 30 (number of referrals to the Emotional Health Triage), and expressed surprise that numbers were reducing. Councillor Dominic Boeck commented that the figures were encouraging and suggested a return to more stable reporting following the peaks during the pandemic.

Councillor Jeff Brooks referred to the table reporting staff turnover on page 67 of the Agenda pack and queried the reason for the increase. Joseph Holmes, Executive Director for Resources commented that information was being gathered through exit interviews and that there had been investment in new talent acquisition staff to investigate improved recruitment and retention schemes.

Councillor Alan Macro noted that the Council no longer monitored delayed transfers of care for those patients in the Adult Social Care system, and whilst he acknowledged that it was no longer recorded nationally he requested that it be re-introduced as a performance indicator locally. Councillor Jo Stewart noted that some data was still captured and agreed that Officers would review to determine if the information could be reported on a regular basis.

Councillor Macro queried why the Care Quality Commission (CQC), had not reviewed the rating for Birchwood Care Home given that they had looked at all the other Council run care homes in January. Councillor Stewart commented that the CQC had undertaken a very 'light touch' high level review and determined that they did not need to return for a further review of the care homes.

In response to a query from Councillor Macro as to when introduction of the electronic medication administration system would take place at Birchwood Care Home, Councillor Stewart commented that it was imminent.

When asked about the level of confidence that Birchwood Care Home would obtain a 'Good' CQC rating when inspected, Councillor Stewart responded that a permanent registered manager had just been recruited to the team, which would provide consistency and leadership, and that staff had been undertaking a huge amount of work to improve the Home. Councillor Stewart offered to bring further progress reports to Executive in the future.

Councillor Adrian Abbs referred to page 71 of the Agenda pack which detailed business counts and job density figures and requested assurance that the data was being monitored. Councillor Abbs suggested that the trends between the 2017/18 and 2022/23 data implied a weakening of business in the area. Councillor Mackinnon commented that the data was being monitored, and suggested that the trends in business numbers related to Covid. Councillor Mackinnon agreed that there needed to be increased job density in West Berkshire and urged support from all Members for the London Road Industrial Estate plans which were aimed at creating hundreds of high quality jobs.

Councillor Lee Dillon referred to the Environmental exception report detailed on page 88 of the Agenda pack and queried how the outturn was measured in practice and whether

litter was only removed from Council held land. Councillor Ardagh-Walter clarified that the measure related only to public highways and pavements and would not include playing fields

Councillor Dillon commented that whilst the figures for the average number of days taken to make a full decision on new Housing Benefit claims was reducing, it was still above the target 19 days, and queried whether the issue was being prioritised. Councillor Woollaston noted that the report referred to Quarter Two data and suggested that the Quarter Three information would show a significant improvement, confirming that additional staff had been assigned to the department.

In response to a query from Councillor Dillon relating to delays in processing planning applications, Eric Owens, Interim Director for Place, explained that the department was currently in the process of recruiting 5-6 staff who were hoped to be in place by March. Further, processes and procedures were being enhanced and so it was hoped that performance would have improved by the Quarter Three report.

Councillor Pattenden queried what steps were being taken to tackle the recruitment issue within the Children and Family Services team, particularly in relation to the data recorded for the percentage of children in care, where children had been visited in the past six weeks. Councillor Boeck responded that he had been disappointed and concerned by the reduction in figures, but commented that he had been assured that no child had been placed in danger as a consequence and that the children had been visited, even if not within the performance timeframe. Councillor Boeck acknowledged that the matter could not be ignored, but that there was a recruitment challenge both within the service and nationally. It was reported that the recruitment and retention strategy for the service had been revised and was in the process of being implemented. Councillor Boeck suggested that whilst there was a recruitment issue, there had also been an increase in demand for the service which had been exacerbated by the pandemic.

Councillor Abbs referred to the exception report detailing the percentage of household waste recycled, composted and reused, and suggested that the explanation for reduction as drought, did not appear to be evidenced. Further, he suggested that the current target of 49.5% should be significantly higher. Councillor Ardagh-Walter commented that weather would always have an effect on the figures, and expressed confidence that introduction of the food waste recycling scheme would significantly increase the tonnage to over 50% by the same time in 2024. Councillor Ardagh-Walter added that a new target would be set for the 2023-24 municipal year and he was keen to stretch it further.

RESOLVED that: Executive

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.

77. Social Value Update (EX4305)

Councillor Ross Mackinnon introduced the report (Agenda Item 9), which provided an update on the Social Value Policy which had been adopted by the Council at Executive on 18 November 2021. Councillor Mackinnon commented that it had been an encouraging start to the Policy.

Councillor Jeff Brooks explained that his interpretation of the report was that only 3 out of 73 published procurement projects had included a specific social value question. Councillor Mackinnon clarified that it was 38 projects that had social value considered but was happy to amend the wording for clarification. Councillor Mackinnon further added that the Council held

regular 'meet the supplier' events where small and medium enterprises within the district could receive advice in structuring bids.

Councillor Lee Dillon agreed that it was a positive start but suggested that the report should include greater detail, listing the number of volunteer hours, and recording attributable facts to enable the Council to quantify its social value delivery.

RESOLVED that:

 The council continues to monitor the implementation of the Social Value policy to determine how it is embedded within the procurement process and what benefits are derived in the future.

78. Members' Questions

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

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

(The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm and closed at 6.25 pm)

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Agenda Item 3.

Executive –9 February 2023

Item 3 – Declarations of Interest

Verbal Item

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Item 4:

Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 9 February 2023.

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 Susan Millington to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transformation:

"While congratulating WBC on its environmental improvements by allowing wildflower verges to develop and reducing the frequency of hedge cutting, I would like to know what other progress is being made to develop a nature recovery plan, including any rewilding opportunities being developed, as mentioned in your Environmental Delivery Plan 2021 (RC010)."

B. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Deputy Leader:

"When interviewed on BBC South Today programme regarding the replacement of the Faraday road football pitch Councillor Bridgeman stated" We want to get on and Build... This fantastic Football pitch on the site of Newbury Rugby Club" Could he please explain why he did not say that the pitch at Monks lane was not a replacement for Faraday Rd and that he had voted at the district planning meeting to that effect?"

C. Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside:

"The non inclusion of the LRIE in the new Section 19 Consultation of the Local Plan Review is causing confusion so please can the Council explain why it has not been included?"

D. Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:

"It is confusing to simple residents like me not to see an RSA or ESA Policy for the London Road Industrial Estate and its exclusion from the LPR as articulated on Page 84 para 7.10, and as the web site is not clear on how the Redevelopment Project is progressing to the next Checkpoint, I would like to see an update which includes a picture of the Timeline and a Gannt Chart showing the Critical Path through to the end of the current phase, and what the deliverables will be at the End of Phase Checkpoint and a high-level plan for the next phase so is an update possible please?"

E. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Leisure and Culture:

"Could the executive explain why they have passed a stand alone shared football / rugby pitch (with a second clubhouse and stands) at Monks lane on what is currently and will still be only large enough to be a training pitch for rugby?"

Item 4:

Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 9 February 2023.

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 Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside:

"Thankfully the LPR Policies under Section 19 in relation to most of the Environmental Issues have been much strengthened from the Section 18 versions, and the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessments are very useful, so if the LRIE is excluded from the LPR Section 19 Consultation how will WBC LPA & LLFA ensure that the recommendations in the SFRA Level 2 Site Specific Analysis in relation to Local Plan Policy are complied with?"

G. Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:

"Was any viabilty study for that change from residential to commercial on the LRIE completed? If so has it been published and what was the cost?"

H. Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside:

"Which part of the Freehold of the Newbury Gateway Plaza Development as shown in this video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCa_C7DGfR8 does West Berks Council own, and why is this Development not included in the Local Plan Review Section 19 Consultation please?"

Agenda Item 5.

Executive – 9 February 2023

Item 5 – Petitions

Verbal Item

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Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2023/24

Committee considering report: Council

Date of Committee: 2 March 2023

Portfolio Member: Councillor Ross Mackinnon

Date Portfolio Member sent / agreed

report:

13 January 2023

Report Author: Shannon Coleman-Slaughter

Forward Plan Ref: C4320

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

That Council is requested to adopt the following recommendation:

(a) To agree and adopt the proposed Investment and Borrowing Strategy for 2023/24.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	Treasury management is the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Council has and intends to borrow and invest 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.						
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 2021 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 Negative						
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:	Х	
ICT Impact:	Х	
Digital Services Impact:	Х	
Council Strategy Priorities:	Х	
Core Business:	Х	
Data Impact:	Х	
Consultation and Engagement:	Joseph Holn	nes, 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 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 2021 Edition (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority 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.
- 4.3 In support of the Capital Strategy and financing the Waste Private Finance Initiative (PFI), the Council expects to borrow in 2023/24. 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 (2023/24 2032/33) as follows:

Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary	2022/23 limit	2023/24 limit	2024/25 limit	2025/26 limit	2026/27 limit	2027/28 limit
•	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Authorised limit – borrowing	£352,732	£373,621	£382,892	£382,892	£382,892	£382,892
Authorised limit – PFI and leases	£14,400	£13,200	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000
Authorised limit – total external debt	£367,132	£386,821	£394,892	£394,892	£394,892	£394,892
Operational boundary – borrowing	£338,732	£359,621	£368,892	£368,892	£368,892	£368,892
Operational boundary – PFI and leases	£12,000	£11,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Operational boundary – total external debt	£350,732	£370,621	£378,892	£378,892	£378,892	£378,892
Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary		2028/29 limit	2029/30 limit	2030/31 limit	2031/32 limit	2032/33 limit
Operational Boundary		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Authorised limit – borrowing		£382,892	£382,892	£382,892	£382,892	£382,892
Authorised limit – PFI and leases		£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000
Authorised limit – total external debt		£394,892	£394,892	£394,892	£394,892	£394,892
Operational boundary – borrowing		£368,892	£368,892	£368,892	£368,892	£368,892
Operational boundary – PFI and leases		£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Operational boundary – total external debt		£378,892	£378,892	£378,892	£378,892	£378,892

4.4 The ongoing impact on the UK from the war in Ukraine, together with higher inflation, higher interest rates, and a deteriorating economic outlook, will be major influences on the Council's Investment & Borrowing strategy for 2023/24. Historically the Council has accessed the majority of its long term financing from the PWLB Lending facility at around 1 – 2%. Recent economic conditions have resulted in average PWLB rates of between 4 – 5%. 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. Over the two past financial years with short-term interest rates lower than long-term rates, the strategy has been in the short-term to borrow short-term loans as the primary financing source. By doing so, the Council has been able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. Moving forward 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 have increased.

4.5 Treasury and non-treasury investments such as the commercial property portfolio are held and maintained in order to provide a net contribution to the Council's revenue budget to support delivery of core services. The Council is dependent on profit generating investment activity to achieve a balanced revenue budget. The table below shows the extent to which the expenditure planned to meet the service delivery objectives is dependent on achieving the expected net profit from investments over the lifecycle of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Proportionality of Investments	2021/22 Actual £000s	2022/23 Forecast £000s	2023/24 Budget £000s	2024/25 Budget £000s	2025/26 Budget £000s	2026/27 Budget £000s
Gross Investment income from Commercial Property	£3.357	£3.492	£3.496	£3.500	£3.504	£3,508
Gross service expenditure	£388.453	£365.560	£386.640	£395.650	£408.230	£421,490
Proportion	0.86%	0.96%	0.90%	0.88%	0.86%	0.83%
Proportionality of Investments	2027/28 Budget	2028/29 Budget	2029/30 Budget	2030/31 Budget	2031/32 Budget	2032/33 Budget
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Gross Investment income from Commercial Property	£3,512	£3,516	£3,520	£3,524	£3,528	£3,532
Gross service expenditure	£434,135	£447,159	£460,574	£474,391	£488,622	£503,281

4.6 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 the war in Ukraine, together with higher inflation, higher interest rates, uncertain government policy, and a deteriorating economic outlook, will be major influences on the Council's treasury Investment & Borrowing Strategy for 2023/24.

- 5.3 Interest rate forecast: The Bank of England (BoE) increased Bank Rate by 0.5% to 3.5% in December 2022. This followed a 0.75% rise in November which was the largest single rate hike since 1989 and the ninth successive rise since December 2021. The December decision was voted for by a 6-3 majority of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), with two dissenters voting for a no-change at 3% and one for a larger rise of 0.75%. The November quarterly Monetary Policy Report (MPR) forecast a prolonged but shallow recession in the UK with CPI inflation remaining elevated at over 10% in the near-term. While the projected peak of inflation is lower than in the August report, due in part to the government's support package for household energy costs, inflation is expected remain higher for longer over the forecast horizon and the economic outlook remains weak, with unemployment projected to start rising. The Council's treasury management adviser Arlingclose forecasts that Bank Rate will continue to rise in 2023 as the Bank of England attempts to subdue inflation which is significantly above its 2% target. While interest rate expectations reduced during October and November 2022, multiple interest rate rises are still expected over the forecast horizon despite looming recession. Arlingclose expects Bank Rate to rise to 4.25% by June 2023.
- 5.4 A detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose as at November 2022 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 £191.8 million of loans at 31.3.2022, with a forecast balance of £186.9 million at 31.3.2023. 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.
- 5.6 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. 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.
- 5.7 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) HM Treasury's backed UK Infrastructure Bank (in partnership with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy).
 - (c) Any institution approved for investments (see below)

- (d) Any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
- (e) Any other UK public sector body
- (f) UK public and private sector pension funds (except The Royal Berkshire Pension Fund)
- (g) Capital market bond investors
- (h) UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other organisations that enable local authority bond issues.
- 5.8 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
- 5.9 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.
- 5.10 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).
- 5.11 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.
- 5.12 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.
- 5.13 The UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) which is wholly owned by the Treasury has been established in partnership with The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BIES). UKIB allows authorities to access funding below PWLB rates for

- applicable projects. Applicable projects focus on addressing climate change and boosting regional growth and economies.
- 5.14 <u>Investments</u>: 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.
- 5.15 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.
- 5.16 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.
- 5.17 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.
- 5.18 The Council may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types subject to the adopted limits. The historic and proposed individual counterparty limits are detailed in the table below.

Organisation	Credit Ratings	Individual Counterparty Limit (£000)	Sector Limit	Time Limit
The UK Government (Debt Management Office)	-	Unlimited	Not applicable	
UK Local Authorities (including Police, Fire and similar bodies)	-	£8,000	Unlimited	25 Years
UK Building Societies (net asset size ranking 1-11)	-	£8,000		13 months
UK Building Societies (net asset size ranking 12-21)	-	£6,500	£14,000	13 months
UK Building Societies (net asset size ranking 22-25)	-	£5,000		13 months
UK Banks and other financial institutions	Long term credit rating of A- or higher	£8,000	Unlimited	13 months
Money Market Funds (Sterling denominated)	AAA or equivalent	£8,000	Unlimited	Not applicable
Other Non-local authority UK public sector body	-	£8,000	Unlimited	25 Years
Registered Providers, Charities	-	£2,500	£5,000	12 months
Council owned companies	-	£5,000	£5,000	2 Years
Council owned joint ventures	-	£5,000	£5,000	2 Years
Strategic pooled funds (including cash plus funds)	-	£8,000	£35,000	Not applicable
Real estate investment trusts	-	£8,000	£17,500	Not applicable

- 5.19 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.
- 5.20 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.
- 5.21 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 bailin should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.
- 5.22 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.
- 5.23 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.
- 5.24 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.
- 5.25 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.
- 5.26 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 2023/24 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 counterparty limits in section 5.19 make provision for these loans.
- 5.27 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.
- 5.28 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:

- 5.29 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) £58.9 million, details in appendix
 C. This is property where the Council has borrowed specifically to fund the purchase.
 - (b) Directly owned property (investment property) £13.7 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.

5.30 Treasury and non-treasury investments such as the commercial property portfolio are held and maintained in order to provide a net contribution to the Council's revenue budget to support delivery of core services. The Council is dependent on profit generating investment activity to achieve a balanced revenue budget. The table below shows the extent to which the expenditure planned to meet the service delivery objectives is dependent on achieving the expected net profit from investments over the lifecycle of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Proportionality of Investments	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Budget	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 Budget	2026/27 Budget
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Gross Investment income from Commercial Property	£3,357	£3,492	£3,496	£3,500	£3,504	£3,508
Gross service expenditure	£388,453	£365,560	£386,640	£395,650	£408,230	£421,490
Proportion	0.86%	0.96%	0.90%	0.88%	0.86%	0.83%
	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Proportionality of Investments	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Gross Investment income from Commercial Property	£3,512	£3,516	£3,520	£3,524	£3,528	£3,532
Gross service expenditure	£434,135	£447,159	£460,574	£474,391	£488,622	£503,281
Proportion	0.81%	0.79%	0.76%	0.74%	0.72%	0.70%

6 Other options considered

Not applicable

7 Conclusion

7.1 On 31st March 2022 the Council held £191.8 million of borrowing and £37.8 million of treasury investments. Existing levels of Council debt and investments are set out in further detail at Appendix D. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table below.

	31.3.22	31.3.23	31.3.24	31.3.25	31.3.26	31.3.27
Balance Sheet Summary	Actual	Estimate	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Capital financing requirement	£278,408	£278,901	£300,304	£330,210	£348,236	£353,004
Less: Other debt liabilities *	(£11,483)	(£10,670)	(£9,807)	(£8,892)	(£7,920)	(£6,890)
Loans CFR	£266,925	£268,231	£290,497	£321,319	£340,316	£346,114
Less: External borrowing **	(£191,848)	(£186,891)	(£181,974)	(£177,242)	(£172,733)	(£168,512)
Internal borrowing	£75,077	£81,340	£108,523	£144,077	£167,583	£177,602
Less: Balance sheet resources	£112,867	£72,008	£73,008	£74,008	£75,008	£77,600
Treasury investments / (New borrowing requirement)	£37,790	(£9,332)	(£35,515)	(£70,069)	(£92,575)	(£100,002)
	31.3.28	31.3.29	31.3.30	31.3.31	31.3.32	31.3.33
Balance Sheet Summary	31.3.28 Forecast	31.3.29 Forecast	31.3.30 Forecast	31.3.31 Forecast	31.3.32 Forecast	31.3.33 Forecast
Balance Sheet Summary						
Balance Sheet Summary Capital financing requirement	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
,	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s
Capital financing requirement	Forecast £000s £359,973	Forecast £000s £362,367	Forecast £000s £360,484	Forecast £000s £358,692	Forecast £000s £356,649	Forecast £000s £354,350
Capital financing requirement Less: Other debt liabilities *	Forecast £000s £359,973 (£5,796)	Forecast £000s £362,367 (£4,636)	Forecast £000s £360,484 (£3,405)	Forecast £000s £358,692 (£2,099)	Forecast £000s £356,649 (£713)	Forecast £000s £354,350 (£0)
Capital financing requirement Less: Other debt liabilities * Loans CFR	Forecast £000s £359,973 (£5,796) £354,177	Forecast £000s £362,367 (£4,636) £357,730	Forecast £000s £360,484 (£3,405) £357,079	Forecast £000s £358,692 (£2,099) £356,592	Forecast £000s £356,649 (£713) £355,935	Forecast £000s £354,350 (£0) £354,350
Capital financing requirement Less: Other debt liabilities * Loans CFR Less: External borrowing **	Forecast £000s £359,973 (£5,796) £354,177 (£164,227)	Forecast £000s £362,367 (£4,636) £357,730 (£159,944)	Forecast £000s £360,484 (£3,405) £357,079 (£155,667)	Forecast £000s £358,692 (£2,099) £356,592 (£151,222)	Forecast £000s £356,649 (£713) £355,935 (£141,626)	Forecast £000s £354,350 (£0) £354,350 (£136,857)

^{*} leases and PFI liabilities that form part of the Authority's total debt

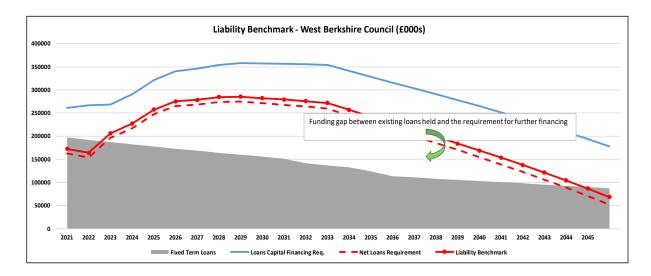
^{**} shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

- 7.2 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 through to financial year 2029/30 at which point the CFR starts to reduce. Based on the proposed capital programme and existing Balance sheet resources, the Council is forecasting an increasing borrowing requirement.
- 7.3 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 ten years. The table below demonstrates that the Council expects to comply with this recommendation during 2023/24 and the longer term.

Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement	31.3.2022 actual £000s	31.3.2023 forecast £000s	31.3.2024 budget £000s	31.3.2025 budget £000s	31.3.2026 budget £000s	31.3.2027 budget £000s
Debt (incl. PFI & leases)	£203,331	£197,561	£191,780	£186,134	£180,653	£175,401
Capital Financing Requirement	£278,408	£278,901	£300,304	£330,210	£348,236	£353,004
Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement	31.3.2028 budget £000s	31.3.2029 budget £000s	31.3.2030 budget £000s	31.3.2031 budget £000s	31.3.2032 budget £000s	31.3.2033 budget £000s
	budget	budget	budget	budget	budget	budget

7.4 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. The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. The liability benchmark itself represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level required to manage day-to-day cash flow.

	31.3.22	31.3.23	31.3.24	31.3.25	31.3.26	31.3.27
Liability Benchmark	Actual	Estimate	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Loans CFR	£266,925	£268,231	£290,497	£321,319	£340,316	£346,114
Less: Balance sheet resources	£112,867	£72,008	£73,008	£74,008	£75,008	£77,600
Net loans requirement	£154,058	£196,223	£217,489	£247,311	£265,308	£268,514
Plus: Liquidity allowance	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,250
Liability benchmark	£164,058	£206,223	£227,489	£257,311	£275,308	£278,764
	31.3.28	31.3.29	31.3.30	31.3.31	31.3.32	31.3.33
Liability Benchmark	31.3.28 Forecast	31.3.29 Forecast	31.3.30 Forecast	31.3.31 Forecast	31.3.32 Forecast	31.3.33 Forecast
Liability Benchmark						
Liability Benchmark Loans CFR	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
<u> </u>	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s
Loans CFR	Forecast £000s £354,177	Forecast £000s £357,730	Forecast £000s £357,079	Forecast £000s £356,592	Forecast £000s £355,935	Forecast £000s £354,350
Loans CFR Less: Balance sheet resources	Forecast £000s £354,177 £80,257	Forecast £000s £357,730 £82,980	Forecast £000s £357,079 £85,772	Forecast £000s £356,592 £88,633	Forecast £000s £355,935 £91,566	Forecast £000s £354,350 £94,572



7.5 Based on the Council's CFR and the liability benchmark, the Council is long term borrower. 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	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Financing costs as a Percentage of the Revenue Budget	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Financing Costs	£2.21	£2.23	£2.25	£2.27	£2.29
Revenue Budget	£165.00	£168.30	£176.50	£185.00	£193.50
Financing Costs as a Percentage	1.34%	1.33%	1.27%	1.23%	1.18%
Figure in Code on a Demonstrate of the Demons Dudot					
Financing Costs as a Percentage of the Peyonus Pudget	2028/29	2029/30	2031/31	2031/32	2032/33
Financing Costs as a Percentage of the Revenue Budget	2028/29 £m	2029/30 £m	2031/31 £m	2031/32 £m	2032/33 £m
Financing Costs as a Percentage of the Revenue Budget Financing Costs		· ·	-		•
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m

- 7.6 In respect of investments, the Council's revenue budget includes net returns from investments in the support of financing delivery of core services. The Council has set a number of quantitative indicators to allow elected members and the public to assess the Council's total risk exposure as a result of its investment decisions.
 - (a) **Total risk exposure:** The first indicator shows the Council's total exposure to potential investment losses.

	31.03.2022	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2025	31.03.2026	31.03.2027
Total investment exposure	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Treasury management investments	£37,790	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Commercial investments: Property	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	£96,775	£68,985	£68,985	£68,985	£68,985	£68,985
Commitments to lend	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Guarantees issued on loans	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
TOTAL EXPOSURE	£96,775	£68,985	£68,985	£68,985	£68,985	£68,985
	-					
		31.03.2028	31.03.2029	31.03.2030	31.03.2031	31.03.2032
Total investment exposure		31.03.2028 Forecast	31.03.2029 Forecast	31.03.2030 Forecast	31.03.2031 Forecast	31.03.2032 Forecast
Total investment exposure						
Total investment exposure Treasury management investments		Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
·		Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s
Treasury management investments		Forecast £000s £10,000	Forecast £000s £10,000	Forecast £000s £10,000	Forecast £000s £10,000	Forecast £000s £10,000
Treasury management investments Commercial investments: Property		Forecast £000s £10,000 £58,985	Forecast £000s £10,000 £58,985	Forecast £000s £10,000 £58,985	Forecast £000s £10,000 £58,985	Forecast £000s £10,000 £58,985
Treasury management investments Commercial investments: Property TOTAL INVESTMENTS		Forecast £000s £10,000 £58,985 £68,985	Forecast £000s £10,000 £58,985 £68,985	Forecast £000s £10,000 £58,985 £68,985	Forecast £000s £10,000 £58,985 £68,985	Forecast £000s £10,000 £58,985 £68,985

(b) How investments are funded: Since the Council does not normally associate particular assets with particular liabilities, this guidance is difficult to comply with. However, the following investments could be described as being funded by borrowing. The remainder of the Council's investments are funded by usable reserves and income received in advance of expenditure.

Investments funded by borrowing	31.03.2022 Actual	31.03.2023 Forecast	31.03.2024 Forecast	31.03.2025 Forecast	31.03.2026 Forecast	31.03.2027 Forecast
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Treasury management investments	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Commercial investments: Property	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985
TOTAL FUNDED BY BORROWING	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985	£58,985
		24 02 2020	31.03.2029	31.03.2030	04 00 0004	04 00 0000
		31.03.2028	31.03.2029	31.03.2030	31.03.2031	31.03.2032
Investments funded by borrowing		Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	31.03.2032 Forecast
Investments funded by borrowing		0.11001				
Investments funded by borrowing Treasury management investments		Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
, ,		Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s	Forecast £000s

(c) Rate of return received: This indicator shows the investment income received less the associated costs, including the cost of borrowing where appropriate, as a proportion of the sum initially invested.

Investments net rate of return	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Forecast	2025/26 Forecast	2026/27 Forecast
Treasury management investments	0.05%	1.65%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%
Service investments: Loans	0	0	0	0	0	0
Service investments: Shares	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial investments: Property	0.85%	1.76%	1.74%	1.71%	1.68%	1.64%
ALL INVESTMENTS	0.45%	1.71%	2.07%	2.04%	2.01%	1.99%
Investments net rate of return		2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32
investments not rate or return		Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Treasury management investments		4.00%	Forecast 4.00%	Forecast 4.00%	Forecast 4.00%	Forecast 4.00%
Treasury management investments		4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%
Treasury management investments Service investments: Loans		4.00% 0	4.00% 0	4.00%	4.00% 0	4.00% 0

7.7 Based on the performance indicators set out within this strategy the Executive Director for Resources and S151 Officer is confident that the Investment and Borrowing Strategy provides 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 2022
- 8.4 Appendix D Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position
- 8.5 Appendix E Treasury Management Indicators
- 8.6 Appendix F Non Treasury Investments

Cb.:a.a4.4a	Call la.	
Subject to	Call-in:	
Yes: \square	No: ⊠	
The item is	due to be referred to Council for final approval	X
Delays in in Council	nplementation could have serious financial implications for the	
Delays in in	nplementation could compromise the Council's position	
	or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or Task Groups within preceding six months	
Item is Urge	ent Key Decision	
Report is to	note only	
Officer det	ails:	
Name: Job Title: Tel No:	Shannon Coleman-Slaughter Interim Head of Finance & Property 01635 503225	

Shannon.colemans laughter@westberks.gov.uk

E-mail:

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 In Borrowing Strategy	vestment &	
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?		Yes ☐ No X If yes, please indicate which priority and provide an explanation		
 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 				
Name of Budget Holder:		Joseph Holmes		
Name of Service/Director	ate:	Joseph Holmes		
Name of assessor:		Shannon Coleman-Slaughte	er	
Date of assessment:		3.1.2023		
Version and release date	(if applicable):			
Is this a ?		Is this policy, strategy, furservice ?	nction or	
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?
(P	lease demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment,

(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	Not applicable	
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: 3.1.2023

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:	3.1.2023

Do you need to do a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)?

	Yes	No
Will you be processing SENSITIVE or "special category" personal data?		X
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"		
Will you be processing data on a large scale?		X
Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both		
Will your project or system have a "social media" dimension?		X
Note - will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?		
Will any decisions be automated?		X
Note – does your systemor 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?		

	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?		X
Note – this could include biometrics, "internet of things" connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised		

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 – December 2022

Economic background: The ongoing impact on the UK from the war in Ukraine, together with higher inflation, higher interest rates, and a deteriorating economic outlook, will be major influences on the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2023/24.

The Bank of England (BoE) increased Bank Rate by 0.5% to 3.5% in December 2022. This followed a 0.75% rise in November which was the largest single rate hike since 1989 and the ninth successive rise since December 2021. The December decision was voted for by a 6-3 majority of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), with two dissenters voting for a no-change at 3% and one for a larger rise of 0.75%.

The November quarterly Monetary Policy Report (MPR) forecast a prolonged but shallow recession in the UK with CPI inflation remaining elevated at over 10% in the near-term. While the projected peak of inflation is lower than in the August report, due in part to the government's support package for household energy costs, inflation is expected remain higher for longer over the forecast horizon and the economic outlook remains weak, with unemployment projected to start rising.

The UK economy contracted by 0.3% between July and September 2022 according to the Office for National Statistics, and the BoE forecasts Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will decline 0.75% in the second half of the calendar year due to the squeeze on household income from higher energy costs and goods prices. Growth is then expected to continue to fall throughout 2023 and the first half of 2024.

CPI inflation is expected to have peaked at around 11% in the last calendar quarter of 2022 and then fall sharply to 1.4%, below the 2% target, in two years' time and to 0% in three years' time if Bank Rate follows the path implied by financial markets at the time of the November MPR (a peak of 5.25%). However, the BoE stated it considered this path to be too high, suggesting that the peak in interest rates will be lower, reducing the risk of inflation falling too far below target. Market rates have fallen since the time of the November MPR.

The labour market remains tight for now, with the most recent statistics showing the unemployment rate was 3.7%. Earnings were up strongly in nominal terms by 6.1% for both total pay and for regular pay but factoring in inflation means real pay for both measures was -2.7%. Looking forward, the November MPR shows the labour market weakening in response to the deteriorating outlook for growth, leading to the unemployment rate rising to around 6.5% in 2025.

Interest rate forecast (December 2022): While interest rate expectations reduced during October and November 2022, multiple interest rate rises are still expected over the forecast horizon despite looming recession. Arlingclose expects Bank Rate to rise to 4.25% by June 2023 under its central case, with the risks in the near- and medium-term to the upside should inflation not evolve as the Bank forecasts and remains persistently higher.

Yields are expected to remain broadly at current levels over the medium-term, with 5-, 10- and 20-year gilt yields expected to average around 3.5%, 3.5%, and 3.85% respectively over the 3-year period to December 2025. The risks for short, medium and longer-term yields are judged to be broadly balanced over the forecast horizon. As ever, there will undoubtedly be short-term volatility due to economic and political uncertainty and events.

Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2023/24

	Current	Mar 22	lun 22	Cop 22	Doc 22	Mar 24	lun 24	Cop 24	Doc 24	Mar 25	lun 25	Cop 25	Doc 25
Official Bank Rate	Current	mai-23	Jun-23	3ep-23	Dec-Z3	mai-Z4	Juil-24	3ep-24	Dec-24	mar-Z3	Juil-Z3	3ep-23	Dec-25
Upside risk	0.00	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	1.50	1.25	1.25	1.25
	3.50	4.00		4.25		4.25	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
Arlingclose Central Case			4.25		4.25								
Downside risk	0.00	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
2													
3-month money market rate										4 50	4.05		4.05
Upside risk	0.00	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	1.50	1.25	1.25	1.25
Arlingclose Central Case	3.00	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.35	4.30	4.25	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.40	3.40	3.40
Downside risk	0.00	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
5yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.00	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Arlingclose Central Case	3.43	3.60	3.80	3.80	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30
Downside risk	0.00	0.80	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
10yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.00	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Arlingclose Central Case	3.47	3.50	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
Downside risk	0.00	0.80	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
20yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.00	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Arlingclose Central Case	3.86	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85
Downside risk	0.00	0.80	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
50yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.00	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Arlingclose Central Case	3.46	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60
Downside risk	0.00	0.80	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

PWLB Standard Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 1.00%

PWLB Certainty Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.80%

UKIB Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.60%

Appendix D

Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

	30/11/2022	30/11/2022
Investment & Debt Portfolio	Actual portfolio	Average rate
	£m	%
External borrowing:		
Public Works Loan Board	(£188)	3.36
Community Bond	(£1)	1.20
Total external borrowing	(£189)	3.35
Other long-term liabilities:		
Private Finance Initiative	(£11)	6.10
Total gross external debt	(£200)	3.50
Treasury investments:		
The UK Government	£20	2.19
Local authorities	£7	3.02
Banks (unsecured)	£2	0.79
Money market funds	£14	2.89
Total treasury investments	£43	2.49
Net debt	(£156)	-

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 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 indicators	Target (£m)
Total Cash available within 3 Months	£10

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] based on borrowing of £20 million and £10 million minimum liquidity level held in investments will be:

Interest Rate Risk Indicator	Limit
Upper limit on one-year Revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in Interest Rates	£175,000
Upper limit on one-year Revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in Interest Rates	£175,000

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.

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.

The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing based on assumed borrowing of £20 million in 2023/24:

Refinancing rate risk indicator	Lower limit	Upper limit
Under 12 months	0%	30%
12 months and within 24 months	0%	30%
24 months and within 5 years	0%	30%
5 years and within 10 years	0%	30%
10 years and within 15 years	0%	30%
15 years and within 20 years	0%	30%
20 years and within 25 years	0%	30%
25 years and within 30 years	0%	30%
30 years and within 35 years	0%	30%
35 years and within 40 years	0%	30%
40 years and within 45 years	0%	30%
45 years and within 50 years	0%	35%

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	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£15 m	£15 m	£15 m

The limits above take into consideration the Council's liquidity requirement of £10 million plus contingency for in ear variations due to cash flow timings.

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 2022

	Actual	31.3.202	22 actual	31.3.2023 expected		
Commercial Property	Purchase cost	Gains or (losses)*	Value in accounts	Gains or (losses)*	Value in accounts	
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
Dudley Port Petrol Filling Station, Tipton	£3,510	£15	£3,765	£0	£3,765	
79 Bath Road, Chippenham	£9,106	£2,275	£11,775	£0	£11,775	
Lloyds Bank, 104 Terminus Road, Eastbourne	£2,900	£0	£1,800	£0	£1,800	
Aldi/Iceland, Cleveland Gate Retail Park, Gainsborough	£6,048	£575	£6,300	£0	£6,300	
303 High Street and 2 Waterside South, Lincoln	£5,665	£100	£2,950	£0	£2,950	
3&4 The Sector, Newbury Business Park	£17,760	£575	£18,010	£0	£18,010	
Sainsbury's, High Street, North Allerton	£7,050	£135	£7,185	£0	£7,185	
Ruddington Fields Business Park, Mere Way, Nottingham	£6,545	£450	£7,200	£0	£7,200	
TOTAL	£58,584	£4,125	£58,985	£0	£58,985	

Directly owned Property – Purchase not Funded by Borrowing

Directly owned property (investment property) held at 31st March 2022

Directly Owned Property	Property Type	Valuation at 31.3.2022
The Stone Building, The Wharf, Newbury	Café	£31
Pelican Lane Crèche, Pelican Lane	Children's Nursery	£0
Rainbow Nursery, Priory Road, Hungerford	Children's Nursery	£40
Clappers Farm / Beech Hill Farm, Grazely	Tenanted Smallholding	£1,800
Bloomfield Hatch Farm, Grazely	Tenanted Smallholding	£1,100
Shaw Social Club, Almond Avenue, Shaw	Community Centre	£70
Swings n Smiles, Lower Way, Thatcham	Children's Day Centre	£400
Units 1 to 7, Kennet Enterprise Centre, Hungerford	Industrial	£565
London Road Industrial Estate, Newbury	Industrial	£9,565
Valuation total per draft 2021/22 Statement of Acco	£13,571	

Medium Term Financial Strategy

Committee considering report: Council

Date of Committee: 2 March 2023

Portfolio Member: Councillor Ross Mackinnon

Date Portfolio Member agreed report: 31 January 2023

Report Author: Joseph Holmes/Melanie Ellis

Forward Plan Ref: C4303

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	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					
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:		Х				
Health Impact:		X				
ICT Impact:		X				
Digital Services Impact:		X				
Council Strategy Priorities:	Х			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:		nd aligned to the budget simulator; Revenue Budget.	see

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

Subject to Call-In:						
Yes: ☐ No: ⊠						
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	\boxtimes					
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						

West Berkshire Council Executive 9 February 2023

Medium Term Financial Strategy

Officer details:

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Document Control

Document Ref:		Date Created:	
Version:		Date Modified:	
Author:	Joseph Holmes/Melanie Ellis		
Owning Service	Finance and Property		

Medium Term Financial Strategy

Document Control

Document Ref:		Date Created:	29.12.2022
Version:	0.3	Date Modified:	30.1.2023
Revision due			
Author:	Joseph Holmes	Sign & Date:	30.1.2023
Owning Service	Finance & Property		

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
0.1	29.12.22	Initial Draft from JH/ME	
0.1	29.12.22	Version for Corporate Board January	
0.2	10.1.23	Version for Operations Board January	
0.3	30.1.23	Version for Executive February	
		Amended version for Council March	



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4.	Medium Term Financial Plan	5
5.	Priorities	. 10
6.	Actions	. 10
7.	Implementation	. 11
8.	Conclusion	. 11
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Foreword

- 1.1 There remains a lot of unknowns for Local Government finance in the future. The macro economy has seen some major changes during 2022-23 that will impact the future financial position of the Council, not least the increase to interest rates at which the Council can borrow to finance capital expenditure. The Local Government finance settlement (LGFS) was only for a one year period, 2023-24, with some inference for 2024-25. The absence of a longer term financial envelope for Local Government does mean that there remains significant uncertainty over the financial position from 2024-25, though Government have provided an inclination of their thinking for Local Government spending. 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. This has been delivered through the utilisation of reserves where possible, though these are at very low levels now (see the revenue budget report) and will need to be replenished for risk reserves in future years.
- 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) and the new Council Strategy once approved for 2023-27. 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 2023-24, 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 a range of factors; firstly, the macroeconomic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact that this has had, and will have on the UK economy including inflation and interest rates; secondly the impact on Government reform in Adult Social Care and other services such as planning policy which will alter financial planning assumptions, and thirdly, the long

awaited fair funding review and proposed further business rates retention proposals for 2025-26 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 This fair funding review was originally due to impact on the 2020-21 budget but is now most likely to come into effect from 2025-26 at the very earliest. The following assumptions have been made in the MTFS:
 - That the fair funding review and business rate baseline reset does not occur until 2025-26 at the earliest (this has been confirmed by Government) and it is assumed that these do not take place during the life of the MTFS – this assumption will be revised in future years when Government plans are clearer
 - Adult Social care (ASC) funding remains in the longer term with a nil impact on WBC from the proposed care reforms in future years
 - New Homes Bonus is removed but replaced with a funding system that delivers equivalent levels of reward to 2023-24 in future years – Government are due to release information before the 2024-25 finance settlement
 - The assumed permitted Council Tax increases remain at 2.99% and ASC Council Tax precept levels at 2% any authority proposing an increase above these levels must hold a local referendum
 - Inflation remains at 2% in the longer term forecasts are that for 2024-25 inflation could be negative

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 – MTFP

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Council Tax income	2.99%	2.99%	2.99%	2.99%
Adult Social Care Precept	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Council Tax (incl. ASC)	117.5	124.1	131.0	138.4
Retained Business Rates	27.3	27.8	28.4	29.0
Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding	7.3	7.5	7.6	7.7
Social Care Grant	6.8	7.8	7.8	7.8
ASC Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund	1.2	1.1	1.8	2.4
ASC discharge fund	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0
New Homes Bonus	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Services Grant	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Other non-ringfenced grants	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
Lower tier services grant	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Funds Available	164.3	170.3	178.5	187.2
Base budget after adjustments	141.6	157.9	161.7	169.9
Pay inflation	4.9	2.0	2.0	2.0
Contract inflation and non pay inflation	4.5	1.4	1.4	1.4
Modelled growth	10.1	3.1	3.1	3.1
Investment in Council Strategy priorities	2.3	0.7	0.5	0.5
Investment due to Covid-19	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other investment	1.7	1.9	0.3	0.2
Increase in capital financing cost	0.6	1.8	1.8	1.8
Savings and income requirement	-9.1	-7.1	-2.7	-1.1
Annual Budget Requirement	157.9	161.7	169.9	178.5
One off investment	0.8	0.3	0.1	0.0
Net Budget Requirement for Management Accounting	158.8	162.0	170.0	178.5
Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding	7.3	7.5	7.6	7.7
Budget Requirement	166.1	169.5		186.2
Use of Earmarked Reserves	-	-		0.0
Use of Transformation Reserve	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Use of Collection Fund Reserves	-0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Increase in reserves	0.0	1.0		1.0
Budget Requirement after use of reserves	164.3	170.3	178.5	187.2
	Adult Social Care Precept Council Tax (incl. ASC) Retained Business Rates Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding Social Care Grant ASC Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund ASC discharge fund New Homes Bonus Services Grant Other non-ringfenced grants Lower tier services grant Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus Funds Available Base budget after adjustments Pay inflation Contract inflation and non pay inflation Modelled growth Investment in Council Strategy priorities Investment due to Covid-19 Other investment Increase in capital financing cost Savings and income requirement Annual Budget Requirement One off investment Net Budget Requirement for Management Accounting Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding Budget Requirement Use of Earmarked Reserves Use of Transformation Reserve Use of Collection Fund Reserves Increase in reserves	Council Tax income2.99%Adult Social Care Precept2.00%Council Tax (incl. ASC)117.5Retained Business Rates27.3Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding7.3Social Care Grant6.8ASC Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund1.2ASC discharge fund0.3New Homes Bonus1.1Services Grant0.7Other non-ringfenced grants0.3Lower tier services grant0.0Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus1.8Funds Available164.3Base budget after adjustments141.6Pay inflation4.9Contract inflation and non pay inflation4.5Modelled growth10.1Investment in Council Strategy priorities2.3Investment due to Covid-191.3Other investment1.7Increase in capital financing cost0.6Savings and income requirement-9.1Annual Budget Requirement-9.1Annual Budget Requirement for Management Accounting7.3Budget Requirement166.1Use of Earmarked Reserves-1.5Use of Transformation Reserve0.0Use of Collection Fund Reserves-0.3Increase in reserves-0.3	Council Tax income 2.99% 2.99% Adult Social Care Precept 2.00% 2.00% Council Tax (incl. ASC) 117.5 124.1 Retained Business Rates 27.3 27.8 Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding 7.3 7.5 Social Care Grant 6.8 7.8 ASC Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund 1.2 1.1 ASC discharge fund 0.3 0.1 New Homes Bonus 1.1 1.1 Services Grant 0.7 0.7 Other non-ringfenced grants 0.3 0.1 Lower tier services grant 0.0 0.0 Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus 1.8 0.0 Funds Available 164.3 170.3 Base budget after adjustments 141.6 157.9 Pay inflation 4.9 2.0 Contract inflation and non pay inflation 4.5 1.4 Modelled growth 10.1 3.1 Investment in Council Strategy priorities 2.3 0.7 Investment d	Council Tax income 2.99% 2.99% 2.99% Adult Social Care Precept 2.00% 2.00% 2.00% Council Tax (incl. ASC) 117.5 124.1 131.0 Retained Business Rates 27.3 27.8 28.4 Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding 7.3 7.5 7.6 Social Care Grant 6.8 7.8 7.8 ASC Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund 1.2 1.1 1.8 ASC discharge fund 0.3 0.1 0.0 New Homes Bonus 1.1 1.1 1.1 Services Grant 0.7 0.7 0.7 Other non-ringfenced grants 0.3 0.1 0.0 Lower tier services grant 0.0 0.0 0.0 Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus 1.8 0.0 0.0 Funds Available 164.3 170.3 178.5 Base budget after adjustments 141.6 157.9 161.7 Pay inflation 4.9 2.0 2.0 <td< td=""></td<>

4.2 The MTFP highlights the need for cost base reductions of £19.9m over the next four years and is based upon a number of assumptions which are considered below.

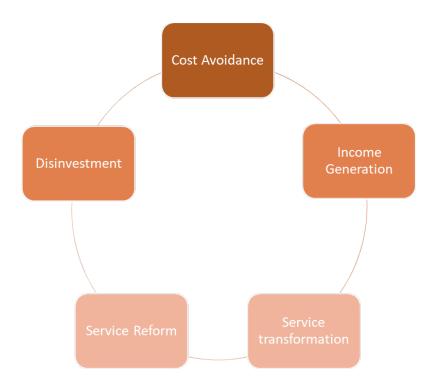
Fi	Figure 1.2							
Ref	Item	Commentary						
1a	Council Tax Income	This is the amount of Council Tax (excluding the ASC precept, see below) raised. A 1% change in the Council Tax base ¹ or Council Tax levied equals approximately £1m. Council Tax provides 62% of the Council's funding excluding fees and charges (72% with the ASC precept). Any increase of this number above 2.99% must be the subject of a public referendum.						
1b	Adult Social Care Precept	A specific element of Council Tax, with a maximum increase of 2% allowed for 2023-24, to help provide funds for Adult Social Care. It has been assumed the ASC precept is set at a maximum of 2% so an assumption that 2% will be allowed throughout the MTFS period has been made.						
2	Retained Business Rates	The Council collects £97m 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 £27m. If business rates increase through new growth in the value of business rates, the Council retains approximately 25%, and retains 100% of all renewable energy schemes.						
3a	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.						
3b/c/d	Social Care Grants	Non ringfenced grant from Government (3b) with 3c and 3d implied non ringfenced but with some information to be determined by Government on what activity these support.						
4a	New Homes Bonus	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.						
4b/c/d	Services grant and other non- ringfenced grants	Services Grant – assumed to continue in some form in future years though to be determined by Government.						
5	Collection Fund	This is the surplus or deficit on 2022-23 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.						

¹ the amount of properties in the district adjusted for the Council Tax Reduction scheme and discounts

Ref	Item	Commentary
6	Funds available	Total non-ring-fenced income available, excluding fees and charges.
7	Base budget after adjustments	The budget from the previous year including £363m expenditure, £190m ring-fenced grant income and £31m income from fees and charges.
8a	Pay inflation	Increased costs due to any pay awards (3.5% assumption 2023-24), increased employer pension costs and incremental pay changes.
8b	Contract inflation & non-pay 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). Non-pay inflation relates to energy costs.
8c	Modelled budget growth	Increases to demand led services through estimated increases in client numbers and/or complexity.
9a	Investment in Council Strategy priorities	Funding investment to deliver the Council Strategy.
9b	Investment – Covid-19	Ongoing future financial pressures relating to the impact of the Covid-19.
9c	Investment in other priorities	Investment to ensure the delivery of core services.
9d	Increase in capital financing costs	The revenue funding for additional borrowing that supports the delivery of the Capital Strategy. This is an area under pressure; the borrowing costs of the Council have more than doubled since setting the 2022-23 budget and so the revenue funding available to finance capital spend will either need to increase in the MTFS to fund previous levels of Council funded programmes or remain/reduce to fund fewer Council funding projects.
10	Savings and income requirement	Items that reduce cost via the themes identified.
11	Annual budget requirement	Sub-total of the above.
12	One off investments	Investment to support initiatives, on a one-off basis.
13	Net budget for management accounting	Sub-total of the above.
14	ASC BCF / iBCF funding	Expenditure that equals the income from this funding source in line 3a above.
15	Budget requirement	Sub-total of the above.
16	Use of Reserves/ increase in reserves	Use of any earmarked or unallocated reserves to support future budgets, and cover the collection fund deficit. Building back reserves in future years.
17	Budget requirement	The new budget that equates to the funds available in line 6.

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 £15m. This includes a wide range of areas and remains 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 themes 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 there 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 2023-24 budget and that are being considered for future financial years. For years beyond 2023-24, worked up proposals will be required and will be incorporated into the annual budget for those financial years. 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 £10.8m of which at least £3.7m has been identified in proposals for future budgets.

Cost Avoidance - £5.8m

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 - £1.8m

Either new income generating opportunities or through increasing additional revenue from existed income sources from fees and charges.

Service Transformation - £0.6m

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 - £0.8m

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 - £0.1m

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 - £1.8m

Reserves have been set aside to support the profiling of savings in the MTFS and the delivery of Council Strategy outcomes. These reserves 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. The budget for the year ahead exhausts the majority of available reserves outside of the General Fund balance. The MTFS model shows £1m increase to reserves from 2024-25 for each year for the remaining three years of the strategy to increase risk reserves and earmarked reserves.

Use of Reserves to support the 2023-24 Budget	£m
Collection Fund Reserves	-0.3
Earmarked Reserves	-1.5
Total	-1.8

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

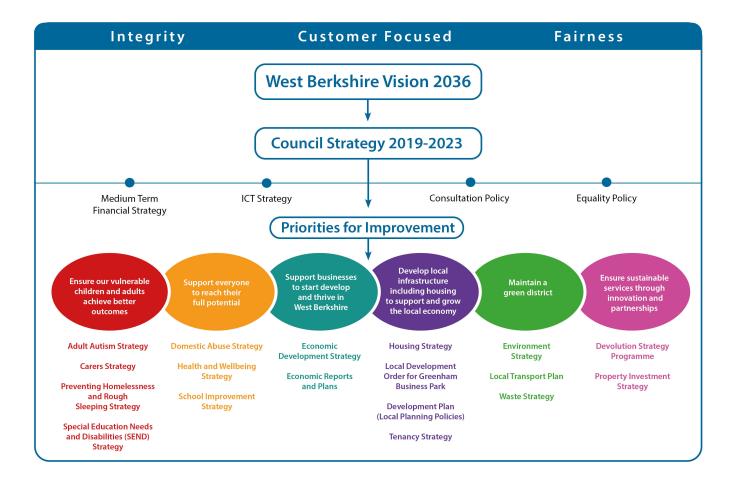
Scenario	Best / highest	Financial	Worst Case	Financial
	case	impact		impact
Council Tax base	2% growth p.a.	£1.7 extra	0% growth	£0.7m p.a.
changes		p.a	from 2024-25	
Council Tax	3%	£1.1m p.a.	0%	£3.3m p.a.
referendum levels		from 23/24		from 23/24
ASC precept	2%	£1.1m p.a.	0%	£2.2m p.a.
		from 23/24		from 23/24
Business Rates	No reset – keep	£1.8m in	Full reset – no	£5m drop
reset and fair	retaining	year 3	transition	from 2025-
funding review	growth			26 plus
from 2025-26				impact of
				fair funding
				review
Agency costs			Growth in	£3m
(staffing) within			agency costs	overspend
social care			as recruitment	
continue on			activity is	
current level			unsuccessful	
leading to an				
overspend				_
Inflation and pay	0.5 % lower	£0.3m p.a.	2% increase	£1.2m
award				_
Capital financing	Rates drop by	tbc – gilt	Increased	£0.2m
costs	1%	rates	rates of 1%	
		dependent		
ASC finance	Per 'best' case	£2.8m	Per 'worst'	£4.8m
model		benefit	case	overspend

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 four 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 post 2024-25
- Further savings proposals for years 2 to 4 of the MTFS
- Further review of reserves in 2024-25 budgets and beyond to ensure that risk reserves are replenished through a contribution to reserves
- Investment in a transformation programme for 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 (2023-24) 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 The Local Government Finance Settlement for 2023-24 has provided some greater certainty and information to inform this MTFS. The removal of changes due a fair funding review and hard business rate baseline reset until 2025-26 at the earliest provide greater levels of certainty over the medium term than has been provided in recent years. This enables the MTFS, certainly for the next two years, to have a

much greater level of certainty over the income levels assumed, though many Government funding streams remain unclear e.g. Services Grant and New Homes Bonus. The new Council Strategy for 2023-27, once approved, will provide greater stability on Council policy direction and a redirection of Council funding to those priorities approved by members.

Glossary

None

Appendices

Appendix A – Scenario planning

Other relevant documentation

Previous Medium Term Financial Strategies Accompanying budget papers for 2023-24 Local Government Finance Settlement 2023-24 (MHCLG) 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).

Council Tax Base Changes

A 1% increase in the Council Tax base equates to approximated 650 properties and just over a £1m additional income. The ability to accurately forecast this figure is difficult. The Council has little control over how quickly properties are built across the district on a year by year basis (the local plan can set out the overall quantum over a much longer period) so faster or slower building rates have a large impact in future years. The other determinate of the Council Tax base is how many residents receive the Council Tax reduction scheme; greater levels of take up will mean a smaller taxbase as this affords some protection to residents from paying the full rates of Council Tax.

The 2022-24 period is forecast to see above 1% increases to the taxbase.

Council Tax referendum level

This is proposed at 2.99% by the Government for 2023-24 and assumed to remain at this level throughout the MTFS. Councils can increase Council Tax above this level but would need to conduct a referendum with residents first. It is assumed in the MTFS scenario planning that this would not occur.

ASC precept

Similar to the above, with a maximum level of 2% allowable.

Business Rates and Fair funding review

This has been articulated in the MTFS above, but the Council is currently above its 'business rates baseline' by over £5m. This is the amount at which the Government, when creating the retention of business rates in 2013-14 assessed as the amount of business rates the Council collected and then ended up retaining after transfers to the Government. If the Government implemented a reset to the underlying business rates baseline this would cost the Council well over £5m a year as the Council has seen growth in business rates above this baseline level over the past ten years.

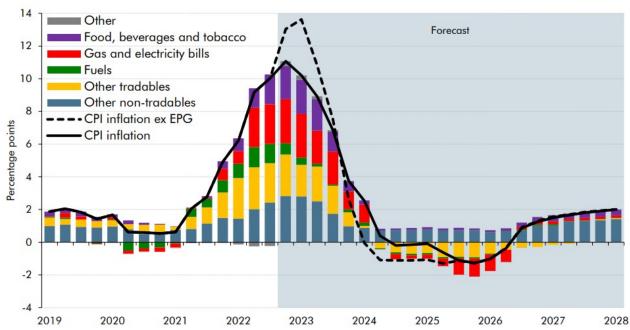
Agency costs

The Council is facing significant pressures on recruiting and retaining staff in certain services, especially in adults and children's social care. The additional agency costs required (to cover vacant posts) are substantial and an estimate of £3m has been identified as a worst case additional cost – in quarters 1 and 2 of 2022-23 the additional costs in adult and children's social care are £1.5m together.

Inflation and pay award

Forecasts for inflation vary significantly but the Office of Budget Responsibility forecast in November 2022 was for an approximate 3.5% inflation figure in 2023-24 (from a high of 11% in 2022-23) with deflation from 2024-25, see below:

Chart 4: Contributions to CPI inflation



Capital financing costs

As highlighted above, interest costs have more than doubled during 2022-23; when the budget was set, Public Works Loans Board rates were approximately 2% and are now in excess of 4%, this means that for the same revenue costs, the Council will be able to afford half of the total Council funded capital projects.

ASC finance model

This model is presented to Executive every quarter as part of budget monitoring. The model has best and worst case costs scenarios. The 2023-24 model provides for the expected costs with a 3.5% inflation uplift, on top of a significant uplift in 2022-23. The difference between the base and best case is £2.8m and between the base and worst case is £4.8m. This has been highlighted during 2020-21, where there was a significant underspend on ASC spend and during 2022-23 where there is a significant overspend forecast.

Capital Strategy, Financial Years 2023/24 to 2032/33

Committee considering report: Council

Date of Committee: 2 March 2023

Portfolio Member: Councillor Ross Mackinnon

Date Portfolio Member sent/agreed

report:

13 January 2023

Report Author: Shannon Coleman-Slaughter

Forward Plan Ref: C4315

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To outline the Capital Strategy covering financial years 2023/24 -2032/33 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 2023/24 2032/33 is approved (appendix A).
 - (b) That the supporting Minimum Revenue Provision Policy (appendix C) is approved, inclusive of retrospective change to the 2022/23 MRP policy.
 - (c) That the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy (appendix D) is approved.
 - (d) That the proposed CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) Bids for inclusion in the Capital programme (appendix E) is approved.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
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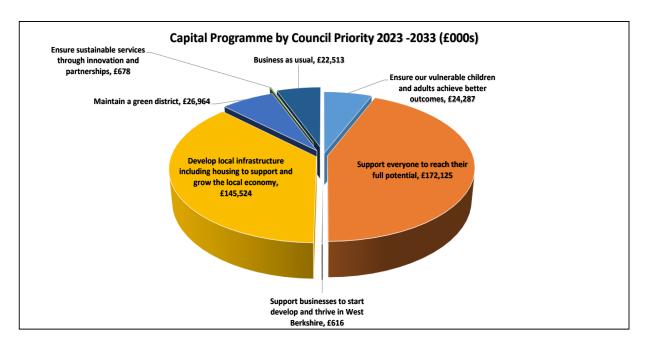
Financial:	£185.2 million of Council debt funding has been applied to the Capital Strategy and supporting programme of work. This level of investment requires an annual increase in the revenue budget in order to satisfy capital financing requirements. The required annual increases are reflected in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
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:	£185.2 million of the programme over the next ten 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 changes. 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 £207.5 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.
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.

			a)	Commentary
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	
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:	Х			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:	Х			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:	Ross		nnon, F	xecutive Director, S151 Officer Portfolio Holder for Finance roup

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 The capital strategy is set against an uncertain economic backdrop. The ongoing impact on the UK from the war in Ukraine, together with high inflation (general and construction industry), and higher interest rates have contributed to deteriorating economic outlook. Historically Public Works and Loan Board (PWLB), rates have been low and stable with average borrowing for a 25 year annuity to fund capital expenditure at between 1 2%. At the time of producing this report a 25 year annuity rate is 4.8%. The increased average rate of borrowing has impacted on the scope of the capital programme, however, despite ongoing pressure on the revenue budget, the Council continues to make significant investment in the future of West Berkshire through its Capital Programme.
- 4.3 The Council has sought to build on its strengths, focusing on social care, education and enhancements to local infrastructure (including better roads, flood prevention, and alleviation schemes). 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. The proposed expenditure on the capital programme over the ten year period amounts to investment of £392.7 million. The Capital Strategy and supporting Capital Programme are aligned to the Council Strategy. Appendix A provides a detailed breakdown of the Capital Programme and the graphic below details planned expenditure over the life of the strategy by Council priority.



- 4.4 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 proposed programme is built with a forecast £207.5 million of external funding. Regular monitoring of actual levels received compared to those forecast will be undertaken and reported to Capital Strategy Group (CSG), and the capital programme adjusted accordingly if necessary.
- 4.5 £185.2 million of debt financing has been earmarked to support delivery of the capital programme over the life of the strategy. 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. 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.
- 4.6 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 C.

5 Supporting Information

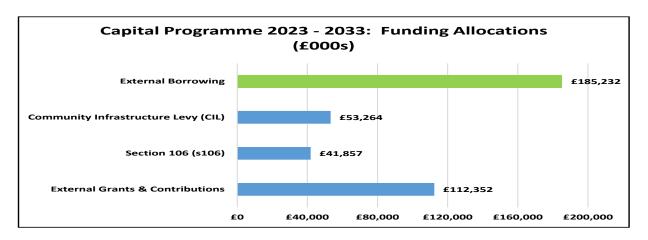
Introduction

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

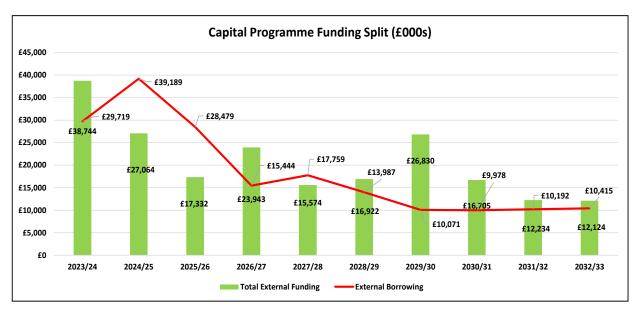
and resources to ensure that decisions are made with sufficient regard to the long term financing implications and risks to the Council. To demonstrate compliance, the code sets out a number of indicators which are reviewed within this report and in the Council's Investment and Borrowing Strategy 2023/24.

Background

5.2 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:



5.3 The level of external grant funding, Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy included in the financing of the programme are forecasts. Funding 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. The graphic below details the forecast trend of external funding versus external borrowing over the life of the capital programme.



- 5.4 £185.2 million of debt funded Council resources are forecast to be applied to the programme. The planned capital programme assumes any capital receipts from the rationalisation of Council assets are applied to fund transformation programmes as opposed to financing the main capital programme. Appendix D details a list of approved programmes to be funded through application of the flexible use of capital receipts legislation. The Council has planned to fund 47% of the total ten year programme through debt financing.
- 5.5 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 £21.4 million during 2023/24. The forecast CFR over the life of the capital programme is anticipated to increase by £75.5 million.

Estimates of Capital	31.3.2022	31.3.2023	31.3.2024	31.3.2025	31.3.2026	31.3.2027
Financing Requirement	actual	forecast	budget	budget	budget	budget
Thanong requirement	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
General Fund services	£215,826	£216,138	£237,541	£267,448	£285,260	£289,593
Council housing (HRA)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Capital investments	£62,583	£62,763	£62,763	£62,763	£62,976	£63,411
TOTAL CFR	£278,408	£278,901	£300,304	£330,210	£348,236	£353,004
	24.2.2020	24.2.2020	24.2.2020	24.2.2024	24.2.2022	24.2.2022
Estimates of Capital	31.3.2028	31.3.2029	31.3.2030	31.3.2031	31.3.2032	31.3.2033
Financing Requirement	budget	budget	budget	budget	budget	budget
rinancing Requirement	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
General Fund services	£294,907	£297,301	£295,418	£293,626	£291,583	£289,284
Council housing (HRA)	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Capital investments	£65,066	£65,066	£65,066	£65,066	£65,066	£65,066
TOTAL CFR	£359,973	£362,367	£360,484	£358,692	£356,649	£354,350

5.6 Council expenditure, particularly in relation to debt financing has to be prudent and appropriate. A regulatory framework is in place monitored through prudential indicators to ensure reasonableness of capital financing assumptions. How much a Council intends to utilise of its available revenue streams to finance debt is key. The table below sets out the percentage allocation of the Council's assumed net revenue stream over the life of the capital programme will be required to service debt (both historic from previous capital programmes and the proposed capital programme 2023 -2033).

Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2021/22 actual	2022/23 forecast	2023/24 budget	2024/25 budget *	2025/26 budget	2026/27 budget
Financing costs (£000)	£14,572	£15,085	£16,009	£17,884	£20,311	£21,268
Proportion of net revenue stream	9.51%	11.13%	11.53%	12.63%	14.07%	14.44%
Proportion of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2027/28 budget	2028/29 budget	2029/30 budget	2030/31 budget	2031/32 budget	2032/33 budget
Financing costs (£000)	£21,476	£21,861	£21,788	£21,154	£21,039	£20,918
Proportion of net revenue stream	14.30%	14.27%	13.94%	13.27%	12.94%	12.61%

5.7 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. 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 C. Planned MRP / repayments over the Capital Strategy are as follows:

Replacement of Prior Years' Debt Finance	2021/22 actual	forecast	2023/24 budget	2024/25 budget	2025/26 budget	2026/27 budget
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Minimum revenue provision (MRP)	£7,286	£8,008	£8,317	£9,282	£10,452	£10,677
Capital receipts	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
TOTAL	£7,286	£8,008	£8,317	£9,282	£10,452	£10,677
Replacement of Prior Years' Debt Finance	2027/28 budget £000s	2028/29 budget £000s	2029/30 budget £000s	2030/31 budget £000s	2031/32 budget £000s	2032/33 budget £000s
Minimum revenue provision (MRP)	£10,790	£11,593	£11,953	£11,770	£12,234	£12,714
Capital receipts	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
TOTAL	£10,790	£11,593	£11,953	£11,770	£12,234	£12,714

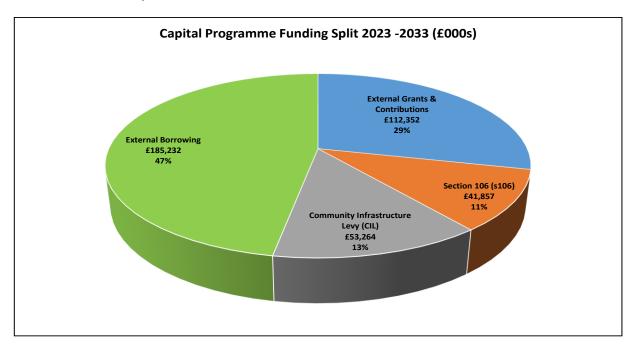
5.8 The Council's main objectives when borrowing are to achieve a low but certain cost of finance while retaining flexibility should plans change in future. These objectives are often conflicting, and the Council therefore seeks to strike a balance between cheap short-term loans and long-term fixed rate 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 the Capital Financing Requirement	31.3.2022 actual £000s	31.3.2023 forecast £000s	31.3.2024 budget £000s	31.3.2025 budget £000s	31.3.2026 budget £000s	31.3.2027 budget £000s
Debt (incl. PFI & leases)	£203,331	£197,561	£191,780	£186,134	£180,653	£175,401
Capital Financing Requirement	£278,408	£278,901	£300,304	£330,210	£348,236	£353,004
Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement	31.3.2028 budget £000s	31.3.2029 budget £000s	31.3.2030 budget £000s	31.3.2031 budget £000s	31.3.2032 budget £000s	31.3.2033 budget £000s
Capital Financing	budget	budget	budget	budget	budget	budget

5.9 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.

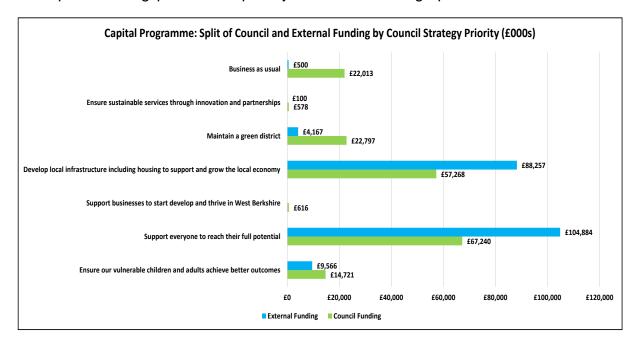
Proposals

5.10 The Capital Strategy and supporting Capital Programme propose total gross expenditure of £392.7 million. In respect of the funding of the overall programme, £207.5 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. £185.2 million of capital expenditure is proposed to be funded via Council resources, i.e. debt.



- 5.11 The Council has sought to build on its strengths, with planned expenditure focused on enhancing investment across the district. Key areas of investment include:
 - (a) £196.4 million in support of ensuring our vulnerable residents achieve better life outcomes and reach their full potential. Investment is planned enabling enhancement of existing educational facilities, provision of new school places in response to new housing developments across the district, enhancing accessibility to existing provision and investment in Adult Social Care Services.
 - (b) £140.5 million in support of infrastructure across the district (roads, bridges, flood alleviation, drainage and cycle paths).
 - (c) £12.3 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) £27 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.
- (e) £2.3 million in support of maintaining and enhancing the Council's commercial property portfolio. The portfolio continues to contribute net income streams (i.e. after direct and capital financing costs), in support of core Council services.
- 5.12 The split in funding per Council priority is detailed in the graphic below:



- 5.13 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.
- 5.14 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. Capital receipts are planned to be used to support revenue transformation under the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy in appendix D.

6 Other options considered

6.1 Not applicable

7 Conclusion

7.1 The Capital Strategy proposes £392.7 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. Planned expenditure is split between General Fund Services (i.e. enhancement and extension of the existing operational asset base) and capital investments (i.e. maintaining the commercial property portfolio). The planned capital investment over the life of the programme is detailed below:

Estimates of Capital	2021/22 actual	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Expenditure	202 1/22 actual	forecast	budget	budget	budget	budget
Experialture	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
General Fund services	£32,013	£52,820	£68,463	£66,253	£45,597	£38,953
Capital investments	£499	£180	£0	£0	£214	£435
TOTAL	£32,512	£53,000	£68,463	£66,253	£45,811	£39,388
Estimates of Capital	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
	budget	budget	budget	budget	budget	budget
Expenditure	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
General Fund services	£31,678	£30,909	£36,901	£26,683	£22,425	£22,539
Capital investments	£1,655	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
TOTAL	£33,333	£30,909	£36,901	£26,683	£22,425	£22,539

7.2 In respect of capital investments, central government financial support for local authorities investing in assets such as commercial property purely or mainly for financial gain has declined. The revised Prudential Code (December 2021), has limited a Local Authority's ability to access debt financing to make further investment, however, financing can be accessed to maintain existing capital assets subject to a cost benefit analysis of retaining ownership. Total commercial investments are currently valued at £58.9 million (as at 31st March 2022), providing a net return after all costs of roughly 2% in support of core Council services.

Net Income from Commercial and Service Investments to	2021/22 actual	2022/23 forecast	2023/24 budget	2024/25 budget	2025/26 budget	2026/27 budget
Net Revenue Stream	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Total net income from service and commercial investments	£2,679	£3,234	£3,238	£3,238	£3,238	£3,238
Proportion of net revenue stream	1.70%	2.39%	2.33%	2.29%	2.24%	2.20%
Net Income from Commercial and Service Investments to	2027/28 budget	2028/29 budget	2029/30 budget	2030/31 budget	2031/32 budget	2032/33 budget
Net Revenue Stream	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Total net income from service and commercial investments	£3,238	£3,238	£3,238	£3,238	£3,238	£3,238
Proportion of net revenue stream	2.16%	2.11%	2.07%	2.03%	1.99%	1.95%

7.3 All capital expenditure must be financed, either from external sources (government grants and other contributions), the Council's own resources (revenue, reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing, leasing and Private Finance Initiative). The planned financing of the above expenditure is as follows:

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Capital Financing	actual	forecast	budget	budget	budget	budget
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
External sources	£20,905	£40,533	£38,744	£27,064	£17,332	£23,943
Capital receipts	£863	£3,966	£0	£0	£0	£0
Debt	£10,744	£8,501	£29,719	£39,189	£28,479	£15,444
TOTAL	£32,512	£53,000	£68,463	£66,253	£45,811	£39,388
Conital Financian	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Capital Financing	niidaet					
3	£000s	£000s	budget £000s	budget £000s	£000s	£000s
External sources						
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
External sources	£000s £15,574	£000s £16,922	£000s £26,830	£000s £16,705	£000s £12,234	£000s £12,124

7.4 47% of the planned programme is funded through application of Council resources. £185.2 million of the programme over the next ten 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 deviation in borrowing costs over and above those assumed within the budget setting will impact on the affordability of the overall programme. 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 that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £10 million at each year-end. This benchmark is currently forecast to be £206 million at 31.3.2023 and will increase to £272 million over the life of the capital programme.

Liability Benchmark	31.3.2022	31.3.2023	31.3.2024	31.3.2025	31.3.2026	31.3.2027
	actual	forecast	budget	budget	budget	budget
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Outstanding borrowing Liability benchmark	£191,848	£186,891	£181,974	£177,242	£172,733	£168,512
	£164,058	£206,223	£227,489	£257,311	£275,308	£278,764
Liability Benchmark	31.3.2028	31.3.2029	31.3.2030	31.3.2031	31.3.2032	31.3.2033
	budget	budget	budget	budget	budget	budget
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Outstanding borrowing	£164,227	£159,944	£155,667	£151,222	£141,626	£136,857
Liability benchmark	£284,426	£285,519	£282,345	£279,273	£275,966	£271,665

7.5 The Council is required to ensure that capital financing is reasonable and affordable in the long term. The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the authorised limit for external debt) each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower "operational boundary" is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit. The table below sets out the Council's borrowing limits inclusive of all debt financing. Allowance has been made within both the operational boundary and authorised limit to allow to debt financing of the planned capital programme, existing

financing, PFI liabilities and further lease financing when IFRS 16 Leases is formally adopted in April 2024.

Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary	2022/23 limit	2023/24 limit	2024/25 limit	2025/26 limit	2026/27 limit	2027/28 limit
operational Boundary	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Authorised limit – borrowing	£352,732	£373,621	£382,892	£382,892	£382,892	£382,892
Authorised limit – PFI and leases	£14,400	£13,200	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000	£12,000
Authorised limit – total external debt	£367,132	£386,821	£394,892	£394,892	£394,892	£394,892
Operational boundary – borrowing	£338,732	£359,621	£368,892	£368,892	£368,892	£368,892
Operational boundary – PFI and leases	£12,000	£11,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000
Operational boundary – total external debt	£350,732	£370,621	£378,892	£378,892	£378,892	£378,892
Authorised Limit and		2028/29 limit	2029/30 limit	2030/31 limit	2031/32 limit	2032/33 limit
Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary		2028/29 limit £000s			2031/32 limit £000s	
			limit	limit		limit
Operational Boundary Authorised limit –		£000s	limit £000s	limit £000s	£000s	limit £000s
Operational Boundary Authorised limit – borrowing Authorised limit – PFI		£000s £382,892 £12,000	fimit £000s £382,892 £12,000	fimit £000s £382,892 £12,000	£000s £382,892 £12,000	limit £000s £382,892 £12,000
Operational Boundary Authorised limit — borrowing Authorised limit — PFI and leases Authorised limit — total external debt		£000s £382,892	limit £000s £382,892	limit £000s £382,892	£000s £382,892	limit £000s £382,892
Operational Boundary Authorised limit – borrowing Authorised limit – PFI and leases Authorised limit –		£000s £382,892 £12,000	fimit £000s £382,892 £12,000	fimit £000s £382,892 £12,000	£000s £382,892 £12,000	limit £000s £382,892 £12,000
Operational Boundary Authorised limit — borrowing Authorised limit — PFI and leases Authorised limit — total external debt Operational boundary —		£000s £382,892 £12,000 £394,892	limit £000s £382,892 £12,000 £394,892	£382,892 £12,000 £394,892	£000s £382,892 £12,000 £394,892	limit £000s £382,892 £12,000 £394,892

7.6 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. Based on the proposed expenditure and planned financing of that expenditure 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 Capital Programme
- 8.2 Appendix B 2023/24 Capital Programme
- 8.3 Appendix C Minimum Revenue Provision Policy
- 8.4 Appendix D Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy
- 8.5 Appendix E Community Infrastructure Levy Bids for inclusion in the Capital programme

Subject to C	call-in:	
Yes: □	No: ⊠	
The item is d	ue to be referred to Council for final approval	Χ
Delays in imp Council	plementation could have serious financial implications for the	
Delays in imp	plementation could compromise the Council's position	
	or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or ask Groups within preceding six months	
Item is Urger	nt Key Decision	
Report is to r	note only	
Officer deta	ils:	
Name: Job Title: Tel No: E-mail:	Shannon Coleman-Slaughter Interim Head of Finance & Property 01635 503225 Shannon.colemanslaughter@westberks.gov.uk	

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	Total 2023-33
Project Title	Description of Project	Total Planned Expenditure										
Occupational Therapy Equipment	Annual provision for essential aids & equipment for vulnerable people.	£1,195,000	£1,206,080	£1,217,380	£1,228,900	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£4,847,360
Social Services - Planned Enhancement Works	Enhancements of Care Homes and Resource Centres	£164,189	£323,663	£203,772	£168,600	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£860,224
Building Work :Fostering	To enable more children to be fostered in West Berkshire	£30,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£O	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£90,000
Additional Places - Secondary Basic Need	Accommodation solution to secondary Basic Need in School Organisation Planning Area 12.	£205,420	£2,473,430	£592,500	£80,830	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£3,352,180
SEMH/ASD Resourced Provision - Primary	Creation of resourced provision for primary aged pupils with SEMH/ASD to meet demand and reduce pressure on the High Needs Block.	£1,428,470	£818,490	£58,980	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,305,940
SEMH/ASD Resourced Provision - Secondary	Creation of resourced provision for secondary aged pupils with SEMH/ASD to meet demand and reduce pressure on the High Needs Block.	£2,319,740	£94,650	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,414,390
Calcot Schools Remodelling	The remodelling, refurbishment and rationalisation of accommodation to align with change of Admission Number.	£1,214,580	£4,205,120	£2,040,610	£180,370	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£7,640,680
North Newbury - New primary school	Additional primary provision to meet the impact from the North Newbury Housing Development.	£240,970	£4,280,740	£842,340	£124,620	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£5,488,670
Brookfields School - accessibility	Remodelling and refurbishment works to address general; toilet and changing room accessibility and suitability issues.	£500,790	£14,120	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£514,910
Project Management - Education	Capital element of the Place Planning & Development Team	£380,910	£394,242	£402,127	£410,169	£418,373	£426,740	£435,275	£443,980	£452,860	£461,917	£4,226,593
Highwood Copse - Basic Need	To cover retention contract costs following build of new 1FE Primary school.	£140,730	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£140,730
Park House - Impact of new housing	Impact at Park House school of additional pupil numbers from Racecourse and Sandleford new housing developments.	£32,850	£0	£571,710	£4,454,090	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£5,058,650
Schools Statutory Compliance Surveys	5-year rolling programme to undertake Asbestos, Condition, Fire and Legionella surveys.	£16,125	£16,770	£17,440	£18,140	£18,860	£19,620	£20,400	£21,220	£22,070	£22,950	£193,595
i-college Integration	Provision of new accommodation for iCollege Integration to address suitability and sufficiency issues.	£623,310	£43,490	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£666,800
Parsons Down Partnership Accommodation Rationalisation	To cover contract retention costs. Rationalisation, remodelling and refurbishment to align with admission numbers	£51,800	£1,200	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£53,000
Aids & Adaptions for special educational needs and disabilities	Provision of special equipment for children with disabilities, including proportion of occupational therapists' time	£63,610	£65,510	£67,470	£69,480	£71,550	£73,670	£76,710	£79,870	£83,160	£86,600	£737,630
Castle Gate - increased capacity	Provision of additional bedrooms and associated support spaces to increase capacity and reduce costs of out of county provision.	£0	£42,060	£628,460	£16,170	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£686,690
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.	£10,060	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£10,060
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.	£0	£3,442,740	£90,820	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£3,533,560
Falkland Primary School - Classroom Replacement	Modular building replacement to address poor condition, poor environmental performance and limited external space.	£242,030	£3,663,060	£90,700	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£3,995,790
Education - Capital Enhancement Programme	Capital Enhancement works as identified by current condition survey data.	£2,789,660	£2,627,170	£2,735,000	£2,830,000	£2,913,200	£3,053,730	£3,177,880	£3,305,800	£3,437,630	£3,573,530	£30,443,600
Home Repair Assist Grant	Grants for emergency home repairs for older/vulnerable people	£31,250	£51,250	£52,530	£53,850	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£O	£188,880

		2023/24 2024/25 2025/26 2026/27 2027/28 2028/29 2029/30 2030/31 2031/32 20		2032/33	Total 2023-33							
Project Title	Description of Project	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure
Disabled Facilities Grant	Mandatory grant for disabled adaptations, to enable local residents to live independently in their own homes.	£1,699,470	£1,711,960	£1,724,760	£1,737,880	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£6,874,070
Temp Accommodation Refurbishment	Refurbishment of temporary accommodation	£55,440	£17,940	£18,390	£18,850	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£110,620
Playing Pitch Action Plan	Provision to support the development of the Playing Pitch Strategy through provision of additional facilities	£3,190,000	£836,575	£O	£0	£0	£0	60	£0	£0	£0	£4,026,575
Refurbishment of Kennet Leisure Centre	Refurbishment of Kennet Leisure Centre	£0	£200,000	£O	£0	£0	£0	£O	£0	£0	£0	£200,000
Shaw House. Restoration of disused outbuildings in the gardens.	Restoration of building and development of outdoor cafe to facilitate future revenue streams.	£0	£350,000	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£400,000
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.	£0	£298,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£298,000
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.	£0	£265,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£265,000
Library Service - self service kiosk replacement	Replacing the current self-service kiosks in libraries when they reach the end of their useful life.	£0	£0	£0	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
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	£0	£550,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£550,000
Libraries Book Stock	Replenishing book stock	£0	£280,000	£146,000	£152,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£O	£578,000
Berkshire Records Office Enhancements	Planned improvement works to building and plant. All six Berkshire local authorities contribute their share to the Berkshire Records Office	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£40,000
Planned enhancement of library buildings	Provision for improvement works	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£400,000
Shaw House Mansion Capital Works	Works to enhance and improve Shaw House, as recommended by Consultants an under terms of HLF grant (25 year duration)	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£90,000
Museum Enhancement Works	Programme of enhancement works as advised by heritage/conservation contractors and consultants/WBC Conservation Officer, and under the terms of the £1.2m Heritage Lottery Fund grant	£47,860	£47,850	£47,850	£47,850	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£191,410
Leisure Centre Compliance & Modernisation	Capital Investment in Leisure Provision required to maintain and enhance existing sites.	£0	£307,000	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£357,000

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	Total 2023-33
Project Title	Description of Project	Total Planned Expenditure										
Leisure Centres Planned Improvements	Planned Enhancement works to Leisure Centres	£164,850	£492,490	£129,890	£132,490	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£919,720
Hampstead Norreys Flood Alleviation Scheme	Subject to DEFRA funding - Flood alleviation scheme for Hampstead Norreys.	£0	£0	£500,000	£0	£O	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£500,000
A339 roundabout/junction Improvements	Network capacity improvements at the central A339 Roundabout in Newbury.	£0	£440,000	£O	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£440,000
VMS/Intelligent Traffic Signs	Replace existing and install new variable message signs.	£40,000	£460,000	£O	£0	£O	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£500,000
Kings Road Improvements	Environmental and Traffic Management Improvements to existing road network following completion of the Kings Road Link Road	£400,000	£0	£O	£O	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£400,000
Car Park Improvements	Capital works to improve and enhance useful life of Council's public car parks	£30,000	£106,340	£65,000	£65,000	£65,000	£65,000	£65,000	£65,000	£65,000	£65,000	£656,340
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.	£55,430	£55,430	£55,430	£55,430	£55,430	£55,430	£55,430	£55,430	£55,430	£55,430	£554,300
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.	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£1,500,000
Village Speed Limits	Assessment and implementation of speed limits resulting from the speed limit review process.	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£300,000
Accident Reduction Works	Road safety improvements as a result of accident investigations	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000	£75,000	£750,000
Footway Improvements Existing & New	Footway improvement schemes	£245,000	£245,000	£245,000	£245,000	£245,000	£245,000	£245,000	£245,000	£245,000	£245,000	£2,450,000
Recreational Walk Route	To improve selected pedestrian rights of way in order to increase their recreational value	£42,240	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£167,250
Street Lighting	Ongoing capital replacements of lighting columns and lanterns	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£1,000,000
Signing Improvements	Signing improvements in the district.	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£300,000
Traffic Signal Upgrades	Modernisation and capital maintenance of the Council's traffic signal assets.	£246,290	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000	£70,000	£876,290

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	Total 2023-33
Project Title	Description of Project	Total Planned Expenditure										
Active Travel Infrastructure	Developing and implementing active travel solutions for West Berkshire	£640,000	£700,000	£700,000	£700,000	£700,000	£700,000	£700,000	£700,000	£700,000	£700,000	£6,940,000
Rights Of Way Volunteer	To undertake rights of way maintenance work by the use of volunteers	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£2,500	£25,000
Improvements To Pedestrian Routes	Improve the condition of pedestrian routes	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£138,900
Disabled Access To Countryside	Improve selected rights of way in order to increase their usability and recreational value for less able users.	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£7,000	£70,000
Bridleway Improvement for Pedestrians	To improve selected rideable and cycle able rights of way in order to increase their recreational and/or utilitarian value	£32,070	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£13,890	£157,080
Ridgeway Trail	To maintain the trail at the standard required by Natural England	£13,000	£13,000	£13,000	£13,000	£13,000	£13,000	£13,000	£13,000	£13,000	£13,000	£130,000
Recreational Cycle ways	To improve selected cycle able rights of way in order to increase their recreational and/or utilitarian value.	£13,880	£13,880	£13,880	£13,880	£13,880	£13,880	£13,880	£13,880	£13,880	£13,880	£138,800
Rural Signing	Improvement of direction signage on rural rights of way	£0	£10,540	£5,270	£5,270	£5,270	£5,270	£5,270	£5,270	£5,270	£5,270	£52,700
Countryside & Environment Capital Salaries	To manage the capital projects the Countryside Service is responsible for under the Local Transport Plan	£337,400	£337,400	£337,400	£337,400	£337,400	£337,400	£337,400	£337,400	£337,400	£337,400	£3,374,000
Land Drainage	Capital Land Drainage and Flood Risk Management works	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£3,000,000
Future Programme Development	Assessment and feasibility of works to support bids for grant, S106, CIL, LDF and LTP3.	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£1,000,000
School Safety Programme	Annual programme of safety improvements in the vicinity of schools.	£100,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£550,000
Essential Improvement work - Bridges	Essential capital improvements of the Council's bridges and other structures	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£300,000	£3,000,000
Preventative Works - Bridges	Proactive works to prevent the need for substantive future works	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£1,000,000
Travel Plans (Transport Planning)	Includes transport model and transport policy officer	£52,800	£52,800	£52,800	£52,800	£52,800	£52,800	£52,800	£52,800	£52,800	£52,800	£528,000

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	Total 2023-33
Project Title	Description of Project	Total Planned Expenditure										
Public Transport Infrastructure	Real Time Passenger Information and other public transport infrastructure.	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£500,000
Highway Improved Programme	Annual Carriageway Treatment Schemes	£5,631,710	£6,798,710	£6,618,710	£3,981,710	£3,981,710	£3,981,710	£3,981,710	£3,981,710	£3,981,710	£3,981,710	£46,921,100
Term Maintenance Establishment	Set-up and resources costs for improvement works identified under the Term Maintenance contract	£775,500	£775,500	£775,500	£775,500	£775,500	£775,500	£775,500	£775,500	£775,500	£775,500	£7,755,000
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)	£449,400	£150,000	£500,000	£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,599,400
Carriageway patching	Annual hand patching programme.	£938,000	£938,000	£938,000	£438,000	£438,000	£438,000	£438,000	£438,000	£438,000	£438,000	£5,880,000
Signs & Road Markings	Annual road sign and road marking replacement programme.	£110,000	£110,000	£110,000	£110,000	£110,000	£110,000	£110,000	£110,000	£110,000	£110,000	£1,100,000
Drainage Improvements	Annual highway drainage improvement works	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£500,000	£5,000,000
Planned Enhancements	Department for Transport funded enhancements to current infrastructure	£132,000	£132,000	£132,000	£132,000	£132,000	£132,000	£132,000	£132,000	£132,000	£132,000	£1,320,000
Transport Services Fleet Upgrade	Replacement of one fleet minibus each year	£0	£227,630	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£1,027,630
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.	£0	£50,000	£0	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
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	£92,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£25,000	£317,000
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	£142,780	£52,600	£52,600	£52,600	£52,600	£52,600	£52,600	£52,600	£52,600	£52,600	£616,180
BBOWT Capital Projects	Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxford Wildlife Trust capital works funded from S106.	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£1,000,000
Urban tree fund	Capital required for investigation, design and implementation of urban trees	£0	£114,020	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£434,020
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	£140,000	£205,000	£0	£O	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£345,000
Infrastructure Design and Delivery	Annual Salaries for Projects Team - part funded by s.106	£1,249,010	£1,292,725	£1,318,580	£1,344,951	£1,371,850	£1,399,287	£1,427,273	£1,455,819	£1,484,935	£1,514,634	£13,859,065
Geographic Information Systems	Funding for development of the Council's Graphical Information System	£80,000	£80,000	£80,000	£80,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£320,000
Corporate IT Replacement	Re-provision of WBC ICT equipment and software (Predominately PCs) on an ongoing basis.	£685,000	£685,000	£830,000	£840,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£3,040,000
Telephony Infrastructure	Contact Centre Systems Enhancements	£150,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£150,000
Upgrade of Print Room	Replace the folding machine/wide format printer and finishing equipment in the print room	£20,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£30,000
Network / App Performance Monitoring	Introduce a network / application performance monitoring tool	£20,000	£5,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£25,000

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	Total 2023-33
Project Title	Description of Project	Total Planned Expenditure										
Project Management - ICT	Capitalise proportion of ICT Staff salaries for those who work on Capital projects	£187,870	£194,445	£201,251	£205,276	£209,382	£213,569	£217,841	£222,197	£226,641	£231,174	£2,109,647
VMWare Hardware Refresh	Replace physical servers (hosts) as they reach end of life.	£100,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£110,000
Public Services Network Accreditation	Essential security enhancement to maintain compliance with Government Connect requirements.	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£40,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£160,000
Members ICT	Members ICT	£0	£0	£0	£85,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£85,000
Superfast Broadband	Project Management	£897,450	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£897,450
Remote Working Infrastructure	Improvements to WBC's remote working infrastructure (currently Citrix, but may change in future)	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£80,000
Network Infrastructure (Core Switches)	Replace core switches at end of life	£90,000	£0	£0	£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£120,000
Planning Service Upgrade	System upgrades for planning systems	£O	£11,250	£0	£11,250	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£22,500
Server Windows Licensing	Upgrade Windows Server Operating System to Windows Server 2012	£0	£0	£80,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£80,000
Upgrade Backup Infrastructure	Upgrade / Replace Backup facilities before they reach end of life	£35,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£35,000
Virtual Private Network Firewall Replacements	IPSEC/ VPN Firewall Replacement	£0	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£50,000
Corporate SAN	Existing Hitachi SAN reaching end of product life.	£20,000	£150,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£170,000
Disaster Recovery Facility	Replace DR equipment at Turnham's Green when it reaches end of life	£117,950	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£267,950
Corporate Database Server Replacement	Replace the Corporate database server when it goes end of life	£32,000	£40,000	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£112,000
Building Enhancements Total Provision	Annual capital works to be undertaken on Council buildings - will be allocated to individual services in year using Condition Survey data	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£600,000
Project Management - Property	Capitation Costs of Property Project Managers	£703,550	£728,174	£753,660	£768,734	£784,108	£799,790	£815,786	£832,102	£848,744	£865,719	£7,900,368
Condition and Asbestos Measured	Condition/Measured Surveys - Annual Programme	£24,000	£17,000	£10,500	£23,750	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£75,250
Surveys Unallocated Buildings	Planned improvement works of other corporate buildings	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£80,000
Asbestos Survey Programme	Health & Safety Compliance	£8,000	£21,000	£14,000	£26,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£69,000
Corporate Furniture Replacement	Corporate Furniture Replacement	£5,300	£5,300	£5,300	£5,300	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£21,200
CIL community infrastructure funding	Funding, via bidding process, for community groups to access funding that supports the IDP using CIL funds top-	£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£500,000
bids Parish Planning	sliced of between £10k-£100k per scheme 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.	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£120,000
Digitalisation Infrastructure/ ICT Allocation	Migrate and Upgrade the Council's Digital Platform	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£1,000,000
Adaptations for Disabilities	Essential adaptations for WBC staff and service users	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£40,000
Members Bids	Matched funding to support local community schemes	£195,620	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£495,620
Renewable energy provision (solar farm	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	£750,000	£9,499,200	£4,500,000	£1,500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£16,249,200
Four Houses Corner	Refurbishment of the sixteen pitches at Four Houses Corner, Ufton Nervet	£3,373,000	£66,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£3,439,000
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.	£300,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£300,000
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.	£250,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£250,000

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	Total 2023-33
Project Title	Description of Project	Total Planned Expenditure										
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	£37,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£37,500
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	£170,000	£300,000	£O	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£470,000
Local S106 Highway Improvements	A selection of network and road safety improvements to mitigate the impact of developments throughout the District.	£257,010	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000	£1,157,010
Pay Machine Replacement	Replacement/modernisation of the Pay on Foot Equipment	£50,000	£O	£150,000	£150,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£350,000
The Diamond Greenham. Changing facilities improvement.	Replacement and upgrade of changing facilities	£120,000	£O	£O	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£120,000
Wildflower verge treatment	Treatment of additional sites (roundabouts & verges) at key locations around the district.	£25,000	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£50,000
Establishment of re-use shop.	Creation of a re-use shop to upcycle items brought to the HWRC's	£0	£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£500,000
Theale Station Improvements	Upgrade to Theale Rail Station - LEP Funded in partnership with FGW & NR	£3,469,560	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£3,469,560
Landlord fit out works in commercial properties	Fit outs linked with commercial property voids (at breaks and lease expiry). Capital expenditure beyond that from tenant dilapidation liabilities.	£0	£0	£213,700	£434,530	£1,655,160	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,303,390
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.	£30,600	£31,200	£31,850	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£93,650
Web Filtering	Extension of web filtering licences on firewalls and switches (Sonicwalls / Fortigate)	£16,000	£0	£16,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£32,000
Backup / Security products for O365 data	Purchase of additional backup protection to a hosted environment to ensure that data will always be retrievable.	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£25,000
Refresh DC A/C & Generator	Replace chillers and generator supporting the MSO Data Centre	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
Integrated Performance Management, Risk Management and Project Management System	Implementation of system to provide efficiencies and increase effectiveness / coordination of data.	£79,450	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£79,450
Northcroft Leisure Centre (Dry side Refurbishment)	Refurbishment and remodelling on the Leisure Centre	£2,000,000	£2,500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£4,500,000
Hungerford LC - Modular exercise studi	io Hungerford Leisure Centre - Modular exercise studio	£170,830	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£170,830
Northcroft Leisure Centre Lido	Redevelopment of the Northcroft Lido	£2,985,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,985,000
Care Home Provision	New care home development (subject to outcome of review)	£0	£O	£5,500,000	£0	£0	£0	£O	£0	£0	£0	£5,500,000
Thatcham Library - New Build	Build a new and larger library in Thatcham as outlined in the council's Infrastructure Development Plan (2022-27).	£0	£1,200,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,200,000
Building Data Warehouse Capability	Looking to improve data accessibility by creating data warehouses which enables data to be extracted from various business systems.	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
Robin Hood Roundabout & A4	Network capacity improvements at the Robinhood Roundabout in Newbury.	£1,400,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,400,000

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	Total 2023-33
Project Title	Description of Project	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure	Total Planned Expenditure								
A4 Faraday Road Improvements	CIL funded capacity improvements and signals upgrade at the A4/Faraday Road junction.	£320,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£320,000
Mortimer St John's Infant School - additional external space.	Provision of a dedicated hard surfaced area to enable delivery of PE lessons for the full statutory curriculum time each week.	£143,000	£3,450	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£146,450
Sandleford Park Development - New Primary school (1)	Provision of additional primary provision to meet the impact from the Sandleford Park Housing Development.	£0	£0	£508,600	£5,824,150	£1,456,050	£195,620	£0	£0	£0	£0	£7,984,420
Sandleford Park Development - New Primary school (2)	Provision of additional primary provision to meet the impact from the Sandleford Park Housing Development.	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£381,820	£5,465,390	£146,850	£0	£0	£5,994,060
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).	£0	£500,000	£520,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,020,000
New Human Resources & Accounting Systems	Streamlining of existing software provision. One system solution in order to generate potential future revenue savings	£500,000	£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,000,000
Refurbishment of Northcroft Leisure Centre preliminary works	Refurbishment of Northcroft Leisure Centre preliminary works	£151,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£151,000
Thatcham Park - Early Years	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.	£54,330	£601,430	£14,740	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£670,500
Castle World of Work (WoW)	Provision of a facility to provide dedicated post-16 employment support and experience to increase percentage of school leavers gaining employment.	£567,080	£13,400	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£580,480
Engaging Potential	Remodelling and extension to provide additional teaching spaces to ensure accommodation is both suitable and sufficient for the needs of the students.	£202,850	£4,780	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£207,630
Shop Mobility	Provides electric wheelchairs for use by people with mobility problems visiting Newbury town centre	£11,000	£11,000	£11,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£33,000
Newbury Town Centre Masterplan	Regeneration of the Town Centre	£201,000	£O	£O	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£O	£201,000
London Road Industrial Estate Planning and Development	Planning and consultancy to help deliver LRIE projects	£172,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£172,500
Education Management Information System	Implementation of new replacement Education Management Information system	£200,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£200,000
Newbury Rail Station Improvements	Upgrade to Newbury Rail Station - LEP Funded in partnership with FGW & NR	£2,555,500	£O	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,555,500
Willows Care Home - Garden Project	Redesign of gardens and outside spaces, making them more accessible to residents with physical and mental illness	£0	£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£O	£30,000
Birchwood Care Home - Garden Project	Redesign of gardens and outside spaces, making them more accessible to residents with physical and mental illness	£0	£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£30,000
Notrees Care Home - Garden Project	Redesign of gardens and outside spaces, making them more accessible to residents with physical and mental illness	£0	£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£30,000
Solar PV Initiative	Renewable energy initiative to improve energy efficiency across the Council's portfolio of properties.	£750,000	£750,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,500,000
Aldermaston Footways	Repair and reconstruction of footpaths	£179,310	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£179,310
Theale Bypass Noise Investigation Feasibility	Road noise reduction scheme	£15,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£O	£15,000

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	Total 2023-33
Project Title	Description of Project	Total Planned Expenditure										
North Thatcham Flood Alleviation Schemes	Environment Agency Funded flood alleviation works	£2,500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£2,500,000
Sovereign Joint Venture	Repayable capital support to Joint Venture with Sovereign Housing to increase supply of affordable housing in the District	£334,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£O	£334,500
Digital Infrastructure	Provision of full fibre broadband to schools	£648,760	£280,000	£280,000	£280,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£O	£1,488,760
Museum Collections	A capital budget to purchase items for the West Berkshire Museum Collection	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£30,000
Supported Living (Freedom to Thrive)	The project will source the use of current West Berkshire Council (WBC) asset/Land, this will then be held by Adult Social Care (ASC), The land will be invested on and will then be let on a commercial lease to an external provider providing an income to cover any capital costs and provide additional revenue to ASC. The property will then have a higher asset value and will also support the reduction in ASC long term budget pressures.	£0	£0	£1,000,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,000,000
Learning Disability Supported Living Setting Transformation Project	The project will refurbish a current West Berkshire Council (WBC) asset held by Adult Social Care (ASC), The property will be let on a commercial lease to an external provider providing an income to cover any capital costs and provide additional revenue to ASC. The property will then have a higher asset value and will also support the reduction in ASC long term budget pressures.	£750,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£750,000
HTST System Replacement	To procure a replacement of our Home to School Transport (HTST) (mainstream and SEND) and social care management software, currently Routewise.	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£25,000
Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP)	This is an agreed programme of works with the Department for Transport to improve public transport in West Berkshire. It will include improvements to the bus infrastructure across West Berkshire, and enable contactless bus payments and fare capping.	£669,053	£669,053	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,338,106
Expansion of Primary provision - Newbury	Provision of 1FE of additional provision to mitigate the impact of an additional 650 new homes in Newbury, spread across six different development sites. These homes are planned as part of the latest iteration of the Council's planning policy, which is not yet adopted, are were included in the 2022 update of the draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan.	£0	£0	£0	£0	£158,310	£1,533,730	£4,385,010	£561,750	£170,220	£0	£6,809,020
Addressing Suitability Needs (Primary)	To ensure Primary (including infant and junior) Schools in West Berkshire highlighted in the 2017 Primary Suitability Report are made suitable for their curriculum and teaching.	£0	£0	£0	£67,000	£1,845,680	£2,080,000	£2,163,200	£2,249,730	£2,339,720	£2,433,310	£13,178,640
SEND Strategy Infrastructure Delivery	Provision of suitable and sufficient specialist accommodation to meet the wide spectrum of local need under the new SEND Strategy.	£30,000	£535,160	£1,080,290	£1,779,470	£4,816,030	£3,300,280	£5,282,390	£187,570	£0	£0	£17,011,190
Dolphin Centre - Dilapidations	To upgrade the Dolphin Centre building for use of the Adventure Dolphin Charity	£0	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
Downs School Modular Replacement	The replacement of dilapidated modular buildings at The Downs School.	£0	£0	£30,000	£205,870	£2,323,985	£2,221,045	£121,820	£0	£0	£0	£4,902,720
Willink Dual Use Library	Create a dual use library for both The Willink Secondary School and the community by combining the existing library facility near the entrance of the Willink school with the school library.	£0	£20,800	£643,600	£37,500	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£701,900
Theale Primary 2FTE Expansion	Provision of 0.5FE of additional provision to mitigate the impact of an additional 270 new homes in Theale, spread across three different development sites.	£0	£0	£0	£0	£171,170	£1,969,760	£492,440	£67,520	£0	£0	£2,700,890
Brookfields Expansion	To expand Brookfields Special School to provide a new classrooms for both early years and KS3	£693,740	£37,260	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£731,000
Inkpen Primary Modular Replacement	Replacement of poor condition modular buildings as highlighted in the condition report completed by Property Services in January 2022.	£0	£0	£80,000	£900,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,000,000
Kennet PDR Expansion and Remodelling	To provide suitable and sufficient space within the PDR unit at The Kennet School to meet the changing needs of the pupils.	£0	£30,000	£85,000	£716,630	£18,380	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£850,010
Modular Building Replacement	To replace modular units across the community, VC and Foundation school estate where they have been assessed as having significant condition and/or environmental performance issues.	£15,000	£50,000	£973,000	£1,000,000	£1,050,000	£1,100,000	£1,140,000	£1,185,000	£1,230,000	£1,280,000	£9,023,000
NEW Thatcham Primary	Creation of additional primary provision to mitigate the initial impact of the proposed new housing development.	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£462,510	£2,015,860	£6,437,980	£825,000	£249,770	£9,991,120

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	Total 2023-33
Project Title	Description of Project	Total Planned Expenditure										
NEW Thatcham Secondary	Creation of additional secondary provision to mitigate the impact of the proposed new housing development.	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£1,816,220	£2,328,490	£4,144,710
Removal of Surplus Places	The removal of surplus places and to align future capacity with forecast numbers.	£0	£0	£29,900	£314,020	£4,553,200	£2,198,090	£181,160	£0	£0	£0	£7,276,370
Transport Services Fleet Upgrade - Zero Emissions Provision	To replace a fleet minibus with a zero-emission vehicle each year. Council operation of these vehicles is more cost effective than outsourcing to private contractors.	£0	£250,000	£250,000	£250,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£750,000
School Streets Capital Investment	Project Overview: To pay for ANPR enforcement cameras, signage and physical cycling/walking infrastructure to support the School Streets programme.	£70,000	£34,350	£46,717	£38,803	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£189,870
Sewerage Treatment Plants	To undertake capital repairs to Council Owned Sewerage Treatment Plants.	£100,000	£100,000	£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£700,000
Castlegate - Messy Play	Creation of an indoor messy play area for fun activities; therapeutic work and to encourage social interaction, creativity and build confidence within Castle Gate respite care home.	£0	£85,000	£5,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£90,000
Verge Parking Improvements	Conversion of verges to permeable parking areas in residential roads.	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£200,000
Project Management - Strategy & Governance	Salaries for project management of the Capital Programme	£117,321	£121,427	£123,856	£126,333	£128,860	£131,437	£134,065	£136,747	£139,482	£142,271	£1,301,799
Sheffield Bottom Lock Visitor Improvements	The site needs investment to make it a facility that local people can be proud of and provides a welcome to visitors to the K and A Canal which passes close by. Works involve surfacing improvements, path repairs and security improvements.	£0	£65,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£65,000
Lambourne Parish Street Light Replacement	This will involve the removal and replacement of 21 concrete lighting columns and units with more environmentally friendly steel columns and LED lanterns which will significantly reduce energy consumption and add to the reduction of the District's Carbon footprint. It will also improve lighting coverage and reduce community safety concerns.	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£25,000
Project to review options and support redevelopment of existing surplus assets.	Feasibility options for future site usage and opportunities at West Street House and West Point. Appointment of electrical consultant and installation of new electricity supply to disconnect electricity supply from wider campus sites.	£220,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£220,000
Care Director V6	Upgrade of Care Director from version 5 (on-premise) to version 6 (fully hosted)	£360,840	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£360,840
118 Bartholomew Street	Design fees, and construction costs for the rebuilding of a gable wall abutting 118 Bartholomew Street, Newbury.	£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£25,000
Moorside Community Centre Sports Hall	Detailed surveys/investigation and partial demolition and rebuilding of sports hall walls.	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
Local Authority Housing Fund	Government scheme for creation/acquisition of residential units specifically for Ukrainian Refugees.	£5,000,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	60	£0	£5,000,000

					2023/24		
Service	Project Title	Description of Project	Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
Adult Social Care	Occupational Therapy Equipment	Annual provision for essential aids & equipment for vulnerable people.	£554,000	£641,000	£0	£0	£1,195,000
Adult Social Care	Social Services - Planned Enhancement Works	Enhancements of Care Homes and Resource Centres	£164,189	£0	£0	£0	£164,189
Children & Family Services	Building Work :Fostering	To enable more children to be fostered in West Berkshire	£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£30,000
Education Services	Additional Places - Secondary Basic Need	Accommodation solution to secondary Basic Need in School Organisation Planning Area 12.	£0	£201,330	£4,090	£0	£205,420
Education Services	SEMH/ASD Resourced Provision - Primary	Creation of resourced provision for primary aged pupils with SEMH/ASD to meet demand and reduce pressure on the High Needs Block.	£51,800	£1,376,670	£O	£0	£1,428,470
Education Services	SEMH/ASD Resourced Provision - Secondary	Creation of resourced provision for secondary aged pupils with SEMH/ASD to meet demand and reduce pressure on the High Needs Block.	£685,210	£1,530,670	£0	£103,860	£2,319,740
Education Services	Calcot Schools Remodelling	The remodelling, refurbishment and rationalisation of accommodation to align with change of Admission Number.	£908,200	£306,380	£0	£0	£1,214,580
Education Services	North Newbury - New primary school	Additional primary provision to meet the impact from the North Newbury Housing Development.	£0	£0	£240,970	£0	£240,970
Education Services	Brookfields School - accessibility	Remodelling and refurbishment works to address general; toilet and changing room accessibility and suitability issues.	£347,550	£153,240	£O	£0	£500,790
Education Services	Project Management - Education	Capital element of the Place Planning & Development Team	£380,910	£0	£O	£0	£380,910
Education Services	Highwood Copse - Basic Need	To cover retention contract costs following build of new 1FE Primary school.	£0	£140,730	£O	£0	£140,730
Education Services	Park House - Impact of new housing	Impact at Park House school of additional pupil numbers from Racecourse and Sandleford new housing developments.	£0	£0	£32,850	£0	£32,850
Education Services	Schools Statutory Compliance Surveys	5-year rolling programme to undertake Asbestos, Condition, Fire and Legionella surveys.	£16,125	£0	£0	£0	£16,125
Education Services	i-college Integration	Provision of new accommodation for iCollege Integration to address suitability and sufficiency issues.	£308,800	£0	£0	£314,510	£623,310

					2023/24		
Service	Project Title	Description of Project	Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	To
Education Services	Parsons Down Partnership Accommodation Rationalisation	To cover contract retention costs. Rationalisation, remodelling and refurbishment to align with admission numbers	£0	£51,800	£0	£0	
Education Services	Aids & Adaptions for special educational needs and disabilities	Provision of special equipment for children with disabilities, including proportion of occupational therapists' time	£63,610	£0	£0	£O	
Education Services	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.	£10,060	£0	£0	£0	
Education Services	Falkland Primary School - Classroom Replacement	Modular building replacement to address poor condition, poor environmental performance and limited external space.	£46,430	£174,890	£20,710	£0	£
Education Services	Education - Capital Enhancement Programme	Capital Enhancement works as identified by current condition survey data.	£280,000	£2,509,660	£0	£0	£2
Development and Regulation	Home Repair Assist Grant	Grants for emergency home repairs for older/vulnerable people	£31,250	£0	£0	£O	f
Development and Regulatior	Disabled Facilities Grant	Mandatory grant for disabled adaptations, to enable local residents to live independently in their own homes.	£499,470	£1,200,000	£0	£0	£1
Development and Regulatior	Temp Accommodation Refurbishment	Refurbishment of temporary accommodation	£55,440	£0	£0	£0	f
Communities & Wellbeing	Playing Pitch Action Plan	Provision to support the development of the Playing Pitch Strategy through provision of additional facilities	£3,190,000	£0	£0	£0	£3
Communities & Wellbeing	Berkshire Records Office Enhancements	Planned improvement works to building and plant. All six Berkshire local authorities contribute their share to the Berkshire Records Office	£10,000	£0	£0	£O	f
Communities & Wellbeing	Planned enhancement of library buildings	Provision for improvement works	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£

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Service	Project Title	Description of Project		Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
Communities & Wellbeing	Shaw House Mansion Capital Works	Works to enhance and improve Shaw House, as recommended by Consultants an under terms of HLF grant (25 year duration)		£30,000	£O	£O	£O	£30,000
Communities & Wellbeing	Museum Enhancement Works	Programme of enhancement works as advised by heritage/conservation contractors and consultants/WBC Conservation Officer, and under the terms of the £1.2m Heritage Lottery Fund grant		£47,860	£0	£0	£O	£47,860
Communities & Wellbeing	Leisure Centres Planned Improvements	Planned Enhancement works to Leisure Centres		£164,850	£O	£O	£O	£164,850
Environment	VMS/Intelligent Traffic Signs	Replace existing and install new variable message signs.		£0	£25,000	£O	£15,000	£40,000
Environment	Kings Road Improvements	Environmental and Traffic Management Improvements to existing road network following completion of the Kings Road Link Road		£0	£O	£O	£400,000	£400,000
Environment	Car Park Improvements	Capital works to improve and enhance useful life of Council's public car parks		£30,000	£0	£O	£O	£30,000
Environment	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.		£0	£O	£O	£55,430	£55,430
Environment	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.		£0	£O	£0	£150,000	£150,000
Environment	Village Speed Limits	Assessment and implementation of speed limits resulting from the speed limit review process.		£0	£30,000	£O	£O	£30,000

					2023/24		
Service	Project Title	Description of Project	Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
Environment	Accident Reduction Works	Road safety improvements as a result of accident investigations	£0	£25,000	£0	£50,000	£75,000
Environment	Footway Improvements Existing & New	Footway improvement schemes	£0	£195,000	£0	£50,000	£245,000
Environment	Recreational Walk Route	To improve selected pedestrian rights of way in order to increase their recreational value	£0	£0	£0	£42,240	£42,240
Environment	Street Lighting	Ongoing capital replacements of lighting columns and lanterns	£0	£100,000	£0	£0	£100,000
Environment	Signing Improvements	Signing improvements in the district.	£0	£30,000	£0	£0	£30,000
Environment	Traffic Signal Upgrades	Modernisation and capital maintenance of the Council's traffic signal assets.	£0	£20,000	£O	£226,290	£246,290
Environment	Active Travel Infrastructure	Developing and implementing active travel solutions for West Berkshire	£0	£20,000	£0	£620,000	£640,000
Environment	Rights Of Way Volunteer	To undertake rights of way maintenance work by the use of volunteers	£0	£0	£0	£2,500	£2,500
Environment	Improvements To Pedestrian Routes	Improve the condition of pedestrian routes	£0	£O	£O	£13,890	£13,890

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Service	Project Title	Description of Project				S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
Environment	Disabled Access To Countryside	Improve selected rights of way in order to increase their usability and recreational value for less able users.		£0	£O	£O	£7,000	£7,000
Environment	Bridleway Improvement for Pedestrians	To improve selected rideable and cycle able rights of way in order to increase their recreational and/or utilitarian value		£18,180	£0	£0	£13,890	£32,070
Environment	Ridgeway Trail	To maintain the trail at the standard required by Natural England		£0	£O	£0	£13,000	£13,000
Environment	Recreational Cycle ways	To improve selected cycle able rights of way in order to increase their recreational and/or utilitarian value.		£0	£0	£O	£13,880	£13,880
Environment	Countryside & Environment Capital Salaries	To manage the capital projects the Countryside Service is responsible for under the Local Transport Plan		£337,400	£0	£O	£O	£337,400
Environment	Land Drainage	Capital Land Drainage and Flood Risk Management works		£0	£300,000	£O	£O	£300,000
Environment	Future Programme Development	Assessment and feasibility of works to support bids for grant, S106, CIL, LDF and LTP3.		£0	£50,000	£O	£50,000	£100,000
Environment	School Safety Programme	Annual programme of safety improvements in the vicinity of schools.		£0	£40,000	£O	£60,000	£100,000
Environment	Essential Improvement work - Bridges	Essential capital improvements of the Council's bridges and other structures		£0	£300,000	£O	£O	£300,000

					2023/24		
Service	Project Title	Description of Project	Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
Environment	Preventative Works - Bridges	Proactive works to prevent the need for substantive future works	£0	£100,000	£0	£0	£100,000
Environment	Travel Plans (Transport Planning)	Includes transport model and transport policy officer	£52,800	£0	£0	£O	£52,800
Environment	Public Transport Infrastructure	Real Time Passenger Information and other public transport infrastructure.	£0	£0	£0	£50,000	£50,000
Environment	Highway Improved Programme	Annual Carriageway Treatment Schemes	£2,932,970	£2,698,740	£0	£0	£5,631,710
Environment	Term Maintenance Establishment	Set-up and resources costs for improvement works identified under the Term Maintenance contract	£500,000	£275,500	£0	£0	£775,500
Environment	Point / Decarbonising	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)	£0	£0	£0	£449,400	£449,400
Environment	Carriageway patching	Annual hand patching programme.	£438,000	£500,000	£0	£0	£938,000
Environment	Signs & Road Markings	Annual road sign and road marking replacement programme.	£110,000	£0	£0	£0	£110,000
Environment	Drainage Improvements	Annual highway drainage improvement works	£175,000	£325,000	£O	£0	£500,000

					2023/24		
Service	Project Title	Description of Project	Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
Environment	Planned Enhancements	DFT Funded	£0	£132,000	£O	£0	£132,000
Environment	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	£0	£0	£25,000	£67,000	£92,000
Environment	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	£142,780	£0	£O	£0	£142,780
Environment	BBOWT Capital Projects	Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxford Wildlife Trust capital works funded from S106.	£0	£0	£100,000	£0	£100,000
Environment	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	£110,000	£O	£30,000	£O	£140,000
Environment	Infrastructure Design and Delivery	Annual Salaries for Projects Team - part funded by s.106	£61,530	£919,780	£107,700	£160,000	£1,249,010
ICT	Geographic Information Systems	Funding for development of the Council's Graphical Information System	£80,000	£0	£0	£0	£80,000
ICT	Corporate IT Replacement	Re-provision of WBC ICT equipment and software (Predominately PCs) on an ongoing basis.	£685,000	£0	£0	£0	£685,000
ICT	Telephony Infrastructure	Contact Centre Systems Enhancements	£150,000	£0	£0	£0	£150,000
ICT	Upgrade of Print Room	Replace the folding machine/wide format printer and finishing equipment in the print room	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£20,000
ICT	Network / App Performance Monitoring	Introduce a network / application performance monitoring tool	£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£20,000
ICT	Project Management - ICT	Capitalise proportion of ICT Staff salaries for those who work on Capital projects	£187,870	£0	£0	£0	£187,870
ICT	VMWare Hardware Refresh	Replace physical servers (hosts) as they reach end of life.	£100,000	£0	£0	£O	£100,000
ICT	Public Services Network Accreditation	Essential security enhancement to maintain compliance with Government Connect requirements.	£40,000	£0	£0	£0	£40,000
ICT	Superfast Broadband	Project Management	£0	£897,450	£O	£O	£897,450

Service	Project Title	Description of Project	Council Funding	External Grants Contributions
ICT	Remote Working Infrastructure	Improvements to WBC's remote working infrastructure (currently Citrix, but may change in future)	£20,000	£0
ICT	Network Infrastructure (Core Switches)	Replace core switches at end of life	£90,000	£0
ICT	Upgrade Backup Infrastructure	Upgrade / Replace Backup facilities before they reach end of life	£35,000	£0
ICT	Corporate SAN	Existing Hitachi SAN reaching end of product life.	£20,000	£0
ICT	Disaster Recovery Facility	Replace DR equipment at Turnham's Green when it reaches end of life	£117,950	£0
ICT	Corporate Database Server Replacement	Replace the Corporate database server when it goes end of life	£32,000	£0
Finance and Property	Building Enhancements Total Provision	Annual capital works to be undertaken on Council buildings - will be allocated to individual services in year using Condition Survey data	£150,000	£0
Finance and Property	Project Management - Property	Capitation Costs of Property Project Managers	£703,550	£0
Finance and Property	Condition and Asbestos Measured Surveys	Condition/Measured Surveys - Annual Programme	£24,000	£0
Finance and Property	Unallocated Buildings	Planned improvement works of other corporate buildings	£20,000	£0
Finance and Property	Asbestos Survey Programme	Health & Safety Compliance	£8,000	£0
Finance and Property	Corporate Furniture Replacement	Corporate Furniture Replacement	£5,300	£0
Finance and Property	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	£0	£0
Communities & Wellbeing	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.	£30,000	£0
Governance & Strategy	Digitalisation Infrastructure/	Migrate and Upgrade the Council's Digital Platform	£100,000	£0
Governance & Strategy	Adaptations for Disabilities	Essential adaptations for WBC staff and service users	£10,000	£0
Communities & Wellbeing	Members Bids	Matched funding to support local community schemes	£195,620	£0
Environment	Renewable energy provision (solar farm)	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	£750,000	£0

		2023/24		
Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£20,000
£90,000	£0	£0	£0	£90,000
£35,000	£0	£0	£0	£35,000
£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£20,000
£117,950	£0	£0	£0	£117,950
£32,000	£0	£0	£0	£32,000
£150,000	£0	£0	£0	£150,000
£703,550	£0	£O	£0	£703,550
£24,000	£0	£0	£0	£24,000
£20,000	£0	£0	£0	£20,000
£8,000	£0	£0	£0	£8,000
£5,300	£0	£0	£0	£5,300
£0	£0	£0	£500,000	£500,000
£30,000	£O	£O	£O	£30,000
£100,000	£0	£O	£0	£100,000
£10,000	£0	£0	£0	£10,000
£195,620	£0	£O	£0	£195,620
£750,000	£0	£0	£0	£750,000

						2023/24		
Service	Project Title	Description of Project		Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
Development and Regulation	Four Houses Corner	Refurbishment of the sixteen pitches at Four Houses Corner, Ufton Nervet		£3,373,000	£O	£0	£0	£3,373,000
Adult Social Care	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.		£300,000	£O	£O	£O	£300,000
Adult Social Care	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.		£250,000	£0	£0	£0	£250,000
Adult Social Care	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		£37,500	£0	£0	£0	£37,500
Adult Social Care	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		£170,000	£0	£O	£0	£170,000
Environment	Local S106 Highway Improvements	A selection of network and road safety improvements to mitigate the impact of developments throughout the District.		£0	£O	£257,010	£O	£257,010
Environment	Pay Machine Replacement	Replacement/modernisation of the Pay on Foot Equipment		£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£50,000
Environment	The Diamond Greenham. Changing facilities improvement.	Replacement and upgrade of changing facilities		£0	£0	£0	£120,000	£120,000
Environment	Wildflower verge treatment	Treatment of additional sites (roundabouts & verges) at key locations around the district.		£0	£O	£0	£25,000	£25,000
Environment	Theale Station Improvements	Upgrade to Theale Rail Station - LEP Funded in partnership with FGW & NR		£0	£3,469,560	£0	£0	£3,469,560

			2023/24					
Service	Project Title	Description of Project		Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
ICT	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.		£30,600	£0	£0	£0	£30,600
ICT	Web Filtering	Extension of web filtering licences on firewalls and switches (Sonicwalls / Fortigate)		£16,000	£0	£0	£0	£16,000
ICT	Backup / Security products for O365 data	Purchase of additional backup protection to a hosted environment to ensure that data will always be retrievable.		£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£25,000
ICT	Refresh DC A/C & Generator	Replace chillers and generator supporting the MSO Data Centre		£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
Governance & Strategy	Integrated Performance Management, Risk Management and Project Management System	Implementation of system to provide efficiencies and increase effectiveness / coordination of data.		£79,450	£0	£0	£0	£79,450
Communities & Wellbeing	Northcroft Leisure Centre (Dry side Refurbishment)	Refurbishment and remodelling on the Leisure Centre		£2,000,000	£0	£0	£O	£2,000,000
Communities & Wellbeing	Hungerford LC - Modular exercise studio	Hungerford Leisure Centre - Modular exercise studio		£170,830	£0	£0	£0	£170,830
Communities & Wellbeing	Northcroft Leisure Centre Lido	Redevelopment of the Northcroft Lido		£0	£0	£0	£2,985,000	£2,985,000
ICT	Building Data Warehouse Capability	Looking to improve data accessibility by creating data warehouses which enables data to be extracted from various business systems.		£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
Environment	Robin Hood Roundabout & A4	Network capacity improvements at the Robinhood Roundabout in Newbury.		£0	£100,000	£0	£1,300,000	£1,400,000
Environment	A4 Faraday Road Improvements	CIL funded capacity improvements and signals upgrade at the A4/Faraday Road junction.		£0	£0	£0	£320,000	£320,000
Education Services	Mortimer St John's Infant School - additional external space.	Provision of a dedicated hard surfaced area to enable delivery of PE lessons for the full statutory curriculum time each week.	-	£0	£0	£0	£143,000	£143,000
Finance and Property	New Human Resources & Accounting Systems	Streamlining of existing software provision. One system solution in order to generate potential future revenue savings		£500,000	£0	£0	£0	£500,000
Communities & Wellbeing	Refurbishment of Northcroft Leisure Centre preliminary works	Refurbishment of Northcroft Leisure Centre preliminary works		£151,000	£0	£0	£O	£151,000
Education Services	Thatcham Park - Early Years	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.		£0	£O	£24,500	£29,830	£54,330

						2023/24		
Service	Project Title	Description of Project		Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
Education Services	Castle World of Work (WoW)	Provision of a facility to provide dedicated post-16 employment support and experience to increase percentage of school leavers gaining employment.			£0	£O	£567,080	£567,080
Education Services	Engaging Potential	Remodelling and extension to provide additional teaching spaces to ensure accommodation is both suitable and sufficient for the needs of the students.		£0	£0	£O	£202,850	£202,850
Communities & Wellbeing	Shop Mobility	Provides electric wheelchairs for use by people with mobility problems visiting Newbury town centre		£11,000	£0	£O	£O	£11,000
Development and Regulation	Newbury Town Centre Masterplan	Regeneration of the Town Centre		£151,000	£0	£50,000	£0	£201,000
Development and Regulation	London Road Industrial Estate Planning and Development	Planning and consultancy to help deliver LRIE projects		£172,500	£0	£0	£0	£172,500
Governance & Strategy	Education Management Information System	Implementation of new replacement Education Management Information system		£200,000	£0	£0	£0	£200,000
Environment	Newbury Rail Station Improvements	Upgrade to Newbury Rail Station - LEP Funded in partnership with FGW & NR		£0	£2,555,500	£0	£0	£2,555,500
Environment	Solar PV Initiative	Renewable energy initiative to improve energy efficiency across the Council's portfolio of properties.		£750,000	£0	£0	£0	£750,000
Environment	Aldermaston Footways	Repair and reconstruction of footpaths		£0	£179,310	£0	£0	£179,310
Environment	Theale Bypass Noise Investigation Feasibility	Road noise reduction scheme		£0	£15,000	£O	£O	£15,000
Environment	North Thatcham Flood Alleviation Schemes	Environment Agency Funded flood alleviation works		£0	£2,500,000	£0	£0	£2,500,000
Development and Regulation	Sovereign Joint Venture	Repayable capital support to Joint Venture with Sovereign Housing to increase supply of ffordable housing in the District		£334,500	£0	£0	£0	£334,500

			Г			2023/24		
Service	Project Title	Description of Project		Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
ICT	Digital Infrastructure	Provision of full fibre broadband to schools	ovision of full fibre broadband to schools		£608,760	£O	£0	£648,760
Communities & Wellbeing	Museum Collections	A capital budget to purchase items for the West Berkshire Museum Collection		£10,000	£O	£O	£O	£10,000
Adult Social Care	Supported Living Setting Transformation Project	The project will refurbish a current West Berkshire Council (WBC) asset held by Adult Social Care (ASC), The property will be let on a commercial lease to an external provider providing an income to cover any capital costs and provide additional revenue to ASC. The property will then have a higher asset value and will also support the reduction in ASC long term budget pressures.		£750,000	£0	£O	£0	£750,000
Environment	HTST System Replacement	To procure a replacement of our Home to School Transport (HTST) (mainstream and SEND) and social care management software, currently Routewise.		£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£25,000
Environment	Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP)	This is an agreed programme of works with the Department for Transport to improve public transport in West Berkshire. It will include improvements to the bus infrastructure across West Berkshire, and enable contactless bus payments and fare capping.		£0	£669,053	£0	£0	£669,053
Education Services	SEND Strategy Infrastructure Delivery	Provision of suitable and sufficient specialist accommodation to meet the wide spectrum of local need under the new SEND Strategy.		£30,000	£0	£0	£0	£30,000
Education Services	Brookfields Expansion	To expand Brookfields Special School to provide a new classrooms for both early years and KS3		£0	£693,740	£0	£O	£693,740
Education Services	Modular Building Replacement	To replace modular units across the community, VC and Foundation school estate where they have been assessed as having significant condition and/or environmental performance issues.		£15,000	£0	£0	£0	£15,000
Environment	School Streets Capital Investment	Project Overview: To pay for ANPR enforcement cameras, signage and physical cycling/walking infrastructure to support the School Streets programme.		£15,000	£O	£O	£55,000	£70,000
Environment	Sewerage Treatment Plants	To undertake capital repairs to Council Owned Sewerage Treatment Plants.	_	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	£100,000
Environment	Verge Parking Improvements	Conversion of verges to permeable parking areas in residential roads.		£50,000	£O	£O	£0	£50,000
Governance & Strategy	Project Management - Strategy & Governance	Salaries for project management of the Capital Programme		£117,321	£0	£0	£0	£117,321

Service	Project Title	Description of Project	Cour Fund
Environment	Lambourne Parish Street Light Replacement	This will involve the removal and replacement of 21 concrete lighting columns and units with more environmentally friendly steel columns and LED lanterns which will significantly reduce energy consumption and add to the reduction of the District's Carbon footprint. It will also improve lighting coverage and reduce community safety concerns.	£C
Finance and Property	Project to review options and support redevelopment of existing surplus assets.	Feasibility options for future site usage and opportunities at West Street House and West Point. Appointment of electrical consultant and installation of new electricity supply to disconnect electricity supply from wider campus sites.	£130,
Adult Social Care	Care Director V6	Upgrade of Care Director from version 5 (on-premise) to version 6 (fully hosted)	£360,
Finance and Property	118 Bartholomew Street	Design fees, and construction costs for the rebuilding of a gable wall abutting 118 Bartholomew Street, Newbury.	£25,0
Finance and Property	Moorside Community Centre Sports Hall	Detailed surveys/investigation and partial demolition and rebuilding of sports hall walls.	£100,
Development and Regulation	Local Authority Housing Fund	Government scheme for creation/acquisition of residential units specifically for Ukrainian Refugees.	£2,500

		2023/24		
Council Funding	External Grants & Contributions	S106	CIL	Total Planned Expenditure
£O	£O	£25,000	£0	£25,000
£130,000	£90,000	£0	£0	£220,000
£360,840	£0	£0 £0 £0		£360,840
£25,000	£0	£0	£0	£25,000
£100,000	£0	£O	£0	£100,000
£2,500,000	£2,500,000	£0	£0	£5,000,000

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Appendix C

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2023/24

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 February 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.
- 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.
- For assets acquired by finance 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.
- In April 2022 CIPFA announced a deferral of the implementation of the IFRS16 Leases accounting standard until 1 April 2024. Accordingly, the Council will not now apply the provisions of this standard prior to the 2024/25 financial year. As part of the 2022/23 MRP policy, Council had previously agreed that where former operating leases are to be brought onto the balance sheet upon eventual 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.
- Where the Council receives a capital receipt upon disposal of an asset previously
 acquired through borrowing, the Council may apply the receipt arising in year to offset
 the charge to revenue (either in full or in part) which would otherwise apply, in respect of
 the element of the Council's aggregate Capital Financing Requirement which pertained
 to the disposal. Members are asked to approve use of this policy change to allow use
 from and including the 2022/23 financial year.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2023/24 will not be subject to a MRP charge prior to 2023/24.

Based on the Council's latest estimate of its capital financing requirement (CFR) on 31st March 2023, the budget for MRP has been set as follows:

Replacement of Prior Years' Debt Finance	2021/22 actual	2022/23 forecast	2023/24 budget	2024/25 budget	2025/26 budget	2026/27 budget
Tears Debt Finance	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Minimum revenue provision (MRP)	£7,286	£8,008	£8,317	£9,282	£10,452	£10,677
Capital receipts	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
TOTAL	£7,286	£8,008	£8,317	£9,282	£10,452	£10,677
Replacement of Prior Years' Debt Finance	2027/28 budget £000s	2028/29 budget £000s	2029/30 budget £000s	2030/31 budget £000s	2031/32 budget £000s	2032/33 budget £000s
Minimum revenue provision (MRP)	£10,790	£11,593	£11,953	£11,770	£12,234	£12,714
Capital receipts	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
TOTAL	£10,790	£11,593	£11,953	£11,770	£12,234	£12,714

Appendix D

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 £3.5 million of capital receipts to transformation projects alongside a further £869k of revenue funding (total funding allocation as at 31.3.2023). It is proposed that a further £250k of capital receipts when they occur are to be allocated to transformational projects in 2023-24 and the developing transformation programme. The table below details the projects that have been funded via the transformation programme up to 2023/24.

Projects	Total
Assistive Technology	£ 65,560
Modernising ASC	£ 27,980
Timelord Phase 2	£ 41,100
Web Data Content Review Officer resource (contractor)	£ 15,400
Additional resourcing Strategic Support (Governance & Strategy)	£ 43,060
Feasibility study for development of a housing company	£ 27,500
Programme Manager (Engaging and Enabling our Local Communities)	£ 58,400
Land Charges portal - additional functionality	£ 17,870
Microsoft 365	£ 125,000
Electronic Sealing	£ 10,000
Place Making Review	£ 50,000
Procurement Strategy	£ 477,100
Equality Diversity & Inclusion Strategy Development	£ 36,000
Internet Review & Renew	£ 20,000
Talent Attraction Project	£ 375,000
Corporate Review Team	£ 242,980
Garden Waste Subscriptions	£ 14,200
Waste Contract	£ 122,140
	£1,769,290

The Council is reviewing its assets and regularly challenging the purpose of assets, including in the Council's commercial property portfolio. There may be opportunities in 2023-24 and beyond for asset sales to fund greater transformational activity.

Appendix E

Community Infrastructure Levy Bids 2023/24

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 £715.5k were received with 20 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, ten bids totalling £370k were approved for proposed inclusion in the Capital budget for the 2023/24 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	Parish/Ward	Project Title & brief description	CIL Funding required
Hungerford Town Council	Hungerford	Hungerford Wheeled Sports Project - The design and construction of a new facility on the existing skate park footprint	£50,922
Kintbury Parish Council	Hungerford & Kintbury	Kintbury Village: Installation of Trim Trail in Miss Lawrence Field. Installation of 8 Outdoor all weather exercise machines	£10,000
Shaw-cum-Donnington Village Hall Committee and Trustees	Speen	Shaw-cum-Donnington Village Hall - Heating Refurbishment & Energy Efficiency	£16,159
West Berkshire Therapy Centre	North East Thatcham	Replacement of Power Assisted Exercise Machines for the Disabled	£19,485
Burghfield Parish Council	Burghfield & Mortimer	Burghfield Common Skate park Replacement	£100,000
Sulhamstead & Ufton (SUN) Village Hall Charity	Bradfield	Main Hall capacity Extension including infrastructure and safety modifications	£20,000
Adventure Dolphin Trustees	Pangbourne	Adventure Dolphin Water based Activity equipment	£20,806
Tilehurst parish Council	Tilehurst & Purley	Tilehurst PC Recreation Ground Outdoor Gym and Multi-use Games Area (MUGA)	£75,000
1st Mortimer Scout Group	Burghfield & Mortimer	Extension & remodelling of Scout hall	£20,000
Mortimer Music Live CiC	Burghfield & Mortimer	Live Music Kit - Investment in a professional audio sound system	£37,640
TOTAL AGREED FUNDING			£370,012

Revenue Budget 2023-24

Committee considering

Council

report:

Councillor Ross Mackinnon

Date Portfolio Member

Portfolio Member:

agreed report:

31 January 2023

Report Author:

Joseph Holmes/Melanie Ellis

Forward Plan Ref: C4314

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to consider and recommend to Council the 2023-24 Revenue Budget, which proposes a Council Tax requirement of £117.5m, requiring a Council Tax increase of 2.99% and an Adult Social Care precept of 2%. The Council Tax will raise £3.3m, the precept will raise a further £2.2m, and an increased taxbase will raise a further £1.8m. At a 4.99% Council tax increase, the budget is balanced, after using £1.8m 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 increased cost of living and continued 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.
- 1.3 The budget is supported this year through a financial settlement announced at the Autumn Statement that provides additional funding to the Council for social care at a time of historically high inflation as well as increases in demand on services. At the same time, the Council faces significant pressures from the wider economy; as mentioned, inflation is at very high levels with interest rates also rising recently and forecasts from the Bank of England of a sustained recession for the UK economy.
- 1.4 The Council recognises the need to support the most vulnerable. The Council has set up a cost of living hub in 2022 to support residents, and the focus of the 2023-24 budget is supporting the most vulnerable by minimising any impact on front line services that are so crucial for the people and business of the district. This has been funded by utilising almost all earmarked reserves outside of the minimum level of general fund reserves, reshaping Council services, managing vacancies, increasing some fees and charges in line with inflation and delivering efficiencies. There is a Government funded £25 reduction on Council Tax for all Council Tax Reduction scheme claimants. The revenue budget seeks manage all of these demands whilst achieving financial balance.
- 1.5 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 £1.8m contribution from reserves; these are largely from specific reserves, for example the residual Covid-19 non-ring-fenced grant, Council Strategy reserve and Collection Fund reserves.

1.6 This report also proposes the Fees and Charges for 2023-24 as set out in Appendix F, the Parish Expenses as set out in Appendix G and recommends the level of General Reserves as set out in Appendix E.

2. Recommendations

The Council is recommended to resolve as follows (for the Executive these remain incomplete as some final figures are reserved for Full Council):

- (1) That Council approves the 2023-24 Council Tax requirement of £117.5 million, requiring a Council Tax increase of 2.99% with a 2% Council Tax Precept ringfenced for adult social care.
- (2) That the Fees and Charges are approved as set out in Appendix F and the appropriate statutory notices be placed where required.
- (3) That the Parish Expenses of £xxxxx are approved as set out in Appendix G (to be determined at Full Council).
- (4) To provide a £25 reduction to Council Tax for all Council Tax Reduction claimants, funded from the Exceptional Hardship Fund (EHF). The EHF has been set up by West Berkshire Council to cover the shortfall between the Council Tax Liability and the award of Council Tax Reduction. We recognise the importance of protecting our most vulnerable customers. An EHF was created to ensure that we protect and support those most in need. It is therefore intended to help in cases of extreme financial hardship and not support a lifestyle.
- (5) That it be noted that the following amounts for the year 2023-24 in accordance with regulations made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (by the Localism Act 2011):-
 - (a) 67,392.41 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.
- (6) Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2023-24 (excluding Parish precepts) is £xxx,xxx,xxx.

- (7) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2023-24in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, amended by the Localism Act:-
 - (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 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 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) £x,xxx.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.
- (8) That it be noted that for the year 2023-24, 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 determined by Full Council).
- (9) 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 2023-24 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 2.99% increase in Council Tax and a 2%
	adult social care precept, which leads to a savings and income
	generation programme of £9.1m in 2023-24. At a 4.99% increase,
	the budget is balanced after using £1.8m of reserves. This use of
	reserves is planned largely to cover social care investment and
	inflationary costs faced across the Council and is funded from
	specific reserves, for example any non ring-fenced risk reserves or
	earmarked reserves 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 £1.8m to support the revenue budget. The in-year (2022-23) financial position supports this use of funds, as the Q3 forecast is for the use of general reserves to the minimum level set out in this paper elsewhere and in appendix Ei and Eii, and this does have an implication for the medium term with very low earmarked reserves available for future years beyond 2023-24.
	The Council is proposing the use of a 2% Adult Social Care Precept for 2023-24, as the Government has allowed a maximum 2% rise in the precept for 2023-24. Over the period 2021-23, the Council did not determine to use the full ASC precept available to it, foregoing 1% of the precept over the period and foregoing 1% of core Council Tax rises over this period compared the maximum Council Tax rise available before triggering a referendum on Council Tax rises.
Human Resource:	The main implications for staff are in respect of investment for service areas and additional workforce capacity. 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 2023-24 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:	Significant amendments to the property and infrastructure portfolio are included as part of the capital strategy which is funded through revenue financing. Transformation activity will be funded through the flexible use of capital receipts via asset sales.

Policy:	•			Strategy is included as part of this ed separately in the budget paper.
	. .		<u> </u>	
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:	Υ			Investment detailed in this report in delivering the Environmental Strategy
Health Impact:		Υ		
ICT or Digital Services Impact:	Υ			Additional investment in delivery of the digital strategy.
Council Strategy Priorities or Business as Usual: Other	Y			As detailed in the report, specific investment in priority areas has been identified separately
Data Impact:		No		

Consultation and Engagement:

See Appendix I on the budget consultation exercise where specific questions were asked between 16th December 2022 and 29th January 2023. 376 responses were received. There was some strong alignment on the areas of relative priorities between the budget papers proposed and responses from the public. There was a very small level of overall support for the 5% increase in Council Tax overall compared to a below 5% rise. The option to go to a Council Tax referendum was not supported overall by a substantial majority of respondents. There was agreement overall for increasing fees and charges with inflation as well as investing in activities to achieve net zero. There was disagreement on the £150 support for Council Tax in respect of working-age universal claimants for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. In response to this and the Government announcement (after this consultation was released) of a £25 reduction in Council Tax for all Council Tax Reduction scheme claimants, the Executive are proposing to re-allocate this budget to the exceptional hardship Council Tax budget to provide further support to residents overall in light of cost of living pressures.

Subsequent to the Executive dispatch deadline the following events are due and will be incorporated into the final budget for Council on the 2nd March 2023.

A Town and Parish Council briefing meeting was held on 31st January 2023.

The Newbury BID Board was provided with an overview of the key areas of the budget on the 8th February 2023.

An online Webinar was held on the 13th February 2023, as part of the launch of the budget with the Executive papers. A series of questions were asked as part of the event with the portfolio holder for finance and economic development and the Executive Director (Resources) on the 13th February 2023.

4. Executive Summary

- 4.1 The purpose of this paper is to consider and recommend to Council the 2023-24 Revenue Budget, which proposes a Council Tax requirement of £117.5m, requiring a 2.99% Council Tax increase and an adult social care precept of 2%. The Council Tax will raise £3.3m, the precept will raise an additional £2.2m and an increased taxbase will raise a further £1.8m. The ASC precept has been levied to reflect the increased demand and financial costs within the Adult Social care system. 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 2023-24, £9.1m of savings and income generation proposals have been recommended.
- 4.3 The Council is forecasting an over spend position of £1m in 2022-23 after using £4.6m of earmarked reserves in-year as well as £1.1m of General Fund reserves held for risks that have emerged during the current financial year. The ongoing effect of any budget pressures and future investment in the Council Strategy priorities has been factored into the 2023-24

budget; this is indeed the key driver for the significant savings requirement for the 2023-24 financial year. With inflation during the current financial year running consistently above 10% the Council needs to fundamentally reset its cost base to align to these new higher costs. With social care being the majority of Council spend, and the waste contract representing the large overall revenue contract of almost £20m, these two areas are seeing major rises that must be included within the Council's budget for the year ahead. In order to fund this the Council has chosen to increase Council Tax by 2.99% and levy a 2% adult social care precept and find savings or income generation of £9.1m. 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 2023-24 Council Tax requirement of £117.5million, requiring a 2.99% Council Tax increase and a 2% 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 2023-24 Revenue Budget, which proposes a Council Tax requirement of £117.5m, requiring a Council Tax increase of 2.99% and a 2% Adult Social Care (ASC) Council Tax Precept. The Council Tax will raise £3.3m, the ASC precept will raise a further £2.2m and an increased taxbase will raise a further £1.8m.
- 5.2 In order to arrive at a balanced budget for 2023-24, £9.1m of savings and income generation proposals have been recommended.
- 5.3 This report also proposes the Fees and Charges for 2023-24 as set out in Appendix F, the Parish Expenses of £xx,xxx as set out in Appendix G, and recommends the level of General Reserves as set out in Appendix E.

6. Implications of the 2022-23 financial year

6.1 The 2022-23 financial year has seen the highest level of inflation in the United Kingdom for over 40 years¹. Indeed, since the formation of West Berkshire Council inflation has not risen above 5.2% before the current financial year. The Council's ability to consume such a large re-alignment of its cost base are severely constrained. Council Tax is set based on information from October to January of the previous financial year and cannot be readjusted during the year, and represents approximately 75% of the Council's income stream. Retained business rates are a significant source of Council funding (@£27.3m) yet the Council has no control over the rate being set. Lastly, the Government funding through

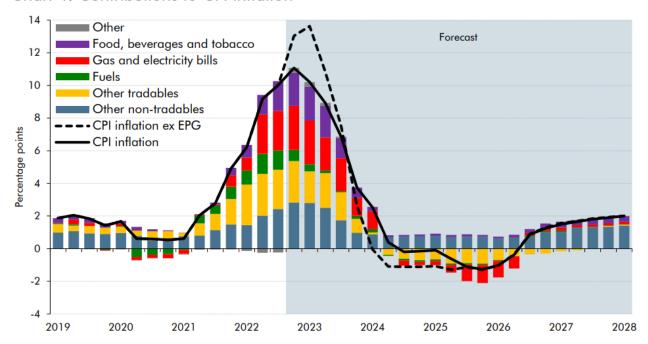
 $, \underline{The \%20 average \%2012\%2Dmonth\%20growth\%20rate\%20of\%20the\%20Consumer\%20Prices, and \%20April\%202022 \\ \underline{\%20was\%202.5\%25}.$

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- New Homes Bonus, Services Grant and Social Care Grant, are all fixed and beyond the control of the Council to increase.
- 6.2 This backdrop of constrained income sources and rising inflation has been compounded by the effect of increasing demand for Council services; social care services seeing an increase in clients, in both adults and children's whilst Special Education Needs Home to school Transport Costs have risen through a combination of inflation and greater numbers of users. At the same time, the legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic on Council services has been a drop in leisure centre use and so increased costs through the leisure contract and a drop in car parking income driven by reduced usage as well as a major decline in season tickets.

Table 1.1. Office of Budget responsibility inflation forecast





- 6.3 The adjustment to the 2023-24 budget is substantial. The social care models are showing an increase of £10.1m. Unit costs have risen from £544 to £608 (12%) in adult social care for example, with inflation provided during 2022-23 being adjusted to be included in the 2023-24 model with an assumed increase of 3.5% to Adult Social Care providers to support the market. The waste contract is based on the RPIx inflationary measure in January for the year ahead, this is currently showing a rise of 11.5% which equates to a further £2.2m in next year's budget.
- 6.4 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.
- 6.5 The Council has also been supporting displaced people from across the world, with a variety of schemes developed including the Homes for Ukraine (HfU) support hub. To date, the Council has helped to assist with 464 Ukrainians coming to West Berkshire which is one

of the highest per head of population number of Ukrainians supported across the country. To enable further support to hosts across West Berkshire an enhanced payments above the Government £350 has been agree with a further £100 per host, plus a further £50 for every additional guest so that hosts are provided with extra funds.

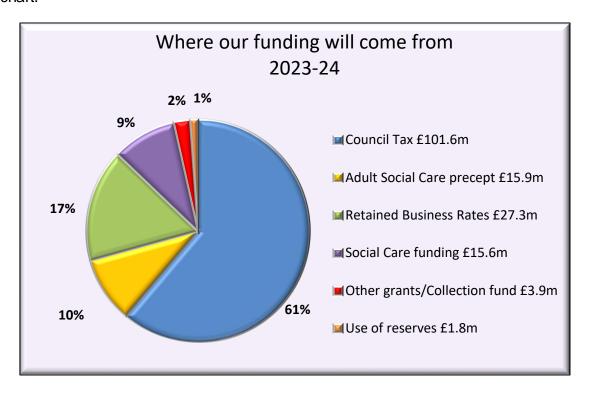
7. The 2023-24 Local Government Finance Settlement

The 2023 Spending Round was announced in November 2022 at the Autumn Statement, with a draft finance settlement announced on the 20th December with subsequent individual notifications of specific grant allocations. The final settlement figures were received on **xx**th **February 2023**. The key points are:

- (1) That the increase in Spending Power for West Berkshire is **7.7%** and that includes the Government assumption that the Council takes the maximum increase in Council Tax and the Adult Social Care Precept that they can without triggering a referendum (4.99% overall for West Berkshire Council).
- (2) That the Spending Review encompasses a two year period from 2023-25 for Local Government as a whole but that the finance settlement only covered the 2023-24 financial year.
- (3) For Council Tax, a core principle of up to 2.99% increase was announced, together with a further 2% increase in council tax through the Adult Social Care (ASC) precept.
- (4) It has been announced that negative Revenue Support Grant will not be charged in 2023-24. 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) Social care grant funding of £6.4m, share of NHS funding for Local Government to support the Adult Social Care discharge relief for the NHS of £0.3m for West Berkshire Council specifically, and a further £1.2m announced for ASC market sustainability and improvement. It is implied that these are non ring-fenced but with some information to be determined by Government on what activity these support.
 - (6) There will be a new round of New Homes Bonus payments in 2023-24 which will not attract new legacy payments. For West Berkshire this amounts to £1.1m compared with £1.2m in the previous year.
 - (7) Service Grant funding of £0.7m.
 - (8) Other non-ringfenced grant funding of £0.3m.
 - (9) Public Health grant allocation of £x.xm tbc.
 - (10) A number of other grants have been announced to combat rough sleeping and homelessness of £0.8m.
- (11) Allocation for external audit fees and transparency arrangements **tbc.**

8. Revenue Funding

8.1 The main sources of funding for the 2023-24 revenue budget are shown in the following chart.



- 8.2 West Berkshire Council's main source of funding is from Council Tax (61%). 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 2.99% for 2023-24. Income from Council Tax is also expected to increase by a further 1.6% as a result of growth in the tax base (the number of properties paying Council Tax). Total Council tax increases will raise £5.1m. This is based on a collection rate of 99.7%.
- 8.3 The Exceptional Hardship Fund (EHF) has been set up by West Berkshire Council to cover the shortfall between the Council Tax Liability and the award of Council Tax Reduction. We recognise the importance of protecting our most vulnerable customers. An EHF was created to ensure that we protect and support those most in need. It is therefore intended to help in cases of extreme financial hardship and not support a lifestyle. The Revenues and Benefits Service will operate the (EHF) to:
 - Allow a period of time for someone to adjust to unforeseen short-term circumstances and to enable them to "bridge the gap" during this time. Due to the nature of this fund and the resource allocated to its function, the period of award will normally be a financial year.
 - Support people in managing their finances
 - Help customers through personal crisis and difficult events that affect their finances.
 - Aim to help prevent exceptional hardship
 - Give support to those who are financially vulnerable
 The EHF is therefore a short-term emergency award credited to the claimants Council Tax account.

It is determined by taking the following information into consideration;

- The steps taken by the customer to reduce their Council Tax liability. I.e., discounts, exemptions or reductions
- The income and expenditure of the customer, their partner and any dependants or other occupants of the customer's home
- Any other difficulties being faced by the customer preventing them from making payment.
- 8.4 The Council is proposing a 2% Adult Social Care Precept for 2023-24, which will raise £2.2m. The maximum allowed is a 2% precept. The previous precepts raise annual funds of £13m. Adult social care makes up over a third of the Council's net revenue expenditure 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.
- 8.5 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 2025-26 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.
- 8.6 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. Both of these funds have been significantly increased for the 2023-24 year.
- 8.7 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 2023-24 was announced by Government in December 2022. The following table sets out the 2023-24 DSG settlement for each block.

Categories	(£'m)
Schools block	127.44
Central school services block	0.97
High needs block	27.39
Early years block	10.85
DSG allocation	166.65
Mainstream schools additional grant	4.33
Additional high needs allocation	1.10
Total DSG funding	172.09

DSG budgets are discussed in detail at the School Forum. The Forum has agreed not to transfer a percentage of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block in 2023-24.

The DSG had a deficit balance of £3m as at 31.3.2022, and in 2022-23 the deficit is forecast to increase to £6m by 31.3.2023. The deficit has arisen largely in high needs but also in early years. The Government has confirmed that the accounting treatment of the High Needs Block deficit will continue until 2025-26 which means some relief from the risk of the deficit of £6m going against the General Fund. If this had happened, the Council would be very close to receiving a s114 notice (in effect where the Council has no money left in reserve) from the s151 officer as there would be barely any general fund reserve left. In the next three years, the Council needs to adopt new proposals to reduce this deficit.

The Council is part of the Department for Education's, Delivering Better Value in Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) programme, which will commence later this year. This programme aims to support local authorities to improve delivery of SEND services for children and young people while ensuring services are sustainable.

- (2) **Public Health Grant.** West Berkshire Council receives a £6.1m (TBC) ring-fenced grant to fund public health functions (to be determined by Government for 2023-24 figures not released for Executive).
- (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 taking 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 £3.5m per year. The majority of fees and charges included in this budget are due to rise by the October CPI figure of 11.1%. This month has been the historic period at which the fees and charges are determined (prior year comparator of 4.2%) and provides for some recoupment of real terms losses to income achieved during 2022-23 as the inflation increase for that year's budget was far below the actual inflation facing the Council.

9. Revenue Expenditure

The Revenue funding outlined above, funds the 2023-24 revenue budget as follows:

		Growth and	Ongoing	Savings & income	Annual budget requirement
Directorate	Base budget	inflation	Investment	generation	2023/24
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
People	85.29	13.25	2.73	-2.88	98.40
Place	29.81	4.44	1.66	-2.36	33.55
Resources	11.32	1.57	0.58	-1.41	12.06
Chief Executive	0.53	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.57
Capital Financing / Corporate	14.61	0.24	0.93	-2.43	13.35
Total	141.57	19.54	5.90	-9.07	157.93

9.1 **Base budget £141.57m**: This is the ongoing budget requirement for the three Directorates together with the ongoing revenue cost of the capital programme.

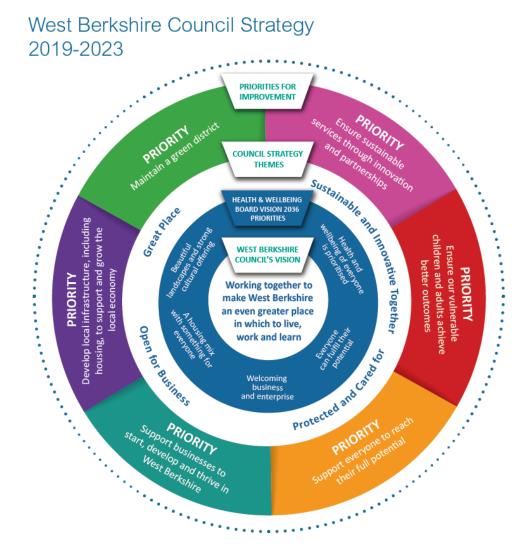
9.2 **Growth and inflation £19.54m:** This is the budget increase required for the Council to perform existing services each year. As part of the budget setting process, the Council provides for general inflationary pressures such as salary increases (3.5% assumption) based on the established number 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 amounts to £2.1m (11.5% assumption) for 2023-24. 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 £10.1m 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 at the most likely figure with there being no balance provided for in the Service Risk Reserve due to it being forecast to be utilised in 2022-23. The model inflation is at 3.5%, reflecting increases expected in costs balanced against increases already in place. The Extracts from the models are shown in Appendix B.

- 9.3 **Ongoing Investment £5.9m:** Each year new service investment is required to be built into the revenue budget. 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 £182.7m Council funded capital programme. The total Capital Programme is £387.7m for 2023-24 and key areas of investment include:
 - £196.4m in support of ensuring our vulnerable residents achieve better life outcomes and reach their full potential. Investment is planned enabling enhancement of existing educational facilities, provision of new school places in response to new housing developments across the district, enhancing accessibility to existing provision and investment in Adult Services.
 - (b) £140.5m in support of infrastructure across the district (roads, bridges, flood alleviation, drainage and cycle paths).
 - (c) £12.3m 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) £27m 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.
 - (e) £2.3m in support of maintaining and enhancing the Council's commercial property portfolio. The portfolio continues to contribute net income streams (i.e. after direct and capital financing costs), in support of core Council services.

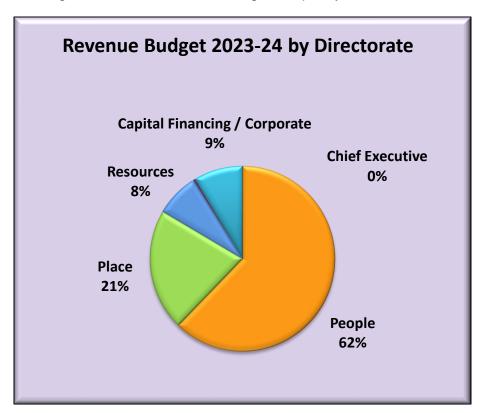
9.4 Full details of the Council revenue investments are given in Appendix C.



9.5 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, through to this year, 2023-24, showing £2.4m.

No	Council Strategy priority	Item	Amount
			£k
1	Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes	 Investment in children's social care staffing to provide additional capacity Additional funding for SEN Home to School Transport Emergency duty service Equipment for Children with disabilities 	523 550 20 15
2	Support everyone to reach their full potential	Investment in family hub capacity	160
3	Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire	 UK Shared Prosperity Grant Funded: Art trail culture initiative Business growth hub Business investment officer Admin budget 	18 20 50 16
4	Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy	 Investment in the planning service Investment in bus services 	227 343
5	Maintain a green district	Investment in support for bio-diversity net gain	100
6	Ensure sustainable service through innovation and partnerships	 Human Resources restructure to support workforce strategy ICT data loss prevention system 	77 36
7	Business as usual	 Reduced insurance income from DfE Coroners additional costs Land charge income drop due to transfer to Central Government 	50 115 126
	TOTAL COUNCIL STRATEGY INVESTMENT		£2,446
	Investment into areas impacted by Covid-19	 Car parking income rebalanced to reflect 2022-23 usage Leisure costs 	750 515
	TOTAL COVID-19 INVESTMENT		£1,265
	TOTAL COUNCIL STRATEGY AND COVID INVESTMENT		£3,711

9.6 The following chart shows how the budget is split by Directorate.



9.7 In order to achieve a balanced budget, £9.1m of savings and income generation proposals have been made.

10. Reserves

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 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 31.3.2022	Forecast increase during 2022-23	Forecast decrease during 2022- 23	Forecast balance as at 31,3,2023
RESERVE	£m	£m	£m	£m
General Fund (unallocated) including				
specifc risk reserves	12.91		-5.66	7.25
School Balances	11.02		-3.00	8.02
Earmarked Reserves	23.83	0.11	-18.55	5.39
General Fund total	47.77	0.11	-27.21	20.66

- 10.3 During 2022-23 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 2022-23 budget papers. For 2023-24, the Council is proposing to support the budget with a £1.8m contribution from reserves, as well as utilising many earmarked reserves for the 2022-23 financial year which were unplanned uses due to the increased costs of inflation and demand as highlighted earlier in this report.
- 10.4 Further information can be found in Appendix Ei and Eii.

11. Funding Statement

The Funding Statement for 2023-24 shows the funding available to the Council which can be used to fund the budget requirement.

	2023-24 Funding Statement			
Ref	Income	£m	£m	Appendix
1a	Council Tax	101.62		
1b	Adult Social Care precept	15.85		
	Total Council Tax income		117.47	
2	Retained Business Rates		27.29	
	Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF	7.33		
	ASC Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund	1.17		
	Social Care grant	6.79		
3d	ASC delayed discharge funding	0.31		
	Total Social Care funding		15.61	
4a	New Homes Bonus	1.06		
4b	Services Grant	0.70		
4c	Other non-ringfenced grants	0.34		
	Total other grant funding		2.11	
F-	Collection Fund deficit () / ourselve Covereil Toy	1 11		
	Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus - Council Tax	-1.41		Н
50	Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus - NNDR Total Collection fund deficit	3.23	1.82	
	Total Collection fund deficit		1.02	
6	Funds Available		164.30	
	Expenditure	£m	£m	Appendi
			444.55	
	Opening base budget*		141.57	
8a	Inflation	6.73		
	Contract inflation	2.73		Α
	Modelled growth	10.08		В
	Total growth and inflation	70.00	19.54	
	3			
9a	Investment in Council Strategy priorities	2.34		
	Investment due to Covid-19	1.27		
	Other investment	1.66		
	Increase in capital financing costs	0.63		
9d	Total ongoing Investment		5.90	С
9d				
	Savings and income generation		-0.07	
	Savings and income generation		-9.07	
10	Savings and income generation Annual Budget Requirement		-9.07 157.93	
10	Annual Budget Requirement		157.93	
10 11 12	Annual Budget Requirement One off investments		157.93	С
10 11 12	Annual Budget Requirement		157.93	
10 11 12 13	Annual Budget Requirement One off investments Net Budget Requirement for Management Accounting Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF		0.82 158.76	
10 11 12 13	Annual Budget Requirement One off investments Net Budget Requirement for Management Accounting		0.82 158.76	
10 11 12 13 14 15	Annual Budget Requirement One off investments Net Budget Requirement for Management Accounting Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF	-1.46	0.82 158.76	
10 11 12 13 14 15	Annual Budget Requirement One off investments Net Budget Requirement for Management Accounting Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF Budget Requirement	-1.46 -0.33	0.82 158.76	
10 11 12 13 14 15	Annual Budget Requirement One off investments Net Budget Requirement for Management Accounting Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF Budget Requirement Use of Earmarked Reserves		0.82 158.76	
10 11 12 13 14 15 16a 16b	Annual Budget Requirement One off investments Net Budget Requirement for Management Accounting Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF Budget Requirement Use of Earmarked Reserves Use of Collection Fund Reserves		0.82 158.76 7.33 166.09	E

* Opening Base budget	£m
Income from fees and charges	-30.71
Ring-fenced grant income	-189.63
Internal recharges and interest received	-1.39
Gross Operating Expenditure	363.00
Base budget	141.28
Opening adjustments	0.29
Opening base budget	141.57

12. Proposals

- (1) That Council approve the 2023-24 Council Tax requirement of £117.5 million, requiring a Council Tax increase of 2.99% with a 2% Council Tax Precept ringfenced 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.

13. Consultation and Engagement

To be completed post upcoming briefings/ budget events.

14. 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.

15. Conclusion

The Council is forecasting an over spend of £1m in 2022-23 after using £4.6m of earmarked 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 2023-24 budget. In order to fund this the Executive has chosen to propose an increase in Council Tax by 2.99%, raise a 2% adult social care Council Tax Precept, use £1.8m of specific reserves and find savings or income generation of £9.1m. 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.

16. 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 I – Budget Consultation response

For Full Council March 2023

Appendix G – Parish Expenses

Appendix H – Council Tax Collection Fund

Appendix J – YouTube Live Summary

Appendix K – Council Tax Resolution

Officer details:

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Appendix A

Contract Inflation

Contract Infl	ation		2023/24	Rate used
Directorate	Service	Description	£000	
Corporato	All	Classing contract	42	40.50/
Corporate	All	Cleaning contract	42	10.5%
Corporate		Total	42	
People	ASC	Birchwood Nursing Home lease	87	15.0%
People	ASC	Rent on Hillcroft House where Council provides ASC services	5	
People	CFS	Supported Lodgings for young people in care and leaving care - Step by Step contract extension	25	7.6%
People		Total	117	
Place	ENV	Waste contract (at RPIX)	2179	11.5%
Place	ENV	Waste - Tax Base adjustment	86	
Place	ENV	BBOWT partnership (CPI)	38	10.1%
Place	ENV	Tree maintenance contract	26	10.5%
Place	ENV	Highways term maintenance contract (set %)	127	
Place	ENV	Bus lane camera maintenance	5	
Place	ENV	Other	4	
Place		Total	2,465	
Resources	F&P	Corporate insurance	100	12.5%
Resources	S&G	Other	8	_
Resources		Total	108	_
		Total contract inflation	2,732	

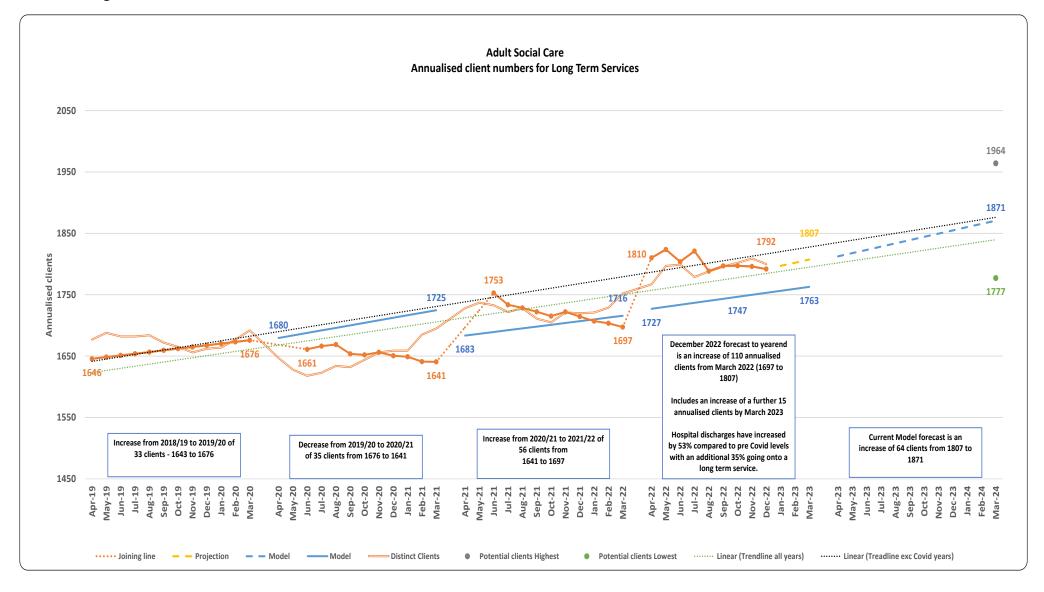
N.B. Rounding may apply to £10k

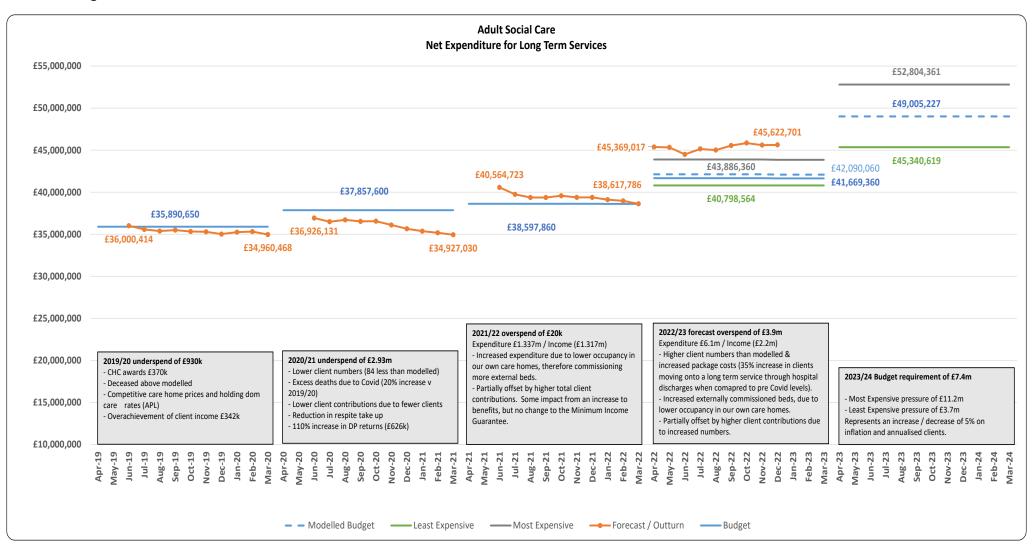
Appendix B

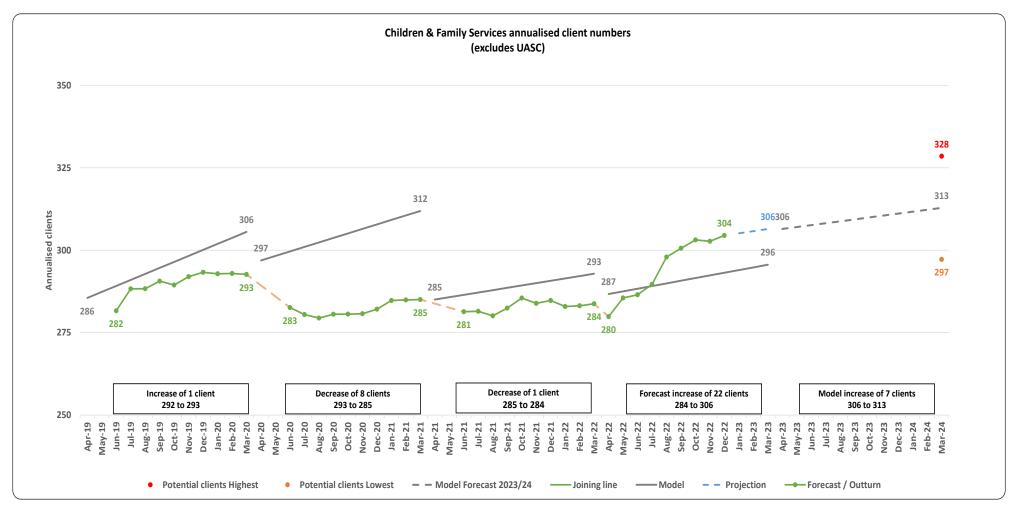
Modelled Growth

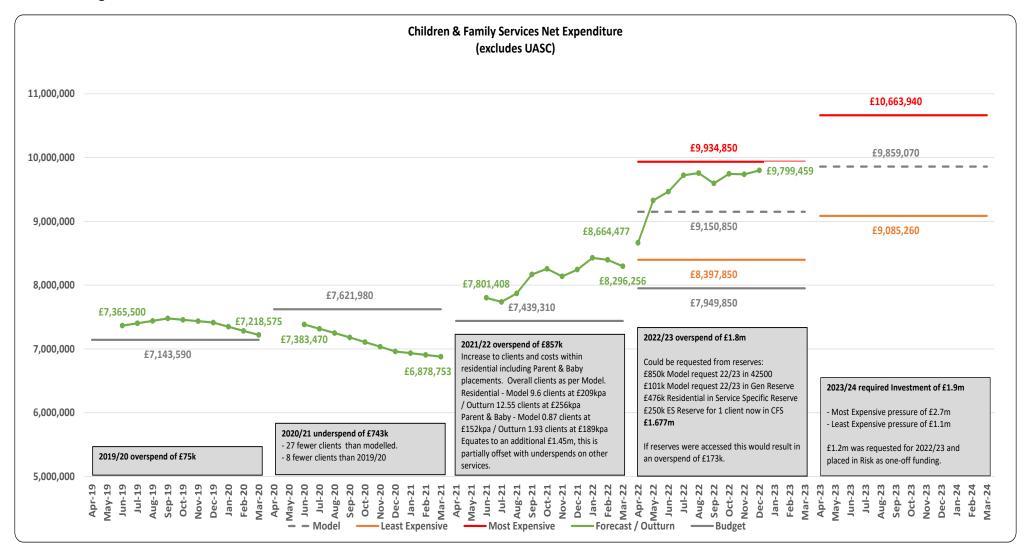
The table below shows the amount of budget growth required for 2023-24 from the modelling undertaken in Adult Social Care, Children & Family Services and Education. Modelling graphs are also shown for the ASC and CFS models.

					2023-24
					Modelled Growth
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description	£000
People	ASC	P1	1	Learning Disability Transitions from children's services to adult social care	1,852
People	ASC	P2	1	Commissioning Budgets demographic increases - long term services demand	4,698
People	ASC	Р3	1	Commissioning Budgets demographic increases - long term services inflation	1,638
People	ASC	P4	1	Commissioning Budgets demographic increases - short term services	100
People	CFS	P5	1	Placement budgets increased demand	1,401
People	CFS	P6	1	Placement Budgets inflation	387
People				Total	10,076









Appendix C

						2023-24	1			2023-24	
						Ongoin	g			One off	
Directorate Corporate Corporate	Service All	Ref C1	BAU	Description Recruitment lag for staffing investment approved in 22/23 Total Additional Financial Assessment & Charging Officer due to increase in number of assessments. The staffing numbers in this team have not increased since 2015, when they were increased due	Investment in Council Strategy £000	300	realignment £000	300		Other funded £000	0
People	ASC	P1	BAU	to the implementation of the Care Act. 2016: 1420 2017: 1534 2018: 1721 2019: 2165 2020: 2228 2021: 2031 2022: 2219				0	44		44
People	CFS	P2	1	Contact Advice & Assessment Service - additional staffing permanent budget. There has been a significant and sustained rise in contacts leading to a rise in referrals and a rise in Child in Need and Child Protection. 2020 Contacts: 3064 Referrals: 693 Section 47: 245 2021 Contacts: 3997 Referrals: 872 Section 47: 335 2022 Contacts: 5369 Referrals: 1088 Section 47: 459	296			296			0
People	CFS	Р3	1	Emergency Duty Service - additional budget required to fund the service. West Berkshire has a duty to provide statutory services to vulnerable people 24/7. During the 'Out of Hours' periods (which totals 3/4 of a typical week) the service to vulnerable adults and children is delivered by Bracknell Forest's Emergency Duty Team. The current activity exceeds the budget. A Berkshire wide service enables us to meet our statutory duties whilst achieving economies of scale and service resilience. The increased costs can to some extent be attributed to covid impact.	20			20			0
People	CFS	P4	1	Additional staff capacity for Family Safeguarding (FSM) Teams. The volume of Children and Families worked with in the FSM Teams has increased significantly in the last three years: 2020: Child in Need 579, Child Protection 111, Average Caseload East 20, West 24. 2021: Child in Need 536, Child Protection 168 Average Caseload East 26, West 20 2022: Child in Need 1040, Child Protection 263, Average Caseload East 27, West 50 The substantial increase in the last year is dramatic and with the caseloads of social workers running at such a high level remedial action is required.	228			228			0

							2023-24			2023-24			
	1		1				Ongoin	g			One off	f	
					Investment in Council Strategy	Covid 19	Core service improvem ent	realignment	Total Ongoing unavoidable investment	Funded from Reserves	Other funded	Total One-off unavoidable investment	
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
People	CFS	P5	1	Mental Health support for Children in Care. West Berkshire is in the first year of a partnership project to provide mental health support to Children in Care. The project is match funded by the CCG and the 3 Berkshire West LA's- Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire contribute depending on CiC population. The project employs health professionals at various grades and expertise to support children in care, social workers and foster carers to maintain stability of placements and prevent breakdown and potentially increased placement costs. The funding for 2022-23 has been secured and approved by the council. The project is a 2 year scheme with a view to extend if the evaluation in year 2 demonstrates better outcomes for children and value for money.					o	27		27	
People	CFS	P7	1	Market supplement & change to Recruitment & Retention scheme. A number of changes to address the increasing recruitment and retention challenges facing Children and Family Services.			901		901			0	
People	ES	P8	1	Children With Disabilities Equipment. Although a large portion of the equipment is capitalised, there are elements that cannot be such as the cost of returns and delivery. The number of children requiring support has increased.	15				15			0	
People	ES	P9	2	Family hub increase to meet increasing needs. There is a SLA with the two nursery schools to provide Family Hub services across the West of West Berkshire. In the recent past (3 years) the budget has been frozen. This is a realtime cut due to the cost of living increase and is now impacting on services. There has been an increasing need for family support with referrals increasing.				8	8			0	
People	ES	P10	1	Family Hubs service investment in staffing. Work is being done to develop and strengthen the family hub offer to a wider remit to include 0 to 19. The staffing levels of the current family hubs was only designed to meet the needs of 0 to 5. Therefore there needs to be investment to develop and secure the wider remit.	60				60			0	
People	ES	P11	1	Family hubs permanent funding. One off funding for 2022/23 was provided from reserves.	100				100			О	
People	ES	P12	1	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Home to School Transport (HTST) investment. The number of pupils currently receiving SEND HTST has risen from 343 to 449 (106 increase) Since 2020, we have also seen rises in fuel and staffing costs.	550				550			0	
People	ES	P13	1	Castlegate premises and cleaning costs			12		12			0	
People	C&W	P14	2	Engaging and Enabling local communities. Engagement with Towns and Parish Councils, local clubs and organisations and communities themselves to develop sustainable opportunities for physical activity for local communities in local settings.					0	100		100	
People	C&W	P15	2	Newbury Sports hub running costs budget required from September 2023			30		30			o	

							2023-24	1			2023-24	l
							Ongoin	g			One of	F
Discount	Camina	Def	Deicette	Description	Investment in Council Strategy	Covid 19	Core service improvem ent	realignment	Total Ongoing unavoidable investment	Funded from Reserves	Other funded	Total One-off unavoidable investment
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description	£000						£000	
Place	D&R	D1	5	Invest to save: £100K investment, £265k saving. Place shaping and Delivery. Invest to save against bio diversity net gain. One Team Leader for Place Shaping with four supporting posts (two Ecology and two Conservation/ Urban Design). Required to establish the necessary skills and resource to meet the ambition of creating high quality places working across the directorate. Resource also necessary to directly meet the changes introduced in the Environment Act currently going through parliament and the need for all planning applications to have a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain uplift. Plus the need to do 53 Conservation area appraisals.	1,268		943	8	2,734 100	171	0	0
Place	D&R	D2	BAU	Invest to save: £32K investment, £63k saving. Premium Service for Pre-Application Advice and Determination of Householder Applications. This will expedite the provision of advice and determining planning applications. Income over and above standard applied fees.	32				32			0
Place	D&R	D3	BAU	Invest to save: £195K investment, £390k saving. Uplift in Planning Fees	195				195			0
Place	D&R	D4	BAU	Public Protection shared service management. £100K one-off investment. The Business Plan going to Joint Committee on the 26th has set out that re-balancing the service budget post Wokingham and in the context of falling income is the priority for 2023/24.					0	100		100
Place	D&R	D5	1	Local Plan Review 2023-2039					0		300	300
Place	D&R	D6	4	Four Houses Corner - Housing Management & Security			89		89			0
Place	ENV	E1	5	Ash die back pressure					o	50		50
Place	ENV	E2	3	Funding for Newbury Bus Contract due to fuel inflation costs	160				160			0
Place	ENV	E3	3	Newbury Bus Contract - Loss of Income					0	4	61	65
Place	ENV	E4	5	Solar PV Projects unachievable income				150	150			0
Place	ENV	E5	3	Bus Company Services 1a, 1c. Additional responsibility due to requirements of Enhanced Bus Partnership.	183				183			0
Place	ENV	E6	BAU	Shortfall in parking income post Covid		750			750			0
Place				Total	670	750	89	150	1,659	154	361	515
Resources	S&G	R1	6	Invest to save: £68k investment, £50k saving plus further savings in future years. Investment in digital resources and holding other posts vacant to ensure transformational activity around the digital strategy.					0	68		68
Resources	S&G	R2	BAU	Invest to save: £101k investment, £101k saving. Increase Elections Team Staffing to enable the delivery of elections across the district. Returning Officer has completed a review and benchmarked the service, requiring an investment to continue to provide an effective elections service and enable effective resilience within the team. This investment will be grant funded.				101	101			0
Resources	F&P	R3	BAU	Schools Insurance Dept. for Education change. Pressure created by schools leaving the Council's insurance arrangements to join the DfE RPA scheme.	50				50			0

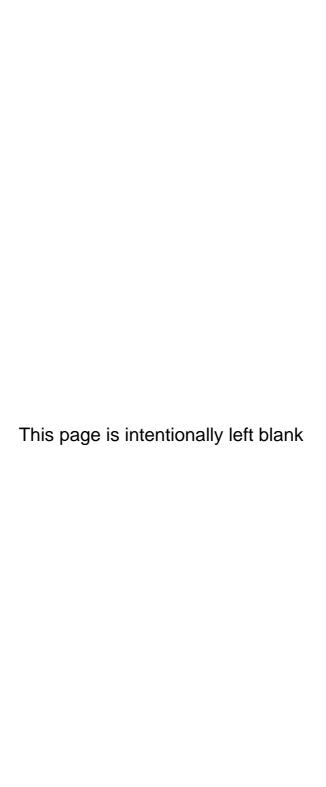
					2023-24				2023-24			
					Ongoing				One off			
					Investment in Council Strategy	Covid 19	Core service improvem ent	Budget realignment	Total Ongoing unavoidable investment	Funded from Reserves	Other funded	Total One-off unavoidable investment
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Resources	ICT	R4	BAU	New Egress system - provides additional protection against electronic data loss. New key defensive system to minimise and prevent the ongoing and repeated occurences where e-mails and their attachments are sent to incorrect recipients with pro-active prompting to staff.	36				36			0
Resources	S&G	R5	6	HR/Payroll solution. 2nd year of two year additional cost with HR/Payroll system provider for existing service provision due to increased contractual costs.					0	70		70
Resources	S&G	R6	BAU	Increased costs of the Berkshire Coroners Court shared service administered by Reading BC, to provide a coroners service to all of Berkshire. This investment is WBC share and is unavoidable as the Council has no direct provision of this service.	115				115			0
Resources	S&G	R7	2	Workforce development / HR Restructure	77				77			0
Resources	S&G	R8	BAU	Loss of Land Charges Income due to transfer of service to Central Government	126				126			0
Resources	S&G	R9	2	Additional support and wellbeing services in Human Resources. Access to expert advice from South East Employers on HR strategic and operational matters, as well as the implementation of a small budget to support staff mental health and wellbeing initiatives to enhance the staff offer and recruitment and retention across the Council.				18	18			0
Resources	S&G	R10	BAU	Additional Democratic Services officer to support the hosting and provision of public meetings. Mainstream funding post Covid-19 specific funds that will enable the Council to continue the effective livestreaming of meetings and the enhancements to the wider public's involvement in local democracy.			55		55			0
Resources				Total	404	0	55	119	577	138		138
				Total	2,342	1,265	1,387	277	5,270	463	361	824

Appendix D

					2023-24
					Saving or income proposal
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description Laboratory Control of	£000
Corporate	All	C1	BAU	Recruitment lag saving for staffing investment proposals in 23/24	(600)
Corporate	All	C2	BAU	Increased rebate through the agency contract due to higher level of agency spend. In future years, it is hoped that this saving can be removed due to reduced agency costs.	(350)
Corporate	All	C3	BAU	Resourcing efficiency saving: 2% increase to a 5.3% efficiency saving on staffing budgets due to higher levels of staff turnover. Increased savings due to higher vacancy savings when posts become vacant through slowing recruitment activity.	(800)
Corporate	All	C4	BAU	Fees and charges increase by October CPI 11.1%	(675)
Corporate				Total	(2,425)
People	DIR	P1	BAU	Structural review. This saving is associated with changes to the management structure within the Directorate.	(100)
People	ASC	P2	1	Review of care packages to ensure that provision reflects an updated assessment of eligible care needs	(450)
People	ASC	Р3	1	Health funding: Review shared funding for clients with Mental Health needs (S117) and Continuing Healthcare (CHC).	(1,100)
People	ASC	P4	1	Resource Allocation System (RAS) software. This saving assumes that there is currently some over-provision, and that the software will reduce that.	(26)
People	ASC	P5	1	Market Management. Market management is an umbrella term for multiple actions relating to careful management of the local care market. This includes the use of fixed block bed and fixed block hours, review of the care home market and pricing strategy, changes to contracts, work with domiciliary care providers regarding their costs and challenges.	(150)
People	ASC	P6	1	Negotiation of contractual arrangements relating to Birchwood Care Home lease	(100)
People	ASC	P7	1	Care Home commissioning to allow placements in homes with Requires Improvement status	(250)
People	ASC	P8	BAU	Rebalancing the prices of in-house services to reflect actual cost	(94)
People	CFS	P9	1	Actions to reduce the need for care placements, including complex care packages	(66)
People	CFS	P10	1	Placement cost reduction. Through the use of house in multiple occupation (HMO) for the Care Leavers as a less costly option than in current use. Work is underway with Housing to develop this option.	(88)
People	CFS	P11	BAU	Service restructure	(70)
People	CFS	P12	BAU	Supporting Families funding to support the Youth Offending Team and Early Help and Prevention	(58)
People	CFS	P13	BAU	Prevention: My Family First team structure change	(68)
People	ES	P14	1	Virtual school restructure	(10)
People	ES ES	P15 P16	1	Pension set aside budget reduction to match current costs	(15)
People People	C&W	P17	2	Education psychology efficiencies Savings from Northcroft expansion	(10)
People	C&W	P18	2	Libraries review	(48)
People	C&W	P19	2	Leisure centres review	(66)
People	C&W	P20	2	Library stock capitalisation	(30)
People	C&W	P21	2	Shaw House additional income	(40)
People	C&W	P22	BAU	Shaw House Exclusive Weddings	(20)
People				Total	(2,896)
Place	D&R	D1	5	Invest to save: £100K investment, £265k saving. Place shaping and Delivery. Invest to save against bio diversity net gain. One Team Leader for Place Shaping with four supporting posts (two Ecology and two Conservation/ Urban Design). Required to establish the necessary skills and resource to meet the ambition of creating high quality places working across the directorate. Resource also necessary to directly meet the changes introduced in the Environment Act currently going through parliament and the need for all planning applications to have a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain uplift. Plus the need to do 53 Conservation area appraisals.	(265)
Place	D&R	D2	BAU	Invest to save: £32K investment, £63k saving. Premium Service for Pre-Application Advice and Determination of Householder Applications. This will expedite the provision of advice and determining planning applications. Income over and above standard applied fees.	(63)
Place	D&R	D3	BAU	Invest to save: £195K investment, £390k saving. Uplift in Planning Fees	(390)

					2023-24
					Saving or income proposal
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description Financial contribution from registered providers for use of the Council's choice based	£000
Place	D&R	D4	4	letting system (Abritas) under the common housing register.	(25)
Place	D&R	D5	4	Planning white paper / Levelling up & Regeneration Bill. There are both potential service efficiencies and cost implications arising from the Bill if proposals continue as previously envisaged, however, this is dependent on changes in national legislation the detail of which cannot be anticipated. The precise implications and timing would need to be confirmed as and when the Bill is finalised, enacted and becomes operational. The estimate is net of investment needed in new systems and procedures.	(100)
Place	D&R	D6	BAU	Place Review. To review systems, processes and resources. Seeking to bring greater efficiency and productivity whilst reducing staff costs.	(220)
Place	D&R	D7	BAU	Increase in cost recovery (pre-apps and planning performance agreements)	(50)
Place	D&R	D8	5	Hold vacant posts	(400)
Place	ENV	E1	5	Food Waste Diversion from Landfill. The introduction of a weekly food waste collection service in 2022/23 is expected to result in a net reduction in waste going to landfill of between 4-5,000 tonnes.	(50)
Place	ENV	E2	2	Digitisation of Playing Pitch Bookings	(10)
Place	ENV	E3	5	Waste Management - Dry Recycling increase	(100)
Place	ENV	E4	5	Biodiversity and carbon credits. This proposal is to invest in enhancing the Council's existing land assets or purchasing new land for enhancement that could be sold to developers for biodiversity net gain credits. These credits could provide an ongoing income to the landowner for maintenance of biodiversity credit site the over a period of 30 years.	(50)
Place	ENV	E5	BAU	Efficiency savings. A number of consultancy/training/administrative budgets being amalgamated and small amounts identified that can be offered up for saving with relatively little impact on service delivery.	(60)
Place	ENV	E6	4	Highway Survey efficiencies. Technological advances in automated highway survey techniques along with collaborative working with other Berkshire Unitary Authorities have brought about savings in how we collect road condition data.	(20)
Place	ENV	E7	4	Pre-app charges for SuDS, Highways, Grounds Maintenance and Tree services	(30)
Place	ENV	E8	4	Capitalisation of Highway Asset salaries to match actual functions	(250)
Place	ENV	E9	4	Benchmark Traffic Regulation Order fees. Following a benchmarking exercise, it is proposed to increase the charges levied by the Streetworks team for the processing of Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders so that they are in line with other authorities' charges.	(40)
Place	ENV	E10	4	Drainage revenue (routine jetting). The implementation of a new gully emptying regime should see a reduction in gully connection blockages which in turn is anticipated to reduce the need for jetting. Capital maintenance investment has been increased accordingly to improve network resillience.	(50)
Place	ENV	E11	4	Winter Maintenance review. Route based forecasting and potential reduction in the Primary and Secondary route coverage.	(60)
Place	ENV	E12	5	Streetworks capitalised salaries	(20)
Place	ENV	E13	5	Capitalising salaries in the Economic Development Team Increasing contactless payment in car parks and on street, reducing the need for a cash	(40)
Place	ENV	E14	5	collection service	(35)
Place	ENV	E15	5	BBOWT service efficiencies	(15)
Place Resources	s&G	R1	6	Invest to save: £68k investment, £50k saving plus further savings in future years. Investment in digital resources and holding other posts vacant to ensure transformational activity around the digital strategy.	(2,343) (50)
Resources	S&G	R2	BAU	Invest to save: £101k investment, £101k saving. Increase Elections Team Staffing to enable the delivery of elections across the district. Returning Officer has completed a review and benchmarked the service, requiring an investment to continue to provide an effective elections service and enable effective resilience within the team. This investment will be grant funded.	(101)
	RES	R3	BAU	Directorate efficiency review. Review of budgets to highlight and take small efficiency savings from across the directorate; for example through more effective training delivery, low value	(75)
Resources				procurements etc.	
Resources Resources	RES	R4	BAU	1	(250)

					2023-24
					Saving or income proposal
Directorate	Service	Ref	Priority	Description	£000
Resources	F&P	R6	6	Digitisation: savings through greater digitisaion of services to remove software costs and/or elements of vacant posts	(30)
Resources	F&P	R7	BAU	Lone Worker Software Application reduced costs following the conclusion of the procurement exercise resulting in lower costs than forecast	(15)
Resources	F&P	R8	BAU	Increased income through commercial property lettings	(193)
Resources	F&P	R9	BAU	Disposal of York House so removal of revenue budget for maintaining vacant property	(11)
Resources	F&P	R10	BAU	Higher investment returns on cashflow due to interest rates increasing during 2022-23	(390)
Resources	F&P	R11	BAU	Delete vacant health and safety advisor post	(45)
Resources	F&P	R12	BAU	Accomodation Reveiew. Part year saving post Timelord 2 investigation of other accomodation options across the Council estate.	(80)
Resources	F&P	R13	BAU	LRIE/Kennet Centre increased income compared to 2022-23 budget	(37)
Resources	ICT	R14	BAU	Print and Postage Savings. Reduced rates of printing and postage to reflect changed service provision and greater digitisation.	(35)
Resources	ICT	R15	BAU	Decommission Resource Finder IT system	(3)
Resources				Total	(1,410)
		•		Total	(9,074)



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 2022-23, earmarked reserves are expected to reduce by £19m, as a result of funding the Collection Fund deficit as planned with 9m, mitigating the in-year overspend (as reported in quarterly report to the Executive), and supporting the General Fund budget for 2022-23 per the budget papers 2022-23.

A summary is shown in the following table:

			Forecast	
		Forecast	decrease	Forecast
	Balance as at	increase	during 2022-	balance as at
Reserve	31.3.2022	during 2022-23	23	31.3.2023
	£m	£m	£m	£m
General Fund (unallocated) including				
specifc risk reserves	12.91		-5.66	7.25
School Balances	11.02		-3.00	8.02
Earmarked Reserves	23.83	0.11	-18.55	5.39
General Fund total	47.77	0.11	-27.21	20.66

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, as seen in the 2022-23 financial year. 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	A 5% movement on demand budgets	£5.5m
significant income budgets	and on reduced income	
Pressure on traded budgets	A 10% movement on traded budgets,	£0.2m
General risks to cover the items	See items below	£1.3m
below		
Total minimum required General		£7m
Reserve		
Forecast General Reserve	Service specific risks are part of	£7.25m
(including service specific risks)	general reserves	

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

Schools balances

This is an amalgamation of unspent and overspent balances.

Earmarked Reserves

The Council has other reserves which are earmarked for specific purposes. The main items are as follows:

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.

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 but now has a very low balance which will be increased with the proposed flexible use of capital receipts (see the Capital Strategy).

Outcomes based budgeting – to support the re-profiling of savings - expected to be depleted during 2023-24.

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
- Children & Family Services £580k
- Education £250k
- Legal Disbursements £100k

There are significant risks in ASC at present for 2023-24; if inflation rises above the budget provision of 3.5%, it would have an impact, with further pressures on staffing and placement costs.

Of the above, almost of all of these reserves are forecast to be utilised to support the 2022-23 in year budget position and so will need to be replenished in future financial years. The MTFS has an additional £3m to be allocated to reserves by 2027.

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 2021-22 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 post external audit by Grant Thornton.

Adequacy of Reserves and Robustness of Budget Estimates s151 Officer Statement

 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 2023.

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 this analysis has been updated for more specific demand and general risks with a minimum level set out for the 2023-24 budget, see further below. An updated LAAP bulletin is expected to be issued post release of these papers to the Executive.

It is recommended that general reserve balances be set at a minimum of £7m.

Before the 2022-23 outturn is reported, the general reserves stood at just over £8.9m based on estimated use of reserves for the 2022-23 budget, 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 £7.25m by the end of the 2022-23 financial year largely due to the in-year use of reserves forecast at Q3.

As can be seen from the previous appendix (Ei) the forecast is for almost all other earmarked reserves and risk reserves to be eradicated for use for the 2022-23 in year budget position or support the 2023-24 budget. This puts even greater importance on ensuring the adequacy of a minimum level of reserves as any that have been build up in recent years have been used to support the 2022-23 budget at both budget setting and due to the in-year overspend.

Any improvement in the 2022-23 in-year position by outturn will be used to replenish any risk reserves and these risk reserves will be an area to enhance in future financial years to improve the Council's financial resilience.

3 Robustness of Estimates

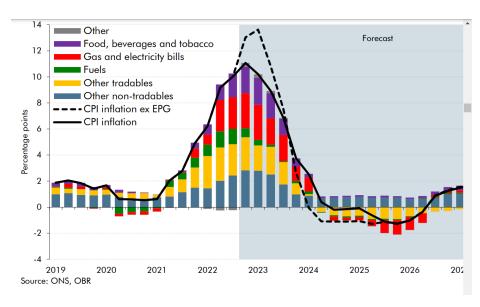
3.1 The treatment of inflation and interest rates

The 2023-24 pay award for staff has been estimated at the Government's prevailing inflation rate target of 3.5%. The 2022-23 pay award has been provided at a flat rate of £1,925 and this has been included in the pay budgets for 2023-24, with the additional 3.5% for 2023-24. At the time of writing there is no certainty over the pay award for the forthcoming financial year, and with inflation forecast to drop significantly during 2023-24 it is assumed that the pay award will revert back to the prevailing rate of inflation. Any pay award above the assumptions of 3.5% would need to be funded from the general fund reserves during 2023-24.

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. The impact of the war in Ukraine, together with higher inflation, higher interest rates, and uncertainty in the economic outlook, on capital financing is detailed in the Investment & Borrowing Strategy. Increases to fees and charges have been set in line with inflation where appropriate based on the October 2022 level of CPI in the main (11.1%).

Due to the significant pressures the Council has faced during 2022-23 from rising demand, residual covid-19 impacts and a major increase in inflation, almost all risk reserves are forecast to be depleted, most notably in Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care. This puts even greater focus on in year budget monitoring in the future as there is very little in reserves above the minimum level set, and the focus for 2023-24 will be to ensure that the historic strong financial stewardship is continued to enable a break even position as at 31.3.2024.

Social Care provider costs remain an area of significant financial pressure. The budget takes into account inflationary pressures from 2022-23 into 2023-24. This service has seen the greatest overspend forecast during 2022-23, driven by increased complexity of demand and inflation, leading to significant average unit cost pressures rising by over 10%. A further inflationary pressure of 3.5% has been assumed for adult social care providers in the budget, along with detailed modelling of expected client numbers for 2023-24. The Government has delayed the major Adult Social Care reforms to 2025 at the earliest, but has provided additional funding for social care more widely, as well as for Adult Social Care hospital discharges. This later funding has been included in the ASC budget through the Better Care Fund for West Berkshire's element of £0.1m with further funding due through the BOB ICS of £0.2m that has not been included in budgets.



Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) inflation forecasts as at November 2022

Overall inflation levels have risen significantly since March 2022. The October CPI figure stood at 11.1%, and this is the basis for future fees and charges increases proposed in the budget; there is a of risk of reducing overall income through these price increases, though they reflect the overall cost base rises the Council is facing through its own contracts. The main risk area, beyond ASC noted above, is in respect of energy price inflation. There is an additional £1.76m in the 2023-24 budget for energy inflation, though this may or may not be partially mitigated through any central Government schemes to support certain areas of business and the public sector.

3.2 Efficiency savings, productivity gains and Government reform

The budget contains proposals to deliver £9.1m 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.

Government reforms continue to have an impact on the budget, with an assumption in the 2023-24 budget of the implementation of the levelling up Bill to enable the Council to have greater control over setting planning fees.

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:

	Over/ -under	
	spend	% of net
Year	£m	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	-0.20	-0.15%
2022/23 est	-1.00	-0.77%

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 support of Covid-19 impacts has been totally removed now, though the impact on the Council's budget remains. For example, £750k is being included in the budget for lost car parking income due to a decrease in the number of car parking places being used and the number of season tickets being taken by businesses. There is also a significant pressure on leisure costs and decreasing income since the pandemic as usage is lower than pre-pandemic levels.

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, 2022-23 being the last year of this spreading. 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, especially due to the national Revaluation of Business Rates in 2023 which has seen a significant increase in the total business rates bill for businesses across the district. There will be some movements through reserves to pay for the 2022-23 forecast deficit on

business rates which has improved and will see a collection fund benefit move through during 2023-24.

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 99.7% and this is an achievable if demanding target. Each 1% uncollected amounts to approximately £1.1m 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 4.99% in the current year and is proposing to do so for 2023-24.

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 2021-22) is highlighting that the Council's reserve position is, compared to others Councils, lower. The Council has less comparable levels of debt and lower social care ratios versus other unitary authorities. The Council spends a comparably high level of revenue expenditure on interest repayment, though this is in part reflective of the Council's commercial property portfolio and ensuring suitable financing of this. As part the above, general fund reserves are just above the minimum level set out in this appendix and appendix Ei. 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.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
General Fund	8.22	8.03	12.10	12.91	7.25

- 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.
- 4.3 Due to the significant pressures on the Council's budget in 2022-23 and in 2023-24, almost all earmarked reserves except for the minimum level of General Fund balance of £7m have been deployed either in 2022-23 or are expected to be in 2023-24. If the Council's financial position by Quarter Four of 2022-23 improves, this will release the pressure on reserves. It is expected that, compared to other Councils, West Berkshire size of reserves will have declined in respect of 2022-23. Though the Council expects to have the minimum level of reserves set aside in the General Fund for year end in 2022-23, having no buffer through other earmarked reserves does increase the risk of the general fund reserve being further depleted, whilst also ensuring the need for all budget holders to exercise the maximum in financial control and stewardship of funds to protect the General Fund reserve in 2023-24.

5 Future risks

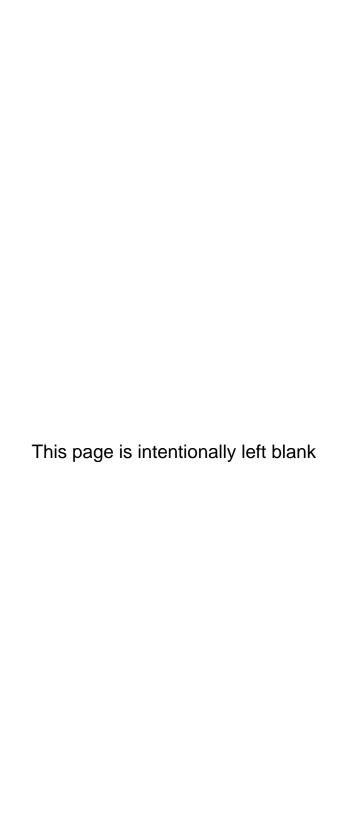
- 5.1 The analysis above, is solely focussed on what the current position and looking to the 2023-24 budget. Major pressures are emerging though on the some of the underlying assumptions that will be made beyond 2023-24. There are three key areas of focus and concern:
 - Per the above, the declining overall reserve position and the need to maintain the utmost financial control for the financial years ahead to ensure that the Council does not go below its minimum level of General Fund reserve is the key risk for the budget ahead and beyond.
 - The post 2025 financial position. The short term funding mechanisms put in place by Government provide an overall 11% increase in core spending power over the next two years to Councils as a whole. This is welcome, but in year inflation is 11.1% and so this funding boost will be eroded before the end of the two years. The issue the Council needs to be most aware of in the latest Government spending plans is the post 2025 funding. This is forecast to be a real terms cut to 2028¹ and Government reform of business rates baselines, overall funding and utilising updated census figures are all likely to be detrimental to the Council's financial position.

¹ https://ifs.org.uk/articles/english-councils-core-spending-power-set-grow-11-real-terms-over-next-two-years

Appendix Eii)

• 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 was due to change in 2023-24 and this would have seen an immediate reduction in the Council's General Fund reserve of the equivalent deficit amount (estimated at approximately £6m). This accounting treatment has now been extended to 2025-26 but raises further the importance of proposals to address this deficit in future Council activity.

Joseph Holmes Executive Director (Resources) and s151 Officer January 2023



People Directorate Fees & Charges Proposals 2023-24

1 Introduction

A fees and charges task & finish group of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) has been meeting in recent months, with an interim report provided to the OSMC in November 2022. These papers have been produced reflecting some of the comments made and future budget papers will take into account proposals of the group as they emerge and where they are approved.

2 Adult Social Care

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 The guidance allows for a prescribed list of allowances, for example, rent, mortgage, council tax, buildings insurance etc plus disability related costs, for example, community alarm system, extra heating costs that meet an individual's presenting care needs.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 There are generally two types of charges discretionary and statutory:

• Discretionary Charges

Unless otherwise stated, the fee increase for 2023-24 is by the annual October CPI of 11.1%. The charge to other local authorities and Health organisations for places in West Berkshire Resource Centres will also be increased by 11.1% for 2023-24.

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 11.1% 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 and Integrated Care Boards 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.

Deputyship Fees are set by the Court of Protection.

	CHARGE	UNIT	INCOME 2021/22	NUMBER OF	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE	NOTES
			2021/22	CLIENTS	2022/23	2023/24	
	RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING CARE:						
*	Residential and Nursing Care in Independent sector homes	Per Week	£4,716,358	477	Actual cost	Actual cost	
*	Residential Care in WBC Home - Notrees	Per Week	£202,697	18	£874.00	£1,000.00	
*	Residential Care in WBC Home - Willows	Per Week	£491,891	31	£874.00	£1,000.00	
*	Residential Care in WBC Home - Birchwood	Per Week	C020 FCF	70	£907.00	£1,200.00	Maximum
*	Nursing Care in WBC Home - Birchwood	Per Week	£930,565	70	£907.00	£1,200.00	charge
*	Residential and Nursing care in WBC Homes - charge the assessed contribution whilst in hospital if bed retained at the home	Per Week	Included in	Included	Assessed Charge	Assessed Charge	subject to financial assessment
*	Residential and Nursing care in WBC Homes - charge the assessed contribution from date of admission even if client subsequently decides to leave the home during the review period	Per Week	above income	in above numbers	Assessed Charge	Assessed Charge	

	CHARGE	UNIT	INCOME 2021/22	NUMBER OF CLIENTS	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	NOTES
	COMMUNITY SUPPORT:						
*	Day activities and transport	Per Day / Per Journey	£220,472	247	Actual cost	Actual cost	
*	Direct Payments (DP)	Per DP	£458,235	164	Actual cost	Actual cost	
*	Personal Care	Per Hour	62.760.200	620	£21.14	£23.90	
*	Live-In Care	Per Week	£2,768,298	639	Actual cost	Actual cost	
*	Community Support	Per Hour			£17.15	£18.60	
*	Extra Care Housing (ECH) at Alice Bye Court for Community Support and Personal Care	Per Hour			Actual cost	Actual cost	
*	Extra Care Housing (ECH) at Alice Bye Court for Core Care charge for on-site response service	Per Week			£30.22	TBC contract out to tender during 23/24	Maximum
*	Extra Care Housing (ECH) at Audrey Needham House & Redwood House for Community Support and Personal Care	Per Hour	£1,123,462	515	Actual cost	Actual cost	charge subject to financial assessment
*	Extra Care Housing (ECH) at Audrey Needham House & Redwood House for Core Care charge for on-site response service	Per Week			£29.00	TBC contract out to tender during 23/24	assessment
*	Sleep In Care	Per Night			Actual cost	Actual cost	
*	Waking Night cover	Per Night]		Actual cost	Actual cost	
*	Respite Care	Per Night	£26,951	25	Actual cost	Actual cost	
*	WBC Resource Centre	Per Day			£51.90	£57.70	
*	WBC Resource Centre outreach workers	Per Hour	£237,527	136	£20.60	£22.90	
*	WBC Resource Centre transport	Per Journey			£9.30	£10.30	
*	WBC Resource Centre meals	Per Meal	£31,187	74	£5.50	£6.10	
	WBC Resource Centre to other LA's and ICB's - Older People	Per Day			£72.20	£80.20	
	WBC Resource Centre to other LA's and ICB's - Learning Disability	Per Day	£32,573	3	£117.30	£130.30	
	WBC Resource Centre to other LA's and ICB's - Physical Disability	Per Day			£108.90	£121.00	

	CHARGE	UNIT	INCOME 2021/22	NUMBER OF CLIENTS	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	NOTES						
	ADMINISTRATION FEES:												
*	Administration fee for commissioning care for full cost clients	Per Annum	£32,609	275	£241.00	£268.00							
*	Set up fee for deferred payers	Set Up			£157.00	£174.00							
*	Administration fee for deferred payers	Per Annum			£262.00	£291.00							
	Support in making a Lasting Power of Attorney application	Per Application			£163.00	£181.00							
*	Next of kin support administration following the death of a Deputyship client	Per Hour			£107.80	£119.80							
	Support in making a Deputyship application	Per Application						£367.00	£408.00				
*	Work up to the date that the Deputyship order is issued	Per Annum			£745.00								
*	Deputyship - Annual management fee firstyear	Per Annum			£775.00		Dependent on clients						
*	Deputyship - Annual management fee for subsequent years	Per Annum	£179,006	£179,006	£179,006	£179,006	£179,006 2	245	,006 245	245	£650.00	_	capital
*	Deputyship - Property management fee	Per Annum		£	£300.00	Fees are							
*	Deputyship - Prepare and lodge of annual return to OPG	Per Return			£216.00	set by the Court of							
*	Deputyship - Preparation of a basic HMRC income tax return	Per Return			£70.00	Protection							
*	Deputyship - Preparation of a complex HMRC income tax return	Per Return			£140.00								
*	Deputyship - travel	Per 1.5 hours			£40.00								
	Support in making a Appointeeship application	Per Application			£136.00	£151.00							
	Completion of Mental Capacity (COP3) application	Per Application	£0	0		£50.00	New charge for 2023/24						

	CHARGE	UNIT	INCOME 2021/22	NUMBER OF CLIENTS	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	NOTES
	ADULT PLACEMENTS:						
*	Band 1 - Full time placement	Per Week			£250.96	£259.61	
*	Band 2 - Full time placement	Per Week			£281.87	£290.52	
*	Band 3 - Full time placement	Per Week			£312.78	£321.43	
*	Band 1 - Respite	Per Night			£71.11	£73.56	
*	Band 2 - Respite	Per Night			£78.31	£80.76	Maximum
*	Band 3 - Respite	Per Night	C102 C41	4.6	£93.77	£96.22	charge
*	Band 1 - Over Night	Per Night	£193,641	46	£50.19	£51.92	subject to financial
*	Band 2 - Over Night	Per Night			£60.49	£62.22	assessment
*	Band 3 - Over Night	Per Night			£70.80	£72.53	
*	Band 1 - Day support	Per Hour			£9.50	£10.42	
*	Band 2 - Day support	Per Hour			£11.39	£12.63	
*	Band 3 - Day support	Per Hour			£12.63	£13.87	
*	Management fee - Full time placement	Per Week			£114.10	£126.80	
*	Management fee - Respite	Per Week	£29,887	6	£34.20	£38.00	
*	Management fee - Day support	Per Hour			£4.50	£5.00	

Phoenix Resource Centre Total Income	•		
CHARGE	UNIT	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
PHOENIX RESOURCE CENTRE:			
	Per Day	£91.40	£101.50
Ground floor Theatre (with lighting and audio system) from	Per Half Day	£47.80	£53.10
	Per Hour	£22.70	£25.20
	Per Day	£159.90	£177.60
Ground floor Theatre (with lighting and audio system) to	Per Half Day	£85.70	£95.20
, , ,	Per Hour	£41.10	£45.70
	Per Day	£75.00	£83.30
Audience seating (setting up and taking down)	Per Half Day	£75.00	£83.30
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Per Hour	£75.00	£83.30
	Per Day	£17.10	£19.00
First floor Theatre office	Per Half Day	£17.10	£19.00
	Per Hour	£17.10	£19.00
	Per Day	£90.90	£101.00
Ground floor frailty and dementia suite (Lilac Lounge)	Per Half Day	£47.70	£53.00
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	Per Hour	£15.90	£17.70
	Per Day	£60.40	£67.10
Ground floor physical disability suite (Sunshine Room)	Per Half Day	£30.80	£34.20
,	Per Hour	£10.80	£12.00
	Per Day	£60.40	£67.10
Ground floor sensory cooking room	Per Half Day	£30.80	£34.20
0 • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	Per Hour	£10.80	£12.00
	Per Day	£60.40	£67.10
Ground floor sensory room	Per Half Day	£30.80	£34.20
,	Per Hour	£10.80	£12.00
	Per Day	£60.40	£67.10
Ground floor optimusic room	Per Half Day	£30.80	£34.20
	Per Hour	£10.80	£12.00
	Per Day	£91.40	£101.50
Ground floor dining room	Per Half Day	£47.80	£53.10
	Per Day	£102.70	£114.10
Ground floor dining room and kitchen	Per Half Day	£53.70	£59.70
	Daily Rate	£30.00	£33.30
Ground floor small activity room	Per Half Day	£15.40	£17.10
·	Per Hour	£6.80	£7.60
	Per Day	£60.40	£67.10
First floor Craft activity room	Per Half Day	£30.80	£34.20
,	Per Hour	£10.80	£12.00
	Per Day	£134.10	£149.00
First Floor Moving and Handling training room 1	Per Half Day	£109.00	£121.10
	Per Hour	£37.10	£41.20

	CHARGE	UNIT	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
		2 2	667.00	-
		Per Day	£67.00	£74.40
	First floor training room 1 - room only	Per Half Day	£55.70	£61.90
		Per Hour	£19.30	£21.40
	First floor training room 2 (large)	Per Day	£118.80	Not
F		Per Half Day	£60.40	Not available
		Per Hour	£21.70	available
		Per Day	£37.70	£41.90
	First floor large meeting room without equipment	Per Half Day	£19.40	£21.60
		Per Hour	£7.90	£8.80
		Per Day	£49.10	£54.60
	First floor large meeting room with equipment	Per Half Day	£23.90	£26.60
		Per Hour	£9.50	£10.60
		Per Day	£22.70	£25.20
	First floor small meeting rooms	Per Half Day	£11.90	£13.20
		Per Hour	£4.40	£4.90
	Accessible shower facility and personal care rooms	Per Hour	£10.20	£11.30

н	ungerford Resource Centre	2021/22		
	Total Income	0		
CHARGE		UNIT	FEE	PROPOSED
CHARGE		UNII		
			2022/23	FEE 2023/24
HUNGERFORD RESOURCE CENTRE:				
		Per Day	106.20	118.00
Ground floor main activity room		Per Half Day	53.70	59.70
		Per Hour	18.80	20.90
		Per Day	54.20	60.20
Ground floor computer suite		Per Half Day	27.30	30.30
		Per Hour	9.50	10.60
		Per Day	27.30	30.30
Ground floor quiet room		Per Half Day	14.20	15.80
		Per Hour	5.60	6.20
		Per Day	27.30	30.30
Ground floor hairdressing salon		Per Half Day	14.20	15.80
		Per Hour	5.60	6.20
		Per Day	54.20	60.20
First floor meeting room 1		Per Half Day	27.30	30.30
		Per Hour	9.50	10.60
		Per Day	54.20	60.20
First floor meeting room 2		Per Half Day	27.30	30.30
		Per Hour	9.50	10.60
Accessible shower facility and personal	carerooms	Per Hour	10.20	11.30

Greenfield Resource (Total I	Centre ncome	2021/22 0		
CHARGE		UNIT	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
GREENFIELD RESOURCE CENTRE:				
		Per Day	106.20	118.00
Atrium		Per Half Day	53.70	59.70
		Per Hour	18.80	20.90
		Per Day	54.20	60.20
Computer suite		Per Half Day	27.30	30.30
		Per Hour	9.50	10.60
		Per Day	79.90	88.80
Frailty and dementia suite		Per Half Day	40.50	45.00
		Per Hour	14.20	15.80
		Per Day	79.90	88.80
Physical disability suite		Per Half Day	40.50	45.00
		Per Hour	14.20	15.80
		Per Day	54.20	60.20
Learning disability suite		Per Half Day	27.30	30.30
		Per Hour	9.50	10.60
		Per Day	54.20	60.20
Optimusic / sensory room		Per Half Day	27.30	30.30
		Per Hour	9.50	10.60
		Per Day	27.30	30.30
Small office		Per Half Day	14.20	15.80
		Per Hour	5.60	6.20
Accessible bath facility and personal care rooms		Per Hour	10.20	11.30
Security opening and locking building at weekends		Per Day	19.40	21.60

Social Care Training

- 2.8 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 11.1% has been applied to these charges for 2023-24, in line with CPI inflation at October 2022.
- 2.9 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.

CHARGE UNIT FEE 2022/23 PROPOSED FEE 2023/24 ADULTS AND CHILDREN'S COURSES: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Voluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 CORPORATE COURSES: Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 £50.00 £50.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £45.00 £50.00 £50.00 £50.00 £50.00 £58.00 £50.00 £58.00 £50.00 £58.00 £50	Social Care Training	2021/22		
Personal Assistants	Total Income	£40,203		
Personal Assistants				
2023/24 ADULTS AND CHILDREN'S COURSES: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Personal Assistants Full Day £27.00 £30.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Voluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £52.00 £58.00 CORPORATE COURSES: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £94.00 £104.00 Half Day £94.00 £58.00 Pull Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £94.00 £104.00 Half Day £9	CHARGE	UNIT		
ADULTS AND CHILDREN'S COURSES: Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £52.00 £58.00 Voluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £52.00 £58.00 CORPORATE COURSES: Full Day £27.00 £30.00 Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 £104.00 Half Day £94.00 £104.00 £104.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 £58.00 Voluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £94.00 £104.00 FOSTER CARE COURSES: Full Day £94.00 £50.00 Personal Assistants Full Day £52.00 £58.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 £50.00			2022/23	
Personal Assistants Full Day feeton fe	ADULTS AND CHILDDEN'S COLIDSES.			2023/24
Personal Assistants Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 CORPORATE COURSES: Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 FOSTER CARE COURSES: Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 FOSTER CARE COURSES: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 £58.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Voluntary / Associated Social Care	ADULTS AND CHILDREN S COURSES:	Full Day	C45.00	CEO 00
Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Woluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £52.00 £58.00 CORPORATE COURSES: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Foster Care Courses: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Foster Care Courses: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Foster Care Courses: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Other Courses For Private,	Personal Assistants	•		
Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Voluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 CORPORATE COURSES:		•		
Full Day £52.00 £58.00 CORPORATE COURSES: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Voluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £94.00 £104.00 FOSTER CARE COURSES: Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Half Day £94.00 £104.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £92.00 £58.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £52.00 £58.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £52.00 £58.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £52.00 £58.00 <td< td=""><td>Private Social Care and all others</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></td<>	Private Social Care and all others			
CORPORATE COURSES: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Woluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £94.00 £104.00 FOSTER CARE COURSES: Personal Assistants Full Day £45.00 £58.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £94.00 £50.00 Woluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 <td< td=""><td></td><td>•</td><td></td><td></td></td<>		•		
Half Day £27.00 £30.00 CORPORATE COURSES:	Voluntary / Associated Social Care	•	£52.00	£58.00
Full Day	Torumary / 1550014104500141 0410	Half Day	£27.00	£30.00
Personal Assistants Half Day £27.00 £30.00	CORPORATE COURSES:			
Half Day £27.00 £30.00	Personal Assistants	Full Day	£45.00	£50.00
Half Day	reisonal Assistants	Half Day	£27.00	£30.00
Half Day £52.00 £58.00	Drivate Social Care and all others	Full Day	£94.00	£104.00
Voluntary / Associated Social Care Half Day £52.00 £58.00 FOSTER CARE COURSES: Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Half Day £94.00 £104.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Voluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £52.00 £58.00 OTHER COURSES FOR PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY AND INDEPENDENT SECTOR: Associated Organisations Full Day £163.00 £181.00	Private social care and an others	Half Day	£52.00	£58.00
FOSTER CARE COURSES:	Valuatory / Associated Social Core	Full Day	£94.00	£104.00
Full Day £45.00 £50.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 Private Social Care and all others Full Day £94.00 £104.00 Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Voluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 OTHER COURSES FOR PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY AND INDEPENDENT SECTOR: Associated Organisations Full Day £163.00 £181.00	Voluntary / Associated social care	Half Day	£52.00	£58.00
Half Day £27.00 £30.00	FOSTER CARE COURSES:			
Half Day £27.00 £30.00	Days and Assistants	Full Day	£45.00	£50.00
Private Social Care and all others Half Day £52.00 £58.00 Voluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 OTHER COURSES FOR PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY AND INDEPENDENT SECTOR: Associated Organisations Full Day £163.00 £181.00	Personal Assistants	Half Day	£27.00	£30.00
Half Day		Full Day	£94.00	£104.00
Voluntary / Associated Social Care Full Day £52.00 £58.00 Half Day £27.00 £30.00 OTHER COURSES FOR PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY AND INDEPENDENT SECTOR: Associated Organisations Full Day £163.00 £181.00	Private Social Care and all others	Half Day	£52.00	£58.00
Voluntary / Associated Social Care Half Day £27.00 £30.00 OTHER COURSES FOR PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY AND INDEPENDENT SECTOR: Associated Organisations Full Day £163.00 £181.00		•	£52.00	£58.00
OTHER COURSES FOR PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY AND INDEPENDENT SECTOR: Associated Organisations Full Day £163.00 £181.00	Voluntary / Associated Social Care	•	£27.00	£30.00
	OTHER COURSES FOR PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY AND INDEPENDENT SE	,		
Non Associated Organisations Full Day £422.00 £469.00	Associated Organisations	Full Day	£163.00	£181.00
	Non Associated Organisations	Full Day	£422.00	£469.00

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.

Family Hubs Fees and Charges (charges per hour)

	Family Hubs											
		FEE 2022/23		PROPO	OSED FEE 2023	/24						
Room Hire	Non-profit Organisation	Profit Organisation	Statutory Services	Non-profit Organisation	Profit Organisation	Statutory Services						
East District - Calcot	£10.00	£20.00	£6.00	£11.50	£22.50	£7.00						
Central District - Thatcham Park Lane	£10.00	£20.00	£6.00	£11.50	£22.50	£7.00						

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

	FEE 2022/23		PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	
Room Hire	**Caretaker Opening Charge	**Caretaker Waiting Time Charge	**Caretaker Opening Charge	**Caretaker Waiting Time Charge
1 Hour	£10.00	N/A	£11.50	N/A
2 Hours	£10.00	£7.00	£11.50	£8.00
3 Hours	£10.00	£10.50	£11.50	£12.00
4 Hours	£10.00	£14.00	£11.50	£16.00
5 Hours	£10.00	£17.50	£11.50	£19.50
6 Hours	£10.00	£21.00	£11.50	£23.50
Fees for after- hours bookings	£3.50		£4.00	

Family Hubs Activity Sessions

	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
Band	£	£
Α	£0 - £3	£0 - £3.50
В	£3.01 - £10	£3.51 - £11.50
С	£10.01 - £20	£11.51 - £22.50

Name of session/Group	Charging Band	Basis
All Stay, Play & Learn	Α	Per family per session
Groups		
Messy Play	Α	Per family per session
All Baby Groups	Α	Per family per session
Post Natal Group	Α	Per family per session
Family Learning Courses	В	Per learner per session
Paediatric First Aid	В	Per adult one off session
Baby massage	В	Per family per session
Little Stars	С	Per family per 6 week course

3 Education: Home to School Transport

The Standard Rate has increased by £90 per year from £840 (academic year 2022-23) to £930 (academic year 2023-24) to reflect increasing transport cost. The Rate represents £4.90 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	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24		
Standard rate	£840	£930		
Replacement bus pass admin fee	£15	£15		
Rail pass admin fee	£20	£20		

4 Communities & Wellbeing: Culture and Libraries Proposed Fees and Charges

rees and Charg	Shaw Ho	ouse	
		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
Shaw House - Room Hire Charges:			
Registered Charity	per hour	£20.00 - £32.00	£22.00 - £36.00
Public Sector and Community use	per hour	£26.00 - £39.00	£29.00 - £43.00
Commercial use	per hour	£33.00 - £51.00	£37.00 - £57.00
	Museu	m	
		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
West Berkshire - Archaeological Archiv	e Box Fee		
Fieldwork Fee This charge covers the fieldwork notification processing of the Archaeological deposit a issuing of an accession number and subse administration. Non-refundable.	and includes	£50.00	£50.00
Deposit Fee This charge includes the provision of up to size boxes and the ongoing care and manarchaeological deposit. Non-refundable.		£105.00	£105.00
Additional Boxes			
Full Box 0.4 x 0.25 x 0.22m =0.022m3		£71.00	£74.00
Half Box 0.4 x 0.25 x 0.11 =0.011 m3		£31.00	£32.00
Quarter Box 0.4 x 0.125 x 0.11 =0.00275 m3		£20.00	£21.00
Eighth Box 0.2x 0.125 x 0.11 m= 0.00275m3		£10.00	£10.00
Sixteenth Box 0.1 x 0.125 x 0.11 m oe 0.2x0.63x0.11 = 0.001375m3		£0.00	£0.00
Skull Box = 1/2 Box 0.2 x 0.2 x 0.25 = 0.012m3		£34.00	£35.00
Human Bone = 1 1/2 Box 0.6 x 0.25 x 0.25	5 = 0.039 m2	£103.00	£107.00
Map Rolls per 100 grams3		£2.00	£2.00
Archive Box deposit charges		£0.00	£0.00
Full Box 0.4 x 0.075 x 0.27m =0.0081m3		£25.00	£26.00
Half Box 0.4 x 0.045 x 0.27 =0.0049 m3		£15.00	£16.00
Heritage Service - Use of Image Collection			
If supplied for private personal use only the both an image production fee and a reproduction	• .	fee is payable. Images sup	oplied for publication incur
Image Production Fee			
Photo Print - up to A6		£5.40	£6.40
Photo Print - up to A5		£10.00	£11.00
Photo Print - up to A4		£17.00	£19.00
Laser Scan - up to A4		£5.40	£6.40
Digital Scan - to CD		£17.00	£19.00
Digital Scan - to CD - Discounted rate for \ non-profit making organisations	West Berkshire	Free	Free

		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
Reproduction Charges			
Commercial Publication:			
Up to full page, B&W or Colour		£42.00	£49.00
Up to Full Page B&W or Colour - Discount promotion of culture in West Berkshire	ed rate for the	£15 one image; £5 for all subsequent images	£15.00 one image; £5.00 for all subsequent images
Cover (front or back)		£78.00	£90.00
Cover (front or back) - Discounted rate for of culture in West Berkshire	the promotion	£30 one image	£30.00 one image
Local Publication		£16.00	£19.00
Local Publication - Discounted rate for We non-profit making organisations	est Berkshire	£15 one image; £5 for all subsequent images	£15.00 one image; £5.00 for all subsequent images
Academic Publication		£31.00	£34.00
Academic Publication, etc Discounted ra Berkshire non-profit making organisations	ate for West	£15 one image; £5 for all subsequent images	£15.00 one image; £5.00 for all subsequent images
Magazine or Newspaper		£42.00	£49.00
Advertising or Brochure		£78.00	£90.00
Exhibition Use		£42.00	£49.00
Exhibition Use - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations		£30.00 one image £10.00 for all subsequent images	£33.00 one image £11.00 for all subsequent images
Website (3 year use)	Per 3 Years	£90.00	£78
Website (3 year use) - Discounted rate for West Berkshire non-profit making organisations	Per 3 Years	£33.00 one image £11.00 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	£15.00	£18.00
New photograph required taken inhouse and supplied digitally	Per Object	£50.00	£58.00
New photograph required taken inhouse and supplied in a physical format			£76.00
Copying and laminating charges			
These charges are common with the library	y 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		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	
Reservation 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	
Admin fee for debt recovery process	, ,	£13.00	£14.00	
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		20:20	20.20	
Lost Tickets		£3.00	£3.00	
Reference and Research enquiry charges		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)		£27.00	£30.00	
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	£16.00	£18.00	
Play sets from SE region	per month	£6.00	£7.00	
Room Hire				
Newbury Library - Carnegie Lounge (reduced rate available for charities/ local non-profit organisations).	per hour	£19.00	£21.00	
Newbury Library - Advice point -small meeting room (reduced rate available for charities/ local non-profit organisations).	per hour	£10.00	£12.00	
Theale Library (reduced rate available for charities/ local non-profit organisations).	per hour	£18.00	£20.00	
All other libraries	per hour	£10.00	£11.00	

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.

Place and Resources Fees & Charges Proposals - 2023-24

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The starting point for the base budget for the 2023-24 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.
- 1.4 A fees and charges task & finish group of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) has been meeting in recent months, with an interim report provided to the OSMC in November 2022. These papers have been produced reflecting some of the comments made and future budget papers will take into account proposals of the group as they emerge and where they are approved.

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 2023-24. Do It Yourself Shared Ownership (DIYSO) leases will be increased in line with the Social Rent Cap.

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 11.1% for 2023-24.

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 2023-24 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	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	
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	4.2 % increase on individual contracts	Social Rent Cap applied to individual contracts	
Transport costs to temporary accommodation (TA)	Actual cost	Actual cost	
Gypsy Traveller rent (Per week, per plot)	£98	£98	
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	<u> </u>		
Ineligible Charges for Bed and Breakfast Acco	mmodation:		
Heating, lighting and hot water per week per Family Unit**	£41.90	£46.55	
Breakfast per person, per week	£3.60	£4.00	
** Family Units Include: Single person, Couple children.	- no children, Couple with 1-4 ch	nildren, Single person with 1-4	

(2) Development Control

(a) Pre-application advice

Pre-Application Advice	2021/22
Total income	£43,371

Pre-Application Advice: Min-	±43,371		
APPLICATION TYPE	TYPE OF ADVICE	FEE 2022/23 - including VAT	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24 - including VAT
	Written Advice Only	£160	£178
Llauachaldar	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£257	£285
Householder	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£257	£285
	Written Advice after Site Visit + meeting	£349	£387
	Written Advice Only	£250	£278
A 1	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£347	£385
Adverts	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£347	£385
	Written Advice after Site Visit + meeting	£444	£493
	Written Advice Only	£178	£198
Listed Building Consent	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£275	£305
Advice	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£275	£305
	Written Advice after Site Visit + meeting	£365	£405
	Written Advice Only	£178	£198
Observe of the disease substitute	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£300	£333
Change of Use (Land only)	Written Advice with a meeting - No Site Visit	£300	£333
	Written Advice after Site Visit + meeting	£406	£451
	Written Advice Only	£186	£206
Telecommunications	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£283	£314
(including prior notifications/approvals)	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£283	£314
notifications/approvais)	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting	£396	£440
	Written Advice Only	£221	£245
Ob an franctic	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£294	£326
Shopfronts	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£294	£326
	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting	£366	£406
	Written Advice Only	£222	£246
Agricultural and Forestry	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£444	£493
development (including prior notifications/approvals)	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£444	£493
notifications/approvais)	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting	£554	£615
5 5	Written Advice Only		£178
Renewable Energy	Written Advice after a Site Visit.		£285
Development under 1	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV		£285
hectare	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting		£387
Renewable Energy	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit		£4,400
Development over 1 hectare	Advice in Principle only		£755
Discharge, vary or remove a condition	Detailed Written Advice only		alent type of pment

Pre-Application Advice: Residential Development (including new build houses, changes of use to houses/flats, mobile homes for residential use)

APPLICATION TYPE	TYPE OF ADVICE	FEE 2022/23 - including VAT	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24 - including VAT
	Written Advice Only	£240	£266
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£300	£333
1 new residential dwelling	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£300	£333
•	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting	£380	£422
	Advice in Principle only	£120	£133
	Written Advice Only	£480	£533
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£540	£599
2-4 new residential	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£540	£599
dwellings	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting	£640	£710
	Advice in Principle only	£240	£266
	Written Advice Only	£960	£1,066
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£1,080	£1,199
5-9 new residential	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£1,080	£1,199
dwellings	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting	£1,300	£1,443
	Advice in Principle only	£480	£533
	Written Advice Only	£1,680	£1,865
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£1,860	£2,065
10-25 new residential dwellings	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£1,860	£2,065
	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting	£2,020	£2,242
	Advice in Principle only	£840	£932
26-49 new residential	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit	£3,300	£3,663
dwellings	Advice in Principle only	£960	£1,066
50-99 new residential	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit – Based on maximum of 30hrs	Initial payment of	Initial payment of
dwelling	work, additional hours charged at £150 per hour	£4,500	£4,995
	Advice in Principle only	£1,200	£1,332
100-199 new residential	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit – Based on maximum of 30hrs work, additional hours charged at £150 per	Initial payment of	Initial payment of
dwelling	hour	£5,500	£6,105
	Advice in Principle only	£2,000	£2,220
200-499 new residential	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit – Based on maximum of 30hrs	Initial payment of	Initial payment of
dwelling	work, additional hours charged at £150 per hour	£7,500	£8,325
	Advice in Principle only	£2,500	£2,775
500+ new residential	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit – Based on maximum of 30hrs	Initial payment of	Initial payment of
dwelling	work, additional hours charged at £150 per hour	£8,500	£9,435
	Advice in Principle only	£3,000	£3,330

Pre-Application Advice: Non-residential Development			
APPLICATION TYPE	TYPE OF ADVICE	FEE 2022/23 - including VAT	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24 - including VAT
Less than 249sqm	Written Advice Only	£265	£294
	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£350	£389
	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£350	£389
	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting	£496	£551
	Advice in Principle only	£128	£142
	Written Advice Only	£480	£533
Between 250 - 499sqm	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£540	£599
	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£540	£599
	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting	£820	£910
	Advice in Principle only	£240	£266
	Written Advice Only	£960	£1,066
Between 500 - 1000sqm	Written Advice after a Site Visit.	£1,080	£1,199
	Written Advice with a meeting - No SV	£1,080	£1,199
	Written Advice after S/Visit + meeting	£1,200	£1,332
	Advice in Principle only	£360	£400
Between 1000 - 2,499sqm	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit	£2,400	£2,664
	Advice in Principle only	£480	£533
Between 2,500 - 4,999sqm	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit	£3,300	£3,663
	Advice in Principle only	£540	£599
Between 5000 – 9999sqm	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit	£4,400	£4,884
	Advice in Principle only	£680	£755
Greater than 10,000sqm	Detailed Written Advice with meeting and Site Visit	£5,500	£6,105
	Advice in Principle only	£810	£899

(b) Planning

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.

	Income 2021/22	Fees and Charges 2023/24
Planning Applications		Government set fees
Invalid applications charge	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	25% of Government set fee after 3 failed attempts

		FEE 2022/23 (Including VAT)	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24 (including VAT)
**	Planning history search	£50 each	£50 each
**	General Planning Policy Advice	£150 per hour	£150 per hour
**	Ecology Advice	£150 per hour	£150 per hour
**	Conservation Advice	£150 per hour	£150 per hour
**	Senior Manager attendance	£150 per hour	£150 per hour
**	Confirmation of compliance with a S106/ compliance with a notice	£150	£100
	Pre-Validation Checking Service: A technical officer will check the following for common errors, omissions or disclaimers: • Application Form	£60 per hour	£60 per hour
	Location/Block Plan	Householder, advertisement and prior notification applications – 1 hour	Householder, advertisement and prior notification applications – 1 hour
	Cil FormPlan(s)	Minor and similar applications – 2 hours Major and similar complex applications – 4 hours	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	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	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 per hour	£150 per hour
**	Copy of Decision Notice, TPO, Appeal Decision Notice, Enforcement Notice	£30	£30
	** Benchmarked fee		

(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 2023-24 have been agreed by the Joint Public Protection Committee and the relevant licensing committees of the two councils.

PPP chargeable services can be found in Appendix Fiii.

(4) Registration Services

Registration fees are largely controlled by statute. It is proposed to increase all discretionary fees by 11.1 %, in line with CPI inflation at October 2022.

Registrars Fees	2021/22
Total income	£416,366

	10tal Income £410,300			
	Registrars			
			FEE 2022/23 - including VAT	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24 - including VAT
*	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Notice of Marriage or Civil Partnership	£35	£35
	Mamage and Own Farmership	Additional fee for Saturday appointment	£25	£28
*	Register Office	Available Wednesday morning. Fee paid at time of notice and includes fee for a certificate	£57	£57
	Shaw House Ceremony Room - Up	Tuesday - Friday	£277	£308
	to 46 guests	Saturday	£308	£342
	Shaw House Hall - Up to 100 guests	Saturday	n/a	£467
		Mon-Fri	£485	£539
	Ceremonies at approved premises	Saturday	£516	£573
		Sunday & Bank Holiday	£590	£655
	Approved Premise Licence - any number of rooms		£2,136	£2,373
	Celebratory Services - Baby	Monday to Friday	£273 + VAT	£303 + VAT
	Naming/Affirmation of vows - Shaw House	Saturday	£346 + VAT	£384 + VAT
	Celebratory Services - Baby	Monday - Friday	£325 + VAT	£361 + VAT
	Naming/Affirmation of vows - At	Saturday	£389 + VAT	£432 + VAT
	approved premises	Sunday & Bank Holiday	£436 + VAT	£484 + VAT
	Private Citizenship ceremony Mon to Sat		£128	£142
	Marriages & Civil Partnerships Booking Fee (non-refundable)		£26	£29
	Ceremony Amendment Fee (Change of date/time)			£15
		Superintendent Registrar		£19
	Additional Registrar Fee	Registrar		£16
		More than 4 months before ceremony	Fees refunded minus £100	Fees refunded minus £111
	Marriages & Civil Partnerships Cancellation Fee	1-4 months before ceremony	50% refund	50% refund
		Less than 1 month before ceremony	No refund	No refund
*		All Certificates	£11.00	£11.00
*	Certificates	Priority service within 24 hours	£35.00	£35.00

^{*} Statutory fee

(5) Archaeology

Archaeology	2021/22	
Total income	£6,534	
Archaeology - Historic Environment Record Charges	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
A4 computer printout (b/w) HER Data	£0.20	£0.22
A4 computer printout (colour) HER data	£0.60	£0.66
A3 computer printout (colour) HER Data	£1.00	£1.10
Research charges for staff time dealing with HER enquiries	Hourly rate of £125 exc. VAT with a minimum of £75 exc. VAT for the first half hour.	Hourly rate of £150 exc. VAT with a minimum of £75 exc. VAT for the first half hour.
Providing archaeological information and advice for agri-environment scheme in line with nationally agreed service standards	Scale of charges, depending on the type of scheme and the area covered, in line with nationally agreed service standards	Scale of charges, depending on the type of scheme and the area covered, in line with nationally agreed service standards

2.2 Environment

(1) **Car Park Charges** – There are no proposed increases for existing car park charges for 2023-24. The Council owned Charging Points for Electric Vehicles fees outlined in the table are base costs, which will increase/decrease based on the cost of energy at each site.

Car Parking	2021/22		
Total income £2	2,638,957		
	·	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
Newbury - Car Park Charges (Mon to Sun i Bank Holidays):	nc		
Noubury Station Multi staroy Car Dark	Up to 2 hours	£2.00	£2.00
Newbury Station Multi-storey Car Park (Saturday & Sunday)	Up to 4 hours	£3.50	£3.50
(Catalaa) a Callaay,	Daily Charge	£4.40	£4.40
	Up to 1 hour	£1.00	£1.00
	Up to 2 hours	£2.00	£2.00
Newbury Station Multi-storey Car Park (Monday – Friday)	Up to 3 hours	£3.00	£3.00
	Up to 4 hours	£4.00	£4.00
	Peak daily charge (arrive before 10am) Ticket expires 23:59	£7.30	£7.30
	Off Peak daily charge (arrive afte 10am) Ticket expires 23:59	er £4.40	£4.40
	Up to 1 hour	£1.50	£1.50
	Up to 2 hours	£2.70	£2.70
	Up to 3 hours	£3.90	£3.90
Kannat Cantra Multi ataray Car Dark	Up to 4 hours	£5.20	£5.20
Kennet Centre Multi-storey Car Park	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
	Up to 1 hour	£1.00	£1.00
	Up to 2 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	Up to 3 hours	£3.00	£3.00
Northbrook Multi storov Car Bark	Up to 4 hours	£4.00	£4.00
Northbrook Multi-storey Car Park	Up to 6 hours	-	-
	Up to 8 hours	-	-
	Over 4 hours	£5.00	£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

Up to 2 hours

Up to 3 hours

Up to 4 hours

Up to 6 hours

Up to 8 hours

Over 8 hours

Evening Charge

£1.50

£2.70

£3.90

£5.20

£7.20

£8.70

£12.00

£2.00

£1.50

£2.70

£3.90

£5.20

£7.20

£8.70

£12.00

£2.00

		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
	Up to 1 hour	£1.50	£1.50
	Up to 2 hours	£2.70	£2.70
Short Stay Car Parks - Northcroft Lane and The	Up to 3 hours	£3.90	£3.90
Wharf	Up to 4 hours	£5.20	£5.20
	Over 4 hours	£12.00	£12.00
	Evening Charge	£2.00	£2.00
Large Otace One Bardes - North and Large West 2020	Up to 2 hours	£1.70	£1.70
Long Stay Car Parks – Northcroft Lane West 08:00 am to 10:00pm	Up to 4 hours	£3.20	£3.20
an to release.	Over 4 hours	£5.20	£5.20
Long Stay Car Parks – Newbury Football Club and	Up to 4 hours	£1.00	£1.00
Market Street staff car park. Market Street	Over 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
(Saturday's only).	no evening charge		
	Up to 4 hours	£1.00	£1.00
Goldwell Park	Over 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	No Evening Charge	Free	Free
Newbury Car Park Charges (Sunday) - All car	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
Bank Holidays):			
Road	30 Mins	Free	Free
Cheap Street (west side) Bartholomew Street	1 hour	£1.00	£1.00
	30 Mins	Free	Free
	1 Hour	£1.00	£1.00
Newbury Car Park Charges (Sunday) - All car Parks 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 Kings Road West Newtown Road (north of St John's Road) West Mills Pelican Lane (west side)	2 Hours	£1.50	£1.50
	4 Hours	£3.00	£3.00
Newtown Road (north of St John's Road)	30 Mins	Free	Free
West Mills	2 hours	£1.00	£1.00
	4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	30 mins	Free	Free
Pelican Lane (west side)	1 hour	£1.00	£1.00
	2 hours	£2.20	£2.20
Newbury on-street Charges (Mon to Satinc Bank Holidays) continued:			
Newtown Road (south of St John's Road) -west	4 hours	£1.00	£1.00
side	over 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	2 hours	£1.00	£1.00
Catherine Road and Link Road	4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	over 4 hours	£3.80	£3.80
	2 hours	£1.00	£1.00
Station Road	4 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	over 4 hours	£3.80	£3.80

Over 4 hours			FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	
Over 4 hours		2 hours	£0.50	£0.50	
Standard Road area Standard Road Road area Standard Road Road Road Road Road Road Road Roa	Old Bath Road (south side) west of Leys Gardens	4 hours	£1.00	£1.00	
2 hours		over 4 hours	£1.50	£1.50	
4 hours		30 mins	Free	Free	
4 hours		2 hours	£0.50	£0.50	
Standard daily charges 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). Out of Newbury Car Park Hourly Rates: Up to 1 hour	Faraday Road area	4 hours	£1.00	£1.00	
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 bours parking at the two locations where it applies (Old Bath Road and Faraday Road). Out of Newbury Car Park Hourly Rates: Up to 1 hour		over 4 hours	£1.50	£1.50	
E1.00 E1.0	Newbury On-Street Charges (Sunday):				
Up to 1 hour	applies. The 30 minutes free parking will be retained where it applies Monday to Saturday as will the £0.5	d at all locations 60 charge for up to 2	£1.00	£1.00	
Hungerford: Church St Up to 2 hours	Out of Newbury Car Park Hourly Rates:				
Hungerford: Church St	·	Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80	
Hungerford: Church St Up to 4 Hours		Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30	
Up to 10 hours	Lhunganfaud, Chuunh Ch	Up to 3 Hours	£1.70	£1.70	
Over 10 hours	Hungerford: Church St	Up to 4 Hours	£2.00	£2.00	
Up to 1 hour		Up to 10 hours	£4.00	£4.00	
Up to 2 hours		Over 10 hours	£10.00	£10.00	
Up to 3 Hours		Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80	
Hungerford: Station Road		Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30	
Up to 4 Hours		Up to 3 Hours	£1.70	£1.70	
Over 10 hours	Hungerford: Station Road	Up to 4 Hours	£2.00	£2.00	
Up to 1 hour		Up to 10 hours	£4.00	£4.00	
Up to 2 hours		Over 10 hours	£6.00	£6.00	
Up to 4 hours		Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80	
Up to 8 hours		Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30	
Over 8 hours	Hungerford High Street (On-Street)	Up to 4 hours	£3.80	£3.80	
Up to 1 hour	, , ,	Up to 8 hours	£6.00	£6.00	
Up to 2 hours £1.30 £1.30 Up to 3 hours £1.70 £1.70 Over 3 hours £5.50 £5.50 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 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) Up to 3 hours £1.00 £1.00		Over 8 hours	£10.00	£10.00	
Up to 2 hours £1.30 £1.30 Up to 3 hours £1.70 £1.70 Over 3 hours £5.50 £5.50 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 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) Up to 3 hours £1.00 £1.00		Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80	
Up to 3 hours		Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30	
Over 3 hours	Pangbourne Station Road:	Up to 3 hours	£1.70	£1.70	
Up to 2 hours				£5.50	
Up to 2 hours		Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80	
Pangbourne River Meadow Up to 4 hours £2.00 £2.00 Up to 8 hours £2.50 £2.50 Over 8 hours Up to 2 hours (no return within 4 hours) Friday 8:30 to 17:30 Up to 3 hours £1.00 £2.00		Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30	
Up to 8 hours E2.00 E2.00 Up to 8 hours E2.50 E2.50 Over 8 hours Up to 2 hours (no return within 4 hours) Friday 8:30 to 17:30 Up to 3 hours E2.00 E3.00 E3.00	D 1 D' 11	Up to 3 hours	£1.70	£1.70	
Over 8 hours £5.50 £5.50 £5.50 Up to 2 hours (no return within 4 hours) Friday 8:30 to 17:30 Up to 3 hours £5.50 £5.50 £5.50 Free - (a ticket must be displayed) Up to 3 hours £1.00 £1.00	Pangpourne River Meadow	Up to 4 hours	£2.00	£2.00	
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) Up to 3 hours £1.00 £1.00			£2.50	£2.50	
Thatcham Kennet Leisure Centre - Monday to Friday 8:30 to 17:30 Up to 2 nours (no return within 4 hours) Up to 3 hours ticket must be displayed) Free - (a ticket must be displayed) Up to 3 hours £1.00 £1.00		Over 8 hours	£5.50	£5.50	
Up to 3 hours £1.00 £1.00	Thatcham Kennet Leisure Centre - Monday to Friday 8:30 to 17:30	return within 4	Free - (a ticket must be	Free - (a ticket must be	
<u>'</u>	•	Up to 3 hours	£1.00	£1.00	
		Over 3 hours	£10.00	£10.00	

		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
	Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80
Hungerford Pangbourne	Up to 2 hours	£1.30	£1.30
matcham Kingsiand Centre	Up to 3 hours	£1.70	£1.70
	Over 3 hours	£3.00	£3.00
	Up to 1 hour	Free	Free
Thataham Gilbort Court	Up to 1 hour £0.80 Up to 2 hours £1.30 Up to 3 hours £1.70 Over 3 hours £3.00 Up to 1 hour Free Up to 2 hours £0.60 Up to 3 hours £0.90 Over 3 hours £2.00 Up to 3 hours £0.90 Over 3 hours £0.90 Over 3 hours £0.90 Over 3 hours £2.00 Peak daily charge (arrive before 10am) Ticket expires 23:59 Off Peak daily charge (arrive after 10am) Ticket expires 23:59 Daily charge £2.00 Up to 4 hours £1.00 Over 4 hours £1.50 Up to 4 hours £1.50 Up to 2 hours £1.30 Over 2 hours £1.30 Up to 1 hour £0.80 Over 2 hours £1.30 Over 2 hours £1.30 Over 2 hours £1.30 Over 2 hours £1.50 Per Quarter £350.00 Per Annum £1,150.00 Per Annum £1,150.00 Per Annum £1,150.00 Per Quarter £350.00 Per Annual £425.00 Per Quarter £350.00 Annual £425.00 Annual £425.00 Per Quarter £350.00 Per Quarter £350.00 Per Annum £1,150.00 Per Quarter £350.00 Per Annual £425.00 Per Quarter £350.00 Per Quarter £160.00 ½ year £315.00 Annual £425.00 Per Quarter £160.00	£0.60	
materiam Gilbert Court	Up to 3 hours	£0.90	£0.90
	Over 3 hours	£2.00	£2.00
	Up to 2 hours	Free	Free
Thatcham Burdwood Centre	Up to 3 hours	£0.90	£0.90
	Up to 1 hour £0.80 Up to 2 hours £1.30 Up to 3 hours £3.00 Up to 1 hour Free Up to 2 hours £0.60 Up to 3 hours £0.60 Up to 3 hours £0.60 Up to 3 hours £0.90 Over 3 hours £2.00 Up to 2 hours £0.90 Over 3 hours £2.00 Up to 3 hours £0.90 Over 3 hours £2.00 Peak daily charge (arrive before 10am) Ticket expires 23:59 Off Peak daily charge (arrive after 10am) Ticket expires 23:59 O Daily charge £2.00 Itimes) Up to 4 hours £1.50 Over 4 hours £1.50 Up to 2 hours £1.50 Up to 2 hours £1.30 Over 4 hours £1.30 Over 2 hours £5.50	£2.00	
Thatcham Station (Monday - Friday)	(arrive before 10am) Ticket expires 23:59 Off Peak daily charge (arrive after 10am) Ticket		£3.40
Thatcham Station (Saturday & Sunday)	<u> </u>	£2.00	£2.00
	Daily orlarge	22.00	22.00
	Up to 4 hours	£1.00	£1.00
Pipers Lane (Monday to Sunday at all times)	<u> </u>		£1.50
Ayloford Way (Monday to Sunday 8 00am to			£1.00
			£1.50
. ,			£0.80
Theale Main			£1.30
	Up to 1 hour	£0.80	£0.80
Theale West		£1.30	£1.30
	<u> </u>	£5.50	£5.50
Newbury Season Ticket Prices:			
	Per Quarter	£350.00	£350.00
			£350.00
Northbrook MSCP:			£1,150.00
	Per Quarter	£350.00	£350.00
Newbury "General":			£1,150.00
Out of Newbury Season Tickets:			
Hungerford	Annual	£425.00	£425.00
-			£160.00
Pangbourne			£315.00
-			£500.00
	Annual	£160.00	£160.00
Theale			
Resident Parking Permits:		£30.00	£30.00
Resident Parking Permits: West Berkshire Residents Parking Permits			£30.00 £1.00
Resident Parking Permits:		£1.00	£30.00 £1.00 £70.00
Resident Parking Permits: West Berkshire Residents Parking Permits West Berkshire Visitor Parking Permits		£1.00	£1.00

		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	
Replacement Blue Badge		£10.00	£10.	00
Parking Dispensation	Per Day	£15.00	£15.	00
	Per application	£15.00	£15.	00
Parking Suspensions	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):			Min	Max
Slow (7kWh) Charger	per kWh	£0.25	40p	79p
Fast (22kW AC) Charger	per kWh	£0.30	45p	50p
Rapid (50kW DC) Charger	per kWh	£0.39	50p	60p
Overstay fee (for Rapid charger).	per hour after 2 hours	£10.00	£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 11.1%, in line with CPI inflation at October 2022.

		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
Tree Preservation Order		£28	£31
Michaelmas Fair		£4,000	£4,444
	Search fees	£78	£86
Public Rights of Way	Path order fees	£1,530-£3,850	£1,670 - £4,277
Statutory Declarations		£210 flat rate with rights to increase if the work required	£253 flat rate with rights to increase if the work required
		is onerous	is onerous
Highways Act Charges:			
Land charges		£54	£60
Vehicular Crossing (S.184)	Approval	£156	£173
Skips on the Highway (S.139)	Initial fee	£48	£53
	per week	£56	£62
Scaffold/hoarding on the Highway (S.169/172)	Initial fee	£97	£107
Scanoid/floatding of the highway (3.109/172)	per week	£55	£61
Tables and Chairs on the Highway (based on	1 to 10	£243	£270
number of Chairs) (S.115)	10 to 27	£399	£443
Humber of Chairs) (5.115)	27+	£798	£887
Storing Materials on the Highways (C 171)	Initial fee	£91	£101
Storing Materials on the Highways (S.171)	per week	£30	£33
EV charging duct across footpath (S.171)	Approval	£153	£170
Temporary Excavation in the highway (S.171)		£121	£134
Cranes, machinery, structure on the highway (S.178)		£175	£194
Per Necessary inspection		£66	£73
S142 Licence to plant in the highway		£145	£161

Permits under SI 2014 No. 3110 Highways, England and the Traffic Management (West Berkshire Council) Permit Scheme Order 2014 (Maximum Permissible Charge)

These are maximum charges, pending consultation on changes to the West Berkshire Permit Scheme.

	FEE 2022/23 PROPOSED FEE 2023				FEE 2023/	24		
		Main Road	s	Minor Roads	Main Roads			Minor Roads
Reinstatement category of street	0, 1 and 2	3 ar	nd 4	3 and 4	0, 1 and 2	3 aı	nd 4	3 and 4
Street designated as traffic sensitive or not	All streets	so	ensitive at me ocations	Non traffic sensitive at any time or location	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	Any time and location	Any part within traffic sensitive times / locations	Wholly within non traffic sensitive times / locations	Any time and location
Provisional AdvanceAuthorisation	£105	£105	£75	£75	£69	£69	£49	£49
Major Works - over 10 days and all major works requiring a traffic regulation order	£240	£240	£150	£150	£156	£156	£98	£98
* Major works - 4 to 10 days	£130	£130	£75	£75	£156	£156	£98	£98
* Major works - up to 3 days	£65	£65	£45	£45	£156	£156	£98	£98
* Standard Activity	£130	£130	£75	£75	£85	£85	£49	£49
* Minor Activity	£65	£65	£45	£45	£43	£43	£30	£30
* Immediate Activity * Permit Variation	£60	£60	£40	£40	£39	£39	£26	£26
* Permit Variation	£45	£45	£35	£35	£30	£30	£23	£23

^{*} Statutory fee

		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
	Other Licences and Charges:		
	Licence to place advertising sign on public highway (A board or similar) in Newbury Town Centre	£57	£63
	Streetworks licence (S.50 NRSWA)	£273	£303
*	Utility Works Inspection (NRSWA/TMA)	£57	£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	£900 plus actual costs of signage, road markings, agency & advertising	£999
**	Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Section 14(1)	£928	£2,000
**	Emergency Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Section 14(2)	£480	£2,000
**	Retrospective Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Section 14(2)	£693	£2,000
	Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders Section 16A where appropriate & Section 21 of PTCA	£84	£90
	Cutting through signal loops and not informing LA	£515 plus cost of recutting loops	£600 plus cost of recutting loops
	Tourist / Direction signs	£556	£617 application and design fee, plus cost of actual sign installation. No charge for unsuccessful applications.
	Traffic Signs / Signals Equipment damaged by Road Traffic Accident or other event	10% of cost of repairs	Cost of repairs plus 10% administration charge.
	Use of permanent Traffic Regulation Order for railway crossing works	£84	£93
**	Access Protection Marking (single standard width dropped kerb driveway)	£133	£250
	Sewerage treatment property charge	£405	£450
*	Cycle Training (non-schools)	£42	£42
	Cycle Training (schools)		£10
	Recovery and storage of unauthorised signs	£145	£161
*	Street Works Core Sampling - Charge per failed core test	£185 (this is an average cost - actual cost calculated from the Coring Advice Note published by SEHAUC	£200 (this is an average cost - actual cost calculated from the Coring Advice Note published by SEHAUC
	* Statutory fee		
	** Benchmarked fee		

			FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
	Provision of Data:			
**		One A4 plan covering 100 metres of highway	£54	£75
**	Highway search enquiries	Additional 100 metres	£15	£25
**		Additional question	£15	£25
	Provision of recorded injury accident Data		£145 + £47 per additional block of up to 10 accidents	£161 + £52 per additional block of up to 10 accidents
	Provision of Traffic Data, per request	data up to 1 year old	£145	£161
	per site:	data up to 3 years old	£116	£129
	por site.	data over 3 years old	£85	£94
	* Statutory foo		·	·

* Statutory fee

** Benchmarked fee

	Charges i	n relation to works occupying the carriageway during period	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
	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
	*		ı	

Statutory fee

	Charges in relation to works outside the carriageway during period of overrun			PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
	Item	Description of street	Amount (£)	Amount (£)
*	1	Street not in road category 2, 3 or 4	2,500	2,500
*	2	Street in road category 2	2,000	2,000
*	3	Street in road category 3 or 4	250	250

Statutory fee

(3) Public Transport

Use of public transport has been affected by the impact of the Covid pandemic. No increases are proposed for 2023-24 in charges to bus operators and passengers, with the exception of Temporary Bust Stop Closures which are to increase by 20% as they have not been uplifted since April 2020.

Public Transport				
		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	
Charge per departure		£0.60	£0.60	
	up to 20 minutes	£0.00	£0.00	
Bus stands 0400-1800	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	up to 3 hours	£3.00	£3.00	
1800-0400 and all day Sunday	over 3 hours	£6.00	£6.00	
Additional charge for breaches		£25.00-£50.00	£25.00-£50.00	
	Per stop	£150.00	£180.00	
Temporary bus stop closure	Per pair of opposite stops	£180.00	£210.00	
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 & Pre-Planning Application Advice

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 11.1%, in line with CPI inflation at October 2022.

Highways Development Control Fees					
		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24		
Street naming and numbering - Property name change		£91	£101		
Changes to new addresses due to the development changing after the schedule has been issued.	Per plot	£91	£101		
	One address/plot	£87	£97		
	2 - 5 addresses/plots	£141	£151		
Street Naming and Numbering - New	6 - 10 addresses/plots	£252	£280		
Developments	11 - 20 addresses/plots	£403	£445		
	21 or more addresses/plots	£20	£23		
S115 Fee		£541	£601		

Provision of Pre-Planning Application Advice				
		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	
Transport Assessment Scoping Note		£169	£188	
Draft Transport Assessment		£572	£635	
Provision of Private Access		£105	£117	
	Less than 5 Dwellings	£169	£188	
	5 to 25 dwellings	£382	£424	
	26 to 79 dwellings	£496	£551	
	80 to 200 dwellings	£572	£635	
Highway Advice for New Developments	More than 200 dwellings	£647	£718	
	0 to 249 sqm	£139	£154	
	250 sqm to 999 sqm	£244	£271	
	1,000 to 9,999 sqm	£382	£424	
	over 10,000 sqm	£496	£551	
Meeting charge	per hour per officer	£141	£157	

(5) Sustainable Drainage Pre-Application Advice Fees

Fees for sustainable drainage advice and meeting charges are being introduced from 2023-24, as follows:

		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
SuDS advice for Major sites (written	Up to 20 dwellings	£250	£278
responses only).	Over 20 dwellings	£450	£500
Meeting charge	Per hour per officer	£141	£157

Ordinary Watercourse and Land Drainage Consent Pre-application Advice					
		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24		
Written advice for a general site enquiry or flood risk assessment enquiry.	Per enquiry	-	£300		
Meeting charge	Per hour per officer	-	£157		
Further written advice after meetings		-	£180		
Anny additional correspondence/advice required upon application	Per hour per officer	-	£157		

(6) 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 11.1%, in line with CPI inflation at October 2022.

Sports Pitches	2021/22
Total income	£547,813

		FEE 2022/23		PROPOSED FEE 2023/24	
		Single Booking	Block Booking	Single Booking	Block Booking
Henwick Worthy Sports Ground:					
Cricket – 1 st Hand Wicket (per match)	Adult	£109.00	£90.80	£121.10	£100.88
Cheket — I Hand Wicket (per materi)	Junior	£50.20	£41.90	£55.77	£46.55
Cricket – 2 nd Hand Wicket (used	Adult	£80.70	£67.20	£89.66	£74.66
grass)	Junior	£39.20	£32.70	£43.55	£36.33
Cricket – Artificial Wicket	Adult	£72.50	£60.40	£80.55	£67.10
Clicket – Artiliciai Wicket	Junior	£37.00	£30.80	£41.11	£34.22
Cristed 20d (Danama) Artificial Winter	Adult	Free	Free	Free	Free
Cricket – 2 nd (Reserve) Artificial Wicket	Junior	Free	Free	Free	Free
F # # 0 ()	Adult	£82.50	£68.80	£91.66	£76.44
Football – Grass (per game)	Junior	£40.40	£33.70	£44.88	£37.44
Forthell Admir Disch	Adult	£46.70	£38.90	£51.88	£43.22
Football - Mini Pitch	Junior	£23.30	£19.50	£25.89	£21.66
Durchy Cross (nor come)	Adult	£82.50	£68.80	£91.66	£76.44
Rugby – Grass (per game)	Junior	£40.40	£33.70	£44.88	£37.44
Rugby Training	Cost per Hour	£22.40	£18.70	£24.89	£20.78
Use of Portable Lights	Cost Per Hour	£22.40	£18.70	£24.89	£20.78
	30 Mins	£44.70	£37.30	£49.66	£41.44
Full Pitch Artificial Grass - peak	1hr Only	£89.40	£74.50	£99.32	£82.77
·	1hr 30mins (11 a side)	£134.20	£111.80	£149.10	£124.21
	30 Mins	£25.00	£20.80	£27.78	£23.11
Half Pitch Artificial Grass - peak	1hr Only (5 a side)	£50.00	£41.70	£55.55	£46.33
	1hr 30mins	£75.00	£62.50	£83.33	£69.44
	30 Mins	£20.80	£17.40	£23.11	£19.33
Full Pitch Artificial Grass – off-peak	1hr Only	£41.70	£34.80	£46.33	£38.66
	1hr 30mins (11 a side)	£62.50	£52.10	£69.44	£57.88
	30 Mins	£10.80	£9.10	£12.00	£10.11
Half Pitch Artificial Grass – off-peak	1hr Only (5 a side)	£21.80	£18.10	£24.22	£20.11
	1hr 30mins	£32.60	£27.20	£36.22	£30.22

			EE 2/23	PROPOS 2023	
		Single Booking	Block Booking	Single Booking	Block Booking
Hardcourt Activities:					
Netball (per court per hr) (OUT OF	Adult	£23.30	£19.40	£25.89	£21.55
ORDER AT TIME OF PUBLICATION)	Junior	£11.70	£9.70	£13.00	£10.78
Tennis (per court per hr) (OUT OF	Adult	£7.00	£5.80	£7.78	£6.44
ORDER AT TIME OF PUBLICATION)	Junior	£3.80	£3.10	£4.22	£3.44
Basketball Hardcout and BMX Pump	Adult	Free	Free	Free	Free
Track	Junior	Free	Free	Free	Free
Moorside:					
Football Cross (Par Cama)	Adult	£69.10	£57.50	£76.77	£63.88
Football - Grass (Per Game)	Junior	£34.20	£28.60	£38.00	£31.77
The Diamond -Greenham:				£0.00	£0.00
Football Cross (Par Coms)	Adult	£69.10	£57.50	£76.77	£63.88
Football - Grass (Per Game)	Junior	£34.20	£28.60	£38.00	£31.77
Holybrook Park:					
Factball Cross (per game)	Adult	£69.10	£57.50	£76.77	£63.88
Football – Grass (per game)	Junior	£34.20	£28.60	£38.00	£31.77
Northcroft Recreation Ground:				£0.00	£0.00
Football Grass (per game)	Adult	£69.10	£57.50	£76.77	£63.88
Football - Grass (per game)	Junior	£34.20	£28.60	£38.00	£31.77
Open space hire for coaching/ community use/festivals/other entertainment.		P.(D.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: £21.42 Per Hour (£25.07 inc vat if applicable)

(7) 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.

(8) Waste

Fees include bulky household collection, garden waste collection and provision of additional wheelie bins for garden waste collection. It is proposed to increase the charges by 11.1%, in line with CPI inflation at October 2022.

Waste Services	2021/22
Total income	£1,811,456

		FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
	Normal (within 7 days)	£45	£50
Special Collection Charges (Bulky Household Collection)	Within 7 days by appointment outside property	£60	£67
,	Within 7 days by appointment inside property	£70	£78
Provision of wheelie bin		£27	£30
Collection of garden waste for year (scheduled) - for 1st green bin (new subscriptions or renewals).		£52	£58
Garden Waste service charge for 2nd to 5th green bins (For renewals only where one off set up payment has already been made).		£40	£44
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:			
	Per 25L bag or equivalent/ single item	£2.50	£2.70
Oall and Dubble	Standard Car/Hatchback	£14.30	£15.30
Soil and Rubble	Trailer	£23.80	£25.80
	Small Van /Estate Car	£28.60	£31.60
	Transit van or similar	£95.20	£105.70
	Per 25L bag or equivalent	£2.10	£2.33
Plasterboard	Standard car / Hatchback	£12.90	£14.32
	Trailer	£21.40	£23.75
	Small Van / Estate car	£25.80	£28.65
	Transit Van or similar	£85.60	£95.00
	Motorised mini bike / motorised go-kart	£2.50	£2.61
	Standard tyre off rim (car/motorcycle)	£5.00	£5.55
Tyres	Standard tyre on rim (car motor cycle)	£7.00	£7.77
	Medium tyre off rim (large 4 x4 / large van)	£9.00	£10.00
	Medium tyre on rim (large 4 x 4 / large van)	£11.00	£12.20
	Miscellaneous tyres	£2.50	£2.78
Gas canisters		£6.00	£6.66
Charges for Non WBC Residents' Use of HWRCs	New charge per visit TBC	£7.00	£7.77

3. Proposals – Resources Directorate

3.1 Electoral Services

These charges are statutory and the Council has no discretion to vary the level.

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. All fees have been reviewed to reflect service delivery costs and an increase of 11.1% in line with CPI at October 2022 is proposed for 2023-24 where appropriate.

	INCOME 2021/22	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
LLC1		£54	£60
Con29 PT1	£242,869	£78	£87
Con29PT11		£27	£30
Additional Questions		£49	£54
Con29 additional parcel		£43	£64
LLC1 additional parcel		£58	£48

3.3 Legal Services Fees

There is a change of categorisation for recharges of staff time to more accurately reflect the staff whose time is recharged. The increase is comparable to inflation of 11.1% for 2023-24, in line with CPI at October 2022.

Legal Services 2021/22			
Total Income £185,832			
CHARGE	RATE	FEE	PROPOSED
		2022/23	FEE
			2023/24
Managers	Hourly	£156	n/a
Team Leader	Hourly	£148	n/a
Solicitor / Barrister	Hourly	£143	n/a
Legal Executive/Senior Legal	Hourly	£132	n/a
Solicitors, Barristers, Chartered Legal Executives of 8 Years + PQE	Hourly	n/a	£173
Solicitors, Barristers and Chartered Legal Executives between 4 and 8 year PQE	Hourly	n/a	£159
All other fee earners (including Paralegals and Legal Executives but excluding Trainee Solicitors)	Hourly	n/a	£147
Trainee Solicitors	Hourly	£111	£123

In 2023-24 there is a proposal for the introduction of new charge for the completion of Proof of Life forms.

CHARGE	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
Proof of Life Forms	No Fee	£35

The rest of Legal Services fees and charges are statutory.

	Provision under, or for the purpose of which, the application is made	Purpose of application	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
*	Section 15A of the Commons Act 2006; section 15 Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013	Landowners' Statements	£1,140	£1,200
*	Section 15(1) of the Commons Act 2006	Registration of a new Town or Village green, other than by the Owner	No Fee	No Fee
*	Section 15(8) of the Commons Act 2006	Registration of a New Town or Village Green by Landowner	No Fee	No Fee
*	Section 19 of the Commons Act 2006	Correction, for the purpose of Section 19(2)(a) and [c]of a mistake made by the Registration Authority	No Fee	No Fee
*	Section 19 of the Commons Act 2006	Correction, for a purpose described in section 19(2)(b) or (e)	£200	£200
*	Section 19 of the Commons Act 2006	Correction, for a purpose described in section 19(2)(d) – payable per register unit	£30	£30
*	Schedule 2, paragraph 2 or 3 to the Commons Act 2006	Non-registration of Common Land or Town or Village Green	No Fee	No Fee
*	Schedule 2, paragraph 4 to the Commons Act 2006	Waste Land of a Manor not Registered as Common Land	No Fee	No Fee
*	Schedule 2, paragraph 5, to the Commons Act 2006	Town or Village Green wrongly registered as Common Land	No Fee	No Fee
*	Schedule 2, paragraphs 6 9 to the Commons Act 2006	Deregistration of certain land registered as common land or as a Town or Village Green	£1,000	£1,000
	* Statutory charge			

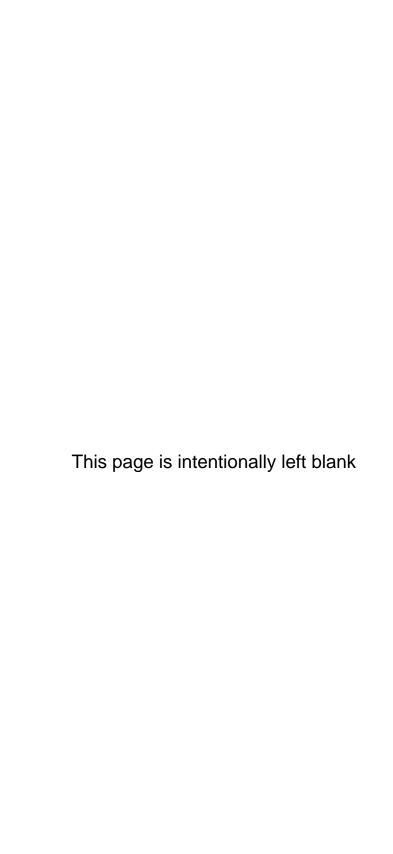
3.4 Council Tax Fees

Fees relating to recovery of unpaid Council Tax are set in consultation with the Ministry of Justice. There is no increase in fees for 2023-24.

	CHARGE	INCOME 2021/22	FEE 2022/23	PROPOSED FEE 2023/24
**	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	£594,192	£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 set by government

^{**} level set by Local Authority



PUBLIC PROTECTION PARTNERSHIP FEES AND CHARGES 2023/2024

The Public Protection Partnership (PPP) provides chargeable services on behalf of two authorities, Bracknell Forest Council and West Berkshire Council.

Fees effective from 1 April 2023

Please Note:

- All Statutory Fees and those linked to national schemes are based on fees published on 08 September 2022 and may be subject to change by Central Government or the management of the schemes.
- The Hourly rate is £64 ph for 2023/24, if there is a minimum number of hours or it is capped it is indicated in the text below.
- Class A Statutory Fees are marked with Pale Gold and Class B Discretionary Fees are headed Blue
- There are some additional fees which will be due when making an application, these are listed separately (if known) and with a note if varied amounts
- If you have any questions regarding our fees and charges please contact PPP Partnership Support Customer Care team using our Make an enquiry form.

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LICENCES, REGISTRATIONS AND CONSENTS

Pre Application Advice

We provide chargeable pre-application advice for the following licenses and consents:

License/Consents	2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Gambling Act	£59ph	£64ph
Licensed Premises Notifications	£59ph	£64ph
Licensing Act 2003	£59ph	£64ph
Scrap Metal	£59ph	£64ph
Sex Establishments	£59ph	£64ph
Skin Piercing & Dermal Treatments	£59ph	£64ph
Street Trading Consents	£59ph	£64ph

Animal Licences

Animal Licences – (Class A – Fee Discretionary)					
*The granting fee includes initial in	•	2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee		
inspection totalling 4 hours (unles					
Inspections required beyond this c					
aborted visits will be charged at ar	n additional fee				
**Additional vets fee payable	0477	0400			
NEW - Animal Boarding	Application Fee	£177	£192		
Establishment - combined (dogs and cats)	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*		
and cats)	Total Fee (minimum)	£413 minimum	£448 minimum		
DENIEWAL Animal Dearding	Application Fee	£148	£160		
RENEWAL - Animal Boarding Establishment - combined (dogs and cats)	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*		
and cats)	Total Fee (minimum)	£384 minimum	£416 minimum		
NEW - Animal Boarding Establishment - single species	Application Fee	£118	£128		
(dogs or cats))	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*		
	Total Fee (minimum)	£354 minimum	£384 minimum		
RENEWAL - Animal Boarding Establishment - single species	Application Fee	£89	£96		
(dogs or cats))	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*		
	Total Fee (minimum)	£325 minimum	£352 minimum		
NEW - Home boarder (midterm inspections to be charged in	Application Fee	£118	£128		
addition to revisits and aborted	Granting Fee	Minimum 2 hours at £118*	Minimum 2 hours at £128*		
visit charges)	Total Fee (minimum)	£236 minimum	£256 minimum		
RENEWAL - Home boarder	Application Fee	£89	£96		
(midterminspections to be	Granting Fee	Minimum 2 hours	Minimum 2 hours		
charged in addition to revisits		at £118*	at £128*		
and aborted visit charges)	Total Fee (minimum)	£207 minimum	£224 minimum		
	Application Fee	£118	£128		

			ppendix i iii
NEW - Home Boarder -	Granting Fee	Per inspection at	Per inspection at
Franchisee arrangers licence	Total Foo /minimums	hourly rate £118 + host	hourly rate £128 + host
(excludes inspection fee per host)	Total Fee (minimum)	inspection fee	inspection fee
	Application Fee	£89	£96
RENEWAL - Home Boarder -	Granting Fee	Per inspection at	Per inspection at
Franchisee arrangers licence	Granting rec	hourly rate	hourly rate
(excludes inspection fee per host)	Total Fee (minimum)	£89 + host	£96 + host
	,	inspection fee	inspection fee
Assessment of hobby host as part of a franchisee licence	Host inspection fee	£118	£128
of a francingee freeze	Application Fee	£177	£192
NEW - Dog Day Care	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*
	Total Fee (minimum)	£413 minimum	£448 minimum
	Application Fee	£148	£160
RENEWAL - Dog Day Care	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*
	Total Fee (minimum)	£384 minimum	£416 minimum
NEW Dee Breeding	Application Fee	£177	£192
NEW - Dog Breeding Establishment (**excluding vet	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*
fee)	Total Fee (minimum)	£413 minimum	£448 minimum
	Application Fee	£148	£160
DENIEWAL Dog Prooding	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours	Minimum 4 hours
RENEWAL - Dog Breeding Establishment	-	at £236*	at £256*
Establishment	Total Fee (minimum)	£384 minimum	£416 minimum
NEW Dog Prooding	Application Fee	£118	£128
NEW - Dog Breeding Establishment (in domestic	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*
dwelling)(**excluding vetfee)	Total Fee (minimum)	£354 minimum**	£384 minimum**
	Application Fee	£89	£96
RENEWAL - Dog Breeding Establishment (in domestic	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*
dwelling)	Total Fee (minimum)	£325 minimum	£352 minimum
NEW - Pet Vending / Sale of pets	Application Fee	£118	£128
	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*
	Total Fee (minimum)	£354 minimum	£384 minimum
	Application Fee	£89	£96
RENEWAL - Pet Vending / Sale of pets	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*
· ·-	Total Fee (minimum)	£325 minimum	£352 minimum
	Application Fee	£177	£192
NEW - Animal for Exhibition	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours at £236*	Minimum 4 hours at £256*
	Total Fee (minimum)	£413 minimum	£448 minimum

	Appendix i iii				
	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours	Minimum 4 hours		
		at £236*	at £256*		
		£384 minimum	£416 minimum		
Riding Establishment - Inspections	are carried out annually, reg	ardless of the star rat	ing or length of		
licence, by a qualified Veterinarian	Officer. **Vets fees will be r	echarged separately.			
NEW - Main inspection fee, plus	Application Fee	£118	£128		
fee per horse (**excluding vets	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours	Minimum 4 hours		
fee)		at £236*	at £256*		
icej	Total Fee (minimum)	£354 minimum**	£416 minimum**		
	Application Fee	£89	£96		
RENEWAL - Main inspection fee,	Granting Fee	Minimum 4 hours	Minimum 4 hours		
plus fee per horse (**excluding		at £236*	at £256*		
vets fee)	Total Fee (minimum)	£325 minimum**	£352 minimum**		
Fee per horse, for the first 10		£15	£16		
horses					
Fee per horse, for next 11-50		£10	£11		
horses					
Fee per horse, for every horse 51		£8	£9		
& over					
Other Fees					
Additional mid licence visit		£118	£128		
Variation to the licence fee		£177	£192		
(inclusive of one visit)					
Replacement licence fee (lost or		£30	£32		
stolen paperwork, change of					
name, etc.)					
Re-evaluation of star rating		£118	£128		
(inclusive of one visit)					
Transfer due to death of licensee	Admin cost	£30	£32		

Wild Animals and Zoos

Wild Animals & Zoos	Duration	Bracknell Forest	Bracknell Forest	West Berkshire 2022/23 Fee	West Berkshire
		2022/23 Fee	2023/24	2022/23166	2023/24
Dangerous Wild Animal	2 years	£472	£512	£472	£512
Consent - New					
(** excluding vets fee)					
Dangerous Wild Animal	2 years	£295	£320	£295	£320
Consent – Renewal					
(** excluding vets fee)					
Zoo Licences (new &	Up to 6	£2065	£2240	£2,066.00	£2240
renewals)	years				
Periodical inspections (**					
excluding Vets Fees)					

Explosives Licences – Statutory

Description	Duration	All Council Areas
	1 year	£111.00
Now license for explosives helpy 350kg Net Explosive	2 years	£144.00
New licence for explosives below 250kg Net Explosive Content (NEC)	3 years	£177.00
Content (NEC)	4 years	£211.00
	5 years	£243.00
	1 year	£55.00
Renewal of licence for explosives below 250kg Net Explosive	2 years	£88.00
Content (NEC)	3 years	£123.00
Content (NEC)	4 years	£155.00
	5 years	£189.00
	1 year	£189.00
Now licence for explosives above 350kg Net Explosive	2 years	£248.00
New licence for explosives above 250kg Net Explosive Content (NEC)	3 years	£311.00
Content (NEC)	4 years	£382.00
	5 years	£432.00
	1 year	£88.00
Renewal of licence for explosives above 250kg Net Explosive	2 years	£150.00
Content (NEC)	3 years	£211.00
Content(NEC)	4 years	£272.00
	5 years	£333.00
Varying the name of licensee or address of site		£37.00
Any other kind of variation		Cost Recovery
Transfer of licence		£37.00
Replacement Licence		£37.00
Full year registration for sale of fireworks (capped fee)		£500.00

Gambling Act 2005 – Statutory

Description	Туре	All Council Areas
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	
	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

		Appendix Fili
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
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
Alllicences	Notification of change	£50
	Copy of licence	£25
Club gaming or machine	New Application	£200
permit	Existing holder	£100
	Renewal	£200
	Annual Fee	£50
	Variation	£100
	Copy of licence	£15
Club Gaming or Machine	New Application	£100
Permit (holds a club Premises	Renewal	£100
Certificate under Licensing		
Act 2003)		
Licensed Premises Notifications		All Council Areas
To make available up to 2	Notification of intention	£50
gaming machines on premises		250
which hold on-premises		
alcohol licence		
	Application (existing holder)	£100
	- Ph. 1990 11 (2.100 11)	2200

Gaming Machine Permit	New Application	£150
(more than 2 machines) on-	Annual Fee	£50
premises which hold on	First Annual Fee (payable within 30 days	£50
premises alcohol licence	of date permit takes effect)	
	Variation	£100
	Transfer	£25
	Change of name	£25
	Copy of permit	£15

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences

Vehicle Licences		Bracknell Forest 2022/23 Fee	West Berkshire 2022/23 Fee	All Council Areas (where applicable) 2023/24 Fee
Hackney Carriage Vehicle – New		£266	£266	£288*
Hackney Carriage Vehicle – Renewal		£236	£236	£256*
Private Hire Vehicle – New		£266	£266	£288
Private Hire Vehicle – Renewal		£236	£236	£256
Home to school – New and renewal		£148	N/a	£160
Private Hire Vehicle with Dispensation - New		£266	£266	£288
Private Hire Vehicle with Dispensation - Renewal		£236	£236	£256
Temporary Vehicle Licence	Up to 3 months	£236	£236	£256
Driver Licences				
Driver – New	3 year Includes initial tests, safeguarding and disability trainings	£301	£301	£328
Driver-Renewal		£272	£272	£296
Home to school – New & Renewal	3 year Includes initial tests, safeguarding and disability trainings	£207	N/A	£225
Conversion of driver licence to another type	1.5hrs (inc retaking tests)	£89	£89	£96

^{*} It was agreed at the Executive meeting on the 22 September 2022 that West Berkshire Council would offer a fee based remittance scheme, subsidised by the Council and that it be introduced from 01 April 2023 for both electric (100%) and hybrid (50%) vehicles that met the agreed criteria.

Private Hire Operators (PHO)

Private Hire Operator	Number of	2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
	Vehicles		
	1	£443.00	£480
NEW	2	£516.00	£560
	3	£590.00	£640
	4	£664.00	£720
	5	£738.00	£800
Per vehicle calculation	6	£811.00	£880
of 3.5 hours (at £64.00	7	£885.00	£960
hourly rate) plus an	8	£959.00	£1040
hour per year (years	9	£1,033.00	£1120
2-5) for first vehicle,	10	£1,106.00	£1200
plus 15 minutes per	11	£1,180.00	£1286
additional vehicle per	12	£1,254.00	£1360
years (years 1-5) up to	13	£1,328.00	£1440
a maximum of 20 vehicles	14	£1,401.00	£1520
venicies	15	£1,475.00	£1600
	16	£1,549.00	£1680
	17	£1,623.00	£1760
	18	£1,696.00	£1840
	19	£1,770.00	£1920
	20	£1,844.00	£2000
	20+	£1,844.00	£2000
District Allian Control	Number of	2022/22 5	2022/245
Private Hire Operator	number of	2022/23 Fee	2023/24Fee
Private Hire Operator	Vehicles	2022/23 Fee	2023/24Fee
		£325.00	£352
Private Hire Operator RENEWAL	Vehicles 1 2	£325.00 £398.00	£352 £432
	Vehicles 1	£325.00	£352
RENEWAL	Vehicles	£325.00 £398.00	£352 £432
RENEWAL Pervehicle calculation	Vehicles 1 2 3	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00	£352 £432 £512
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64	Vehicles	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00	£352 £432 £512 £592
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 hourly rate) plus an	Vehicles	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 hourly rate) plus an hour per year (years	Vehicles 1 2 3 4 5 6	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 hourly rate) plus an hour per year (years 2-5) for first vehicle,	Vehicles 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 hourly rate) plus an hour per year (years 2-5) for first vehicle, plus 15 minutes per	Vehicles 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 hourly rate) plus an hour per year (years 2-5) for first vehicle, plus 15 minutes per additional vehicle per	Vehicles 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00 £915.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912 £992
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 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	Vehicles 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00 £915.00 £988.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912 £992 £1072
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 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 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00 £915.00 £988.00 £1,062.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912 £992 £1072 £1152
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 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	Vehicles 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00 £915.00 £988.00 £1,062.00 £1,136.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912 £992 £1072 £1152 £1232
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 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 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00 £915.00 £988.00 £1,062.00 £1,136.00 £1,210.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912 £992 £1072 £1152 £1152 £1232 £1312
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 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 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00 £915.00 £988.00 £1,062.00 £1,136.00 £1,210.00 £1,283.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912 £992 £1072 £1152 £1232 £1312 £1392
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 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 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00 £915.00 £915.00 £1,062.00 £1,136.00 £1,210.00 £1,283.00 £1,357.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912 £992 £1072 £1152 £1232 £1312 £1392 £1472
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 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 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00 £915.00 £915.00 £1,062.00 £1,136.00 £1,210.00 £1,283.00 £1,357.00 £1,431.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912 £992 £1072 £1152 £1152 £1312 £1392 £1472 £1472 £1552
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 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 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00 £915.00 £988.00 £1,062.00 £1,136.00 £1,210.00 £1,283.00 £1,357.00 £1,431.00 £1,505.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912 £992 £1072 £1152 £1152 £1232 £1312 £1392 £1472 £1552 £1632
RENEWAL Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 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 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	£325.00 £398.00 £472.00 £546.00 £620.00 £693.00 £767.00 £841.00 £915.00 £915.00 £1,062.00 £1,136.00 £1,210.00 £1,283.00 £1,357.00 £1,431.00 £1,505.00 £1,578.00	£352 £432 £512 £592 £672 £752 £832 £912 £992 £1072 £1152 £1232 £1312 £1392 £1472 £1552 £1632 £1712

Other Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Charges

Other charges		2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Other thanges		2022/23 166	All Council Areas
			(where applicable)
Variation to PHO licence	To include reissue of	£59	£64
	licence with additional		
	vehicle registration		
	added plus extra fees		
	for these for length of licence		
Transfer of vehicle to		£59	£64
new owner			
Change of vehicle		£74	£80
Replacement Licence		£30	£32
Replacement Badge		£30 + Badge Costs	£32 + Badge Costs (£5)
Replacement Vehicle		£30 + Plate Costs (£26)	£32 + Plate Costs (£26)
Licence Plate			
KnowledgeTest		£74	£80
Missed Appointment		£30	£32
Disclosure and Barring		£79	£70
Service Check (DBS)			
Advertising on a	Bracknell Only	£59	£64
Hackney carriage - New			
Advertising on a	Bracknell Only	£30	£32
Hackney Carriage -			
Renewal			
Change of address (PH		£10.50	£11.50
& HC)			
Backing Plate		£26 at cost	£26 at cost
Medical Exemption		£30	£32
Refund Processing Fee		£30	£32
Change of vehicle	Including	£30 + sticker and	£32 + sticker and
registration	Due also all Ondes	licence costs	licence costs (£31)
Age of vehicle	Bracknell Only	£59	£64
Inspection – initial & renewal			
Pre-application advice,	Min 1 hour	£59	£64
hourly rate	I WIIII I HOUI	L.33	104
Disability Awareness		Included in driver	Included in driver
Training		application fee	application fee
Safeguarding Training		Included in driver	Included in driver
		application fee	application fee
First aid Training	Bracknell Only		Will be removed if
			revisions to policy
			adopted

Hairdresser Registration (Bracknell Forest Only)

Description	2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
		All Council Areas
		(where applicable)
Hairdresser/barber registration	£30	£32

Licensing Act 2003 - Statutory

Premises Licence – "one off" fees set by statute based upon rateable	PPP Areas
value (RV) of premises (Class B – Statutory Fee)	C100
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	£64
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	£64

Petroleum Licences – Statutory

Petroleum Licences	All Co	uncil Areas
Not exceeding 2,500 litres		£45
Not exceeding 50,000 litres		£61
Exceeding 50,000 litres		£128

Scrap Metal

Description		2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Scrap Metal site –New	3 Years	£472	£512
Scrap Metal site - Renewal	3 Years	£443	£480
Scrap Metal mobile collector - new	3 Years	£236	£256
Scrap Metal mobile collector - renewal	3 Years	£207	£224
Scrap Metal - Variation of Licence		£236	£256
Scrap Metal - change of site manager		£59	£64
Scrap Metal - copy of licence		£11	£16
Scrap Metal - Change of Name		£30	£32

Sex Establishments - Statutory

Description	Туре	All Council Areas
Sex Establishments - (Class A – Fee	Cinema	min £3,100 to max £5,150
Discretionary)	Shop	min £3,100 to max £5,150
	Entertainment Venue	min £3,100 to max £5,150

Skin Piercing & Dermal Treatments

Description	Туре	2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Skin piercing Registrations	Individual (4hrs)	£236	£256
(one off registration) - (Class	Premises (5hrs)	£295	£320
A – Fee Discretionary)	Joint application (7hrs)	£413	£448
Pre-application work, hourly	Min. 1 hour	£59	£64
rate			

Street Trading Consents

Description	Туре	Bracknell Forest 2022/23 Fee	Bracknell Forest 2023/24	West Berkshire 2022/23 Fee	West Berkshire 2023/24
	Daily	N/a	£64	N/a	£64
	1 Week	£144	£156	£144	£156
	Monthly Rate	£241	£262	£241	£262
	3 months	£642	£699	£642	£699
Street Trading	6 months	£803	£875	£803	£875
Consents - (Class A	Annual Fee	£1365	£1487	£1365	£1487
– Fee	6 months max. 2	£642	£699	N/A	N/A
Discretionary)	trading days a week				
	incl. Fri, Sat & Sun				
	6 months max. 2 trading days a week Mon-Thurs only	£482	£525	N/A	N/A

	Ice cream van (per	£717	£781	As for 6	As for 6
	van) 6 month			months	months
				above	above
	Ice cream van (per	£186	£202	As for 1	As for 1
	van) 1 month			months	months
				above	above
Variation fee		£89	£96	£89	£96
Refund for Street Traders	In the event that follo withdrawn by officers If the application is repayable.	s, a sum of 50% o	of the applicati	on fee is payabl	e as a refund.
Pre-application work, hourly rate	Min. 1 hour	£59	£64	£59	£64

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Abandoned vehicles – Statutory

Description		Bracknell Forrest Only
Removal (prescribed fee)	Less than 3.5 tonnes	£150
Daily Storage (prescribed fee)	Less than 3.5 tonnes	£20
Enforcement Disposal costs (prescribed fee)	Less than 3.5 tonnes	£75
Fixed Penalty Notice	Reduced to £120.00 if paid within 7 days	£200
Enforcement invoice costs		£77

Anti-Social Behaviour Act

Description		2022/32 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Anti-Social Behaviour	High Hedges Fee (Class	£1,206	£1310
Act	A – Fee Discretionary)		

Dog Warden Services

Description	2022/23Fee	2023/24 Fee
Stray Dogs – not taken to kennel	£73	£80
Stray Dogs – taken to kennel	£73 plus Cost recovery and	£80 plus Cost recovery and
	Vets fees separate.	Vets fees separate.
Kennels cost	Recharge based on cost	Recharge based on cost
Dog fouling fixed penalty charge	£75	£75
Miscellaneous stray dog activities e.g.	Cost recovery charged at	Cost recovery charged at
taxi, relocating, microchipping	£59	£64ph

Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 – Statutory

Scheduled Processes – (Class B – statutory	All Council Areas
Fee)	
Standard Process	£1,650

		Appendix Fill
Additional fee for operating without a permit		£1,188
•		£257
Service Stations (PVR1& PVRII combined) Service Station (PVR1)		£155
, ,		
Dry Cleaners Vehicle Refinishers		£155
		£362
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant		£1,650
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for the 3 rd to 7 th applications		£985
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for the 8 th and subsequent applications		£498
Substantial changes		
Standard Process		£1,050
		11,030
Standard process where substantial change		£1,650
results in a new PPC activity Reduced Activities		£102
		£102
Annual Subsistence Charge (Statutory)	Low	C773
S. 1.10	Low	£772
Standard Process	Medium	£1,161
	High	£1,747
	Low	£113
Service stations PVR II	Medium	£226
	High	£341
	Low	£228
VR and other reduced fees	Medium	£365
	High	£548
	Low	£79
Dry cleaners/PVR1	Medium	£158
	High	£237
	Low	£626
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant	Medium	£1,034
	High	£1,506
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for 2 nd	Low	£646
permit	Medium	£1,034
	High	£1,506
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for 3rd	Low	£385
to 7 th permit	Medium	£617
	High	£924
Mobile Screening & Crushing Plant for the	Low	£198
8 th and subsequent permits	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	2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Inspection of Housing Premises for Immigration purposes	£404	£435
(Class A – Fee Discretionary)		
Enforcement Notices served under Housing Act 2004	£118	Hrly Rate
HMO Licence NEW - assisted application	£1180	£1280
HMO Licence RENEWAL	£797	£865
Caravan Site Licences		
Site licence new (plus additional fee per pitch)	£443	£480
New licence additional fee per pitch	£16	£17
Transfer of licence	£187	£192
Alteration of conditions	Hrly Rate	Hrly Rate
Annual inspection fee – per pitch	£14	£15
Enforcement action -per hour	£59	£64
Deposit, vary or deleting site rules	£118	£128
Mobile Homes Regulations 2020		
Application Fee – Fit and Proper Test	£118	£128
(any application taking more than two hours to process		
will be charged at an additional hourly rate of £64/ph or		
part thereof)		
Annual Check Fee – Fit and Proper Test	Hrly Rate	Hrly Rate
Where the authority has to assist with appointing a site ma	nager the costs will be	e specified in the

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		2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Risk assessment	Every 5 years. Min. charge 1 hour, simple risk assessment and report typically 5 hours	£59 hourly rate	£64 hourly rate
Sampling	Charge for a visit, taking a sample and delivery to the laboratory. Typically 2.5 hours	£59 hourly rate	£64 hourly rate
Private water and pool samples	Includes cost of testing	£59	£64
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.	£118	£128
Analysis – Regulation 10	Where a supply provides <10m³/day or serves <50 people and is used for domestic purposes	£28	£32
Analysis of Group A		Hourly Rate +	Hourly Rate +
Parameters		Laboratory Costs	Laboratory Costs
Analysis of Group B		Hourly Rate +	Hourly Rate +
Parameters		Laboratory Costs	Laboratory Costs
Hourly charge			£64

Other Fees

	Hourly rate applies minimum of 2 hours	2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Environmental Information Request - Individual, Non-Commercial	Hourly rate applies minimum of 2 hours	£118 minimum	£128 minimum
Environmental Information Request - Commercial and Government	Hourly rate applies minimum of 2 hours	£118 minimum	£128 minimum
Civil Actions (Class A – Fee Discretionary)		£118 minimum	£128 minimum
Safety Certification and administration	Hourly rate applies minimum of 2 hours	£118 minimum	£128 minimum
Pre-Application Advice, hourly charge		£59	£64

TRADING STANDARDS

Buy with confidence

Description	Employee numbers	2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Application Fee	1-5 employees	£125	£136
(set nationally by Buy	6-20 employees	£167	£182
with Confidence	21-49 employees	£208	£226
scheme)	50+ employees	POA	POA
Annual fee	1-5 employees	£250	£272
(set nationally by Buy	6-20 employees	£375	£408
with Confidence	21-49 employees	£500	£545
scheme)	50+ employees	POA	POA
Members before	1-5 employees	£125	£136
2017/18 Annual Fee	6-20 employees	£189	£206
(Bracknell Forest legacy members only)	21-49 employees	£252	£274

^{*} West Berkshire & Wokingham schemes administered by Hampshire County Council

Primary Authority

Description	2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Primary Authority Work hourly chargeable rate	£59 Hrly Rate	£64 Hourly Rate
Annual charge - previous year usage 10 hours or	£531	£576
less		
Annual charge - previous year usage 20 hours	£1062	£1,158
Anything likely to be in excess of 20 hours	Individually assessed	Individually assessed

Support with Confidence

Description	Employee numbers	2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Application fee	1-5 employees	£59	£64
	6-20 employees	£120	£130
	21+ employees	£300	£327

Weights and Measures

Description		2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Weights and Measures Fees	Includes the cost of maintaining calibration of equipment annually (Based on ACTSO guidance)	£64	£64

Other Fees

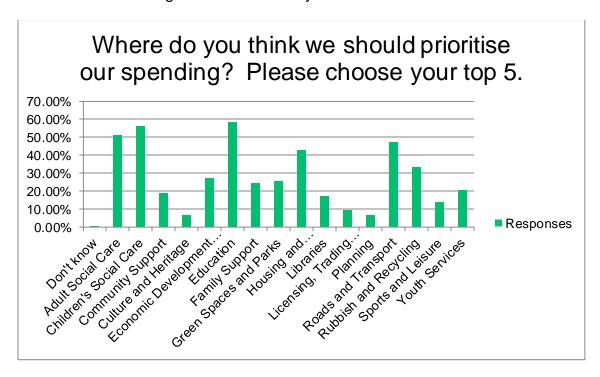
Description		2022/23 Fee	2023/24 Fee
Food export certificates	Full cost recovery based on	£59 minimum	£64 minimum
	hourly rate		
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme	2 hours	£118	£128
rescore			
General Business Advice	Hourly rate (first 30 minutes	£59	£64
(Non-Primary Authority)	free)	159 104	
Resident Request for Advice	Hourly rate	£59	£64

Summary of responses to the budget consultation

To engage residents and businesses in the budget setting process, the Council ran a budget consultation exercise between the 16th December and 19th January (https://www.westberks.gov.uk/balancingourbudget). The response to the consultation was positive with 376 responses over the period.

The consultation asked a range of six questions with the responses provided in the below. The consultation also some freetext boxes as well and though have not been shared in full below due to the number of responses received, some of the comments have been included to demonstrate the feeling and commentary provided. The results have also been highlighted against the proposals from the Executive to Full Council for the budget to highlight where these align or not when Council members are making decisions on the budget.

1) **Spending priorities** – respondents were asked to rank the following areas to be their five highest – the summary is shown below:



The focus of investment priorities has a relatively strong alignment with the proposed budget. The largest areas of investment in the budget are in social care, education, highways and transport and housing, those five areas seeing 83% of the total investment and modelled growth in the budget proposals. The lowest area of priority was planning which does see some proposed investment for the delivery of the local plan as well as increased staffing (offset by increased fees).

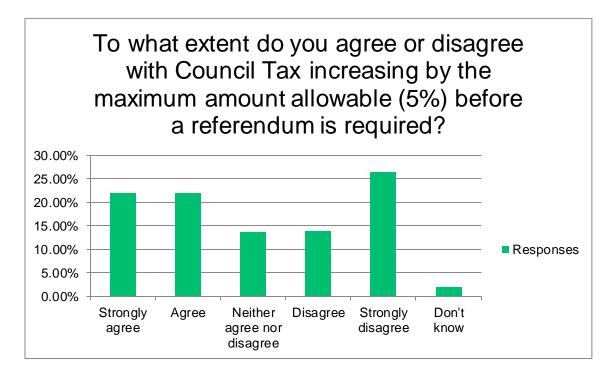
There was a reasonable gap between the top 5 areas and other areas of priority. The comments reflected some of this per the below

[&]quot;Adult Social care must be top priority. Minimise Green issues and bureaucracy eg Environmental issues"

[&]quot;All are priorities - but some are essential - eg social care but Areas such as libraries, green spaces etc are so important for people's well-being"

"It is clearly difficult to choose only five areas and I have selected those we perhaps "should" focus on. However from a personal perspective, our household values green spaces, sport and leisure and roads maintenance in order to do the things which make the current situation more tolerable"

2) Council Tax (within referendum levels)



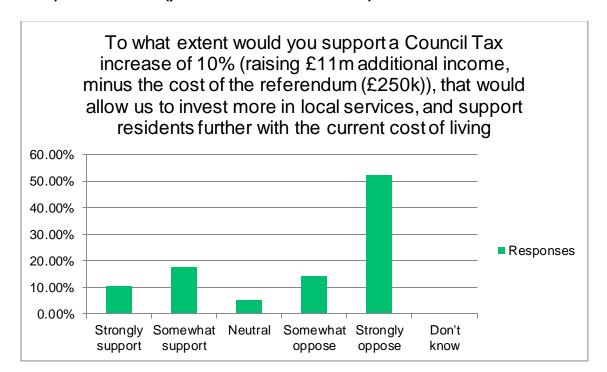
There has been a real split of views on Council Tax changes with 44% of people agreeing or strongly agreeing with a 5% rise and 41% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. The proposal in the budget papers is for a 5% increase in Council Tax.

[&]quot;At this time of strain for households increases should be avoided"

[&]quot;5% is far less than current inflation and so this is necessary. Council tax is good value for money"

[&]quot;This question is difficult. My answer does not explain the situation in as much as this will mean a ~£100 extra for a Band D resident and is probably fine for those who can afford it and terrible for those who can't. Most people will be unable to change their housing situation and any pay increases working people might have will already be more than absorbed by the cost of living. As there is no easy way to determine each person's current position unless they are on benefits, I am leaning towards a disagree"

3) Council Tax (potential for a referendum)



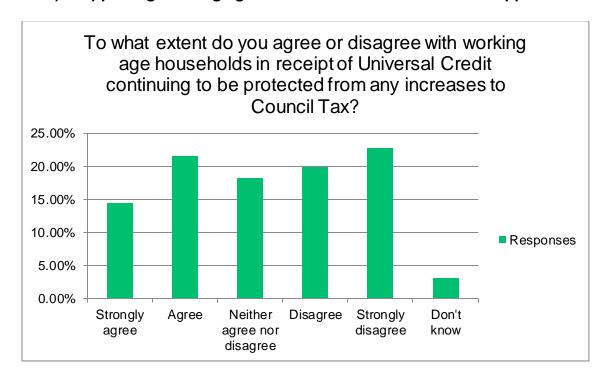
There is a clear disagreement in support of a Council Tax increase of 10% (as noted above the proposal in the budget papers is for an increase below the referendum trigger levels). The comments received on not going for a Council Tax rise of 10% were based around cost of living, Council finding more efficiencies and issues with Council Tax property bandings. There were some supportive comments, 28% of respondents did support the proposal, with some of these were proposing greater grading of Council Tax bandings.

"We have childcare costs going up to £8.55 an hour in the new year. This is to enable us to work full time. Raising council tax would not be helping me with current cost of living pressures"

"With the cost of everything else rising I believe the council should do everything they can to avoid adding to the pressures of local residents rather than increasing council tax by this amount "

"This should be graded against council tax bands. People in higher bands should pay more than people in lower bands....."

4) Supporting working age households with Council Tax Support



This question elicited a higher disagree/strongly disagree comment as opposed to agree/disagree though there was quite a similar level of response across all areas. The proposal is for there to be a £150 additional support with Council Tax for those of working age in receipt of universal credit. Since the release of the consultation, the Government proposed for a £25 protection for *all* claimants of Council Tax Support.

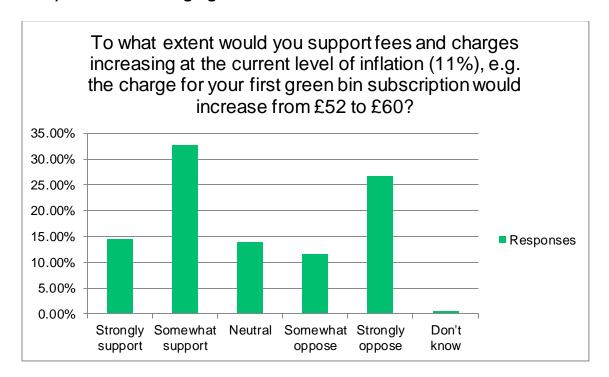
Some of the comments received were around ensuring all pay Council Tax (the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme ensures that those of working age are required to pay a minimum of 30% of their Council Tax bill) and that the cost of living is impacting everyone at present.

[&]quot;Everyone needs to share burden"

[&]quot;I would agree with partial support but everybody needs to feel that they are really contributing"

[&]quot;At the moment it is the duty of those of us who can afford it to help those who can't. I hope eventually things will improve and this could change."

5) Increased charging for services



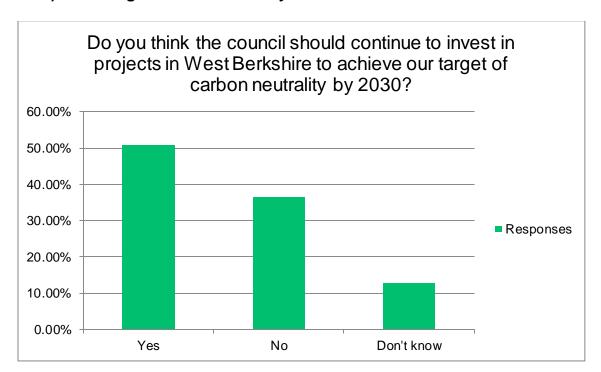
A preference supporting increasing fees and charges has been expressed (47%)) though there was still a substantial minority (38%) in favour of not increasing them in line with current inflation (at the time). There were a range of comments, many focussed on concerns over fly-tipping rising and residents ceasing to pay for the garden waste service.

[&]quot;For services which could be considered luxury such as garden waste, yes"

[&]quot;Increase in costs is going to encourage flytipping of green waste"

[&]quot;5-6% increase tops"

6) Investing in carbon neutrality



There was a preference expressed to continue investing, though a reasonable sized minority support stopping investment. This question elicited the second highest number of responses, with support from many and wanting more work on this and highlighting that climate change is increasing costs to the Council, but also many comments around West Berkshire being a relatively small place compared to the country as a whole / internationally, and support for this agenda but after the cost of living has fallen back down.

"Absolutely. This cannot and should not be dropped. It would be a short-termist and catastrophic action which would damage future residents of our area."

"Carbon neutral projects can be complimentary to economic development and growth (and other priorities) if planned properly and therefore shouldn't be seen as an either / or situation"

"With the current budget problems the money spent here could be utilised elsewhere for a couple of years"

Business Representation

The Council is also required to consult with businesses. Of the overall responses, 29 (8%) were from business representatives within the district. Five of the top six areas of priorities were the same (with a different order) as the overall priorities, but there was a higher value placed on economic development and regeneration which was 2nd highest for business representation. In respect of Council Tax, there was quite a marked difference with the overall population with no overall support for Council Tax rises of 5% or 10%. There was no overall support for agreeing with the proposal on working age households in receipt of Universal credit receiving continued protection from increases to Council Tax. There was also lower levels of support for inflationary uplifts in fees and charges (with an overall majority not in support). In respect of investing in net zero, there was also much lower support than the overall responses, with a majority (56%) in support of not continuing to invest in projects to achieve carbon neutrality.

Some of the comments included:

"My business has to go through planning to open much needed new sites and it takes an incredibly long time, the process is tied up in red tape and is unnecessarily difficult as soon as we open we pay business rates and contribute back, if this process was quicker and smoother more business would be able to pay business rates quicker increasing the council income".

"Please do more to support businesses struggling on the high street, especially with rateable values changing in April. Those who have done well to survive the pandemic and the beginning of the cost of living crisis will be penalised the most for their hard work. The high street is dire as it is and without help, particularly for small independent businesses, it's going to get worse. These businesses are peoples entirely livelihood and the council should finally step up and support them. Without these businesses, West Berkshire is nothing".

Representation of this consultation

The survey also asked some question of individuals concerning their age, ethnicity, gender, postcode. These are summarised in the below to show how the consultation responses compare against the wider population in West Berkshire:

Sex

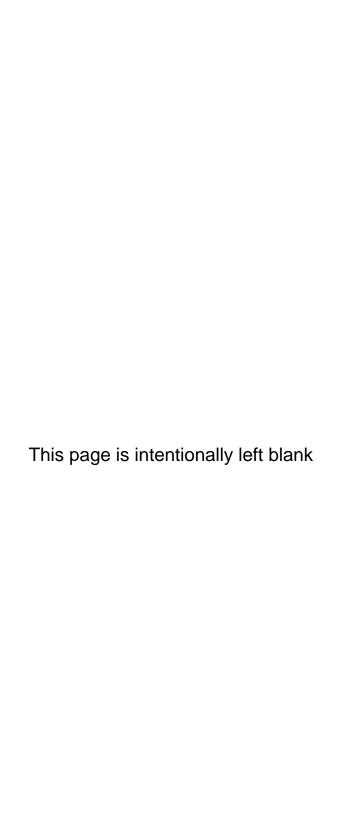
ltem	West Berkshire	Budget consultation
Female Residents	50.6%	54%
Male Residents	49.4%	45%

Age

	West Berkshire %	Budget consultation %
Age range		
Aged 24 years and under	28	2
Aged 25 to 34 years	11.3	8
Aged 35 to 64 years	41.2	67.1
Aged 65 to 74 years	10.6	16.2
Aged 75 years and over	9	6.6

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	West Berkshire %	Budget consultation %
Asian, Asian British or	3.7	1.7
Asian Welsh		
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or	1.3	0
African		
Mixed or Multiple ethnic	2.4	0.3
groups		
White	91.9	95.9
Other ethnic group	0.7	2.1



Capital Financial Performance Report Quarter Three 2022/23

Committee considering report: Executive

Date of Committee: 9 February 2023

Portfolio Member: Councillor Ross Mackinnon

Date Portfolio Member agreed: 26 January 2023

Report Author: Shannon Coleman-Slaughter

Forward Plan Ref: EX4301

1 Purpose of the Report

The financial performance report provided to Members reports on the forecast under or over spends against the Council's approved capital budget. This report presents the forecast outturn position for financial year 2022/23 as at Quarter Three.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the forecast outturn position on the 2022/23 capital programme.
- 2.2 In respect of reprofiling of planned capital expenditure, members are asked to approve:
 - (a) £7.3 million of planned expenditure to be reprofiled into financial year 2023/24 (project details in Appendix B).
 - (b) £39k of Council funding (i.e. debt funding) proposed to be brought forward from approved expenditure for financial year 2023/4 into financial year 2022/23 (project details in Appendix B).
- 2.3 In respect of reprofiling of planned capital expenditure, members are asked to note:
 - (a) £239k of external funding to be brought forward from financial year 2023/24 into financial year 2022/23 (project details in Appendix B).

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

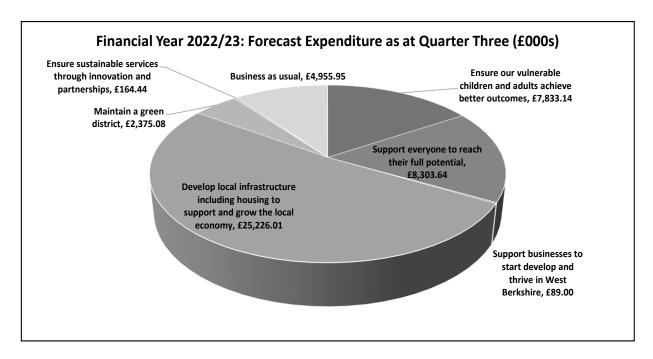
Implication Commentary

Financial:	At the end of Quarter Three, expenditure of £48.9 million has been forecast against a revised budget of £59.1 million, an overall forecast underspend of £10.2 million. £7.3 million of future expenditure is proposed to be reprofiled into financial year 2023/24. £278k of funding is proposed to be brought forward from financial year 2023/24 into financial year 2022/23.									
Human Resource:	Not a	Not applicable								
Legal:	Not a	pplicat	ole							
Risk Management:	to d difficu close poten risk o	A key ongoing risk is the potential impact of engaged suppliers to default on contractual obligations through financial difficulties. Budget Managers and Capital Strategy Group are closely monitoring these risks to highlight projects with potential suppliers of concern and where there is an ongoing risk of default and/or the potential to retender agreed contracts at potentially higher cost.								
Property:	Not a	pplicab	ole							
Policy:	Not a	pplicab	ole							
	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:	Х			
Health Impact:	X			
ICT Impact:	X			
Digital Services Impact:	Х			
Council Strategy Priorities:	Х			
Core Business:	Х			
Data Impact:	Х			
Consultation and Engagement:	Officer	olmes, Executive	Resources,	s151

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The capital programme enables delivery of key Council schemes focused on supporting the approved Capital and Council Strategies.
- 4.2 At Quarter Three, expenditure of £48.9 million is forecast to be incurred in delivering against the approved capital programme in financial year 2022/23. The forecast expenditure of £48.9 million against an approved budget of £59.1 million, generates a forecast year end underspend of £10.2 million. Forecast planned expenditure by Council Strategy priority is detailed in the graphic below.



- 4.3 As part of the forecast outturn position £7.3 million of future planned expenditure is proposed to be reprofiled into financial year 2023/24, a detailed breakdown of which is included in Appendix B. This is comprised of £2.8 million of Council funded expenditure (i.e. to be financed through external borrowing) and £4.5 million of externally funded expenditure. A further £278k of funding is proposed to be brought forward from financial year 2023/24 to enable completion of existing projects, details are provided in Appendix B. Quarter Three reprofiling will be processed as part of the 2022/23 financial year close down process.
- 4.4 In respect of financing the capital programme, as at 30th November 2022, the Council's total level of long term borrowing to fund capital spend stood at £188.8 million. The total level of long term borrowing forecast at 31st March 2023 is £186.9 million.
- In respect of the economic outlook, the Bank of England (BoE) increased Bank Rate by 0.5% to 3.5% in December 2022. This followed a 0.75% rise in November which was the largest single rate hike since 1989 and the ninth successive rise since December 2021. Recent economic instability has been reflected in significant increases to Local Government borrowing from the PWLB (Public Works and Loans Board), with rates for a 25 year annuity loan now on average at near 5% compared to an average of 2.5%. In a rising interest environment, the Council will face risks of increased cost on any new external borrowing undertaken to support delivery of planned capital works, in addition to general cost inflationary pressures. The capital programme approved by Council Committee in March 2022 was set with the expectation to undertake £14.5 million of new long term borrowing alongside £8.1 million of short term borrowing during 2022/23. During the current financial year officers have sought to mitigate risk through a strategy of not undertaking long term borrowing in respect of PWLB financing and, instead focusing on supporting delivery of the capital programme through short term borrowing and cash balances. The strategy of keeping borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing, in order to reduce risk and keep interest costs low is anticipated to continue until 31st March 2023.

4.6 Capital financing costs are incurred a year in arrears, hence the cost of financing 2022/23 capital expenditure will fall into financial year 2023/24. Current planning indicates that approximately there is a £46.3 million borrowing requirement in 2023/24 in support of capital expenditure, the waste PFI and maintaining minimum investment balances of £10 million.

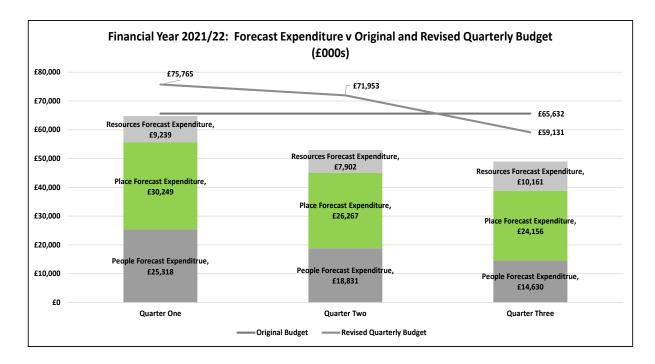
5 Supporting Information

Introduction

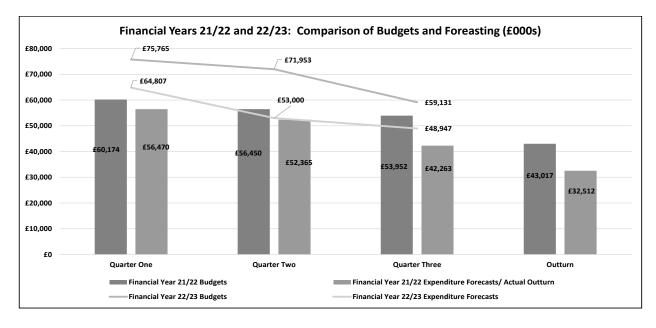
- 5.1 Capital expenditure and its supporting financing have financial consequences for the Council for many years into the future. Expenditure is therefore subject to both a national regulatory framework and to local policy framework.
- 5.2 The Prudential Code requires authorities to look at capital 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 that local authorities have fulfilled these objectives, the code sets out a number of indicators, although the Code does not include suggested indicative limits or ratios. Local Authorities are to set their own limits and ratios, subject to controls under section 4 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Council's capital programme is a key driver of the treasury management activity.

Background

- 5.3 As at Quarter Three, total forecast expenditure against the approved capital programme of £59.1 million for 2022/23 amounts to £48.9 million, generating a £10.2 million underspend position.
- 5.4 The 2022/23 capital programme was agreed by Council in March 2022 with a gross expenditure budget of £65.6 million split between externally funded expenditure of £28.7 million and £36.9 million of Council funded expenditure (i.e. application of capital receipts and external borrowing). The repayment of principal sums and interest on loans used to fund capital expenditure are met from the revenue budget for capital financing and risk management. Included within the capital programme for 2022/23 was £20.3 million of expenditure reprofiled from the 2021/22 approved capital programme, with an additional £9 million of expenditure subsequently reprofiled into 2022/23 at the end of 2021/22. During the financial year budget changes may occur, mainly as a result of budgets brought forward from prior financial years, additional grants, s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations received in year or expenditure re-profiled in future financial years. As part of the budget monitoring process, the forecast year end position of the capital projects is reviewed and proposals for unutilised budgets to be re-profiled is reviewed by CSG. Appendix A provides a breakdown of budget changes as at the Quarter Three.
- 5.5 The Quarter Three forecast position is after £23.7 million of expenditure having been reprofiled into financial year 2023/24 in Quarters One and Two (£5.8 million and £17.9 million respectively). The graphic below details forecasting during financial year 2022/23 against the original approved budget as revised for reprofiling and other in year budget changes.



5.6 The trend for a reducing expenditure forecast and increased reprofiling throughout the financial year is not uncommon. Projects are subject to delays for various reasons – for example, delay in appointing contractors, planning negotiations and increased costs through inflation and restriction of accessible suppliers. The graphic below compares the current year forecasts against budget (line element of the graphic) to the quarterly position in financial year 2021/22 (bar element of the graphic).

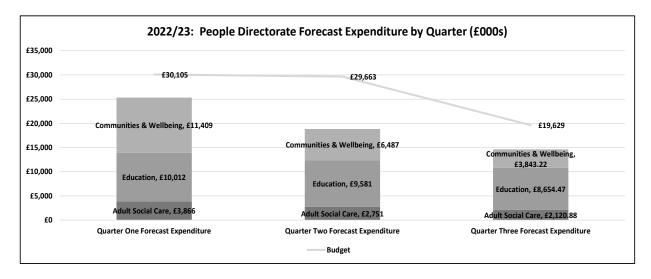


5.7 Reprofiling throughout the financial is incorporated into the annual capital programme budget setting process to ensure all capital financing assumptions remain robust and sustainable.

Financial Year 2022/23 Forecasting as at Quarter Three

The People Directorate

5.8 The directorate is forecasting total expenditure of £14.6 million against a budget of £19.6 million. £4.2 million of the forecast underspend is proposed to be reprofiled into financial year 2023/24 with £278k of funding brought forward from financial year 2023/24 to enable completion of projects ahead of schedule. The graphic below details forecasting during financial year 2022/23 against the original approved budget as revised for reprofiling and other in year budget changes.

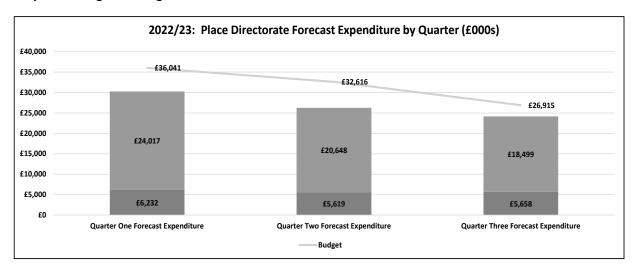


- 5.9 Adult Social Care is forecasting a £1.3 million underspend with a proposal for £830k of planned expenditure to be reprofiled into financial year 2023/24. The £830k relates to planned expenditure on the refurbishment of the Council's residential home asset base and modernisation works. £450k of unutilised Council funded budget relates to planned expenditure which is no longer anticipated on occupational therapy equipment and telecare. Both budgets are demand led annual budgets. Budget Managers have confirmed that sufficient budget is provided for financial year 2023/24 in the proposed capital programme and no reprofiling of funding is required from 2022/23.
- 5.10 Children and Family Services are forecasting a minor £9k underspend relating to property adaptation and accessibility works. This is a demand led budget and no reprofiling from 2022/23 into financial year 2023/24 has been sought by the service.
- 5.11 Education Services is forecasting a £1.1 million underspend with a proposal to reprofile £768k into financial year 2023/24. The £768k relates to planned expenditure on primary and secondary basic need projects, and the Brookfields expansion project which has slipped due to recruitment issues in the Property Services team. The icollege development which was delayed due to issues appointing a contractor. The Calcot Remodelling project which is delayed at the feasibility stage due to issues around external areas and potentially surplus land. £239k of allocated external funding per the approved capital programme is proposed to be brought forward from financial year 2023/24 to support delivery of SEMH/ASD resourced provision in secondary schools. This project has incurred increased costs in 2022/23 due to an acceleration of the project in year. £570k of unutilised funding across a number of projects has not be identified for reprofiling by the service, inclusive of Council funding for completed projects: Speenhamland 2FTE project (£149k), Parsons Down rationalisation project (Phase 1 and 2 underspend £170k).

5.12 The Communities and Wellbeing Service is forecasting a £2.6 million underspend with a proposal to reprofile £2.6 million of planned expenditure into financial year 2023/24. The £2.6 million relates to £1.1million of Council funded planned expenditure on leisure centre modernisation and provision including a modular exercise studio in Hungerford (£105k) and playing pitch provision (£500k), and £1.5 million of planned expenditure on expansion of the Berkshire Records Office (funding split £1.2 million external funding and £300k Council funding). A further £39k of Council funding is proposed to be brought forward from financial year 2023/24 to fund expenditure on members' bids. Previously at Quarter Two the service had requested full reprofiling of the 2022/23 budget into 2023/24 as there was an expectation that works would not commence in the current financial year. The Quarter Three request is to reprofile back committed funding into financial year 2023/24.

The Place Directorate

5.13 The directorate is forecasting total expenditure of £24.2 million against a budget of £26.9 million. The £2.7 million forecast underspend is proposed to be reprofiled into financial year 2023/24. The graphic below details forecasting during financial year 2022/23 against the original approved budget as revised for reprofiling and other in year budget changes.

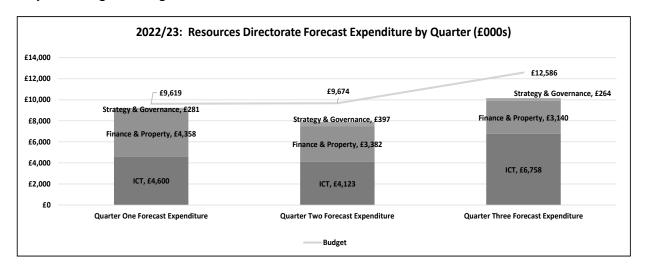


- 5.14 The Development and Regulation Service is forecasting an online position at Quarter Three with no proposed reprofiling of expenditure into financial year 2023/24. The service reprofiled £568k of planned expenditure into financial year 2023/24 at Quarter Two, reprofiling is detailed in Appendix B.
- 5.15 The Environment Service is forecasting a £2.75 million underspend with proposed reprofiling of £2.7 million. The £2.7 million of reprofiling is split between £2.4 million of externally funded expenditure and £271k of Council funded planned expenditure. The £2.4 million of external funding is inclusive of Newbury Rail Station Improvements (£1.5 million), Theale Station Improvements (£400k), and the Bus Service Improvement Plan (£434k). Theale and Newbury station improvement projects are subject to delays from third parties. The Bus Station Improvement Plan funding was awarded in January 2023, The Department for Transport have been advised that due to lateness of funding allocation design and delivery of the project has been delayed until financial year 2023/24. £271k of Council funded planned expenditure proposed to be slipped into financial year 2023/24 primarily relates to

the Solar Photovoltaics project (£116k) and natural carbon reduction measures project (£155k). The Solar project is delayed due to limitations in available asset data and requirement for further assessments. The natural carbon measures project is delayed due to dependencies on third party land. The £50k not proposed for reprofiling relates primarily to Council funded planned expenditure on the Faraday Road Open Space project (£40k) where the project scope has been reduced and funding is no longer required.

The Resources Directorate

5.16 The directorate is forecasting total expenditure of £10.2 million against a budget of £12.6 million. £320k of the forecast underspend is proposed to be reprofiled into financial year 2023/24. The graphic below details forecasting during financial year 2022/23 against the original approved budget as revised for reprofiling and other in year budget changes.

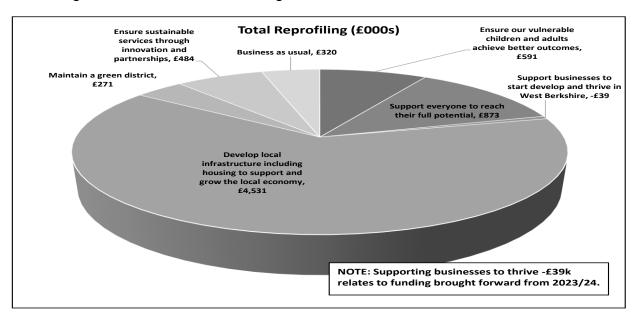


- 5.17 The ICT service is forecasting a £864k underspend and no proposal for reprofiling has been submitted by the service. The £864k primarily relates to planned Council funded expenditure on projects: Telephony (£402k), capital salaries (£252k) this saving is being driven by vacancies, and refresh of the MFD fleet (£200k). The service undertook a reprofiling of planned expenditure into financial year 2023/24 at Quarter Two, details of reprofiling is included in Appendix B. The ICT budget was increased at Quarter Three to include provision for delivery of Superfast Broadband (£2.9 million) and for a Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator project (£498k). Details of budget changes are included in Appendix A.
- 5.18 The Finance and Property Service is forecasting a £1.4 million underspend with a proposal for £230k to be reprofiled into financial year 2023/24. The £230k of proposed reprofiling relates to Council funded planned expenditure on the Enterprise Resource Planning project. This project has now been re-scoped with a focus primarily on a new HR/Payroll system and is currently at the procurement stage. The balance of unutilised funding in the current financial year (£1.18 million), relates primarily to planned Council funded expenditure on landlord fits out works (commercial property portfolio) that are no longer required (£970k), and Community Infrastructure Levy funding bids (£147k).

5.19 The Strategy and Governance Service is forecasting a £146k underspend with a proposal to reprofile £90k into financial year 2023/24. The £90k relates to Council funded planned expenditure on digitisation infrastructure projects. The balance of unutilised funding relates to Council funded project management where posts remained vacant until January 2023.

Proposals

- 5.20 As part of the Quarter Three budget monitoring review, £7.3 million of expenditure has been identified as unlikely to be incurred in the current financial year and is requested to be reprofiled into subsequent financial years. A further £278k of funding has been proposed to be brought forward from financial year 2023/24. Appendix B provides a breakdown by project of proposed reprofiling.
- 5.21 The funding of the proposed reprofiling into financial year 2023/24 is split between £4.5 million of Council funding (i.e. expenditure funded through external borrowing) and £2.8 million of external funding (i.e. external grants, S106 and CIL). The proposed reprofiling from 2023/24 into 2022/23 is split between £239k of external funding and £39k of Council funding.



5.22 Post reprofiling the revised forecast outturn underspend is a £3.2 million underspend. Total planned expenditure in 2022/23 is forecast to be £48.9 million, of which £22.6 million is planned to be funded through Council borrowing. The costs of any long term financing through PWLB loans will be incurred against the 2023/24 revenue capital financing budget.

6 Other options considered

Not applicable.

7 Conclusion

7.1 The capital programme is subject to a number of financial risks. Construction inflation (currently forecast at 8 - 10% compared to an assumed level of 2%) potentially resulting

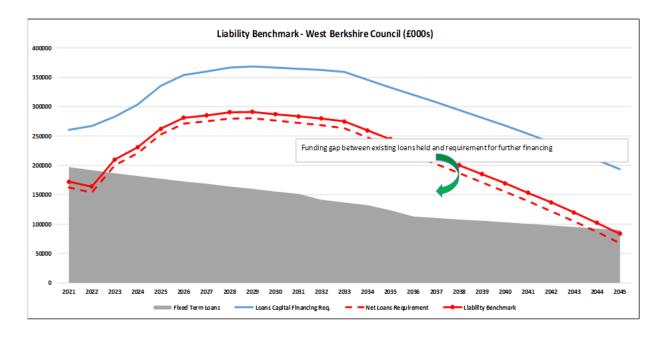
current contracts being subject to a reduction in scope to deliver within agreed financial terms and tender cost for new projects subject to significant increases. The scale of the programme itself is also dependant on sufficient resourcing both internally and externally being available to support delivery. During 2021/22 £27.8 million of expenditure was reprofiled into 2022/23 (including £9 million reprofiled at outturn), which equated to 58% of the original 2021/22 capital programme. Total reprofiling in 2022/23 at £31 million of which £20.6 million is Council funded equates to 40.9% of the Quarter One budget.

- 7.2 All capital expenditure must be financed, The Prudential Code requires authorities 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. A key indicator is the Council's Authorised Limit for external for debt which was approved at Council on 3rd March 2022, at £367.1 million for the current financial year. As well as the level of borrowing needed to fund capital expenditure, the Limit also allows for debt embedded in the Waste PFI contract and any temporary borrowing which is required for cash flow purposes during the year (up to a maximum of £24 million at any one time).
- 7.3 As at 30th November 2022, the Council's total level of long term borrowing to fund capital spend stood at £188.8 million. During financial year 2022/23 a strategy of not undertaking long term borrowing in respect of Public Works and Loan Board (PWLB) financing has been pursued, instead focusing on supporting delivery of the capital programme through short term borrowing and cash balances. The strategy of keeping borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing, in order to reduce risk and keep interest costs has minimised the impact of rising PWLB rates on the Council. The total level of long term borrowing forecast at 31st March 2023 is £186.9 million. Based on the Quarter Three capital expenditure position and the level of proposed reprofiling it is not anticipated that long term borrowing will be required in the duration of the current financial year. Major Council funded (i.e. debt funded) schemes reprofiled at during the financial year that have contributed to the revised borrowing position are:
 - (a) Downlands Sports Centre replacement and expansion, £2.9 million
 - (b) The Playing Pitch Action Plan, £4.4 million
 - (c) Renewable Energy Provision, £2.7 million
- 7.4 In August 2021 HM Treasury significantly revised guidance for the PWLB lending facility and CIPFA published its revised Prudential Code for Capital Finance and Treasury Management Code on 20th December 2021. To comply with the Prudential Code, authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return. This Code also states that it is not prudent for local authorities to make investment or spending decision that will increase the Capital Financing Requirement "CFR" (which represents an authority's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes), unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the authority. The 2022/23 capital programme was expected to increase the Council's CFR by £23 million to £304.5 million by 31.3.2023 based on the Council's draft 2021/22 financial statements and the approved capital programme. As at Quarter Three the revised forecast CFR based on revised planned capital expenditure is £287.1 million, increasing to £307.4 million in financial year 2023/24.

	31.3.22	31.3.23	31.3.24
Balance Sheet Summary & Forecast	Actual	Estimate	Forecast
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Capital financing requirement	278,408	287,142	307,432
Less: Other debt liabilities *	(11,483)	(10,670)	(9,807)
Loans CFR	266,925	276,473	297,625
Less: External borrowing **	(191,848)	(186,891)	(181,974)
Internal borrowing	75,077	89,581	115,651
Less: Balance sheet resources	112,867	68,358	69,358
Treasury investments / (New borrowing requirement)	37,790	(21,223)	(46,293)

- 7.5 Capital financing costs are incurred a year in arrears, hence the cost of financing 2022/23 capital expenditure will fall into financial year 2023/24. Based on Quarter Three forecasting, the Council's Balance Sheet forecast indicates that long term borrowing will be required in financial year 2023/24. Current planning indicates that approximately there is a £46.3 million borrowing requirement in 2023/24 in support of capital expenditure and the waste PFI financing.
- 7.6 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. The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. The liability benchmark itself represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level required to manage day-to-day cash flow. Councils are now required as part of in year reporting to publish the liability benchmark.

	31.3.22	31.3.23	31.3.24
Liability Benchmark	Actual	Estimate	Forecast
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Loans CFR	266,925	276,473	297,625
Less: Balance sheet resources	112,867	68,358	69,358
Net loans requirement	154,058	208,115	228,267
Plus: Liquidity allowance	10,000	10,000	10,000
Liability benchmark	164,058	218,115	238,267



7.7 Based on the Council's CFR and the liability benchmark, the Council is long term borrower. The Council is required to ensure that capital financing is reasonable and affordable in the long term. Based on the Quarter Three expenditure forecasts the Council's forecast outstanding borrowing remains within the liability benchmark parameters.

Borowing & Liability Benchmark	31.3.2022 actual	31.3.2023 forecast	31.3.2024 budget
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Outstanding borrowing	191,848	186,891	181,974
Liability benchmark	164,058	218,115	238,267

7.8 Based on the performance indicators set out within this report the Executive Director for Resources and S151 Officer is confident that capital expenditure is affordable in the longer term.

8 Appendices

Appendix A – Budget Changes as at Quarter Three

Appendix B – Quarter Three Reprofiling Proposals

Subject to Call-In:								
Yes: □	No: X							
The item is du	e to be referred to Council for final approval							

Capital Financial Performance Report Quarter Three 2022/23

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council							
Delays in im	plementation could compromise the Council's position						
	or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or Task Groups within preceding six months						
Item is Urge	nt Key Decision						
Report is to	note only	Χ					
Officer deta	nils:						
Name: Job Title: Tel No: F-mail:	Shannon Coleman-Slaughter Chief Financial Accountant 01635 503225 Shannon colemans laughter@westberks.gov.uk						

Appendix A

Budget Changes: As at Quarter Three Financial Year 2022/23

Service Area	Original Gross Expenditure Budget 2022/23	Budget Agreed by CSG to be Reprofiled from 2021/22	Agreed Reprofiling at Q1	Agreed Reprofiling at Q2	Agreed Reprofiling at Q3	Other Changes to 2022/23 Budget	Revised Budget for 2022/23	Explanation of Other Agreed Changes
PEOPLE DIRECTORATE								
Adult Social Care	3,022,170	785,850				148,000	3,408,520	£148k Increase to Care Homes PMP budget
Children & Family Services	20,000	10,000	0	(10,000)		0	20,000	
Education	13,023,530	1,138,950	(239,000)	(4,674,840)		474,890	9,723,530	£8,530 Salary Adjustment required as per agreement at CSG to balance estimates approved in March 2022 £293,690 Additional Budget Approved for SEMH Project at CSG £50,000 approved by CSG for Kennet School PDR Unit Remodelling Works £21,200 - for SEMH/ASD Resourced Provision Primary approved by s151 Officer & portfolio holder on 19/10/2022 £100k for Brookfields Expansion approved at CSG on 13/10/2022 £10k for Castle Gate Messy Play Area approved at CSG on 10/11/2022 £45,340 Salary transferred from Property Budget - Correction of post location approved by s151 Officer on 30/05/22
Communities & Wellbeing	11,104,120	656,350	(351,000)	(4,932,100)			6,477,370	
Total for People Directorate	27,169,820	2,591,150	(590,000)	(10,164,440)	0	622,890	19,629,420	
PLACE DIRECTORATE						·		
Development & Regulation	4,978,720	1,253,490	0	(574,500)			5,657,710	
Environment	26,744,120	2,974,750	(5,164,790)	(5,594,380)		2,297,550	21,257,250	£186,300 Increased budget approved for Separate Food Waste Collection Project (£96,540) Salary Adjustment required as per agreement at CSG to balance estimates approved in March 2022 £1.7m Addition DFT Grant Budget allocated to numerous budgets £21,750 for Winterbourne Byway 8 as approved at CSG on 08/12/2022 £446,040 for Bus Service Improvement Plan as approved at CSG on 15/09/2022 £15k for Car Park Maintenance £25k for Wild Flower Displays (CIL Funded)
Total for Place Directorate	31,722,840	4,228,240	(5,164,790)	(6,168,880)	0	2,297,550	26,914,960	
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE								
ІСТ	3,178,760	1,425,460	0	(428,950)		3,446,550	7,621,820	£17,190 for Superfast Broadband Project Management as approved at CSG on 08/12/2022 £2,995,490 for Superfast Broadband Project as approved at CSG on 08/12/2022 £(65k) moved from IT to cover new resource required in Strategy & Governance as approved by s151 Officer 03/10/2022 £498,870 for Digital Connectivity Infrastructure Accelerator Project as approved at CSG on 08/12/2022
Finance & Property	3,114,120	694,300	0	0		746,400	4,554,820	£691,130 - Timelord 2 Capital Funding - Budget was not increased as per Executive Agreement in July 2021 (£20,390) Salary Adjustment required as per agreement at CSG to balance estimates approved in March 2022 £45,340 Salary transferred from Property Budget - Correction of post location approved by JH on 30/05/22 £121k New Project for repairs to the Malt House, Great Shefford as agreed at CSG on 10/11/2022
Strategy & Governance	446,000	105,250		(236,700)		95,000	409,550	£30,000 for Youth Participation Project approved at CSG £55k for Digital Signposting Project £55k previously agreed at Q2 removed and £65k transfer from IT as above for Resourcing - as agreed by s151 Officer on 03/10/2022
Total for Resources Directorate	6,738,880	2,225,010	0	(665,650)	0	4,287,950	12,586,190	
Total Capital Budget	65,631,540	9,044,400	(5,754,790)	(16,998,970)	0	7,208,390	59,130,570	

Proposed Reprofiling at Quarter Three

Proposed Reprofiling of Planned Expenditure from 2022/23 into 2023/24

Budget Monitoring Period	Directorate	Service	Cost Centre	Project Title	Priority	Gross Expenditure Budget	Forecast Outturn at Q3	Underspend at Q3	Re-profiling Request	Externally Funded Re- profiling	Council Funded Value
Q3	People	Adult Social Care 8	36045	Modernising ASC	1	83,000	0	(83,000)	83,000		(83,000)
Q3	People	Adult Social Care 8	36051	Notrees Day Centre - Refurbishment	1	300,000	20,000	(280,000)	280,000		(280,000)
Q3	People	Adult Social Care 8	36052	Birchwood Care Home - Refurbishment	1	400,000	150,000	(250,000)	250,000		(250,000)
Q3	People	Adult Social Care 8	36053	Willows Edge - Refurbishment	1	250,000	45,000	(205,000)	205,000	(205,000)	
Q3	People		36055	Feasibility Study for ASC Care Home	1	30,000	18,000	(12,000)	12,000		(12,000)
Q3	Adult Social Care	Total				1,063,000	233,000	(830,000)	830,000	(205,000)	(625,000)
Q3	People	Education 8	32277	Theale Primary Basic Need Project	2	177,080	9,560	(167,520)	167,520	(167,520)	
Q3	People	Education 8	32285	Highwood Copse	2	194,250	11,400	(182,850)	182,850	(182,850)	
Q3	People	Education 8	32319	i-college Alternative Education - East of Area	2	1,475,340	1,292,630	(182,710)	182,710	(168,540)	(14,170)
Q3	People	Education 8	32337	Calcot Schools Remodelling	2	136,480	45,540	(90,940)	90,940		(90,940)
Q3	People	Education 8	32341	Additional Places - Secondary Basic Need	2	145,960	88,890	(57,070)	57,070	(57,070)	
Q3	People	Education 8	32352	Brookfields Expansion	2	100,000	10,000	(90,000)	87,000	(87,000)	
Q3	Education Total					2,229,110	1,458,020	(771,090)	768,090	(662,980)	(105,110)
Q3	People	Communities & Wellbeing 8	35188	Leisure Centre Compliance & Modernisation	4	418,380	30,000	(388,380)	388,380		(388,380)
Q3	People	Communities & Wellbeing 8	35195	Expansion of Berkshire Records Office. Reading	4	1,447,450	0	(1,447,450)	1,447,450	(1,183,000)	(264,450)
Q3	People	Communities & Wellbeing 8	35196	Feasibility studies for options to deliver the Leisure Strategy	4	269,340	124,000	(145,340)	145,340		(145,340)
Q3	People	Communities & Wellbeing 8	35198	Hungerford LC - Modular exercise studio	2	120,000	15,510	(104,490)	104,490		(104,490)
Q3	People	Communities & Wellbeing 8	35199	Playing Pitch Action Plan	4	750,000	250,000	(500,000)	500,000		(500,000)
Q3	People	Communities & Wellbeing 8	35204	Shaw House outbuildings restoration	4	50,000	0	(50,000)	50,000		(50,000)
Q3	People	Communities & Wellbeing 8	35122	Libraries Book Stock	6	152,690	102,690	(50,000)	50,000		(50,000)
Q3	Communities & \	Vellbeing Total				3,207,860	522,200	(2,685,660)	2,685,660	(1,183,000)	(1,502,660)
Q3	People Total					6,499,970	2,213,220	(4,286,750)	4,283,750	(2,050,980)	(2,232,770)
Q3	Place	Environment 8	31627	Newbury Town Centre Paving	4	66,930	25,000	(41,930)	41,930	(41,930)	
Q3	Place	Environment 8	31631	Newbury Rail Station Road Improvements	4	3,000,000	1,481,900	(1,518,100)	1,518,100	(1,518,100)	
Q3	Place	Environment 8	31671	Theale Station Improvements	4	400,000	0	(400,000)	400,000	(399,940)	(60)
Q3	Place	Environment 8	33110	Solar PV Initiative	5	167,910	45,000	(122,910)	116,368		(116,368)
Q3	Place	Environment 8	33130	Natural Carbon Reduction Measures	5	205,000	50,000	(155,000)	155,000		(155,000)
Q3	Place	Environment 8	31660	Environment Strategy - Minor Projects and Improvements	4	150,000	110,000	(40,000)	40,000	(40,000)	
Q3	Place	Environment 8	31677	Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP)	6	446,040	11,750		434,290	(434,290)	
Q3	Environment Tot	al				4,435,880	1,723,650	(2,712,230)	2,705,688	(2,434,260)	(271,428)
Q3	Place Total					4,435,880			2,705,688	(2,434,260)	(271,428)
Q3	Resources	Finance & Property 8	37634	Enterprise Resource Planning System	7			(230,500)	230,500		(230,500)
Q3	Finance & Prope				·	240,500	, ,	(230,500)	230,500	0	
Q3			37601	Digitalisation Infrastructure/ ICT Allocation	7	180,300	90,800	(89,500)	89,500		(89,500)
Q3	Strategy and Gov	ernance Total				180,300	90,800	(89,500)	89,500	0	(89,500)
Q3	Resources Direct					420,800	100,800	(320,000)	320,000	0	(320,000)
Q3	Q3 - Council Tota	l .				11,356,650	4,037,670	(7,318,980)	7,309,438	(4,485,240)	(2,824,198)

Capital Financial Performance Report Quarter Three 2022/23
Proposed Funding to be Brought Forward from 2023/24 into 2022/23

Budget Monitoring Period	Directorate	Service	Cost Centre	Project Title	Priority	Gross Expenditure Budget	Forecast Outturn at Q3	Underspend at Q3	Re-profiling Request	Externally Funded Re- profiling	Council Funded Value
Q3	People	Education	82336	SEMH/ASD Resourced Provision - Secondary	1	2,907,260	3,146,260	239,000	(239,000)	239,000	
Q3	People	Communities & Wellbeing	87610	Members Bids	3	0	59,000	59,000	(38,880)		38,880
Q3	Q3 - Council Tota	I				2,907,260	3,205,260	298,000	(277,880)	239,000	38,880

Quarters One & Two Information Only Reprofiling

Budget Monitoring Period	Directorate	Service	Cost Centre	Project Title		Gross Expenditure Budget	Forecast Outturn at Q1	Underspend at Q1	Re-profiling Request	Externally Funded Re- profiling	Council Funded Value
Q1	Q1 - Council Tota	ıl		12,245,850	6,069,660	(6,176,190)	5,754,790	(2,555,500)	(3,199,290)		
Q2	Place	Development & Regulation	80014	Sovereign Joint Venture	4	669,000	334,500	(334,500)	334,500		(334,500)
Q2	Place	Development & Regulation	87750	London Road Industrial Estate	4	850,500	695,000	(155,500)	155,500		(155,500)
Q2	Place	Development & Regulation	87756	Newbury Town Centre Masterplan	4	134,000	67,000	(67,000)	67,000		(67,000)
Q2	Place	Development & Regulation	86020	Temp Accommodation Refurbishment	4	31,620	20,000	(11,620)	11,620		(11,620)
Q2	Development &	Regulation Total				1,685,120	1,116,500	(568,620)	568,620	0	(568,620)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87294	Network Infrastructure (Core Switches)	7	90,000	0	(90,000)	90,000		(90,000)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87319	Telephony Infrastructure (VoIP Outlying Offices)	7	20,000	0	(20,000)	20,000		(20,000)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87342	Maintenance of DR Facility	7	135,890	67,940	(67,950)	67,950		(67,950)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87343	Telephony Infrastructure (Unified Communications Core Infrastructure)	7	60,000	0	(60,000)	60,000		(60,000)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87344	Telephony Infrastructure (Unified Communications Software)	7	78,170	6,070	(72,100)	72,100		(72,100)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87354	Contact Centre Systems Enhancements	7	180,000	0	(180,000)	150,000		(150,000)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87356	Network/ App Performance Monitoring	7	20,000	0	(20,000)	20,000		(20,000)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87358	Upgrade of Print Room	7	25,000	15,000	(10,000)	10,000		(10,000)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87359	Web Filtering	7	16,000	0	(16,000)	16,000		(16,000)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87360	Backup / Security products for O365 data	7	25,000	0	(25,000)	25,000		(25,000)
Q2	Resources	ICT	87361	Building Data Warehouse Capability	7	50,000	0	(50,000)	50,000		(50,000)
Q2	ICT Total					700,060	89,010	(611,050)	581,050	0	(581,050)
Q2	Q2 - Council Tota	ıl				26,425,680	8,462,320	(17,963,360)	17,933,360	(3,302,010)	(14,631,350)

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Committee considering report: Executive

Date of Committee: 9 February 2023

Portfolio Member: Councillor Ross Mackinnon

Date Portfolio Member agreed report: 26 January 2023

Report Author: Melanie Ellis

Forward Plan Ref: EX4300

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 2022/23.

2 Recommendation

2.1 To note the forecast £1m overspend. The overspend is after taking account of provision that was made in reserves for specific risks at the time of budget setting, and amendments expected to be made before year end. Without this provision, the forecast would be an over spend of £7.7m.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	£1m forecast over spend, after taking account of provision in reserves/amendments. Without this provision, £7.7m over spend.
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 2023/24. Specifically this includes inflation risk being seen in care costs and energy.

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:		Υ		
Health Impact:		Υ		
ICT Impact:		у		
Digital Services Impact:		у		
Council Strategy Priorities:		у		Business as usual
Core Business:		у		
Data Impact:		у		

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The 2022/23 net revenue budget of £144m was set in March 2022, using £140m of revenue funding and £4m of reserves. During the budget build, inflationary pressures were identified in demand led services. Not all of these pressures were built into the budget, with some being put aside in reserves to be called on should the pressures arise.
- 4.2 Inflation has increased further and at Quarter Three, budget managers are forecasting pressures across the Council totalling £7.7m. After factoring in utilising the reserves that were set aside to support this, and forecast amendments, the overspend is £1m.

		(Under)/over spend (Under)/o			over spend	end (Under)/over spend						
			Quarte	r One	Quart	er Two	wo Quarter Three					
		•		Forecast		Forecast					Forecast	1
				after		after					after	Change
	Current		Budget	Reserves	Budget	Reserves	Budget	Provided in	Provided		Reserves	from Last
	Net	Forecast	Manager	and	Manager	and	Manager	Earmarked	in General	Amend-	and	Quarter
Directorate Summary	Budget	Outturn	Forecast	Mitigation	Forecast	Mitigation	Forecast	Reserve	Fund	ments	Mitigation	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
People	87,131	91,351	7,839	3,463	8,661	3,395	7,830	(2,830)	(624)	(156)	4,220	825
Place	31,398	31,776	1,347	(196)	1,702	126	1,201	(316)	(500)	(7)	378	252
Resources	11,816	11,407	241	(555)	(571)	(630)	(221)	(73)	0	(115)	(409)	221
Chief Executive	534	524	(15)	(25)	(5)	(11)	(10)	0	0	0	(10)	1
Capital Financing/Risk Mgt	14,740	11,596	(1,271)	(551)	(1,989)	(1,739)	(1,105)	(1,340)	0	(700)	(3,145)	(1,406)
Total	145,619	146,653	8,141	2,136	7,798	1,141	7,696	(4,559)	(1,124)	(978)	1,034	(106)

4.3 The People Directorate forecast overspend is £7.8m. This would reduce to £4.2m after use of reserves that were set aside leaving overspends of £1.4m in Adult Social Care (ASC), £1.3m in Children & Family Services (CFS), £1.1m in Education and £0.5m in Communities & Well Being.

4.4 In ASC:

- Long term services are forecasting a £2.8m overspend. There are higher client numbers, 1792 compared to 1753 modelled, due to higher levels of new requests for support and demand from hospital discharge. There is an increase in the cost of new client care packages, due to inflation and complexities. There is lower occupancy in our own care homes and clients have had to be placed in externally commissioned beds costing more.
- Short term services are £0.28m under spent due to the additional funding announced in November for Hospital Discharge. This funding will be used both against previously forecast and new expenditure.
- There is a £1.7m overspend in our care homes due to agency staffing requirements, a shortfall of income, high dependency clients, covid cases and energy costs.

- Use of reserves would reduce these pressures by £2.5m.
- 4.5 In CFS the over spend comprises £0.7m over spend in placements as identified in the model during budget build and £1.7m in Family Safeguarding teams due to agency costs. Use of reserves would reduce these pressures by £0.9m. There has been an £0.9m increase in the forecast overspend since last quarter. £0.2m is due to placement costs, £0.2m for Child Care Lawyers, £0.3m from agency costs and £0.2m from the pay award.
- 4.6 The Education £1.1m over spend is predominantly due to Home to School Transport, with more children with special needs requiring transportation. The Communities and Wellbeing overspend of £0.5m is due to income pressures in leisure.
- 4.7 The Place Directorate is forecasting an overspend of £0.4m. There is a £0.5m pressure in Development & Regulation (D&R) and a £0.1m underspend in Environment.
 - In D&R there are agency pressures covering vacancies in the planning service and a shortfall of planning income. Housing is facing pressures from emergency and temporary accommodation. Forecasts and the pay award have increased the pressures from last quarter.
 - In Environment, car parking/season ticket income has significantly reduced compared to pre-pandemic levels. There is £0.4m set aside in reserves for this, as it was identified as an expected pressure at the time of budget build, leaving an unfunded pressure of £0.45m. There are also pressures from solar energy income, street lighting, network management and maintenance. However, waste management is seeing increased levels of recycling income, reduced use of landfill and overachievement of garden waste subscriptions, and transport services have underspends from staff vacancies and overachievement of income.
- 4.8 The Resources Directorate forecast underspend of £0.4m has arisen from the agency rebate and commercial property income which are covering off agency costs in Finance & Property and ICT, and corporate building maintenance costs.
- 4.9 The Capital Financing forecast is an under spend of £1m from 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.
- 4.10 There is an underspend of £2.2m in Risk Management from £1.3m proposed release of the Outcomes Based Budgeting Reserve to support the pay award pressures across all services, £0.1m release from reserves that is no longer required, and £0.7m forecast benefit from a review of outstanding purchase orders.
- 4.11 The 2022/23 savings and income generation programme of £5.3m is 79% Green.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

5.2 The 2022/23 net revenue budget of £144m was set in March 2022, using £140m of revenue funding and £4m of reserves.

- 5.3 During the budget build, inflationary pressures were identified in demand led services. Not all of these pressures were built into the budget, with some being put aside in earmarked reserves to be called on should the pressures arise.
- 5.4 Inflation has further increased and we continue to see pressures across the Council, and are factoring in using the reserves that were set aside to support this.

Quarter Three 2022/23

- 5.5 The Quarter Three budget manager forecast is a £7.7m overspend, which after taking account of £5.7m provision that was made in reserves for specific risks at the time of budget setting and £1m other forecast amendments, would reduce to £1m.
- 5.6 The forecasts by service are shown below:

			(Under)/over spend (Under)/over spend Quarter One Quarter Two		(Under)/over spend Quarter Three							
	Current Net Budget	Forecast Outturn	Budget Manager Forecast	Forecast after Reserves and Mitigation	Budget Manager Forecast	Forecast after Reserves and Mitigation	Budget Manager Forecast	Earmarked Reserve	Provided in General Fund	Amend- ments	Forecast after Reserves and Mitigation	Change from Last Quarter
4 - 1:0 - : 10	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adult Social Care	55,120	56,498	, -		4,834	1,738		(2,000)	(523)	(136)	1,378	
Children & Family Services	19,053	20,369	,	1,057	2,576	452	,	(830)	(101)	(20)	1,317	864
Executive Director	331	316	()	(7)	(31)	(31)	(15)	0	0	0	(15)	17
Education DSG funded	(444)	(444)	707	500	955	0	4.005	0	0	0	4 005	104
Education	9,860	10,955		582	900	931	1,095	0	0	0	1,095	164
Public Health & Wellbeing	600	600		0	000	0	Ū	0	0	0	145	140
Communities & Wellbeing	2,611	3,056		429	328	305			0	0	445	_
People	87,131	91,351	7,839	3,463	8,661	3,395		(2,830)	(624)	(156)	4,220	825
Development & Regulation	6,895	7,391	430	(52)	794	155		(40)	(100)	(7)	496	_
Executive Director	215	226		(22)	10			0	0	0	11	
Environment	24,288	24,159		(122)	898	(40)		(276)	(400)	0	(129)	(89)
Place	31,398	31,776	,	(196)	1,702	126	, -	(316)	(500)	(7)	378	_
ICT	2,291	2,454	77	53	(35)	(35)	163	0	0	0	163	
Executive Director	307	294		0	(11)	(11)	` ,	0	0	0	(13)	()
Commissioning & Procurement	827	432	(237)	(237)	(317)	(317)	(396)	0	0	0	(396)	(79)
Finance & Property	1,374	1,438	208	(194)	78	78		0	0	(115)	63	\ /
Strategy & Governance	7,017	6,790	193	(177)	(286)	(345)	(154)	(73)	0	0	(227)	118
Resources	11,816	11,407	241	(555)	(571)	(630)	-221	-73	0	-115	-409	221
Chief Executive	534	524	(15)	(25)	(5)	(11)	-10	0	0	0	-10	
Capital Financing	14,610	13,636	(421)	(421)	(1,009)	(1,009)	(975)	0	0	0	(975)	34
Risk Management	130	(2,040)	(850)	(130)	(980)	(730)	(130)	(1,340)	0	(700)	(2,170)	(1,440)
Capital Financing/Risk Mgt	14,740	11,596	(1,271)	(551)	(1,989)	(1,739)	(1,105)	(1,340)	0	(700)	(3,145)	(1,406)
Total	145,619	146,653	8,141	2,136	7,798	1,141	7,696	(4,559)	(1,124)	(978)	1,034	(106)

NB: Rounding differences may apply to the nearest £k.

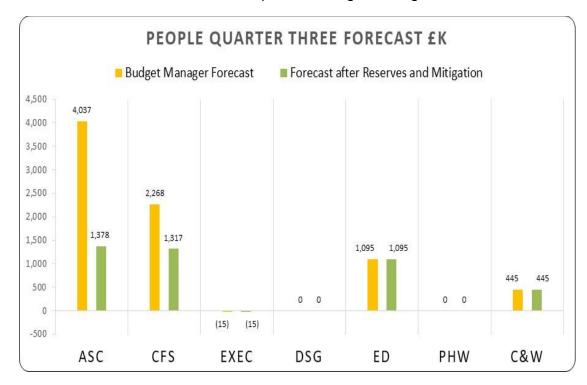
Impact on Reserves

5.7 Reserves that are forecast to be used during 2022/23 are shown below:

Reserve	Current Balance	Proposed Utilisation to support Q3 forecast 2022/23	Balance Remaining
11000110	£m	£m	£m
Service risk reserves	4.50	-3.22	1.28
Outcomes Based Budgeting	1.34	-1.34	0.00
General Fund	9.41	-2.16	7.25
	15.25	-6.72	8.53

People Directorate

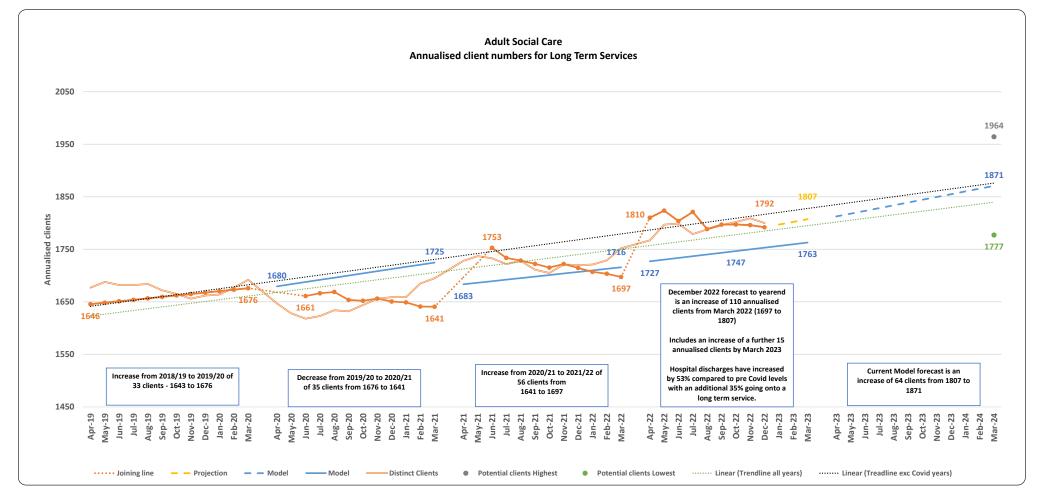
5.8 The Directorate forecast is an over spend of £7.8m. The over spend could be reduced to £4.2m by accessing specific reserves which were set aside for risks relating to inflation and demand that have arisen. The £360k change from last quarter is largely due to further use of reserves and hospital discharge funding.

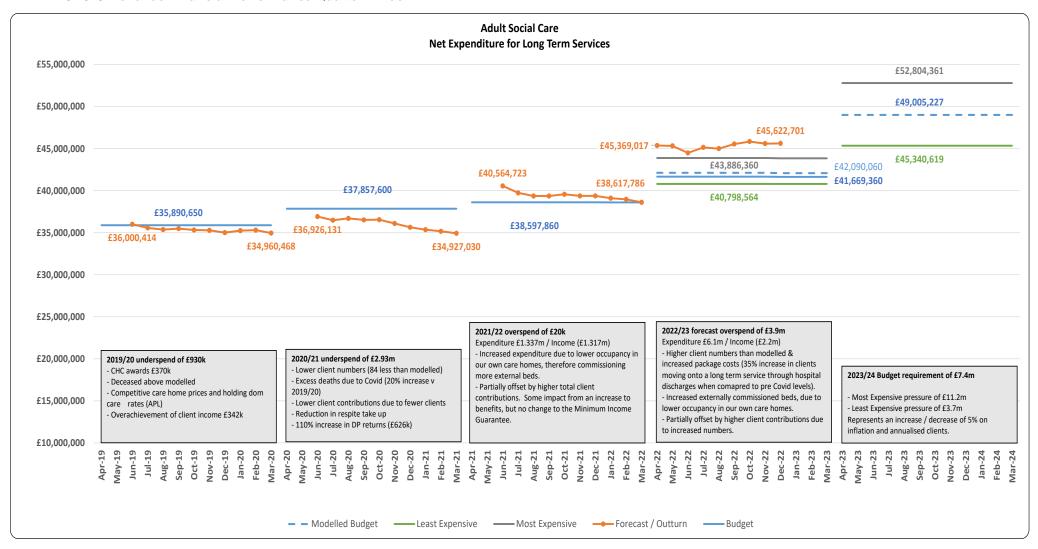


- 5.9 In ASC, the forecast over spend is £4m. The over spend could be reduced to £1.4m by using provisions that were made in the service risk reserves and against the General Fund for inflation and other risks identified during the budget build process, together with additional savings identified since the Quarter Three submissions.
- 5.10 Overall, the ASC forecast overspend has decreased by £360k since Quarter Two. The pay award of £1,925 (excluding on costs) created a new pressure of £750k and agency costs in care homes have increased by £374k. Funding of £1.2m was received in November for Hospital Discharge, and is being used both against previously forecast expenditure and new expenditure. A further £240k can be released from the risk reserve.

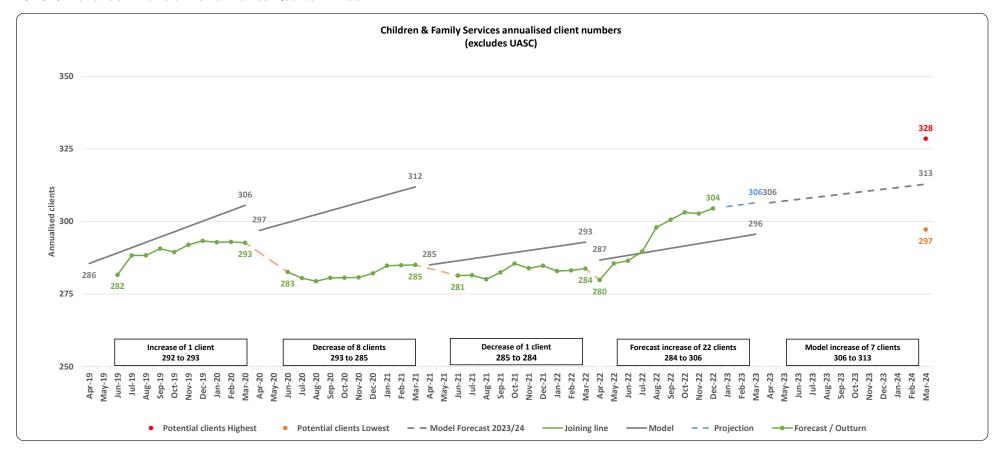
- 5.11 ASC long term services (LTS) are forecast to be £2.8m over spent.
 - There are higher client numbers than modelled, 1792 compared to 1753. The rise in clients is attributable to higher levels of new requests for support, mirroring the national picture set out by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services in their Spring Budget survey. This includes high demand from hospital discharge.
 - There is an increase in the cost of new client care packages, due to current inflation (provided for in reserves), complexities and challenges in the external workforce market.
 - There has been lower occupancy in our own care homes and clients have had to be placed in externally commissioned beds costing more.
- 5.12 Short term services are £0.28m under spent due to the additional funding announced in November for Hospital Discharge. This funding will be used both against previously forecast and new expenditure.
- 5.13 There is a £1.7m overspend in our own care homes due to a shortfall of income, agency staffing requirements, high dependency clients, covid cases and energy costs.
- 5.14 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. Staffing options are being explored with HR.
- 5.15 The ASC Model for long term services will be updated monthly throughout this financial year to inform the 2023/24 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 3.5%, reflecting increases expected in costs balanced against increases already in place.

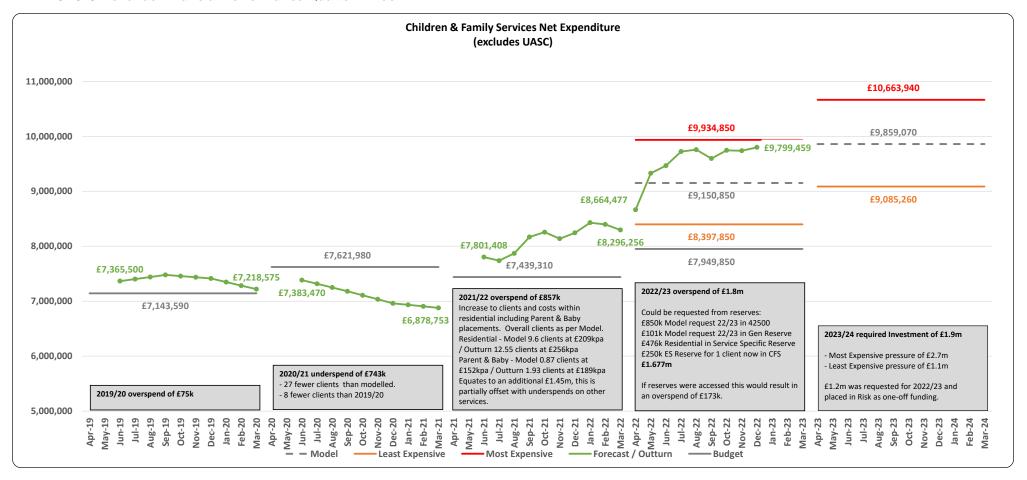
The graphs below shows client numbers from April 2019 and net expenditure for Long Term Services.





- 5.16 In CFS, the forecast is a £2.3m over spend. This could be reduced to £1.3m with the use of the risk provision for residential placements and additional savings found post Quarter Three.
 - There is a forecast £715k over spend in placements which was identified in the model during budget build and is fully provided for in reserves. Demand at the front door has increased by around 50% over the last year, in addition to increased complexity, mental health and emotional wellbeing needs. There is additional challenge of recent legislative changes and a national shortage of suitable residential placements. This is driving costs up.
 - The Family Safeguarding teams are overspending by £1.7m due to agency costs.
 This has been required to cover vacancies, maternity leave and additional capacity.
 There are 21 vacancies across the East and West Teams and seven maternity leaves.
- 5.17 There has been an £864k increase in the forecast overspend since last quarter. £162k is due to placement costs, £225k for Child Care Lawyers due to a higher number of Child Protection Plans, £283k from increased agency costs and £210k from the pay award.
- 5.18 The service continue to effectively manage placements as part of the Children and Family service Accommodation & Resources Panel. There is a robust plan in place for some children to appropriately safely step down from costly residential care. Additional in house supports to foster carers (fostering hub, mental health team) will enable increasing numbers of children to live in lower cost 'In house' placements.
- 5.19 There is active recruitment taking place for qualified staff to fill vacancies. The national picture is one of acute shortage of social workers. There is ongoing work to refresh and reinvigorate the recruitment and retention package, and options are being explored for overseas social workers to relocate to the UK.
- 5.20 The model for placements has been refined and will be updated monthly. Client numbers and net expenditure are shown in the graphs below.

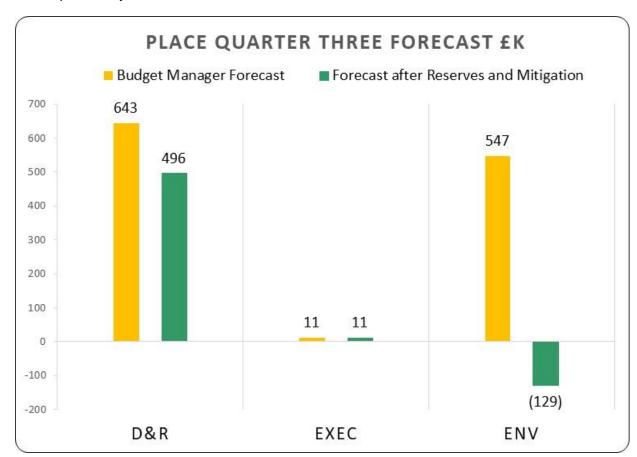




- 5.21 Education is reporting a £1.1m over spend. The over spend is predominantly due to a forecast pressure on Home to School Transport (HTST), which has increased since last quarter. The volatility of this service means that it is difficult to forecast but there are more children with special needs requiring transportation, limited spaces in Newbury schools, rising fuel costs and driver's wages all contributing to this year's overspend position.
- 5.22 Communities and Wellbeing is reporting a £0.4m overspend mainly due to income pressures in leisure. The increase from last quarter is due to the pay award.
- 5.23 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 £270k under spend which will transfer to the reserve. This is mainly due to staff projects being supported from COMF funding and underspends on joint arrangements held with other local authorities.

Place Directorate

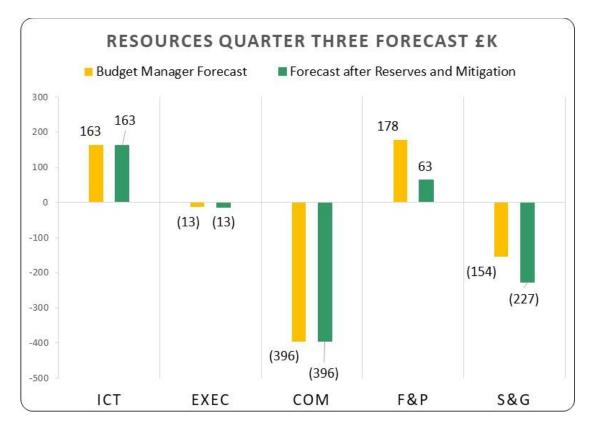
5.24 The Place Directorate is forecasting an overspend of £1.2m against a budget of £31m. The overspend could be reduced to £0.4m by accessing reserves that were set aside during the budget build for specific pressures. Overall the overspend has increased from last quarter by £252k.



- 5.25 In Development and Regulation, there is a £0.6m forecast over spend, which could reduce to £0.5m through use of reserves.
 - There are £409k of agency and consultant pressures in Planning from covering sickness and vacancies and the service struggling to recruit qualified permanent staff. Planning income is below target, with a pressure of £306k partly covered off by a £100k reserve. Minerals and Waste Examination has been delivered with a £139k underspend.
 - Housing is facing £186k of pressures on emergency and temporary accommodation, £235k for Rough Sleeping Initiative and £60k funding pressures from restrictive grant conditions in the Household Support Fund. There has been a revenue saving of £160k against site management as the costs are capital in nature.
 - There are underspends of £85k in Economic Development due to vacancies, capitalisation and delayed projects. Registrars have overachieved income by £30k and contributions towards time spent on migration schemes have saved £129k.
 - The increased spend from last quarter is £341k due to the pay award, increased demand in housing, and a further downturn in planning fee income.
 - The service continue to review agency requirements and monitor planning fee income opportunities.
- 5.26 In Environment, there is a £0.5m forecast overspend, which could reduce to an underspend of £0.1m by using reserves set aside as part of the budget process for pressures identified. The forecast has reduced by £89k since last quarter.
 - The largest area of pressure is parking income which is seeing significant reductions compared to pre-pandemic levels both from car parks and season tickets amounting to £0.86m. There is £0.4m set aside in reserves for this, as it was identified as an expected pressure at the time of budget build.
 - Other pressures include £172k solar energy income which is not achieving the
 expected levels of income based on current output of the installed solar panels,
 £167k increased costs from street lighting and £150k from maintenance
 requirements. However, there has been a £300k reduction in revenue expenditure
 as staff have been able to be charged to capital projects.
 - In network management, there is a £152k pressure on supervision fees for Section 38 and 278 orders, a £160k pressure on the streetworks income target, but an overachievement of Traffic Regulation income. The overspends here are covered by a reserve.
 - Transport services are seeing underspends from staffing vacancies and overachievement of income.
 - Waste management are seeing increased levels of recycling income, reduced use
 of landfill and an overachievement of garden waste subscriptions leading to a
 favourable variance of £0.6m.

Resources Directorate/Chief Executive

5.27 The Resources Directorate is forecasting an underspend of £221k against a budget of £12m, and after use of reserves of £73k and amendments of £115k, the underspend would increase to £409k.



- 5.28 In Commissioning & Procurement, there is a £396k forecast surplus largely due to income from the agency contract rebate, as a result of the increased agency usage.
- 5.29 In ICT there is a forecast overspend of £163k. There are agency pressures of £150k in Telecoms and Applications teams to support corporate projects. Other pressures are from print and reprographic income, school income, cloud based storage costs and from WAN circuit requirements. There are staffing underspends and contributions offsetting some of the overspend and the impact of the pay award.
- 5.30 In Finance and Property, the £178k forecast over spend has arisen as follows:
 - Pay award pressure of £120k.
 - Temporary staff costs covering workload pressures in the Financial Reporting Team is expected to lead to an over spend of £138k. There are further agency pressures in Exchequer Services totalling £66k.
 - Energy costs, repairs, maintenance and security in corporate buildings are causing a pressure of £262k.
 - These pressures are offset by £200k overachievement on commercial property income, a £55k benefit from unutilised accruals, a £115k insurance claim, grant

contributions from migration schemes and income from the Health and Safety buy back.

- 5.31 Strategy and Governance is forecasting a £154k underspend, which could increase to £227k after use of reserves.
 - In HR there are £147k savings from National Insurance, and in the Customer Services & Engagement Team there are £193k savings due to use of Transformation Funding.
 - In Legal there are pressures due to Coroners Court increased costs £65k, land charges income of £60k and client disbursements £72k (covered by reserve).
 - Audit are forecasting a £34k underspend from vacancies.

Capital Financing and Risk Management

- 5.32 The Capital Financing forecast is an under spend of £1m. Capital financing costs are lower than expected due 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.
- 5.33 There is an underspend of £2.2m in Risk Management arising from:
 - £1.34m proposed release of the Outcomes Based Budgeting reserve (OBB) to support the pay award pressures across all services.
 - £130k release of a provision from reserves that is no longer required.
 - £700k forecast benefit from a review of outstanding purchase orders.

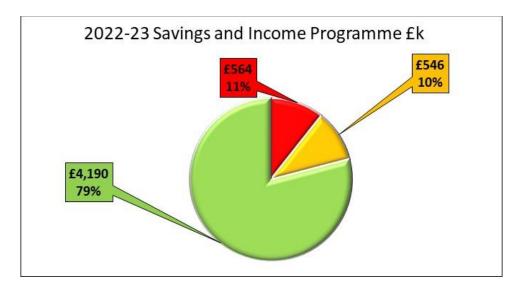
Employee and Agency Spend

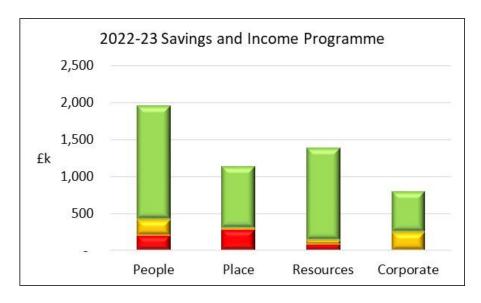
- 5.34 At Quarter Three, total employee spend including agency was £54.8m against a budget of £51.5m, an overspend of £3.37m. The overspend has increased by £1.8m from last quarter. This is largely as a result of the annual pay increase for 2022/23 being paid and backdated to 1st April 2022 costing £2.1m. Provision was made in the budget for an increase of 2%, but the actual pay award was £1,925 per FTE, which equates to an average percentage increase of approximately 5.5%. Funds of £1.34m will be released from Earmarked Reserves to support some of the extra cost.
- 5.35 A recruitment freeze has been in place and savings have been identified from vacant posts totalling £292k since Quarter Two.
- 5.36 Within employee costs, agency spend to Quarter Three was £8.57m. Agency is 17% as a percentage of employee budgets.

		Employee			Agency as a
	Employee	Spend to Q3		Agency	% of
	Budget to	(including	Over/ (under)	spend to	Employee
Service	Q3	agency)	spend	Q3	budgets
Chief Executive	382,613	389,804	7,192	-	
Adult Social Care	13,327,553	14,549,043	1,221,491	3,086,316	23%
Children & Family Services	6,631,350	7,233,607	602,257	2,145,927	32%
Communities & Wellbeing	1,475,528	1,376,463	(99,065)	-	0%
Executive Director - People	218,273	200,011	(18,262)	975	0%
Education	4,387,260	4,278,715	(108,545)	575,313	13%
Public Health & Wellbeing	1,313,505	1,849,202	535,697	60,021	5%
Executive Director – Place	150,015	149,736	(279)	-	0%
Development & Regulation	7,791,128	9,348,043	1,556,916	1,781,167	23%
Environment	4,545,060	4,549,491	4,431	160,891	4%
Commissioning & Procurement	1,022,460	1,051,360	28,900	-	0%
Executive Director - Resources	145,088	119,113	(25,975)	-	0%
Finance & Property	3,480,855	3,668,420	187,565	371,739	11%
ICT	1,720,800	1,741,939	21,139	129,406	8%
Strategy & Governance	4,867,245	4,325,107	(542,138)	262,416	5%
	51,458,730	54,830,054	3,371,324	8,574,171	17%

2022/23 Savings and income generation programme

5.37 In order to meet the funding available, the 2022/23 revenue budget was built with a £5.3m savings and income generation programme. The programme is monitored using the RAG traffic light system. The status is shown in the following charts:





5.38 Red items are as follows:

- £36k for supported living in ASC due to delays in construction of a new Learning Disability service due to supply chain issues.
- £26k Resource Allocation System software and £43k for ASC digital pathway which will be implemented as part of Care Director V6 upgrade.
- £100k for ASC utilisation of the workforce reform grant. This is not achievable within the funding received and the conditions placed on the grants.
- £32k home improvement agency income, not achievable for private adaptation work.
- £100k for Environment in delivery of solar PV projects. An investment bid has been proposed for 2023/24 to realign unachievable income.
- £152k from Traffic Management income not being achieved.
- £75k from Timelord2 due to energy costs and project delay. Savings will be achieved in future years.

5.39 Amber items are as follows:

- £250k from Timelord reduced mileage: being reviewed.
- £133k for Children's staffing capacity savings due to high levels of demand.
- £42k for income from Northcroft leisure expansion.
- £40k traded income in Education.
- £15k temporary accommodation maintenance as the cost of materials have increased.
- £34k print and postage due to increased costs of paper and lack of external income.
- £32k from property disposals management cost savings, still awaiting sale.

Proposals

5.40 To note the year-end forecast £1m over spend, after taking account of provision that was made in reserves for specific risks at the time of budget setting and forecast amendments. Without this provision, the forecast would be an over spend of £7.7m.

6 Other options considered

6.1 None.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The 2022/23 financial year is presenting financial challenges for the Council due to inflation and demand. Provision that was set aside in Earmarked Reserves will be required to reduce the overspend by £4.6m, and £1.1m which was provided against the General Fund. The remaining overspend of £1m will further reduce the General Fund.
- 7.2 The £5.3m savings and income generation programme is forecast to be 79% achieved and will be reported on each quarter.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A Quarter Three position
- 8.2 Appendix B Budget changes

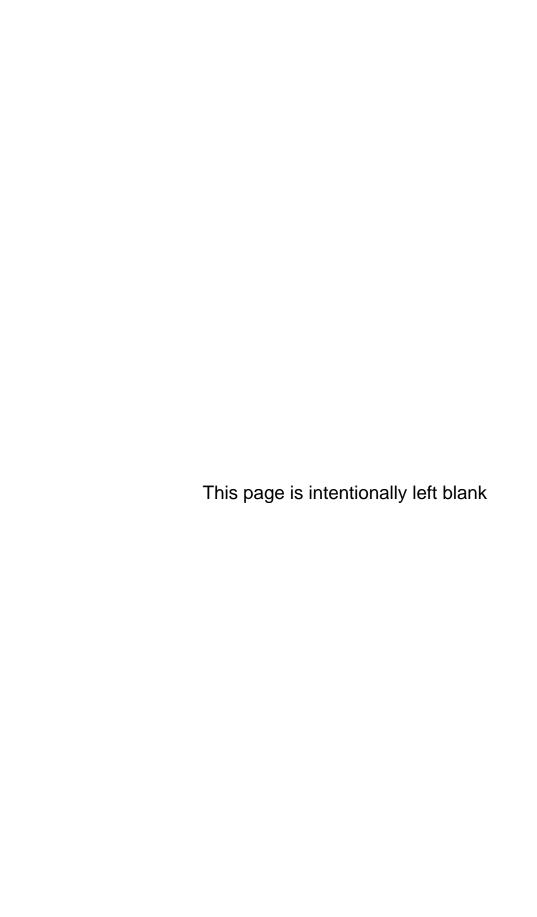
Subject to Call-In:						
Yes: □	No: ⊠					
The item is d	ue to be referred to Council for final approval					
Delays in imp	plementation could have serious financial implications for the					
Delays in imp	plementation could compromise the Council's position					
	Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months					
Item is Urger	nt Key Decision					
Report is to r	note only	\boxtimes				
Officer details:						
Name: Melanie Ellis Job Title: Acting Head of Finance and Property Tel No: 01635 519142 E-mail: Melanie.Ellis@westberks.gov.uk						

Appendix A – Quarter Three position

	Parland			Forecasted Performance							
		Buc	lget			Expenditure			Income		Net
	Original Budget 2022/23 £	Changes in year 2022/23 £	Funding Released from Reserves 2022/23 £	Revised Budget 2022/23 £	Annual Expenditure Budget for 2022/23 £	Annual Expenditure Forecast for 2022/23 £	Expenditure Variance for 2022/23 £	Annual Income Budget for 2022/23 £	Annual Income Forecast for 2022/23 £	Income Variance for 2022/23 £	Net Variance £
Adult Social Care	55,119,550	0	0	55,119,550	75,091,640	84,312,010	9,220,370	-19,972,090	-25,155,470	-5,183,380	4,036,990
Children & Family Services	17,972,860	1,011,000	68,930	19,052,790	21,230,460	24,210,230	2,979,770	-2,177,670	-2,889,710	-712,040	2,267,730
Executive Director - People	330,710	0	0	330,710	330,710	316,200	-14,510	0	0	0	-14,510
Education (DSG Funded)	-444,000	0	0	-444,000	120,241,660	118,053,030	-2,188,630	-120,685,660	-118,497,030	2,188,630	0
Education	9,891,580	-161,000	129,730	9,860,310	13,571,540	16,439,420	2,867,880	-3,711,230	-5,484,480	-1,773,250	1,094,630
Public Health & Wellbeing	-80,000	0	680,370	600,370	6,987,220	6,715,610	-271,610	-6,386,850	-6,115,240	271,610	0
Communities & Wellbeing	2,427,920	38,380	144,600	2,610,900	4,038,960	4,376,210	337,250	-1,428,060	-1,319,880	108,180	445,430
People	85,218,620	888,380	1,023,630	87,130,630	241,492,190	254,422,710	12,930,520	-154,361,560	-159,461,810	-5,100,250	7,830,270
								•	-		
Development & Regulation	6,598,320	-2,170	298,930	6,895,080	13,802,090	21,010,030	7,207,940	-6,907,010	-13,471,980	-6,564,970	642,970
Executive Director – Place	214,610	0	0	214,610	214,610	225,610	11,000	0	0	0	11,000
Environment	24,450,060	-243,630	81,700	24,288,130	35,782,780	35,875,190	92,410	-11,494,650	-11,039,610	455,040	547,450
Place	31,262,990	-245,800	380,630	31,397,820	49,799,480	57,110,830	7,311,350	-18,401,660	-24,511,590	-6,109,930	1,201,420
ICT	2,222,590	0	68,000	2,290,590	3,164,190	3,270,090	105,900	-873,600	-816,040	57,560	163,460
Executive Director - Resource	313,430	-6,000	0	307,430	307,430	314,980	7,550	0	-21,000	-21,000	-13,450
Commissioning & Procureme	744,880	34,250	47,950	827,080	10,388,820	10,440,570	51,750	-9,561,740	-10,009,060	-447,320	-395,570
Finance & Property	1,334,840	-33,210	72,700	1,374,330	32,917,850	33,238,780	320,930	-31,543,520	-31,686,120	-142,600	178,330
Strategy & Governance	7,022,660	-60,890	54,730	7,016,500	8,098,460	7,946,770	-151,690	-1,081,960	-1,084,350	-2,390	-154,080
Resources	11,638,400	-65,850	243,380	11,815,930	54,876,750	55,211,190	334,440	-43,060,820	-43,616,570	-555,750	-221,310
Chief Executive	533,970	0	0	533,970	533,970	523,970	-10,000	0	0	0	-10,000
Chief Executive	533,970	0	0	533,970	533,970	523,970	-10,000	0	0	0	-10,000
Capital Financing & Managen	14,610,470	0	0	14,610,470	14,730,470	14,546,930	-183,540	-120,000	-911,120	-791,120	-974,660
Movement Through Reserves	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Risk Management	850,000	-850,000	130,000	130,000	130,000	0	-130,000	0	0	0	-130,000
Capital Financing and Man	15,460,470	-850,000	130,000	14,740,470	14,860,470	14,546,930	-313,540	-120,000	-911,120	-791,120	-1,104,660
Total	144,114,450	-273,270	1,777,640	145,618,820	361,562,860	381,815,630	20,252,770	-215,944,040	-228,501,090	-12,557,050	7,695,720

Appendix B – Budget Changes

Service	Original Net Budget	Approved Budget B/F from 2021- 22	Budget changes not requiring approval	FAGG approved release from reserves	Approved by S151 & Portfolio Holder	Approved by Executive	Budget C/F to 2023-24	Final Net Budget
Adult Social Care	55,120							55,120
Children and Family Services	17,973		1,080					19,053
Executive Director	331		,					331
Education DSG funded	(444)							(444)
Education	9,892		(161)	130				9,860
Public Health & Wellbeing	(80)			680				600
Communities & Wellbeing	2,428		38	145				2,611
People	85,219	0	957	955	0	0	0	87,131
Development & Regulation	6,584		12	299				6,895
Executive Director	215							215
Environment	24,208		(1)	82				24,288
Place	31,007	0	11	381	0	0	0	31,398
ICT	2,223			68				2,291
Executive Director	313		(6)					307
Commissioning & Procurement	745		34	48				827
Finance & Property	1,340		(39)	73				1,374
Strategy & Governance	7,000		(38)	55				7,017
Resources	11,621	0	(49)	243	0	0	0	11,816
Chief Executive	534							534
Capital Financing & Risk	15,460		(850)	130				14,740
Total	143,841	0	69	1,709	0	0	0	145,619
Quarter One	143,841			594				144,435
Quarter Two	143,841			552				144,987
Quarter Three	143,841		69	563				145,619
Quarter Four	143,841							145,619
Total	143,841	0	69	1,709	0	0	0	145,619



Contract Award for the North and East Thatcham Flood Alleviation Schemes

Committee considering report: Executive

Date of Committee: 9 February 2023

Portfolio Member: Councillor Richard Somner

Date Portfolio Member agreed report: 19 January 2023

Report Author: Jon Winstanley

Forward Plan Ref: EX4266

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To report on the outcome of the tender for the North and East Thatcham Flood Alleviation Schemes. This follows the procurement strategy agreed at Procurement Board in September 2022.

2 Recommendation

2.1 This report is to note.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The pre-tender estimate for the works was valued at £2,600,000 - £3,000,000 based on previous tender prices for similar schemes undertaken over the last 5 years. The winning tender is £1,653,818 therefore substantially under budget. The majority of the funding for this project will be provided by DEFRA grant funding via the Environment Agency, however funding is also being committed by other project partners (West Berkshire Council, Thatcham Town Council & Thames Water). Any underspend will result in a reduction in DEFRA grant being claimed. The overall budget for the project including design, planning, utility diversions, land costs and prelim work is £3.5m.

Human Resource:	None	None as a result of this report.					
Legal:	The open tender process used for this procurement is compliant with the PCR 2015 and the Council's constitution. The NEC3 contract was issued as part of the procurement documentation and therefore all contractual terms are already agreed and the contract will require perfecting only in order to progress to signature should the contract award be approved. In line with the Council's constitution a performance bond in the form set out in the procurement documentation will be required from the contractor prior to contract signature and commencement of the contract. It is our understating that the delivery of the performance bond and the perfecting of the contract will be managed by the consultants; Ardent on the Council's behalf prior to signature. The contract award will require publication. It is noted that the procurement has already been included in the Forward Plan. Dawn Bond – 5 January 2023						
Risk Management:	The contractor will maintain a risk register for this project which will be overseen by the Asset Management Team. The Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, have a duty under the Flood and Water Management Act to carry our works to manage local flood risk.						
Property:	Access to the sites will be gained under Land Drainage Act 1991 notices of entry which will be served in advance of commencement in accordance with the Act.						
Policy:	This proposal is in line with the Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.						
	Positive Neutral Negative Commentary						
Equalities Impact:		х					

A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?				N/A	
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		N/A	
Environmental Impact:	х			The scheme is identified in the Council's Environment Strategy Delivery plan.	
Health Impact:	х			The scheme will protect people from flooding.	
ICT Impact:		х		N/A	
Digital Services Impact:				N/A	
Council Strategy Priorities:	x			This proposed supports the Council Priorities of 'Maintaining a Green District' and 'Developing local infrastructure to support and grow the local economy'.	
Core Business:		х		N/A	
Data Impact:		х		N/A	
Consultation and Engagement:	The project has been subject to a full public consultation as part of the planning process.				

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 In July 2007 devastating floods hit Thatcham and around 1,200 homes were flooded. Since then a number of agencies have been working together to ensure that Thatcham is protected as much as possible from flooding.
- 4.2 The North and East Thatcham FAS scheme involves the construction of three flood attenuation ponds adjacent to Bowling Green Road, at Heath Lane and at East Thatcham. The works consist of diverting an existing watercourse into new attenuation basins in order to reduce the risk of flooding to properties within the Thatcham area and is identified as a key measure in the Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan.
- 4.3 This is the latest project in a number of successfully delivered flood alleviation schemes in Thatcham delivered in partnership with the Environment Agency and Thatcham Flood Forum with contributions from Thames Water and Thatcham Town Council.
- 4.4 The completed projects (Cold Ash Hill FAS, Tull Way Reservoir, Floral Way Reservoir and South East Thatcham FAS) are protecting 913 properties from the impact of surface water flooding. This project will protect an additional 107 properties and with the final Memorial Fields project due for completion in 2024, a total of 1,210 properties will have been protected from the devastating impact that flooding can have. This will represent over £12m of investment in flood defences in Thatcham over the life of the SWMP.
- 4.5 Following a competitive tender exercise a contract for the construction of the North and East Thatcham Flood Alleviation Scheme has been awarded to Hope & Clay Construction Ltd. Due to the estimated cost of the construction (>£2.5m) it was anticipated that contract award would require Executive approval in accordance with the Constitution, hence this report was placed on the forward plan. However the successful tender price at £1,653,818 is lower than anticipated and has allowed the contract to be awarded under delegated authority following Procurement Board approval. This report is therefore to note.
- 4.6 Although the successful price is considerably below the pre-tender estimate, Officers are not concerned about the ability of the contractor to construct the project as required. Experience has shown that prices for earthworks projects of this nature can fluctuate dramatically dependent on the contractor's appetite for risk. Analysis of the pricing schedule and the quality submission has not led to any concern and has revealed justifiable reasons for the tender price being lower. This contract has therefore been awarded to Hope and Clay construction Limited for the price of £1,653,818 and construction will commence at the end of March 2023.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

5.1 Following a competitive tender exercise a contract for the construction of the North and East Thatcham Flood Alleviation Scheme has been awarded to Hope & Clay Construction Ltd. Due to the estimated cost of the construction (>£2.5m) it was anticipated that contract award would require Executive approval in accordance with the Constitution. However the successful tender price is lower than anticipated and has

allowed the contract to be awarded under delegated authority following Procurement Board approval. This report is therefore to note.

Background

- 5.2 In July 2007 devastating floods hit Thatcham and around 1,200 homes were flooded. Since then a number of agencies have been working together to ensure that Thatcham is protected as much as possible from flooding.
- 5.3 Following the success of similar schemes in Thatcham (Cold Ash, Tull Way and Floral Way), this scheme will significantly contribute to the completion of the Thatcham Surface Water Management Action Plan works with only the Memorial Fields project remaining (programmed for 2024).
- 5.4 The scheme involves the construction of three flood attenuation ponds in East Thatcham, Bowling Green Road and at Heath Lane. The works consist of diverting an existing watercourse into new attenuation basins in order to reduce the risk of flooding to properties within the Thatcham area and is identified as a key measure in the Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan.
- 5.5 This is the latest project in a number of successfully delivered flood alleviation schemes in Thatcham delivered in partnership with the Environment Agency and Thatcham Flood Forum with contributions from Thames Water and Thatcham Town Council.
- 5.6 Complete schemes include:

Project	Homes Protected	Investment
Cold Ash Hill FAS	131	£913,531
Tull Way Reservoir	200	£1,834,180
Floral Way Reservoir	512	£3,260,000
South East Thatcham FAS	70	£2,260,882
Total	913	£8,268,593

5.7 This project will protect an additional 107 properties and with the final Memorial Fields project due for completion in 2024, a total of 1,210 properties will have been protected from the devastating impact that flooding can have. This will represent over £12m of investment in flood defences in Thatcham over the life of the SWMP.

Proposals

- 5.8 This contract opportunity was advertised as an open tender via the Council's eprocurement system and Contracts Finder. A contract award notice will be published on Contracts Finder following agreement of this report.
- 5.9 27 contractors initially expressed an interest in the project. 10 contractors submitted a selection questionnaire, 9 contractors were taken through to the ITT stage. We received

- 1 compliant tender and 1 late response which was rejected. The tender received was evaluated on the basis of 70% price and 30% quality. The total number of marks available was 1000. The winning tender scored 914.
- 5.10 Pricing strategy is to award a fixed price, lump sum contract based upon an amended NEC3 Engineering and Construction Contract 2005 (2013 edition). The proposed winning tenderer has supplied a total bid of £1,653,818. This was considerably below the pre-tender estimate, however experience has shown that prices for earthworks projects of this nature can fluctuate dramatically dependent on the contractor's appetite for risk. Analysis of the pricing schedule and the quality submission has not led to any concern regarding the contractor's ability to deliver the project and any underspend will result in a reduction of the grant money claimed from the Environment Agency.
- 5.11 To validate that the tender is not considered 'abnormally low', an in-depth analysis of the pricing schedule was carried out and it has been concluded that there are justifiable reasons for the lower tender price compared with the pre-tender estimate. There is no particular part of Hope and Clay's tender that stands out as being particularly underpriced, the prices are lower across the board. Being a local contractor it is likely they are benefitting from local knowledge and associated efficiency savings. They also own their own plant and all staff are directly employed rather than sub-contracted.

6 Other options considered

6.1 Not awarding the contract and re-tendering is the only conceivable alternative and this is not a recommended course of action.

7 Conclusion

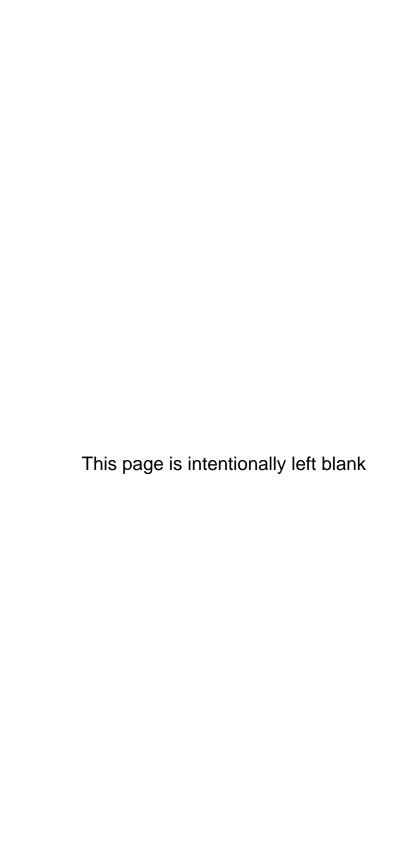
7.1 This project represents another key milestone towards completing the Thatcham Surface Water Management Plan and protecting Thatcham from the devastating impact of flooding. It is the culmination of a significant effort by West Berkshire Officers, Members and partners including Thatcham Flood Forum, the Environment Agency, Thatcham Town Council and Thames Water.

8 Appendices

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 r	note only	\boxtimes					
Wards affected: Chieveley & Cold Ash, Thatcham North & East. Officer details:							
Name: Jon Winstanley Job Title: Service Director Tel No: 01635 519087 E-mail: jon.winstanley@westberks.gov.uk							



West Berkshire Council Central Energy Contract Procurement Strategy

Committee considering report: Executive

Date of Committee: 9 February 2023

Portfolio Member: Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter

Date Portfolio Member agreed report: 11 November 2022

Report Author: Adrian Slaughter

Forward Plan Ref: EX4299

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide a summary of the Council's current procurement strategy for the Central Energy Contract and put forward recommendations for changes that would improve the management of risks associated with the current volatile wholesale market and rising energy costs.

2 Recommendation

2.1 That the Executive grants authority for the Council to switch from its existing L6 trading basket to the L12 trading basket by informing CCS before the identified 15th March 2023 notification deadline.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The total annual value of the central energy contract in 2021/22 was circa £2.4million.
	Based on historical energy consumption and the delivered energy prices achieved, it has been estimated that this value will increase to circa £3.6million for 2022/23
	As a result of continued rising wholesale energy costs, this value is expected to continue increasing in the short to medium term.

Human Resource:	N/A					
Legal:	It is our understanding that the proposed change of basket within the CCS framework is permitted under the terms of the framework agreement (although we have not at the time of writing reviewed its terms) and is not considered to be a fresh procurement but a permitted amendment to an existing contract. As such the proposed approach is compliant with the PCR 2015 and the Council's constitution. It will be necessary to determine whether any legal documentation is required in order to effect this change which Legal will undertake in consultation with the commissioning team.					
Risk Management:	The proposal and recommendation in the report have been produced as a way of managing the risk associated with the current energy market conditions and therefore the Council's financial exposure to increasing wholesale costs.					
Property:	The recommendation within this report will influence future operational energy costs and therefore energy budgets within the Council's portfolio (including schools) for those sites that are part of the central energy contract.					
Policy:	N/A					
	Positive Neutral Negative Strive Neutral Negative Neutral Negative Neutral Negative Neutral Negative Neutral Negative Neutral Negative Neutral					
Equalities Impact:						
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X Stage1 EQIA undertaken and determined no impact					

B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		No		
Environmental Impact:		Х				
Health Impact:		X				
ICT Impact:		X				
Digital Services Impact:		X				
Council Strategy Priorities:		X				
Core Business:		X		N/A		
Data Impact:		х		N/A		
Consultation and Engagement:	Jon Winstanley – Service Director Environment Jonathan Martin – Finance Manager Jenny Graham – Environment Delivery Manager Sarah Wood – Category Manager Agency & Energy Sarah Passow – Environment Delivery Officer Dawn Bond – Solicitor (Contracts)					

4 Executive Summary

4.1 The Council currently offers a non-mandatory 'central energy contract' service for the supply of electricity and gas to its corporate sites and schools. Schools can opt-in to this contract to be part of the Council's portfolio.

- 4.2 The contract is let via the Crown Commercial Services framework agreement Reference RM6011: Lot 1. The current contract is a rolling framework agreement which ends on 01/10/2023 but which will be replaced by CCS in a similar framework.
- 4.3 Given current market conditions and rising energy costs, the Energy & Carbon Team, working with our energy suppliers and the Category Manager for Energy, have looked at the existing procurement strategy to see if any changes could be easily made that would improve the management of future financial risk.
- 4.4 Whilst staying with the existing RM6011 framework there is the option to change the Council's existing trading basket (L6) to either L12, L24 or V30. Please refer to 5.7 to 5.10 for further explanation of these baskets. (NB, 'Basket' is CCS terminology for the type of energy product and associated procurement strategy that they offer)
- 4.5 The relative merits and disadvantages of the different trading baskets are discussed in greater detail within the body of the report. In summary, with the existing L6 Basket, the risk and governance controls adopted by CCS means that they are required to buy a minimum amount of energy for their customers each month during the 6 month procurement window. This is to reduce the risk that they have to buy a larger portion of the customer's energy requirements towards the end of the 6 month window when Market prices may have risen. The specialist buyers at CCS also have discretion based on their experience and energy market forecast to buy more than the minimum each month so that they can buy at the most advantageous time for their customers. If the Council was to switch to the L12 basket, we would be effectively increasing the window of opportunity for the specialist buying team to enter the market and get the best possible price for the Council.
- 4.6 It is the view of officers that switching to the L12 basket offers the best balance of budget certainty, whilst reducing exposure the volatile wholesale market. At the same time the L12 basket offers the shortest notice period (24 months) should the council wish to make any other long term changes to its procurement strategy.
- 4.7 It is therefore recommended that the Executive give authority to switch to the L12 trading basket before the identified notification deadline of 15th March 2023. The contract delivery would then start from 1st April 2024.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 The Council currently offers a non-mandatory 'central energy contract' service for the supply of electricity and gas to its corporate sites and schools. Given current energy market conditions, the Energy & Carbon Team, working with the framework suppliers and the Council's Category Manager for Energy, have undertaken a mini review of the trading baskets, examining if the Council would be better to switch to any of the other trading baskets offered by the framework.
- 5.2 Whilst this report contains claims as to the overall performance of the Framework, taken from existing Crown Commercial Services (CCS) customer reports that are independently audited, this report is **not** a VFM exercise looking more generally at the

Energy Market and available frameworks or other available procurement methods for securing the Council's energy supply contracts.

Background

- 5.3 The Council currently uses a framework created by Crown Commercial Services (CCS) in order to provide a 'non-mandatory' central energy supply contract for electricity and gas to its corporate and school portfolio.
- 5.4 CCS have been purchasing energy commodities on the wholesale market for over 24 years. Its current annual electricity spend is approximately £1billion per annum (comprising 1,100 customers and 50,156 meters across central government and the wider public sector for England and Wales). The annual gas spend is approximately £360million per annum (comprising 885 customers and 30,000 meters across central government and the wider public sector in England and Wales).
- 5.5 CCS is therefore one of the largest buyers of energy in the UK and the scale allows for fully resourced, specialist energy trading and risk management teams.
- 5.6 Within the framework, customers can chose from a number of different trading baskets that are based on whether it provides a 'fixed' or 'variable' price during the annual contract delivery period, and the amount of time that is afforded to the CCS energy trading team to secure its customers energy requirements from the wholesale market.
- 5.7 West Berkshire Council currently use the 'L6' trading basket offered by CCS. This is a 'fixed' price annual contract (1st April to 31st March) where the price remains the same throughout the contract delivery period. There is a 6 month purchase window immediately prior to the delivery period, starting 1st October, where the CCS Energy Trading team will enter the market multiple times and all procurement is completed before the delivery period starts.
- 5.8 CCS also offer an 'L12', more recently an 'L24', and a 'V30' trading basket.
- 5.9 Both the 'L12' and 'L24' baskets operate in the same way as the 'L6' basket during the annual contract delivery period in that they provide a 'fixed' commodity (p/kWh) price. The main difference between the 'L' baskets is the length of purchase window in advance of the annual contract delivery period. The 'L12' has a 10 month window initiated 12 months before the annual contract delivery period and therefore ending two months before the start. The 'L24' has a 22 month purchase window initiated before the annual contract delivery period, e.g. for financial year 2025/26 the purchase window will open 1st April 2023.
- 5.10 The 'V30' trading basket has a 42 month purchasing window that is initiated 30 months before the annual contract delivery period, and continues throughout this period. The biggest difference with the 'V30' basket is that the commodity price (p/kWh) will change on a monthly basis. It is worth noting that Government requires all its departments to use the 'V30' trading basket.
- 5.11 The longer the purchase window then the longer the notice period should the Council wish to move between baskets or cease using the CCS framework. The table below outlines the request change, trading start dates and notice periods for the next 3 years.

Current Trading Basket	New Trading Basket	Request change deadline	CCS Trading start date	CCS Supply start date	Notice Period for new basket
L6	L6	15 th September 2023	1 st October 2023	1 st April 2024	12 months
L6	L12	15 th March 2023	1 st April 2023	1 st April 2024	24 months
L6	L24	15 th March 2023	1 st April 2023	1 st April 2025	36 months
L6	V30	14 th September 2023	1 st October 2023	1 st April 2026	42 months

- 5.12 The UK is now experiencing a lengthy period of energy market volatility and rising energy prices that started in December 2021 and significantly increased with the invasion of Ukraine by Russia in February 2022. Due to the way in which the 'L6' trading basket operates, with CCS purchasing the L6 customer energy requirements from October 2021, the Council was largely protected from the very large energy price increases that have been seen in financial year 2022/23.
- 5.13 Despite this, there was still an 80% increase in the average unit price (p/kWh) for the Council's non-half hourly electricity and 220% for gas in 2021/22 to 22/23.
- 5.14 CCS have very recently started offering a review of baskets and forecasting of energy costs at an individual customer level. Before now, all forecasts were based on the overall portfolio across all of the frameworks customers. The Energy & Carbon Team subsequently requested this be undertaken for West Berkshire Council. The timings of the review and the notice periods for each trading basket mean that the Council is already committed to the L6 trading basket for financial year 2023/24.
- 5.15 The results of the review estimate that, based on current market predictions and historical Council energy consumption, the Council's overall financial liability across its portfolio of corporate buildings and schools will increase from approximately £3.6million in 2022/23 to approximately £7.7million in 2023/24.
- 5.16 With the recent government announcements regarding shortening the time the Energy Bill Relief Scheme will be available it is currently unknown what, if any, targeted government relief will be available to Local Authorities from April 2023 onwards. As it stands, the majority of Council and school sites are considered unlikely to benefit from

the existing Energy Bill Relief Scheme in 2022/23 as CCS has managed to procure the majority of its customer's energy requirements below the wholesale threshold price at which the scheme kicks in. Should an individual meter within the Council's portfolio qualify then this will automatically be applied by the Council's Energy Suppliers (EDF for electricity and Total for gas).

Proposals

- 5.17 Whilst awaiting further information from government regarding potential support for future energy costs, an action that can potentially be taken by the Council is to change its trading basket from 'L6' to one of the other trading baskets being offered by CCS for financial year 2024/25.
- 5.18 With this in mind, the obvious choice would be to switch to the 'L12' trading basket as this still provides the security of a 'fixed' commodity price (p/kWh) during the contract delivery period and increases the length of the purchasing window in which CCS Energy Traders have to secure the energy requirements for the Council. They would therefore have more flexibility as to when to buy from the wholesale market and avoid periods of increased costs.
- 5.19 The 24 month notice period that the Council would have to give in order to change from the L12 basket or stop using the framework is recognised as restrictive but is shorter than the other potential baskets.

6 Other options considered

- 6.1 Do nothing and remain within the 'L6' basket was considered as an option but quickly discounted due to the rigidity of the shortest purchasing window. With current energy market volatility and the continuing upward trend on energy costs, the 'L6' basket is likely to closely reflect these conditions. This risk outweighing the 'flexibility to change' benefit of the shortest notice period.
- 6.2 Switch from the L6 basket direct to L24 was also considered but this would potentially mean having to commit to one more additional financial year (2024/25) with the L6 basket as the annual contract delivery period for the next L24 basket does not start until 1st April 2025. The L24 basket is also a relatively new offering from CCS and as such there is no supporting evidence as to how it would perform in terms of providing VFM.
- 6.3 Switch from L6 to L12 as an interim for 2024/25 but at the same time also notify CCS of the intention to then switch to L24 for 2025/26. The biggest drawback to this approach is the length of notice period (36 months) required in order to change from the L24 basket or stop using the framework. In order to provide the minimum 36 month notice period the Council would potentially be committing itself to the L24 basket until the end of 31st March 2028 rendering any further recommended changes to the procurement strategy difficult to quickly achieve.
- 6.4 Switching from L6 to V30 would provide an even longer purchasing window prior to the start of the contract delivery period (30 months) and this continues throughout the contract (12 months). This improves the opportunity for the CCS trading team to buy from the market at periods of low cost and therefore provide lower unit prices for the customer. However, as a result of energy still being bought during the contract period,

West Berkshire Council Central Energy Contract Procurement Strategy

the unit price will change on a monthly basis throughout the contract delivery period which reduces budget certainty. As a direct result, the V30 basket has the longest notice period of 42 months should the Council wish to change baskets or leave the framework. The current timings also mean that the next opportunity to switch is not until September 2023, with the actual contract delivery period starting financial year 2026/27.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 For the reasons outlined in 5.17 to 6.4, it is believed that switching from the L6 trading basket to an L12 gives the Council the best balance of a fixed price (budget certainty) and reduces exposure to a volatile wholesale market (longer 10 month purchasing window).
- 7.2 The relatively short notice period (24 months) in comparison to the other options means that, in the future, should the Council wish to alter its procurement strategy again as a result of any further review, then it is not tied into a lengthy contract before it can implement any changes.

Subject to C	all-in:						
Yes: □	No: ⊠						
The item is d	ue to be referred to Council for final approval						
Delays in imp Council	plementation could have serious financial implications for the	\boxtimes					
Delays in imp	plementation could compromise the Council's position						
	or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or ask Groups within preceding six months						
Item is Urger	nt Key Decision						
Report is to r	note only						
Officer details:							
Name: Job Title: Tel No: E-mail:	Adrian Slaughter Energy & Carbon Manager 01635 503265 Adrian.slaughter@westberks.gov.uk						

Libraries Review Report

Committee considering report: Executive

Date of Committee: 9 February 2023

Portfolio Member: Councillor Howard Woollaston

Date Portfolio Member agreed report: 3 January 2023

Report Author: Felicity Harrison / Jude Thomas / Nicola

Peacock

Forward Plan Ref: EX4106

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to present the findings of the 2021/22 Libraries Review. This follow-up review sets out to ensure that the service remains fit for purpose and meets community needs after the library transformation work which took place in 2016/17.

2 Recommendation

2.1 To consider the proposals in the report on the future development of the Library Service.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary				
Financial:	If it is decided that additional investment is needed, this funding will be secured accordingly.				
Human Resource:	As above, if it is decided that additional staffing is needed, funding will be secured accordingly.				
Legal:	N/A				
Risk Management:	The future of the Mobile Library service. Revenue gap relating to town and parish council contributions.				
Property:	There could be potential implications for all libraries depending on which recommendations are progressed.				

Policy:	Libraries Connected Universal Offers				
	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:	Х			Any changes will be undertaken in line with the Council's Environment Policy and net zero carbon emissions target.	
Health Impact:	Х			A number of the recommendations specifically aim to have a positive impact on health and wellbeing.	
ICT Impact:	Х			Dependent on which recommendations are accepted.	
Digital Services Impact:	Х			Dependent on which recommendations are accepted.	
Council Strategy Priorities:	х			Ensure that vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes. Support everyone to reach their full potential.	
Core Business:	Х			Culture, Leisure, and Libraries.	

Data Impact:		Х		
Consultation and Engagement:	See detail below.			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 A review of the Library Service was undertaken in 2016/17, resulting in significant transformation of the Service. It was recommended, as part of the review, that the impact of this transformation was evaluated, after three years, to ensure that the Service remains fit for purpose and meets community needs. This exercise was delayed due to the Covid pandemic.
- **4.2** The follow up review has now taken place, and was conducted in three phases:
 - Phase 1: Community Needs Assessment and community engagement
 - Phase 2: LGA Peer Review
 - Phase 3: Compiling the Libraries Review report
- **4.3** Areas of priority have been identified through the review process, with recommendations made as to how to respond to priorities.
- **4.4** Proposed actions to improve and develop the Service to meet the future needs of residents are set out under each priority area.
- **4.5** The development of a new Library Service vision and action plan is proposed, aligning with national and local strategic priorities. This would clearly communicate the commitment to, and priorities for, the Service in the short, medium and long term.
- **4.6** This marks the beginning of a wider programme of engagement with stakeholders to turn the outcomes of the review into an action plan linking to agreed strategic priorities.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 This report sets out the findings of the recent Libraries Review undertaken to understand the impact of the significant changes to the Library Service following the previous review in 2016/17. In doing so, it provides:
 - 1. Details of the 2016/17 Libraries Review and the resulting changes to the service;
 - Context of other factors that have impacted on the service since the 2016/17 review;
 - Key findings of the current review;

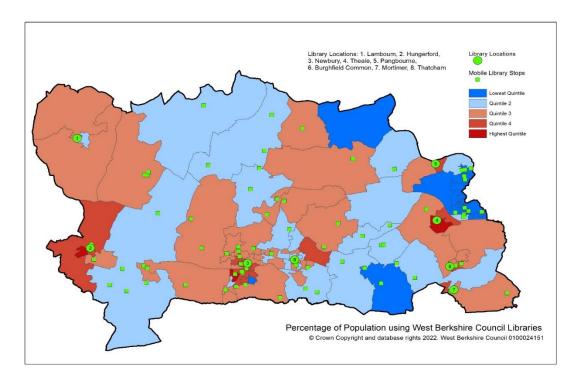
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4. Proposed priorities and options for the future service.

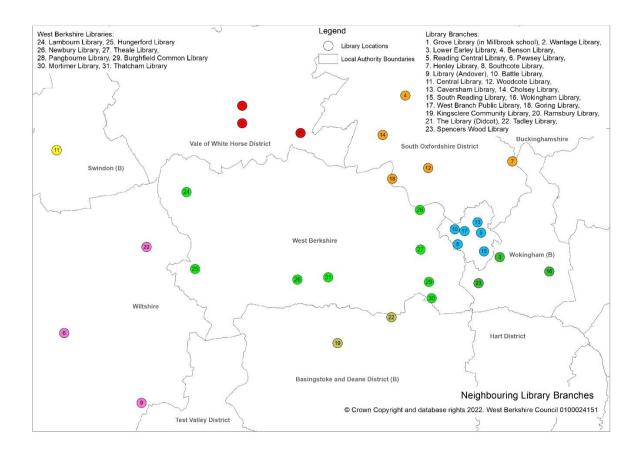
Background

- **5.2** West Berkshire Libraries currently operate eight libraries within the District, a mobile library and an At Home service. The libraries are situated in:
 - Burghfield Common
 - Hungerford
 - Lambourn
 - Mortimer

- Newbury
- Pangbourne
- Thatcham
- Theale



- **5.3** Geographically, Mortimer and Burghfield Libraries are three miles apart and there is a gap in provision in the north of the District, as shown in the diagram above.
- **5.4** In addition, there is an e-library offering access to e-books, e-audio, e-magazines and e-newspapers.
- **5.5** The libraries in neighbouring local authority areas are shown in the diagram below.



Libraries Review 2016/17

- **5.6** In 2016/17 West Berkshire Council conducted a review of Library Services based on an independent assessment of needs carried out by consultants *Red Quadrant*. The review resulted in major changes to the service which were implemented in 2017/18.
- **5.7** In 2017/18, the revised budget for the Libraries Service was set at £1,046,000, resulting in an annual saving of £690,000.
- 5.8 The outcome of the 2016/17 Libraries Review resulted in a level of library service that could not be met by the Council's service budget allocation alone. It was agreed that the £150k funding gap could be met by requesting that town and parish councils make a voluntary contribution of £1 per resident, based on the population of each parish, for the next 3 years.
- 5.9 One of the recommendations from the 2016/17 Libraries Review was that there should be a further review of the library service after three years. The purpose of the follow up review is to ensure the service meets the needs of residents, including any Covid-19 impacts, and delivers on wider outcomes across the Council and those identified in the new <u>Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy</u> and the <u>Cultural Heritage Strategy</u>.

Service remodelling following Libraries Review 2016/17

5.10 As a result of the Libraries Review in 2016/17, a decision was taken to make the following significant changes to the service:

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- A budget reduction of £690,000
- A 42% reduction in library staff, from 42.11 to 24.32 FTE
- The closure of one library service point, at Wash Common, which is now run independently by the community.
- The reduction of the number of mobile libraries from two to one.

5.11 In response to this, the following transformation took place:

- A new operational model was established with volunteers supporting staff.
- A Community Hub was created at Hungerford Library.
- A commitment to more partnership working with local communities and town and parish councils, to include the introduction of a voluntary contribution of £1 per head of the population, from town and parish councils.
- The development of positive relationships with other Council services, in particular targeting Early Years and Education.
- A mini re-structure of the professional staff team to align with priorities.
- The West Berkshire Libraries brand was created.
- Significant capital investment for building improvements.
- The location of the WBC Public Protection Partnership at Theale Library to maximise income and secure the future of the library in the current location
- Capital investment in digital improvements; new public PCs, self-service kiosks, introduction of Libraries App.

Impact of Transformation

5.12 Demand / Performance

5.12.1 In the two years prior to the pandemic, library usage in the District increased, which is in the contrast to the gradual decline in library usage nationally. In 2019/20, there were 346,895 visits and 571,352 items borrowed. Visitor numbers have still not recovered to these levels, post pandemic. The pandemic, inevitably, disrupted patterns of library use, with periods of library closure. For this reason the 2020/21 library data has been excluded from this report as it would give a misleading impression of trends as visits and borrower numbers were greatly reduced. The Library Service is now in recovery and this is reflected in the data which we now have for 2021/22, when there were 201,657 visits and 553,903 items borrowed.

Library usage data trends:

Library Service KPIs/Measures of Volume	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2021/22
Visitor numbers - physical visits	380,527	332,241	349,364	346,895	201,657
Number of library events held	*	*	2194	2248	776
Items borrowed including e- library items	619,146	539,473	534,968	571,352	553,903
Number of website hits	131,828	91,981	102,499	114,528	151,117
Volunteer hours	3,039	10,147	12,034	12,935	10,001

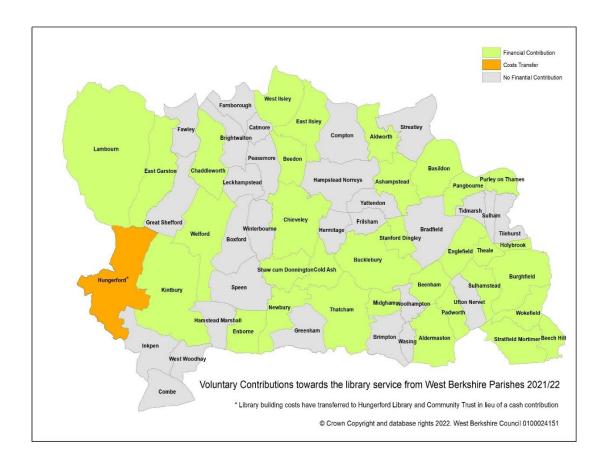
^{*} Data not available

5.12.2 We have one remaining mobile library. Of a total of 670 'active borrowers' using this service in 2019/20, 313 used only the mobile library. An Active Borrower is someone who has borrowed at least one physical item in the preceding 12 month period. The existing diesel vehicle is 15 years old and reaching the end of its roadworthiness. The Mobile Library Service is perceived as essential by parish councils, but low usage, combined with the age of the vehicle, means that consideration needs to be given to how this service is delivered. In 2020/21, the usage of this service had further declined, with 486 'active borrowers' having used the service that year. Of these only 258 only used the Mobile Library Service which gives a more accurate reflection of demand.

5.13 Finance

- 5.13.1 The revised budget for libraries was set at £1,046,000 for the new Library Service, an annual saving of £690,000. As the existing level of library service could not be met by the Council's service budget allocation alone, it was proposed that the £150k gap should be met by requesting town and parish councils to consider making a voluntary contribution of £1 per resident, based on the population of each parish for the next 3 years.
- 5.13.2 The target for town and parish council contributions is based on £1 per head of population, which totals £150k. Contributions averaged 90k per year for the first three years which created an annual budget pressure/deficit of £60k. Since then voluntary contributions from some town and parish councils have decreased, and

- we anticipate more parishes may reconsider the level of their contributions in the future, increasing the need to explore alternative options.
- 5.13.3 The map below shows the contributions made by town and parish councils in the financial year 2021/22. It should be noted that those councils that do make voluntary contributions towards the library service varies each year. This impacts on the ability to plan services, and is a constant pressure on the revenue budget.



5.14 Staff / Volunteers

- 5.14.1 The new model relies on volunteer support and works particularly well in smaller branches, and where there is a volunteer organiser to prepare rotas, although it has been more difficult to integrate volunteers into the teams in larger libraries, particularly Newbury Library. This is possibly because there are a number of younger volunteers, fulfilling requirements for Duke of Edinburgh or university applications, resulting in a higher turnover. It has been identified that the role of the volunteer at Newbury Library would benefit from review.
- 5.14.2 A Volunteers Officer recruits and manages volunteers across Culture and Libraries and supports the volunteer organisers.
- 5.14.3 The staffing is so lean that casual cover is needed for every staff absence, and current staffing levels at Newbury Library are a cause for concern as they impact on the capacity to provide additional outreach services. As a result, outreach work has been targeted and aimed primarily at Early Years and Primary Schools.

- 5.14.4 The Newbury Library Manager post has been increased by five hours to full time, to create more resilience within the team.
- 5.14.5 There is a routine reliance on casual staff to be able to operate the service safely, in compliance with fire evacuation requirements, and this sometimes results in unplanned closures, if health and safety requirements cannot be met.

5.15 Digital

- 5.15.1 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding has been used to make investments in digital technology including new public PCs, self-service kiosks and introduction of Libraries App.
- 5.15.2 Further improvements are needed in the ICT infrastructure and back-office support so that library staff and users can make the best use of new ICT equipment.

External factors

5.16 Since 2016, a number of external factors have affected the nature of library usage and the type of services. Some of these are the continuation of long-term trends, such as pressure on housing and technology evolution. It is clear that Covid-19 has accelerated a number of these trends and has had a profound impact on health, deprivation, education and the workplace.

5.17 Population and Housing

- 5.17.1 The population of West Berkshire is forecast to remain stable over the next decade, with the 'over 65' population increasing by approximately 25%, the 'under 10' population falling by about 12%. One third of the population is classified as rural.
- 5.17.2 The Local Plan forecasts 4,500 new homes, principally in the Thatcham and Newbury areas, with 300 new homes in rural areas. The cost of housing, both owned and rented, has accelerated faster than inflation over the last decade. As a result, families and young people, particularly those on average incomes, tend to be living in smaller properties.
- 5.17.3 The growth plan indicates that the libraries are in the right location, but may need to be expanded, especially in Thatcham.
- 5.17.4 The continued high rurality means that current access challenges will remain and, with the population ageing, accessibility issues are likely to grow.
- 5.17.5 Smaller houses, combined with increased home working, may increase the demand for low-cost, quiet working spaces for both adults and secondary age children.

5.18 Technological evolution

5.18.1 Since 2016, consumer technology has been ever more focussed on mobile devices and applications. This trend, when combined with increased data speeds and volumes, has created a fully mobile capability for many, reducing even the need

- for PCs and connection to broadband. Most companies, service providers and users have fully embraced this trend, which has increased the 'digital divide' for those who do not have this technology and now find non-digital options increasingly difficult to access. This trend can be seen in usage trends in our libraries, with declining hours of use of hardware.
- 5.18.2 The implication is that hardware use will remain important for a smaller number of otherwise digitally-excluded residents and that high broadband speed and suitable workspaces will be increasingly important.

5.19 Deprivation indicators

- 5.19.1 West Berkshire is a prosperous district, with low levels of relative deprivation. There are a small number of wards in Newbury and Thatcham with higher levels of deprivation. Areas of higher deprivation have good access to a library.
- 5.19.2 The rural areas (the west and north) have low overall levels of deprivation, but have limited local services and public transport connections, which impacts those without access to a car and those on lower incomes.
- 5.19.3 West Berkshire does have an education gap for disadvantaged children above the national average. While this is being addressed through strategies in Education and Family Services, there is a potential role for library services to play in supporting the drive to reduce the gap.
- 5.19.4 Library fines have been a long standing arrangement in public libraries, but they potentially impact disproportionately on those who are most vulnerable (financially or as a result of cognitive disability or mental ill health). They are a known barrier to people joining and retaining library membership. The fear of incurring fines and building debt with the Council is a reason often cited for not using the otherwise free library service.
- 5.19.5 An increasing number of other authorities have already removed this barrier for their residents, helping to reduce the widening gap of 'haves and have nots'. By removing library fines, WBC would be supporting its most vulnerable residents who may be at risk of poverty, giving them access to a wide range of books, information and digital access to enable job searches, benefit applications, study support, school readiness, and reading for pleasure.
- 5.19.6 The current income target for library fines is £28,490.

5.20 Covid-19 recovery

- 5.20.1 Aside from the direct impact of Covid-19 on closing services, it is likely that it will have a longer term impact in a number of areas.
- 5.20.2 While home working was on the rise pre-2020, many employers, including West Berkshire Council, are now embracing it more actively. Although this is proving attractive for many, it can be challenging for some people without an appropriate workspace at home, or where digital connectivity is expensive and/or limited.

5.20.3 There has been a rise in mental ill health and issues of social exclusion, even in the recovery stage, with those who are clinically vulnerable concerned about mixing in public areas while the virus continues to be common, even in a less dangerous form.

Libraries Service Review 2022 methodology

5.21 In carrying out this review, the Council undertook a number of engagement exercises, as detailed below.

5.22 Public, staff and volunteer surveys

- 5.22.1 An on-line public consultation exercise with library users and non-users, was carried out, between October and December 2021, with hard copy versions made available for those without internet access. A total of 896 responses were received. The majority of responders were library users, and in employment or retired/not working through choice, aged 65 and over, and identified as being White English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British.
- 5.22.2 Feedback and suggestion boards were also placed in some library branches and comments were taken into consideration.
- 5.22.3 Online staff and library volunteer surveys were carried out.
- 5.22.4 Online engagement sessions with town/parish councils took place in January 2022.

5.23 Community Needs Assessment 2022

- 5.23.1 In January 2022, consultants, Shared Intelligence, were commissioned to undertake a Community Needs Assessment which included interviews with representatives of community organisations and selected West Berkshire Council Service Directors, and a workshop with Library Service staff.
- 5.23.2 Information and feedback gathered through this engagement process, combined with library data analysis, informed the findings and recommendations in the Community Needs Assessment.

5.24 Local Government Association Peer Review

- 5.24.1 In April 2022, a Peer Review was undertaken by the Local Government Association, funded by Arts Council England.
- 5.24.2 The Peer Review provided an external, objective overview of West Berkshire Council's current Library Service, and recommendations in relation to the following priority area:

Based on the changing needs of the community which have been identified in our new Community Needs Assessment, how can we deliver the Library Service more efficiently in a largely rural area, including innovative ways in which to ensure access?

5.24.3 The findings of the Peer Review have been documented in a separate report.

Key Findings of Review 2022

Public, staff and volunteer surveys

- **5.25** Liaison with selected community groups was undertaken, prior to commissioning Shared Intelligence to undertake the Community Needs Assessment.
- **5.26** Findings included that library fines were considered as being a barrier to some residents using the library service as people worried about missing the return date and being unable to pay the fine. Refugees/asylum seekers cited this in particular and, with the increase in numbers, this was considered of importance by organisations such as Educafe.
- **5.27** Increased understanding of, and support for, those with learning disabilities regarding access to the library service and provision of activities for these residents.

5.28 Public Survey Key Findings:

- 5.28.1 Responses to the public survey showed that a good quality library service, which is accessible to everyone in the community, is highly valued. The Library Service should be providing facilities and services which are designed to reduce social isolation, and should support health and wellbeing.
- 5.28.2 Engagement with children, young people outside of school through provision of young people focussed activities was also seen as important. Increased engagement with schools was a common theme, as was increased arts, culture and heritage activities.
- 5.28.3 Helping people who do not have access to digital technology and applications, or cannot use them, was also flagged up as being a priority. There were several comments about wanting a better e-library offer which suggested the need to explain factors such as the limitations of digital rights, and the reasons for the two different services.
- 5.28.4 There was also a deep appreciation of the 'At Home' service and the mobile library service by regular users. Some respondents stressed the need to prioritise the core service, providing a good selection of physical books.

5.29 Volunteer Survey Key Findings:

- 5.29.1 Some volunteers felt that they would like to have the opportunity to undertake a broader range of duties and believed they could do more to help paid staff. One example was they could undertake more tasks on Spydus, the library management system. In contrast though, some volunteers reported that they did not feel comfortable supporting customers with ICT queries because of a lack of experience and confidence.
- 5.29.2 Volunteers clearly recognised that low staffing levels were an issue and that this has an impact on the number of events and activities that can be delivered in libraries.

5.30 Staff Survey and Staff Workshops Key Findings:

- 5.30.1 Staff expressed concern about low staffing levels in the service, and how it impacted on their ability to help library users. They stressed the importance of creating opportunities for young people to gain experience of working in the Library Service through apprenticeships. More ICT training and career progression opportunities were also acknowledged as being needed, as there was felt to be a lack of flexibility within roles to allow staff to 'try' other work within the service.
- 5.30.2 A common theme was the need for increased support from ICT when equipment/networks were not working.
- 5.30.3 Many staff felt that library fines should be removed as they were a barrier which stopped people using the library service.
- 5.30.4 It was also felt that there was a need for a clear vision and improved communication within the Library Service.
- 5.30.5 In addition to the staff survey, workshops were held with a range of Library Service staff and the key findings are detailed below.
- 5.30.6 Staff felt that lower staffing levels had reduced capacity to develop and undertake work which could strengthen the service. This had also led to reduced delivery of cultural heritage outreach activities.
- 5.30.7 It was also felt that community engagement activities, particularly with rural communities, had been severely impacted with the reduction of staff delivering outreach work.
- 5.30.8 It was also reported that there was a lack of capacity to meet the increasing demand from library users for ICT support and assistance. This was exacerbated by the insufficient support for library ICT issues which required an understanding of the service and requirements.
- 5.30.9 Staff also reported that they were undertaking duties outside of their primary skill set and experience, with concerns regarding resulting impact.

Online engagement sessions with town and parish councils

5.31 The key findings from the on-line engagement sessions held with town and parish councils are outlined below:

5.32 Digital

- 5.32.1 Access to digital provision for all was considered to be a key element of the service requiring improvement, particularly support and training in using library PCs.
- 5.32.2 The need to be able access on-line services, particularly when access was not available at home, was also identified as important, particularly in rural locations.

5.32.3 The development of the Council's Digital Strategy was suggested to encourage use of e-magazines, e-books and digital formats, particularly for young people as a means of attracting them to use the Library Service.

5.33 Libraries as a community space

5.33.1 The importance of libraries as a place for people to meet others, in a safe space, reducing isolation and loneliness was acknowledged, but views were mixed as to whether this should be in a traditional 'quiet' library space or a more diverse community hub environment.

5.34 Mobile Library Service

- 5.34.1 Despite user numbers of the Mobile Library Service being low in comparison to town and parish council populations, it was considered to be an important service, and one which town and parish councils were currently prepared to support financially, recognising that it was a 'lifeline' for those people who did use it. It was suggested that the Mobile Library Service should offer a wider range of services, in response to the needs of residents, and that stop-off points should be reviewed and revised and the duration of stops extended to improve access and use.
- 5.34.2 It was acknowledged that, whilst other councils had abolished their Mobile Library Services, this was not supported by the parish and town councils of West Berkshire.

5.35 Voluntary Contributions

- 5.35.1 Feedback was split between those that understood the financial pressure upon the Council, and were willing to contribute, recognising the importance of the library service, and those that believed the Council had a duty to provide the statutory service, and that it should be funded by council tax contributions. Although in a minority, it was reported, that some thought the voluntary contribution represented a 'double taxation' and represented the Council "shirking their responsibilities".
- 5.35.2 It was raised that parish councils who make a voluntary contribution of £1 per head of population can feel a sense of unfairness, knowing that neighbouring parishes receive the same level of library service even if they don't make a contribution. It was recognised this would be a challenge to resolve.
- 5.35.3 There was a question over whether, in future, town and parish councils could justify the contribution if user numbers remained as they were. There was also a suggestion that, in making the voluntary contribution, parish and town councils had become 'stakeholders' and this gave them 'control over what happens', and this was seen as a benefit.

5.36 Increased engagement with schools

5.36.1 The value of increased working with schools was raised, including involving parents/carers with their children's use of the library to encourage their own use of it. A programme of regular school visits, from pre-school to secondary, was suggested, to encourage future use, as was a familiarisation programme for

secondary and sixth form students to assist them in using the library, and making the transition to further/higher education.

5.37 Post-Pandemic Services

5.37.1 Post pandemic requirements were discussed including that, with more people working from home, there may be greater demand for libraries to be used as work spaces, and hours of opening may need to be reviewed and revised to be more flexible.

5.38 Communicating what the Library Service has to offer

5.38.1 Increased use of social media and digital platforms, particularly to reach young people, was suggested as a way of raising awareness of the service, as was the use of parish newsletters and posters, although resourcing issues were acknowledged for the former. Promotion of activities and services through community groups was also suggested.

Community Needs Assessment 2022

5.39 The key findings of the LGA Library Service Community Needs Assessment (CNA) for West Berkshire, undertaken by Shared Intelligence, were structured around themes in the cross agency West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Vision for 2036 and are outlined below.

5.40 Realising potential

- 5.40.1 Although West Berkshire is a generally prosperous area, with high life expectancy, strong economic sectors and good employment, there are pockets of deprivation and a number of people with needs that are easily masked by the general picture. This is manifested through wide gaps in areas such as secondary school attainment; social mobility challenge, particularly for children; and gaps in the employment market, particularly for those with a learning disability or mental health illness. A further aspect of need in West Berkshire relates to refugee populations.
- 5.40.2 This points to a key role for libraries in helping to engage harder to reach children, young people and their families and in providing information about the full range of education and training opportunities, and making a wider range of foreign language material available.

5.41 Health and wellbeing

- 5.40.1. Overall population health in West Berkshire is good. However, the population is ageing at a faster rate than nationally, with forecast sharp growth in the over 75 population, and the gap between the healthy and overall life expectancies is significant. There are also high numbers of people with mental health problems and, reflecting the rural nature of the area, there are problems with limited access to public transport, public services and cultural facilities.
- 5.40.2. Health and wellbeing needs are, therefore, very important for libraries libraries can help as sources of information, places for social connection and safe public spaces.

5.41. Employment and economy

- 5.41.1. Although West Berkshire's employment rate (aged 16 to 64) is higher than the equivalent figure for the south east region and England, and residents are highly skilled with the rate of education (NVQ4 level or above) higher than the levels for the south east region and England, there still exist clear employment and economic based needs, with eleven Local Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the three most deprived deciles nationally for education, training and skills. Underemployment is a challenge with people working fewer hours than they would like, or in roles not making best use of their skills. The pandemic has impacted on the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, which employ 16% of local people, many of them young people, women or people from ethnic minorities.
- 5.41.2. The pandemic has also accelerated changes in patterns of work. A third of West Berkshire workers were able to work from home during the Covid-19 period and there is known to be a growing demand nationally for co-working space. The Economic Development Strategy, as refreshed in 2021, recognises the need to help start-ups and small businesses grow, including by providing incubator space and 'one stop shop' advice for new and viable small firms.
- 5.41.3. This suggests a role for libraries as a location for access to information about training, for delivery of training in smaller towns, and to be an environment that supports older and disadvantaged people looking to participate in the workforce. There are also implications for library space as a facility for workers otherwise based at home, and for small and start-up businesses.

5.42. Sustainability and quality of life

- 5.42.1. The *Health and Wellbeing Vision* includes a strong sustainability and quality of life agenda. This relates to more partnership working, increased links with cultural organisations and, as evidenced in the public survey, a desire to see libraries as places which have a strong cultural element including events, exhibitions, courses and classes.
- 5.42.2. There is a role for libraries in holding information and hosting events and exhibitions to engage people in and promote sustainable choices.

5.43. Cross-cutting themes

5.43.1. The CNA concluded that the generally prosperous nature of West Berkshire masks some pockets of disadvantage and the wide gaps between the best and worst performing figures in areas such as secondary school attainment and healthy life expectancy. The Covid-19 pandemic has further shone a light on needs in areas such as social isolation, including of carers and people with learning disabilities, and the number of people with secondary mental health needs. Drawing on this, four cross-cutting themes were identified that the Library Service can do more to support:

- Engagement. There is an important role for libraries to support wider efforts to address the difficulty of engaging hard to reach communities, through a focus on intergenerational learning and wider prevention work. Outreach work requires resource to keep refreshing relationships with key partners, such as schools, so approaches to marketing and the creation of staff capacity for engagement and community activities will need to be considered.
- Access to information and services. With a large rural area and increasing digitisation of public services, there is a need to promote digital inclusion. For libraries this means building offers of assisted digital support, particularly to older people and vulnerable groups, who lack the confidence to use self-service channels, or do not have access to suitable devices or reliable internet connection. Serving this need will also require more tailored support for public facing information technology equipment and creates a staff training need.
- Community resilience. Particularly in the context of an ageing population, there is a growing need for communities to identify and harness their own strengths in connecting people to peer support, social interaction and community action. Libraries can support this by functioning as community hubs. This will need co-creation with communities and other public service organisations and requires consideration of factors such as whether a library building can be open outside of library opening hours for wider community uses.
- Skills and employment. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated changes in the pattern of work, creating a need to provide space and facilities to support home workers, micro businesses and job seekers. More widely, there are the challenges of younger people's social mobility and the participation in the labour market for older and disadvantaged groups. These issues can be supported with changes to the configuration of physical library space and equipment and by encouraging support networks, with partners to use libraries.

5.44. Library locations

- 5.44.1. Needs that affect the nature of the library locations were also identified. In addition to the 10,000 new homes built between 2000 and 2018, concentrations of new housing will be built in the next few years around Thatcham, Newbury, in the east of the District and in parts of the Downs area. The Health and Wellbeing Vision 2036 recognises the importance of creating a sustainable housing mix, including an increase in affordable housing, to help meet the challenge of attracting and retaining young people. Additional provision of residential care bed spaces for the ageing population, as well as adaptations to help older people remain living at home, are also required.
- 5.44.2. This has important implications for libraries; while the overall population level of the District is set to be stable into the 2040s, existing patterns of population will change and it will be necessary to adapt as these changes take place in the medium term. Space needs to be flexible. Points identified for consideration are laid out below.

- 5.44.3. **East.** There are four libraries relatively close together with varied patterns of use. The potential for partnership should be explored, to create more community hub style facilities that can promote engagement with the community.
- 5.44.4. **Newbury and Thatcham.** Masterplanning work in the town centres was identified as an opportunity to tailor library provision better to local needs including extending the current facility in Newbury in a way that would support the employment and skills agenda, and creating a new facility that can better meet needs in Thatcham; the current facility is considered to be poorly located and constrained by its small size.
- 5.44.5. **North.** A large area of the north and centre of the District is not served by a local West Berkshire library and active library borrowers mainly travel to Newbury or Pangbourne. Although deprivation levels are low in this part of the District, access to housing and services is limited, due to its rural nature, so opportunities to linking some library provision with a wider community hub idea were identified.
- 5.44.6. More detail of the findings of the Community Needs Assessment can be found in Appendix A.

Local Government Association Peer Review

- **5.42** The key findings from the LGA Peer Review of the Library Service are detailed below.
- 5.43 The recently completed Community Needs Assessment (CNA) provides a comprehensive analysis of library usage and demographics, and identifies cross-cutting themes which the library service should be well placed to address to help achieve wider priorities for West Berkshire. It provides a helpful body of evidence on which to base the current review.
- 5.44 A new West Berkshire Council Strategy will be launched following the May 2023 local elections. This provides an opportunity to position the library service to support delivery of Council priorities. There is political support in West Berkshire for the library service, and an understanding of its contribution towards the achievement of wider outcomes in the community. However, there is a keenness for the service to deliver more from within its existing resource base, including meeting the challenge of providing access to the service in a predominantly rural area.
- 5.45 There may be scope to secure additional capital funding. The peer team heard that the Council had an appetite to invest in buildings as part of a 'one public estate' approach to asset management across West Berkshire. This gives scope for more colocation and joined up service delivery with Leisure and other services, leading to greater engagement with library service users along with efficiency gains.
- **5.46** The Council has an ageing mobile library vehicle and recognises that decisions will need to be made around a replacement or alternative approaches. This gives an opportunity to re-think service provision to ensure an accessible and cost-effective service in rural areas.
- **5.47** There are opportunities to enhance the Libraries Services' engagement with other Council departments and external agencies. This should build on existing successes, such as that of the EduCafe in Newbury library in providing access to advice and

support for a range of communities and increasing footfall through the library; the role of library staff in helping to maintain contact with vulnerable residents during the Covid-19 pandemic; and the early work the Service is doing to promote the Health and wellbeing agenda. Such activities help to cement the perception of the Libraries Service as a potential solution to other services and partners' challenges in accessing residents and communities.

- **5.48** The report presents some options for consideration to build on the opportunities outlined above in providing strategic direction for the Libraries Service, including providing an accessible service in rural areas, increasing the usage and reach of the services and potential efficiency gains.
- **5.49** The Peer Review Challenge full report can be found in Appendix B.

Priorities

5.50 Giving consideration to the data and feedback analysis from all engagement exercises undertaken as part of the review, the key priorities, detailed below, have been identified.

5.51 Developing a clear Vision and Strategy for the Libraries Service

- 5.51.1. A Vision and Strategy for the Libraries Service should be developed, aligned with the West Berkshire Vision 2036 and the new Council Strategy due in 2023, the Cultural Heritage Strategy and the Leisure Strategy. There is also a need to develop the use of the library offer to deliver other Council agendas.
- 5.51.2. The Service should link more effectively with the <u>Libraries Connected Universal</u> <u>Library Offers</u> Culture & Creativity; Reading; Information & Digital and, in particular, Health & Wellbeing.

5.52 Reviewing Library Locations and Opening Hours

- 5.52.1. As part of the master planning work in the town centres, the opportunity to extend provision in Newbury to co-locate services should be explored, to contribute to wider objectives including the employment and skills agenda. In Thatcham, the opportunity to create a new facility that better meet local needs, should be considered.
- 5.52.2. It is important that the potential for more partnership working and co-location throughout the District is explored, e.g. developing a dual use library facility with Willink School.
- 5.52.3. A large area in the north and centre of the District is not served by a library. There is a need to investigate, through consultation with stakeholders, whether library provision here could be linked to a wider Community Hub.
- 5.52.4. Libraries should be included in a Council overview of assets.

5.52.5. Reviewing library opening hours, where necessary, to fit in with community needs will enable better use of our library facilities. For example, supporting post pandemic changes in people's working patterns and the rise in home working.

5.53 Delivering the Service Effectively to Rural Areas

- 5.53.1. There is a need to review and clearly identify the purpose and outcomes to be achieved by the mobile or equivalent library service, providing access to library services in the more remote rural areas.
- 5.53.2. The current mobile library needs to be replaced with a vehicle which is more efficient to run. Consideration needs to be given as to whether this could be a more tailored 'enhanced' service linking in with parish councils who are making financial contributions towards our service.
- 5.53.3. Other possible locations for pop up libraries such as village halls, community centres and leisure facilities should be explored as alternative ways of delivering the service to our communities.

5.54 Digital Improvements and Inclusion

- 5.54.1. Linking into the Council's Digital Strategy and the Libraries Connected Information and Digital Offer, we need to ensure that our libraries provide quality information and digital support to West Berkshire residents. With a large rural area and the increasing digitisation of public services, there is a need to promote digital inclusion.
- 5.54.2. The Library Service needs to make it easy for people to find the materials, information, and technology they need. Community members are not always aware of the wide variety of materials and information that the library has in various formats. There is a need to increase awareness of all that the library provides for the community, which includes technology access at the library and at home, through remote services. This will enable individuals and communities to develop learning skills to find answers and inform life choices, as well as providing technology access that is vital to many community members.
- 5.54.3. Building offers of digital support to older people and vulnerable groups is important. There is also a need to evaluate how the pandemic has changed the requirements of our residents. For example, there is an increased demand for workspace in libraries and access to video conferencing software.
- 5.54.4. Improving and increasing communication and awareness of the Library Service and its offer is also a key priority. The Library Service should be more aligned with the Culture and Libraries brand. Embedding library events and activities into the Heritage website will enable more consistency in providing access to, and promoting events and activities effectively across the wider service.
- 5.54.5. Increased support from central ICT is vital to support the services we are currently offering in libraries such as access to public PCs, printing, photocopying, and scanning. The turnaround time for fixing faults is very often slow, which results in customer frustration

5.54.6. Continued capital investment is needed in technology to improve the services we offer e.g. Wi-Fi printing.

5.55 Developing Work with Schools

5.55.1. The Library Service has an important role in developing a reading culture, and a lifelong love of reading. Good links have been built with Early Years and primary schools through the very successful Bookstart programme and the Summer Reading Challenge. There is now a need to improve links with secondary schools and develop a library user education programme.

5.56 Increasing Engagement and Inclusion

- 5.56.1. There is an important role for libraries to focus on engaging with hard to reach groups through community contacts.
- 5.56.2. There are already some effective library 'Friends' groups in existence, but they are not all constituted. Working with existing groups to become constituted and developing groups where they do not currently exist will be advantageous. This will enable the Council to work in a greater capacity with these groups, and increase advocacy with parish councils as well as increasing a sense of community ownership of the library. This is also a way of accessing funding opportunities which are not open to local authorities.
- 5.56.3. There is a need to increase outreach provision with a focus on those areas where engagement with the Library Service is low and/or requires ongoing support to retain use e.g. Lambourn. This is dependent on increasing staff capacity.
- 5.56.4. There is also a need to increase the use of arts, culture and creative activity as a means of engaging new and existing library users.
- 5.56.5. Consideration to remove library fines should also be explored. Library fines have been a long standing arrangement in public libraries, but they potentially impact disproportionately on those who are most vulnerable (financially or as a result of cognitive disability or mental ill health). They are a known barrier to people joining and retaining library membership. The fear of incurring fines and building debt with the Council is a reason often cited for not using the otherwise free Library Service.
- 5.56.6. An increasing number of other authorities have already removed this barrier for their residents, helping to promote inclusion. By removing library fines, WBC would be supporting its most vulnerable residents who may be at risk of poverty, giving them access to a wide range of books, information and digital access to enable job searches, benefit applications, study support, school readiness, and reading for pleasure.

5.57 Developing Our Workforce

5.57.1. Providing a confident, competent, and resilient workforce and linking in to the WBC Workforce Strategy is a key priority. This can be done by ensuring that library staff are trained and upskilled, where necessary.

- 5.57.2. Recruitment and co-ordination of digital champions liaising with staff across the service to build capacity in the team and ensure that they are making the best use of new ICT equipment.
- 5.57.3. It is important to reframe existing staff roles, as and when the opportunity arises, to align with the Library Service's strategic vision.

5.58 Addressing the Gap in the Revenue Budget

- 5.58.1. The current funding model, which relies on voluntary contributions from parish and town councils in order to deliver a balanced budget, needs to be urgently reviewed. At the moment, the same level of service is delivered to the whole district, without consideration of whether or not a town/parish council has made a voluntary contribution towards the running costs of the library service. This level of library service provision is not sustainable without voluntary contributions being received, particularly in the more densely populated areas of the district where the equivalent of £1 per head of population is substantial. Closer and more effective partnership working with town and parish councils to confirm what they want from the library service, and how they can help us deliver it, is an essential part of future development.
- 5.58.2. Community Transfer of library buildings should be actively pursued where this would be appropriate.
- 5.58.3. In order to make most effective use of financial resources, further opportunities to capitalise spend on library stock should be explored. This has the potential to make savings on revenue spending in 2023/24.
- 5.58.4. The potential of accessing additional funding through fully constituted 'Friends Groups' is also a factor here.

Recommendations

5.59. Based on the findings of the Libraries Review, along with a recognition of the current economic climate, we believe that there is a need to make changes to our Library Service, and recommend that the following steps are implemented over the next three years.

Libraries Review Recommendations

Our work on the libraries review has highlighted the need to develop a vision for libraries which aligns with national and local strategic priorities, followed by a longer-term action plan to deliver the following outcomes:

- 1. **Innovative use of space across the district**. Seek co-location with community partners so that several services can be accessed in one visit, and explore the need for additional provision in the North of the district.
- 2. **Access to services**. Put in place locally accessible library services which meet the needs of local communities and reduce rural isolation.
- Inclusion. Work more closely with communities/hard to reach groups to continually improve awareness of library services, and remove known barriers such as library fines to encourage residents to join and retain library membership.
- 4. **Improve links with secondary schools**. Encourage and support literacy and reading for pleasure, and promote independent learning.
- 5. **Digital Inclusion.** Enhance access to digital services in line with community needs, by providing access to equipment, the internet and enabling communities to improve digital skills and reduce digital poverty.
- 6. Addressing the revenue budget gap. Review the current funding model which relies on voluntary contributions from town and parish councils, and explore other funding opportunities available through library 'Friends Groups'.
- 5.59.1. The next stage will be to consult with a range of stakeholders to seek their views on these recommendations and how we can implement them. This feedback will enable us to drive forward improvements to the library service and produce a library vision and strategy. We are currently building a work programme which will confirm the timescales for this.

Financial Summary

5.60. The tables below shows the current revenue and capital budget positions for the Library service.

Revenue Budget 2022/23

	Original	*Gross Operating	Planned Net
Cost Centre Description	Budget	Income Target	Expenditure
Libraries Central Costs	266,310	0	266,310
Newbury Central Library	448,180	-77,880	370,300
Library Volunteers	19,020	0	19,020
Library Professional Services Team	107,150	0	107,150
Burghfield Common Library	36,180	-8,550	27,630
Hungerford Library	44,690	-5,890	38,800
Lambourn Library	39,070	-5,930	33,140
Mortimer Library	36,100	-8,170	27,930
Pangbourne Library	34,620	-8,460	26,160
Thatcham Library	55,330	-34,680	20,650
Theale Library	68,760	-35,510	33,250
Mobile Library and At Home Service	78,300	-2,310	75,990
**Library Stock Unit	83,880	0	83,880
Library IT Systems	100,900	0	100,900
Grand Total	1,418,490	-187,380	1,231,110

^{*}Includes income from library charges, venue hire, rent and voluntary contributions from town and parish councils.

Capital Budget 2022/23

Cost Centre Description	Original Budget
Libraries Book Stock (physical items)	152,690
***Planned maintenance - library buildings	141,900
Grand Total	277,420

^{***} Includes £41k CIL funding for Thatcham Library building improvements project

^{**}Includes stock unit staff salaries, online resources, e-library costs including e-newspapers and e-magazines.

Libraries Review Report

5.61. The table below shows the proposed service developments for the next three years.

Opportunities for Future Investment in the Library Service

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Proposed service	Capitalise expenditure on e-books	Increase opening hours at	Create additional Assistant Librarian
developments with cost	and e-audiobooks in order to	Lambourn Library by 4 per week	post to increase outreach provision.
implications	release revenue funding to achieve savings.	(total opening hours would be 20).	
		Consider the impact of removing library fines which are a known barrier to people joining and retaining library membership.	
Comments	E-books and e-audiobooks are now classified in CIPFA guidelines as 'intangible assets', which makes this a legitinate use of capital funding.	Community need in Lambourn identified for additional opening hours.	Would provide a focus on those areas where engagement is low or requires ongoing support to retain library usage levels.
Potential issues/risks	None identified.	Loss of income from library fines	None identified.
		and charges.	

6 Other options considered

6.1 This report lays out proposals for how the Library Service could be developed. There is the option to maintain the service 'as is'.

7 Conclusion

7.1 In order to act on the findings from the Libraries Review, Members are requested to consider the recommendations laid out in this report.

8 Appendices

- **8.1** Appendix A Community Needs Assessment
- **8.2** Appendix B LGA Peer Review

Subject to Call-In:			
Yes: ⊠	No:		
The item is d	lue to be referred to Council for final approval		
Delays in imp Council	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: Job Title: Tel No: E-mail:	Felicity Harrison Culture & Libraries Manager 01635 503087 felicity.harrison@westberks.gov.uk		



Library community needs assessment for West Berkshire

January 2022

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Executive Summary

1.1 The report presents a community needs assessment for the library service in West Berkshire. Its findings will be an input into the process of reviewing the council's library service.

Libraries in West Berkshire

- 1.2 There are eight physical libraries in West Berkshire. Four (Pangbourne, Mortimer, Burghfield Common and Theale) are located on the eastern side of the local authority area. Three are along the Kennet Valley (Thatcham, Newbury and Hungerford) and one serves Lambourn, in the north west of the area. In addition, there is a mobile library service with 81 stops, an "At Home" service and the ability to borrow electronic items through the council's e-library.
- 1.3 In common with many library services, use has declined in the last 15 20 years, although the number of library visits and issues of stock have been stable or increasing following a library review in 2017. The Covid-19 pandemic inevitably disrupted patterns of use, with periods of library closure and restricted services. Libraries adapted and there was a huge growth, of 87%, in the use of elibrary resources between 2019/20 and 2020/21. Many events were put online and the service introduced a new order and collect service. It is likely that the pandemic has accelerated trends towards greater use of online resources.

Detailed assessment of needs

1.4 The national Libraries Connected Universal Library Offers set out the role libraries can play to "connect communities, improve wellbeing and promote equality through learning, literacy and cultural activity". Recognising this role in supporting wider local action on social, economic and environmental wellbeing, the first part of the needs assessment has been structured around themes in the cross agency *West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Vision for 2036*.

Realising potential

- 1.5 West Berkshire is a generally prosperous area with high life expectancy, strong economic sectors and good employment. However, there are pockets of deprivation and numbers of people with needs that are easily masked by the general picture. This is manifested through wide gaps between the best and worst performing figures in areas such as secondary school attainment. It has a social mobility challenge, particularly for children. There are gaps in the employment market, particularly for those with a learning disability or mental health illness. A further aspect of need in West Berkshire relates to refugee populations where there is a growing cohort of Syrian and Afghan people.
- 1.6 This points to a key role for libraries in helping to engage harder to reach children, young people and their families and in providing information about the full range of education and training opportunities and making a wider range of foreign language material available.

Health and wellbeing

1.7 Overall population health in West Berkshire is good. On the Index of Multiple Deprivation, it ranks as one of the 20% least deprived districts in England for health. However, within this there are some important trends.

- West Berkshire has a population that is ageing at a faster rate than nationally, with forecast sharp growth in the over 75 population.
- The gap between its healthy and overall life expectancies is significant and there are gaps in life expectancies of around ten years between some wards.
- There are also high numbers of people with mental health problems. During the course of interviews with stakeholders for this assessment, a common theme was the extent of lower level mental health need and the requirement for emotional support.
- Reflecting the rural nature of the area, there are problems with low availability of
 public transport, of sparse access to public services and to cultural facilities. On the
 government's Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), a majority of the population live in
 areas that are in the poorest scoring three deciles for "barriers to housing and
 services".
- 1.8 Health and wellbeing needs are therefore very important for libraries libraries can help as they are sources of information, offer a place for social connection and safe public space.

Employment and economy

- 1.9 West Berkshire performs strongly on many local economic indicators. Its employment rate is 84% for people aged between 16 and 64 and is higher than the equivalent figure for the south east region and England. Many West Berkshire residents are highly skilled with the rate of education to NVQ4 level or above higher than the levels for the south east region and England. Nevertheless, there are clear employment and economic based needs:
 - There is a particular challenge with underemployment people working for fewer hours than they would like or carrying out work that does not make best use of their skills.
 - 11 Local Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are in the three most deprived deciles nationally for education, training and skills – these are located around Newbury, Thatcham, Lambourn, Hungerford and in the Tilehurst South and Holybrook wards.
 - The pandemic had a particular impact on the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, which employ 16% of local people, many of them young people, women or people from ethnic minorities.
 - The pandemic also accelerated changes in patterns of work. A third of West Berkshire workers were able to work from home during the Covid-19 period and there is known to be a growing demand nationally for co-working space. The *Economic Development Strategy*, as refreshed in 2021, recognises the need to help start-ups and small businesses grow, including by providing incubator space and "one stop shop" advice.
- 1.10 This points to the role of libraries as a location for access to information about training, for delivery of training in smaller towns, and to be an environment that supports older and disadvantaged people looking to participate in the workforce. There are also implications for library space as a facility for workers otherwise based at home and for small and start up businesses.

Sustainability and quality of life

1.11 The *Health and Wellbeing Vision* includes a strong sustainability and quality of life agenda. This relates to more partnership working, increased links with cultural organisations and, as evidenced in the public survey, a desire to see libraries as places which have a strong cultural element including events, exhibitions, courses and classes. There is a role for libraries in holding information and hosting events and exhibitions to engage people in and promote sustainable choices.

Cross-cutting themes

- 1.12 This needs assessment highlights how the generally prosperous nature of West Berkshire masks some pockets of disadvantage and wide gaps between the best and worst performing figures in areas such as secondary school attainment and healthy life expectancy. The Covid-19 pandemic has further shone a light on needs in areas such as social isolation, including of carers and people with learning disabilities, and the number of people with secondary mental health needs. Drawing on this, we have identified four cross-cutting themes that are of particular relevance as changing needs that the library service can do more to support:
 - Engagement. Our research has highlighted the difficultly of engaging hard to reach communities and the headline indicator of this is the large secondary education gap. There is an important role for libraries to support wider efforts to address this, through a focus on intergenerational learning and wider prevention work. Serving this need will require consideration of approaches to marketing and how to create staff time for engagement and community activities. Outreach requires resource to keep refreshing relationships with key partners such as schools. Discussions with staff for this needs assessment highlighted their view that they do not currently have the level of resourcing needed for this.
 - Access to information and services. With a large rural area and increasing digitisation of
 public services, there is a need to promote digital inclusion. For libraries this means building
 offers of assisted digital support, particularly to older people and vulnerable groups who lack
 the confidence to use self-service channels, or do not have access to suitable devices or
 reliable internet connection. Serving this need will also require more tailored support for
 public facing information technology equipment and creates a staff training need.
 - Community resilience. Particularly in the context of an ageing population, there is a growing
 need for communities to identify and harness their own strengths in connecting people to
 peer support, social interaction and community action. Libraries can support this by
 functioning as community hubs. This will need co-creation with communities and other
 public service organisations. It requires consideration of factors such as whether a library
 building can be open outside of library opening hours for wider community uses.
 - Skills and employment. This is an area where the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated
 changes in the pattern of work, creating a need to provide space and facilities to support
 home workers, micro businesses and job seekers. More widely, there are the challenges of
 younger people's social mobility and the participation in the labour market for older and
 disadvantaged groups. These are factors that can be supported with changes to the
 configuration of physical library space and equipment and by encouraging support networks,
 with partners to use libraries.

Library locations

- In addition to needs that affect the overall library offer, there are also changing needs that affect the nature of the library locations. West Berkshire's infrastructure development plan indicates concentrations of new housing will be built in the next few years around Thatcham, Newbury, in the east of the district and in parts of the downs area. This is in addition to the 10,000 new homes built between 2000 and 2018. The Health and Wellbeing Vision 2036 recognises the importance of creating a sustainable housing mix, including a focus on increasing the amount of affordable housing and recognising the challenge of attracting and retaining young people. An additional aspect is extending provision of residential care bed spaces for the ageing population as well adaptations to help older people remain living at home.
- 1.14 This has important implications for libraries. While the overall population level of the district is set to be stable into the 2040s, existing patterns of population will change and they can expect to need to continue to adapt as these changes take place in the medium term. Space needs to be flexible.

 Points to consider reflecting the changing demography are:
 - East. There are four libraries relatively close together with varied patterns of use. There is a need to explore the potential for partnership to create more community hub style facilities that can promote engagement with the community.
 - Newbury and Thatcham. Masterplanning work in the town centres is an opportunity to tailor library provision better to local needs. In Newbury, there is an opportunity to extend the current facility in a way that would support the employment and skills agenda. In Thatcham, patterns of use indicate a need for more engagement in parts of its surrounding area. Staff report that the current facility is poorly located and its potential constrained by its small size creating a new facility that can better engage people needs to be explored in the planning exercise.
 - North. A large area of the north and centre of the district is not served by a local West
 Berkshire library and active library borrowers mainly travel to Newbury or Pangbourne.
 Modelling a potential catchment for a library in this area shows its level of need on most
 indices of deprivation is low. However, it is a rural area which ranks very poorly on access to
 housing and services. Through consultation with stakeholders, there is a case to explore
 linking some library provision with a wider community hub idea.

2 Introduction

Purpose of this report

- 2.1 The report presents a community needs assessment for the library service in West Berkshire. Its findings will be an input into the process of reviewing the council's library service.
- 2.2 Shared Intelligence has been commissioned to undertake the community needs assessment. The brief is to take a holistic approach to considering the needs of communities, including health, education and economic data as well as demographic information in relation to existing library locations. We have been asked to present a narrative that will enable the library service to:
 - Assess how well the service meets the needs of residents including any Covid-19 impacts on needs.
 - Create options for:
 - A level of service that can better meet changing community needs with a similar amount of capacity and resource as at present.
 - A more ambitious vision for libraries requiring further capital investment to deliver increased engagement and positive, measurable outcomes for residents.
- 2.3 We should stress that this document is a needs assessment. It is out of scope to recommend how the service should meet the needs identified. However, our approach is that the assessment is informed by an awareness of how modern library services can serve a wide range of needs.

Approach to assessing community needs

2.4 In our experience, an effective needs assessment distinguishes between needs that local communities have (which library services can serve) and current patterns of use. Usage information provides a view of the accessibility of and demand for services currently on offer – but it does not on its own reveal insight about need for the various ways that libraries can support individuals and communities. Part of the brief for this work is to provide insight into the needs of the significant part of the population that does not use library services, but may stand to benefit from them.

Method

2.5 The needs assessment has been produced from three principal areas of activity:

Document review

2.6 We have carried out a literature review to understand the council's and wider local partnership strategies and associated evidence bases. References to source material are given throughout this document.

Data analysis

2.7 We have analysed several sets of data. This includes:

- Library use data, provided by the library service. This covers:
 - Borrower patterns.
 - Visitor data.
 - Data about active borrowers, their post code locations and ages.
- Index of Multiple Deprivation data.
- Information from West Berkshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment documents.

Interviews

2.8 We have undertaken interviews with senior officers in the council, at Service Director and Head of Service level and with representatives of four voluntary and community sector organisations who work with client groups with needs that may be supported by libraries. At the end of the interview process, we also carried out a workshop with senior library service staff. This served as a sensemaking session, to ensure the insights were informed by frontline experience.

Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on data continuity

2.9 This needs assessment was undertaken in autumn 2021, 18 months following the start of restrictions brought into address the Covid-19 pandemic. For a large part of that 18-month period libraries were either closed, or open with restrictions created by social distancing requirements. Some restrictions and behaviour changes persist at the time of writing. This has had an effect on continuity of data. For most data analysis, we have used 2019/20 as the most recent year of consistent data.

3 Overview of West Berkshire

- 3.1 West Berkshire is a small unitary local authority with a population of 158,465¹. The district's principal towns are Newbury and Thatcham, which together have a population of 69,667. Additionally, 31,444 people live in the suburban area in the east of the district which adjoins the Reading borough. 57,354 are classed as living in the rural part of the district. This includes market towns such as Hungerford and Lambourn as well as small towns and villages. Overall, nearly 75 per cent of the district sits within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- The census in 2011 found that 94.8% of the population were white, including 4.4% white non British or Northern Irish. 2.5% were Asian or Asian British, 0.9% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; 1.6% from mixed/multiple ethnic groups; and 0.2% from other ethnic groups. Using the same data, only two wards, Tilehurst South and Holybrook (87.4%) and Tilehurst Birch Copse (91.3%) had a percentage of white population less than 92%.

Population trends

- 3.3 West Berkshire's population is forecast to be stable in the medium term. 2030 and 2043 estimates show a level very similar to the present population². However, there are dynamics within the population that indicate that there are likely to be changing needs and trends that will develop over next 20 years. These are:
 - Ageing population and the balance of retired to working age people. In common with many areas, West Berkshire's population is projected to grow older. While this is a national trend, it is set to grow at a faster rate than nationally. Key data are shown in the table below:

¹ This is based on the mid year 2020 estimates from the Office of National Statistics, quoted on the council's website. Town and settlement populations are taken from the same source.

² Office of National Statistics projections from NOMIS (downloaded on 5 November 2021). The projection for 2030 is 157,677 and 2043 is 157,643.

	West	England
	Berkshire	
Percentage aged 65+		
2021	20%	19%
2030	25%	21%
2043	28%	24%
Percentage aged 75+		
2021	9%	9%
2030	12%	11%
2043	16%	13%
Percentage working age (18 to 65)		
2021	58%	60%
2030	55%	58%
2043	52%	57%
Ratio working age: retired age*		
2021	1:2.9	1:3.2
2030	1:2.2	1:2.7
2043	1:1.8	1:2.4

^{*} NB figures do not take account of the fact that the retirement age will reach 67 by 2028.

Two points are important to note:

- The growth in the over 75 population who often have the highest needs and are most vulnerable to isolation.
- The drop in the ratio of the retired to working age population.
- Location of new housing. The council's Emerging Draft Infrastructure Development Plan3 identifies describes how the Local Plan Review anticipates future residential and mixed-use development in three areas. These focus on Newbury and Thatcham (around 4,500 units, of which 2,500 in north east Thatcham); the eastern area (around 800 units) and the North Wessex Downs (around 300 units). This needs to be seen in the context of a forecast stable population and the fact that 10,000 new homes were built between 2000 and 2018⁴.

Context for libraries

A need to consider the important role libraries play in helping older adults remain active and independent and in offering groups and services that help to support carers.

A case for reviewing library service point distribution, to ensure it adequately reflects areas of increasing concentrations of housing.

³ Emerging Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan, West Berkshire Council, July 2021.

⁴ West Berkshire Vision 2036, West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board.

Prosperity, Index of Multiple Deprivation and rurality

- 3.4 West Berkshire is a generally prosperous area with high life expectancy, strong economic sectors and good employment, particularly in the technology sector and good connections through the Thames Valley corridor.
- 3.5 Using the government's Index of Multiple Deprivation⁵, it is ranked 289 out of 317 English single tier and district councils in terms of deprivation. This means it is generally one of the least deprived areas in the country, on a range of data sets measured in small geographic areas (Local Super Output Areas, or LSOAs). 26% of its 97 LSOAs are in the 10 per cent least deprived.
- 3.6 However, there are pockets of deprivation and numbers of people with needs (such as mental health) that are easily masked by the general picture. There are two LSOAs in the most deprived three deciles nationally, located in the Newbury Greenham and Thatcham North East wards.

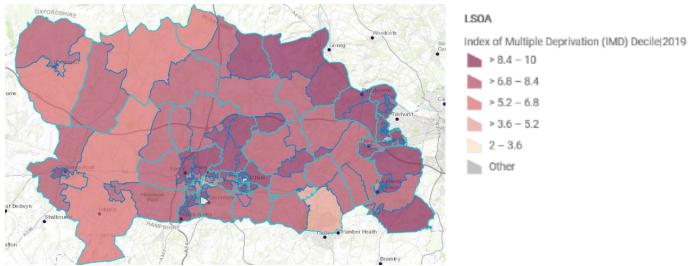


Figure 1: overall 2019 IMD decile distribution by LSOA (lower number and paler colour indicates higher deprivation)

3.7 The IMD contains a "domain" for "barriers to housing and services". This represents an area where the majority of the district's population are in the most deprived three deciles. This domain measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. It includes geographical barriers, relating to the physical proximity of local services, and wider barriers, including access to and affordability of housing.

⁵ Index of Multiple Deprivation, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019

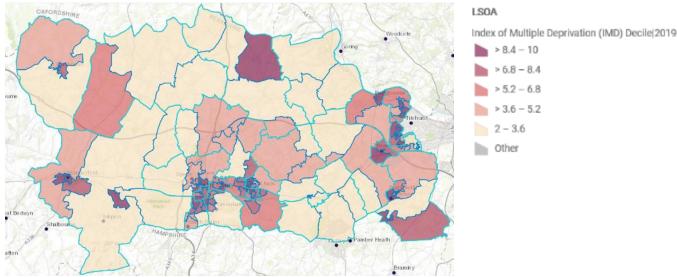


Figure 2: IMD 2019 - domain for barriers to housing and services

- 3.8 The level of barriers to housing and services reflects the rural nature of the area. Many of those living in the rural part of West Berkshire are in an area with a low density of population and challenges including low availability of public transport of sparse access to public services or the cultural facilities available in a major centre such as Newbury. On housing, the House Price Index for November 2019 indicated the average house price for first time buyers in England was £251,222 compared to £276,521 in West Berkshire⁶.
- 3.9 We discuss in paragraphs 5.4 to 5.5 the significant secondary education attainment gap and young people's social mobility challenge in the area. This indicates that there are sections of the population who are hard to reach. In an area that is generally prosperous and with a vibrant technology sector, there is a problem with digital inclusion. While many people are very comfortable with finding information digitally and can afford devices and fast connections, a significant minority risk being left behind whether because of their age, ability to afford a suitable device, or not having the skills needed by employers.

Context for libraries

A need to consider whether and how effectively libraries engage harder to reach groups.

The role of libraries in providing a route to access information and services, in a rural context and for those who either do not have, or are not comfortable with digital access.

Budget and preventative services

3.10 In common with many local authorities, budget pressures have led to reductions in discretionary and preventative aspects of services. The libraries budget and staffing reduced in 2017 by 44%. Children's centres have reduced to three family hubs and direct youth provision has very substantially reduced.

⁶ UK House price index - Land registry.

Context for libraries

Previous reductions in services are an important context factor for assessing community needs and how libraries may respond to them.

Covid-19

3.11 The Covid-19 pandemic has shone a light on isolation and also precipitated change in patterns of town centre use. By pushing so much activity online, including social connection, it has brought the issue of digital exclusion into focus.

Context for libraries

It is difficult to assess the long-term Covid-19 impact at this stage, but it sets an important context for the role of libraries in recovery and prevention.

4 Libraries in West Berkshire

- 4.1 There are eight physical libraries in West Berkshire. Four (Pangbourne, Mortimer, Burghfield Common and Theale) are located on the eastern side of the local authority area. Three are along the Kennet Valley (Thatcham, Newbury and Hungerford) and one serves Lambourn, in the north west of the area. In addition, there is a mobile library service with 81 stops, an "At Home" Service and the ability to borrow electronic items through the council's e-library.
- 4.2 Libraries offer a range of services. In addition to the core access to books for borrowing and reference, the service provides:
 - Free access to wifi and computers.
 - Self-service printing, photocopying and scanning.
 - Talks on popular topics such as local history and the environment, including online versions of these since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - Room hire.
 - Free access to e-books, e-magazines and e-newspapers.
 - Local and family history resources.
 - Audiobooks and e-audiobooks.
 - Services for children including Storytime, Rhymetime, Code Club, craft events and other occasional events, many of which were delivered online during the pandemic.
 - Book groups: titles available in book group sets of 10 copies (for an annual fee) and an online group set up at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - Online access to reference resources, including access to academic and research journals and Britannica Online and GoCitizen, an online resource for candidates preparing for the Life in the UK test (British citizenship).
- 4.3 In common with many library services, use has declined in the last 15 20 years, although the number of library visits and issues of stock has been stable or increasing following the library review in 2017. Some trends are shown in the graphs below. One of these refers to the number of "active borrowers". An active borrower has borrowed at least one item of physical stock in the preceding 12 months. It excludes anyone who has only borrowed from the council's e-library.

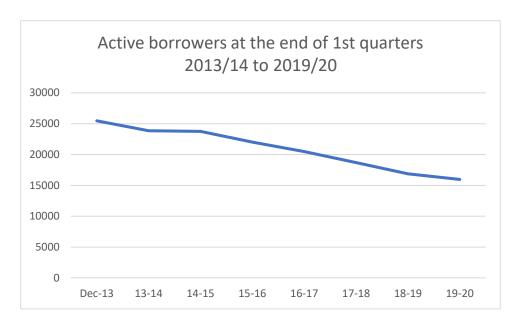


Figure 3: number of active borrowers measured at the end of the first quarter

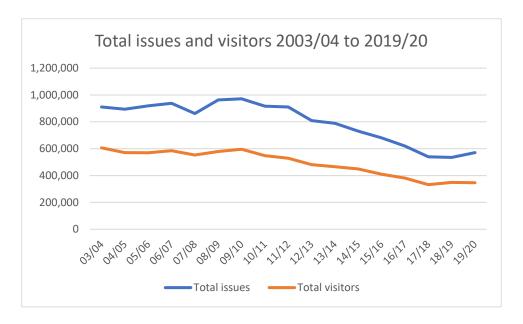


Figure 4: total number of stock issues and visits recorded by financial year. Note that this total stock issues figure includes e-library downloads as well as all online renewals.

4.4 The chart below is taken from CIPFA data and shows West Berkshire's relative position compared with other English authorities for the level of library visits per capita. Over the period 2010/11 to 2019/20, West Berkshire has shown an average level of decline. Only four authorities have seen growth in visits.

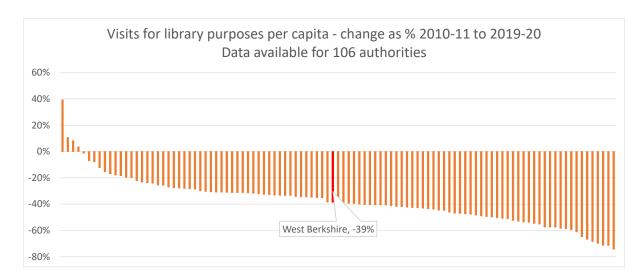


Figure 5: change in visits for library purposes per capita for 106 local authorities

4.5 A second chart shows the number of active library users per capita over the same period. West Berkshire has fared better than the majority, but its level of decline is still significant. Only five authorities have achieved growth.

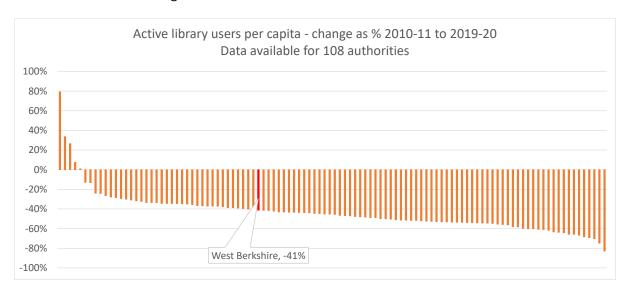


Figure 6: change in active library users per capital for 108 local authorities

4.6 Other characteristics and trends in West Berkshire library use are described below.

Age profile of West Berkshire libraries

4.7 Based on 2019/20 data for active borrowers, the age breakdown between junior and adult borrowers shows that children aged 10 or under are the proportionately largest group compared with the population of their age group. This dataset covers all borrowers using West Berkshire libraries, so covers some who do not live in the district. In the library profiles section, in Appendix I, we present some analysis based on borrowers with West Berkshire post codes. However, this is difficult to show on a whole authority level without double counting of the borrowers who use more than one library.

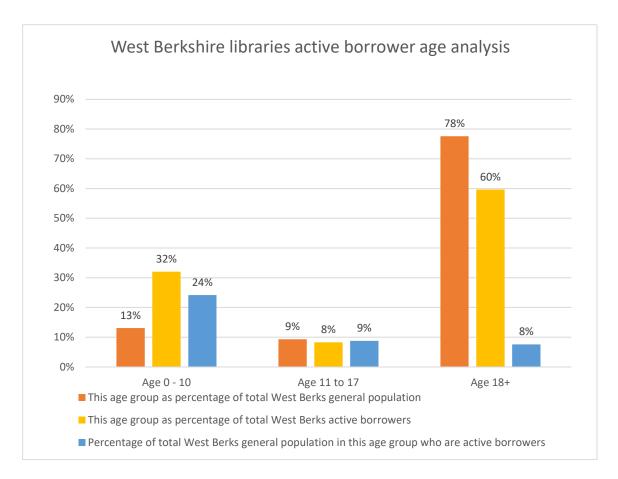


Figure 7: age analysis of active borrowers (including non West Berkshire post code borrowers)

Ethnic profile of library users

4.8 The library service no longer collects ethnicity information about its borrowers – this was discontinued in 2018 because of concerns about compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For this reason, we have not attempted an ethnic profile of library users. Some analysis on a per library basis was included in the 2016 needs assessment⁷ based on the previously held data. This found the ethnic breakdown for each library was roughly similar to the areas they serve, with some variation around how well the "white other" group was represented. The analysis noted a much higher proportion of white other users using the then two mobile libraries than any static library. It is important to note, however, that these data were optional for customers to provide so do not present a comprehensive picture.

Use of electronic resources

4.9 The chart below shows the steady growth in downloading of electronic resources, such as eBooks.

⁷ West Berkshire Libraries Needs Assessment, RedQuadrant, September 2016.

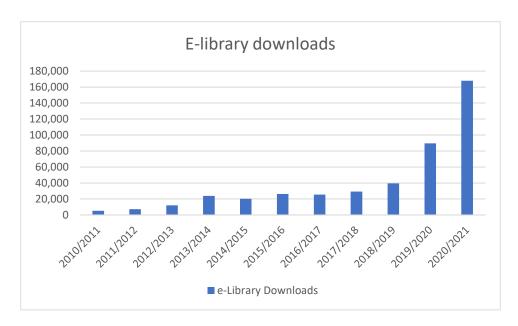


Figure 8: trend in e-library downloads

- 4.10 The upward trend was established before the Covid-19 pandemic, and then spiked during it.
- 4.11 The library service has recently introduced a libraries mobile phone app. This enables users to search the library catalogue and to renew and reserve books. It also provides access to the collection of free e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines and e-newspapers.

Use of computers in libraries

4.12 The libraries provide wifi, some printing facilities, scanning and access to public computers. This is an important component of the total number of library visits. There has, however, been a decline in the use of public computers since 2015/16, as can be seen in the graphs below. There is now an increasing trend for customers to use their own mobile devices to work on, using the library wifi. The number of public computers available has therefore been reduced and they have been replaced with more study tables with USB charging points to meet demand.

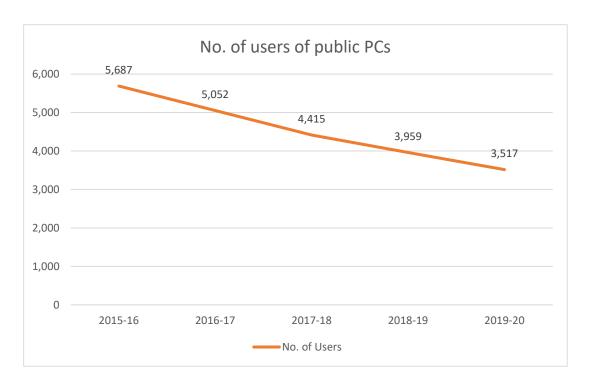


Figure 9: trend in number of users of public computers in libraries

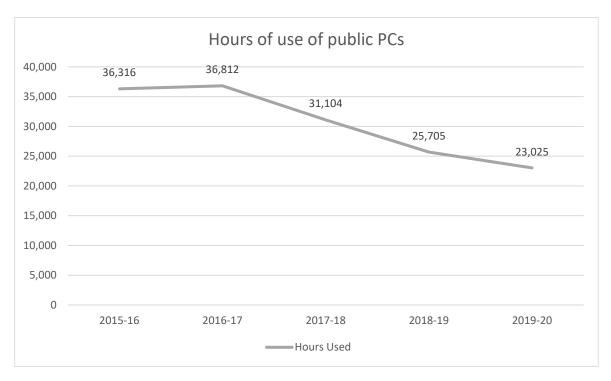


Figure 10: trend in total hours of use of public PCs

Mobile library and "At Home" service

4.13 There is one mobile library service (reduced from two in 2017/18). Use of the mobile service has declined sharply in the last decade, although the trend has been more stable since the consolidation to one service. The chart below shows the number of visits to the mobile service:

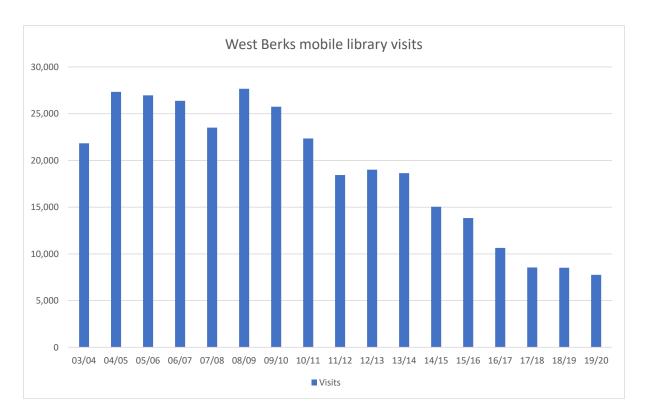


Figure 11: trend in number of visits to West Berkshire mobile libraries

- 4.14 While this is a smaller number of visits than that for any static library, its percentage of issues is the same (at 4%) as the libraries at Burghfield Common, Pangbourne and Theale.
- 4.15 An "At Home" service has operated since the late 2000s. This had 127 active borrowers in 2019/20. It is targeted at readers who find it difficult to visit their local library because of age or disability and is delivered by volunteers. The chart below includes the 2020/21 figure as the "At Home" service was important during the pandemic. The drop in visits reflects the government restriction that applied to the use of elderly volunteers which meant that the service did not operate during the first few months of the first national lockdown, resuming in May 2020.

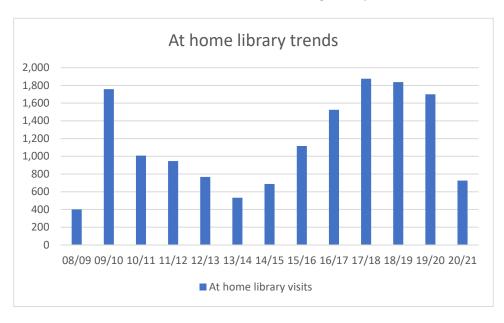


Figure 12: trend in number of West Berkshire "At Home" library visits

Covid-19 pandemic implications

4.16 The Covid-19 pandemic inevitably disrupted these patterns, with periods of library closure and restricted services. We have removed 2020/21 from most of the charts shown in this section as including it would give a misleading impression of trends as visits and borrower numbers were greatly reduced. As libraries adapted, there was a huge growth, of 87%, in the use of e-library resources between 2019/20 and 2020/21. Many events were put online and the service introduced a new order and collect service. It is likely that the pandemic has accelerated trends towards greater use of online resources. It is worth noting, however, that in the first four months of the 2021/22 financial year, over 1,900 new borrowers have been recruited, the highest for the equivalent period since 2015.

5 Detailed assessment of needs

Needs

- This section aims to present a range of socio-economic data and analysis about West Berkshire which is relevant to a set of needs that libraries can help to support. In selecting the data for the purposes of a library needs assessment, our thinking has been influenced by the input of interviewees and also the Libraries Connected Universal Library Offers⁸. These set out the role libraries can aim to play to "connect communities, improve wellbeing and promote equality through learning, literacy and cultural activity".
- 5.2 The sections below have been structured under the five "hopes for the future" presented in the West Berkshire Vision 2036. This presents a vision for inclusive growth and a focus on sustainable achievement of outcomes for all of the people of West Berkshire. The hopes for the future are:
 - We will have delivered a West Berkshire where everybody has what they need to fulfil their potential.
 - We will have delivered a West Berkshire where the health and wellbeing of residents of all ages and backgrounds is good.
 - We will have delivered a West Berkshire that welcomes business, enterprise and industry into a productive, growing and dynamic local economy.
 - We will have delivered a West Berkshire with a housing mix with something for everyone.
 - We will have delivered a West Berkshire with beautiful, historic and diverse landscapes and a strong cultural offering.

"We will have delivered a West Berkshire where everybody has what they need to fulfil their potential"

5.3 The focus of this theme is creating the conditions to ensure that everyone living in West Berkshire has the best possible start in life and has the opportunity to thrive. An important context factor for this is social mobility which has been area of weakness for West Berkshire for some time. The Social Mobility Commission's *State of the Nation 2017* report includes the concept of social mobility "cold spots" for the areas that perform worst on 16 areas of indictor, covering early years, schools, youth and working lives factors. It identifies West Berkshire as the 60th worst cold spot out of 324 local authority district areas in England⁹.

Children and young people

On early years specifically, West Berkshire is the eighth worst "cold spot" area in England for social mobility. This reflects Ofsted ratings for nursery providers and also the district's relatively low

⁸ https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/page/universal-library-offers (Accessed 16/11/2021)

⁹ State of the Nation 2017: Social Mobility in Great Britain, Social Mobility Commission, November 2017

percentage of children eligible for free school meals who achieve a "good level of development" at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage¹⁰. This is shown in more detail in the Public Health outcomes framework data, which uses data from 2018/19.

Indicator	West Berkshire	South East	England
Children achieving a good level of development at the age of reception	74.6%	74.6%	71.8%
Children with free school meal status achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception	41.4%	55.4%	56.5%
Children achieving expected level in the phonics screening check year 1	81.8%	82.2%	81.8%
Children with free school meals status achieving the expected level in the phonics screening check in Year 1	57.0%	66.1%	70.1%

- 5.5 During the course of education, the attainment gap between the most and least well performing students is significant in West Berkshire. Data reported in 2017 shows that the difference begins at 3.1 months for early years (a relatively low gap) but rises to 25 months at secondary level, which is the tenth largest of English education authorities. The Health and Wellbeing Vision makes it clear that an important ambition for the area is that all its young people should be well-educated irrespective of the wealth of their parents.
- This is also reflected in the economic development strategy which aims to promote a wide range of education and training opportunities, including T Levels and apprenticeships, to widen access.

Adults

- 5.7 The social mobility position for "working lives" is much stronger. West Berkshire is the 16th most socially mobile area, reflecting indicators to do with salary, house prices, occupation types and home ownership. Where the area performs less well is with gaps in its employment market. There are particular issues with employment of disadvantaged groups. The Public Health Outcomes Framework gave West Berkshire a "red" indicator for those with a learning disability in employment and "amber" for those with a mental health illness.
- An important ambition for West Berkshire is that the workforce has the skills it needs and that anyone, regardless of their age, health or ability is given a chance to participate in the workplace. In interviews with stakeholders, we heard the view of the importance of intergenerational learning to tackle social mobility encouraging parents to read with their children and the key role that libraries can play in encouraging this. This is discussed further in paragraphs 5.38 to 5.44 under *engagement*.

¹⁰ Since 2014 free school meals have been universally available for children in reception, year 1 and year 2. The indicator reflects the requirement for parents to tell schools if they receive any of the qualifying benefits, which are used to trigger claims under the pupil premium scheme.

5.9 A further aspect of need in West Berkshire relates to refugee populations. There is growing cohort of Syrian and Afghan refugees for whom libraries can provide safe space, an opportunity to socialise or to obtain information.

Points to consider in terms of library services

- Activities and resources which support increased school readiness for pre-school children and their parents.
- Opportunities to strengthen reading (for pleasure and for study) and other attainment among school-age children.
- Activities to support family learning.
- Opportunities to access resources and support outside of regular school and work hours (e.g. weekends and evenings).
- Provision of information about the full range of education and training opportunities.
- Range of foreign language material available.

"We will have delivered a West Berkshire where the health and wellbeing of residents of all ages and backgrounds is good"

- 5.10 Overall population health in West Berkshire is good. On the Index of Multiple Deprivation, it ranks as one of the 20% least deprived districts in England for health. This is reflected in a higher than average life expectancy for men and women. It also ranks above the regional and national averages in other wider determinant of health indicators, such as the percentage of children in low income families and the percentage of people in employment.
- Healthy life expectancy is higher than the England average. However, at 66.3 years for women (compared with a life expectancy of 85.2) and 68.2 for men (compared with a life expectancy of 81.9) it is clear that the extra life expectancy of people in West Berkshire is not necessarily one of healthy years.
- There are also health inequalities. Life expectancy is 4.4 years lower for men and 5.2 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of West Berkshire than in the least deprived areas. The 2017 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on life expectancy and mortality highlights that there were gaps in life expectancies of around ten years between some wards¹¹. The JSNA also highlights how multiple factors affect mortality including access to services, income levels and rurality and the Health and Wellbeing Vision identifies a number of actions which will help more people to live well for longer, including helping communities to support their residents and empowering individuals to take more responsibility or their health.

¹¹ West Berkshire Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - Living Well: Life Expectancy and Mortality, 2017. The document uses ward boundaries that have been changed by a 2018 Local Government Boundary Commission report. In 2017, the largest gaps were:

[•] For males, between Victoria (75.3) years and Bucklebury (85.2 years).

For females, between Thatcham North (80.6 years) and Birch Copse (90.2 years).

- 5.13 While health deprivation is relatively low, there are still significant numbers of people with needs. A key example is mental health. The JSNA on adult mental health was published in 2016. This cites a predicted instance of adults aged 18 to 64 with a common mental disorder of 15,077 and projected it as stable to 2030. Other indicators also illustrate the extent of mental health problems, including:
 - Amber indicators on rate of emergency hospital admission for intentional self-harm (all ages) and hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in young people (aged 15-24 years).
 - A red indicator on adults in contact with secondary mental health services who live in stable and appropriate accommodation¹².
 - A sharpening of mental health issues from the pandemic. The council's Recovery and Renewal Strategy¹³ describes clear evidence of increased referrals both for adults and children and young people.
- 5.14 During the course of interviews with stakeholders for this assessment, a common theme was the extent of lower level mental health need and the requirement for emotional support. Many of those in need are people who are not in touch with, or would not meet the criteria for statutory mental health support. This is an area where libraries can help as they offer a place for social connection or quiet time.

Social isolation and health and wellbeing

- 5.15 The Health and Wellbeing Vision 2036 highlights a growing concern about social isolation, particularly rural isolation, and its adverse impact on personal wellbeing. It contains an aspiration to ensure that all residents are given the opportunity to participate in their communities and can access the services they need. This is important for people of all ages, but the impact is particularly noted for young people and older adults.
- 5.16 Formal indicators do not make West Berkshire a particularly striking area nationally for social isolation or loneliness, but the numbers of people involved are still significant and constitute a local need:
 - On the Public Health Outcomes Framework, 16.9 per cent of people over the age of 16 report that they feel lonely often / always or some of the time. This is lower than the regional and national average.
 - West Berkshire has amber indicators for the percentage of adult social care users, and carers, who feel they have enough social interaction. This has been measured for the age groups over 18 and over 65. The rates are similar to the English average, but slightly worse for adult carers aged 18+.
- 5.17 During the course of interviews, we have heard how isolation particularly affects those who do not have access to private transport, in rural areas. In addition to teenagers and older people, this is a

¹² Public Health Outcomes Framework at a glance summary, (2019/20 data).

¹³ Recovery & Renewal Strategy, West Berkshire Council, May 2021

factor for young people employed in low paid but distinctive jobs in the horse-racing industry in the north west of the district.

There are around 750¹⁴ people aged 14 or over on learning disability registers for West Berkshire. The gap in the employment rate between those with a learning disability and the overall employment rate is rated as red in the Public Health Outcomes and is 77.8%, compared with a national figure of 70.6%. This is a group where individuals often benefit from help in connecting to the internet and making job applications, but can feel uncomfortable in settings such as Job Centre Plus.

Points to consider in terms of library services

- The role of libraries as a place for social connection or offering quiet space to people experiencing mental health problems.
- A hub for information about staying healthy.
- Providing a location for social interaction, whether through events or being a location for groups to meet.
- Providing a comfortable and welcoming setting for people with learning disabilities who may need help with internet access or linking to the jobs market.

"We will have delivered a West Berkshire that welcomes business, enterprise and industry into a productive, growing and dynamic local economy"

- 5.19 West Berkshire performs strongly on many local economic indicators. Its employment rate is 84% for people aged between 16 and 64 and is higher than the equivalent figure for the south east region and for England. A large percentage (59%) of employment is in senior managerial, professional or associate professional or technical roles. This is also higher than the regional and English average, as are average wage levels. The dominant industry by far for Gross Value Added is information and communication, which accounts for 29% of the total district amount¹⁵.
- 5.20 The council's *Economic Development Strategy*, published in 2020 set out the need to move away from previous approaches which had centred on sustaining the conditions for prosperity. It stresses the need to tailor the strategy to deal with several challenges. These include some of those identified already in this document ageing population, social mobility and participation in the labour market of older and disadvantaged backgrounds and those with mental health issues or learning difficulties to be given more opportunity to participate in the workplace.
- 5.21 It also highlights the additional challenge of underemployment. This manifests itself as people working for fewer hours than they would like or carrying out work that does not make best use of their skills. This reflects research from the Learning and Work Institute's Youth Opportunity Index,

¹⁴ The NHS figure in October 2021 was 733.

¹⁵ All figures accessed via the economy and employment section of the Berkshire Observatory (accessed in November 2021).

published in late 2018^{16} . West Berkshire ranks first out of 150 local authorities for the employment rate of 23 to 28 year olds, but 142^{nd} for net underemployment.

5.22 Generally, West Berkshire residents have good skills levels with 49.3% educated to NVQ4 or above (meaning some form of Higher Education) compared to 45.1% across the South East region and 43.1% for England. The district compares similarly favourably for NVQ levels 3, 2 and 1. The percentage with no qualification is low at 2.6%, compared with 4.8 at regional level and 6.4% in England¹⁷. This is reflected in the education and skills domain of the IMD, where 44 out of 97 LSOAs are in the three least deprived deciles nationally. However, 11 LSOAs are in the three most deprived deciles nationally. These are the paler areas on the map below, and are located around Newbury, Thatcham, Lambourn, Hungerford and in the Tilehurst South and Holybrook wards.

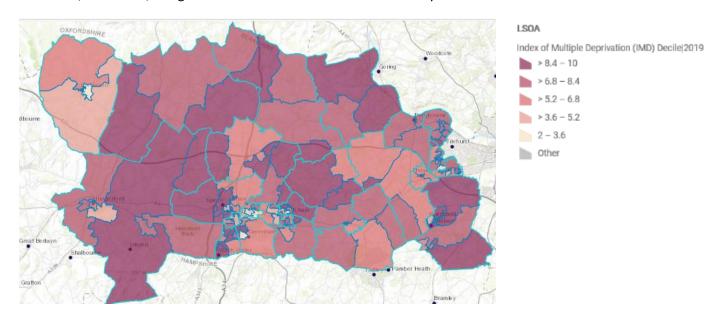


Figure 13: 2019 IMD – domain for education, training and skills

- The Economic Development Strategy also has been updated in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic¹⁸. This notes the particular impact of the pandemic on the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, which employ 16% of local people, many of them young people, women or people from ethnic minorities. It sets out the need for support to help those who have lost their jobs to securing long term employment.
- This also highlights changes in patterns of work accelerated by the pandemic. This includes the trend to home working (one third of West Berkshire workers were able to work from home during the Covid-19 period). This is likely to have a long-term impact on the future use of commercial property, with a reduction in office space and to exacerbate strains on local high streets. Nationally there is a growing demand for co-working space as well as growth in creative micro-businesses that people run as a side activity. A local evidence base has not yet been assembled, but the strategy recognises the need to improve the available workspace in the district, and to help start-ups and small

¹⁶ https://learningandwork.org.uk/what-we-do/social-justice-inclusion/youth-commission/youth-opportunity-index/ (accessed 16 November 2021).

¹⁷ Data from the ONS annual population survey for 2020, accessed via NOMIS in November 2021.

¹⁸ Economic Development Strategy Refresh, West Berkshire Council, June 2021

businesses grow, including by providing incubator space and "one stop shop" business advice service and website signposting.

5.25 Linked to this is the question of the health of town centres. The need for action to support town centres that are desirable for residents and visitors is noted in the Health and Wellbeing Vision. This was written pre-pandemic and was couched in terms of a response to the growth of online shopping. The trend has been sharpened by the pandemic. For example, the Covid-19 response survey conducted in summer 2020¹⁹ asked how often respondents thought that they would visit their local town's high street when able, compared with before the pandemic. Only 54% responded "about the same, while 31% answered "less" or "much less".

Digital skills

The council's *Digital Strategy 2020-23*²⁰ commits it to playing an active part in ensuring those who live and work in West Berkshire are able to improve their digital skills. This directly refers to the aim of assisting people with Universal Credit and job applications, including by volunteers in libraries, as well as Citizens Advice. The strategy does not present local data about the extent of the need, but notes: "whilst the advancement of technology has brought many benefits, the UK Consumer Digital Index in 2019 found that one fifth of the UK population do not have foundational digital skills." The need to address this is further developed in the *Economic Development Strategy*, which identifies that there is a need for upskilling in the education sector and for providing a broader range of specialists in West Berkshire who are equipped to deliver the training that will address this.

Points to consider in terms of library services

- At least in the short-term, how to help those whose jobs have been affected by the pandemic and are looking for new opportunities and potentially new directions.
- Providing an environment that supports older and disadvantaged people looking to participate in the workforce.
- Being a location for access to information about training, and for delivery of training in smaller towns.
- Workspace, with facilities for workers otherwise based at home and for small and start up businesses. Linking this to the role of libraries in attracting people to town centres.
- Direct support with digital skills.

"We will have delivered a West Berkshire with a housing mix with something for everyone"

5.27 This is important as a context factor for the libraries review. It includes a focus on increasing the amount of affordable housing. This recognises the challenge of attracting and retaining young people who in the past have reached university age and then left an area of generally high house prices. An additional aspect is extending provision of residential care bed spaces for the ageing population as well adaptations to help older people remain living at home.

¹⁹ Residents' Survey: Covid-19 – Headline Findings Report, West Berkshire Council, July 2020

²⁰ Digital Strategy 2020-23, West Berkshire Council, November 2019

Points to consider in terms of library services

The implication for libraries is that existing patterns of population will change and they
can expect to need to continue to adapt as these changes take place in the medium
term. Space needs to be flexible.

"We will have delivered a West Berkshire with beautiful, historic and diverse landscapes and a strong cultural offering"

- 5.28 This area of aspiration creates a strong sustainability and quality of life agenda that libraries can help to support. This relates to more partnership working, increased links with cultural organisations and, as evidenced in the public survey, a desire to see libraries as places which have a strong cultural element including events, exhibitions, courses and classes.
- 5.29 West Berkshire has a number of rich cultural assets and a tradition of a large number of events and activities. However, the *Cultural Heritage Strategy*²¹ notes that consultation has emphasised the difficulty many residents have in gaining access to these. There are strong links between arts and cultural participation and good wellbeing, so a priority theme of the Cultural Heritage Strategy is to improve access and participation, particularly for disadvantaged groups, including children from deprived backgrounds.

Points to consider in terms of library services

- Events and exhibitions to engage people in and promote sustainable choices.
- Linkage to the promotion of access and participation in arts and cultural activities.

Public engagement survey

- 5.30 A public engagement survey was carried out in late autumn 2021 as part of a review of the whole library service, including mobile libraries, the "At Home" service and e-library, regular activities for children and families, and annual events such as the Summer Reading Challenge. The aim of the survey was to collect feedback from the service's customers and from those who do not use libraries to assess potential changes to improve the service, and to develop the service in the future.
 - There were 896 survey responses which represents 5.72% of active library borrowers based on pre-pandemic levels in 2019/20.
 - 71% of responders were female.
 - 63% were aged over 55.
 - 91% were library users.
- 5.31 Some headlines from the survey are included here to give some additional context to the needs assessment.
- 5.32 In some ways the responses indicated that a lot of respondents primarily enjoy the "traditional" aspects of the library service 57% said that book related services were the ones they used most. This may reflect the older demographic of the majority of those surveyed but there was also

²¹ West Berkshire Cultural Heritage Strategy 2020-2030, West Berkshire Council

recognition of the value of digital services, information provision and events. However, some respondents were clearly not well informed about the breadth of the current offer - one noted "[I] didn't realise you provide so much!". 13.6% said that lack of awareness of services provided was a reason they had not used library services in the last two years and 16% said that had not used it as they did not think the service was relevant to them.

- 5.33 On balance, the responses show a good level of support for libraries playing a broader role as a community facility. There were several positive comments about the way that the Hungerford and Lambourn libraries work with their communities; good support for the role of libraries in providing digital access for some people; and positive response to the idea of services that connect vulnerable groups more to their communities and reduce isolation.
- 5.34 There was evidence, however, of a minority of respondents who felt that the service should prioritise what was perceived as a core task done well providing access to books. Others voiced concerns about whether current buildings would have adequate space for more community focused activities, while some respondents were concerned about the impact on noise levels.
- 5.35 There were several messages about the current offer:
 - A very high level of satisfaction with the current staff and service.
 - There were several comments indicating a wish for a better e-book and audio-book offer, including a wish for more books and a better search / user interface. There are some practical limitations on these services the comments suggest the need to explain factors such as the limitations of digital rights management and why there are two services to customers.
 - There were several comments from people who would like longer or more flexible opening hours. This is likely to reflect the restrictions on getting to libraries faced by working age people or those wishing to visit with school aged children.
 - There is a deep appreciation of the "At Home" service by its users and a set of very appreciative comments from regular users of the mobile library.
 - There were several comments about a wish for closer working with schools this was
 raised in responses to several questions so may indicate a small number of users to
 whom this is very important issue.
- 5.36 The responses clearly show the continued impact that the Covid-19 pandemic is having on people's library habits with several users explaining how they were still fearful of making visits to the extent that they had before March 2020.

Cross-cutting themes and implications for libraries

5.37 This section aims to set out some conclusions about the areas where libraries can support the needs identified. It draws on insights from the round of interviews carried out as part of this work and suggests some cross-cutting themes.

Engagement

5.38 One of the themes of the interviews we carried out was the difficulty of engaging the disadvantaged communities in West Berkshire. Some interviewees had a perception that libraries are underused by residents in the more deprived areas who see them as serving a middle-class demographic. For example, while West Berkshire has a high participation rate for the Summer Reading Challenge (SRC), there is a question about whether it reaches the children and young people who stand to benefit most. The chart below, based on 2021 data shows that the lowest rate of completion is in Lambourn, which has the most deprived library catchment area. Some responses to the staff survey also indicated that a lot of the children who sign up to SRC are not those who need most help with their reading.

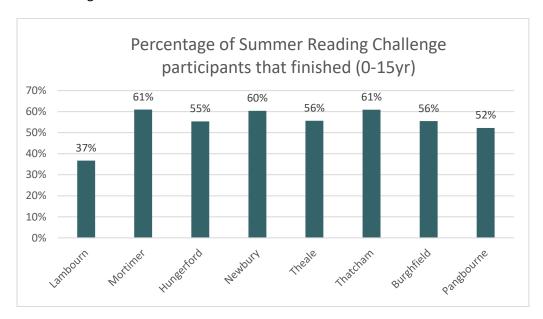


Figure 14: 2021 Summer Reading Challenge finishers by library

5.39 It is important to note that the Reading Agency has now released statistics for the 2021 Summer Reading Challenge. West Berkshire had the highest percentage reach in the South East of England, with 16% of 4-12 year olds taking part. This is due to a high level of engagement with schools which the library service has worked very hard to develop since 2017.

5.40 Identified needs include:

- While there are strong building blocks in partnership with children's services through
 the Bookstart and Imagination library schemes, there is a strong case for more linked
 activity, given the large attainment gap that opens up during secondary education. An
 important theme is the need to encourage intergenerational reading and learning.
- Greater dedicated resource for promoting library services. Education staff interviewed emphasised that much effort is needed to engage schools, constantly promoting and re-promoting library offers.
- Closer linkage of promotion of the library and education adult learning offers. We understand that there are practical limits on this created by the individual learning

- record that needs to be maintained for formal courses, but there is scope for more shared marketing to help engagement.
- Looking at the role of the mobile library as a means of engaging communities. Can it be combined with other services as part of a wider mobile outreach service and targeted more at harder to reach communities and estates? See paragraphs 6.24 to 6.28 for discussion of the mobile library.
- Review of foreign language information and resources in libraries, including to reflect the growth of Syrian and Afghan refugee numbers.
- Review the approach to fines. This was a small factor in the public survey (7.4% of
 respondents identifying concerns about overdue fines as a reason for not using library
 services in the previous two years). However, anxiety about fines was identified by one
 voluntary and community sector representative, and several staff in their survey
 responses, as a barrier to some disadvantaged groups in becoming library borrowers.

Access to information and services

- 5.41 This is an important theme in the context of a district with a large rural area that has nearly two thirds of its LSOAs ranked in the three most deprived deciles nationally for barriers to housing and services. Public sector information and transactions are increasingly available only digitally, with limited face to face customer service points. Some facilities, like arts, are perceived as Newbury focused. It is increasingly challenging to provide bus services in rural areas.
- 5.42 In our interviews, we repeatedly heard concerns about digital exclusion and its implication for access to information and services. There are three dimensions lack of access to devices, internet connection and digital skills. Examples given include people with mental health support needs who would like assistance in accessing housing support and information.
- 5.43 We also heard a lot of support for the concept of community hubs and the advantages of co-locating libraries with other public services or community facilities. This would mean building on the positive experience in Hungerford. The convenience of combined access for users was highlighted as especially helpful for people with learning disability or mental health needs.

5.44 Identified needs include:

• More tailored IT support and infrastructure at libraries. Staff are very clear that to enable libraries to address digital inclusion, they need IT support suitable for a public facing context. Currently computers are set up with the same restrictions as staff equipment meaning that support has to be called for any issue, including some software updates. There is only one part-time member of IT support staff with detailed knowledge of the library public access computers, leading to slow response times and frustration for the public. The council has invested heavily in libraries IT provision and the public access computers (hardware and software) in all libraries were replaced in 2019. There have, however, been problems with the implementation of the new equipment in terms of its integration with the bookings management system and printing. In 2019/20, 5,900 (7%) of computer hours were lost because of technical

problems requiring maintenance (compared with 83,700 available hours). In April to July 2021 over 2,000 hours have been lost. This is in addition to issues that do not warrant a full shutdown. Staff also report that the corporately procured multifunctional devices providing printing/photocopying/scanning facilities are not suited to public requirements, particularly in terms of photocopying. There is a strong need to allow members of the public to print via wifi from their own devices and with simple payment mechanism.

- Staff training to enable an "assisted digital" service to be offered more consistently.
- Consideration of the scope to establish more community hubs.

Community resilience

- 5.45 As local public service budgets have reduced in recent years, it has become increasingly difficult to meet rising demand. It is increasingly important that communities harness their own strengths in connecting people to peer support, social interaction and community action.
- 5.46 According to the 2014 JSNA²², an estimated 14,000 people in West Berkshire (9.3% of the population) provide unpaid care. The social care system would not be sustainable without their support.
- 5.47 We have highlighted the large instance of secondary level mental health problems. The JSNA *Living* Well Mental Health in Adults ²³ notes that excess under 75 mortality rate in adults with serious mental illness in West Berkshire was the highest in the South East region. Without strong community links, it can be hard to understand who may be isolated and at risk.
- As in many areas, the Covid-19 pandemic led to a surge in community action. 25.3% of respondents to the 2020 Covid-19 survey said they had volunteered to help in their local community during the pandemic and 35.9% of respondents said they felt more connected to their local community than previously.
- 5.49 Library use has been shown to have a range of health and social benefits including socialisation and provision of respite for carers and new parents, improved health literacy through health drop-ins, and reduced loneliness and isolation especially for older people living alone. These benefits can be experienced by ordinary users and by library volunteers. A clear message from the interviews we conducted is that libraries have a contribution to make here and that a stronger contribution to community resilience requires co-design of the offer at a local level to reflect hyper local needs.

5.50 Identified needs include:

Lambourn has an effective model of community co-design, based on the Lambourn Library Volunteer Group and the Friends of Lambourn Library. As well as mobilising extensive volunteer support, it helps to tailor the service to the local needs, linked to a low wage horse-racing focused economy. It also works to animate groups and provide

²² Vulnerable Groups – Carers, West Berkshire Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2014

²³ Living well - Mental Health in Adults, West Berkshire Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, 2016

- social interaction in an isolated community. Can this level of engagement be encouraged in other library locations?
- Establishing libraries as a location for "mental health first aid".
- Greater promotion of room hire opportunities, to encourage community groups to meet locally. This raises the question of whether the library building can be open outside of library opening hours (as is the case in Hungerford) to allow community access.
- The public survey showed some concern (about the risk of diluting perceived core purpose, about space and noise) in any broadening of library services. The tone of these comments strongly point to the need for co-production with communities about expanding any library's role.

Skills and the economy

- 5.51 Libraries have a well-established role in supporting skills development and employment. This ranges from computer "code" clubs for children, to the PC access which allows job seekers to make online applications or create CVs. However, changing patterns of work, and changing skills requirements, mean that there is potential for libraries to play a much greater role in economic support. The changing context includes:
 - More people working from home, a trend greatly accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - A growth in micro businesses run from home, often in creative or craft sectors.
 - Employers are particularly looking for business focused digital skills not coding, but rather applied skills such as social media marketing and database use.

5.52 Identified needs include:

- Provision of more desk space for non office-based workers to use to work for example young people who do not have study space at home.
- Provision of enhanced facilities for micro-businesses, for example 3d printers, and other facilities on the model of the "Makerspaces"²⁴ concept to encourage co-creation, sharing resources and knowledge, and networking.
- Building on these concepts, establishing libraries as a focal point for encouraging people into town centres. There are opportunities in the master planning exercise which has taken place in Newbury, and this opportunity is discussed in section 6.

²⁴ Government guidance on Makerspaces is at this link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/libraries-and-makerspaces/libraries-and-makerspaces The concept of establishing them in libraries was included in the UK Digital Strategy, 2017.

6 Library locations

Purpose of this section

- Part of the brief for this work is to analyse the location of libraries in relation to population and existing customers. The static library locations are long-established and it is important to review them, in a context where an average of around 500 new homes have been built per annum between 2006/07 and 2018/19 and several thousand more are expected in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- In order to support this analysis, we have created a set of library "catchments". We have matched postcode data for active borrowers for each library in 2019/20 to their LSOA. We have then identified for each of West Berkshire's 97 LSOAs which library is the most popular among its active borrowers. We have then allocated that LSOA to that library's catchment. The table at Appendix II shows for each LSOA the percentage of active borrowers using its most used library.
- 6.3 This enables us to assess the patterns of use for each library in relation to IMD scores and to understand the hinterland from which it attracts its borrowers. Two caveats about the method do need to be stated:
 - Some post codes are not co-terminous with LSOAs. This means that some properties
 may exist both sides of a LSOA boundary. In such cases, the postcode will be allocated
 to one side according to its centroid. This means that our catchments cannot be 100%
 accurate around boundary thresholds.
 - The strength of "popularity" of the most used library varies among the LSOAs. In some cases, it is very high (99%) and in others lower (the lowest is 37% meaning that in such cases, it is just a couple of borrowers which determine the catchment allocation)²⁵.
 - Catchment information and associated IMD average decile information are shown below. The IMD number indicates the average decile position on a 1 to 10 scale – a high number correlates with least deprivation:

•	of catchment		Income		Skills and Training	Health Deprivation and Disability			Living Environment
Burghfield	7,675	8.4	8.2	8.6	7.6	8.0	7.4	6.6	7.6
Common									
Hungerford	9,470	7.5	7.0	8.3	6.7	8.7	8.2	6.8	4.7
Lambourn	4,245	6.3	5.7	7.3	3.7	7.7	5.7	4.0	5.7
Mortimer	5,816	7.7	7.3	7.7	7.7	8.3	6.7	6.0	3.7
Newbury	63,597	7.9	7.7	7.9	7.0	8.6	7.8	5.3	6.0
Pangbourne	18,751	9.4	9.0	8.9	7.9	9.4	9.2	6.6	8.3
Thatcham	28,307	8.1	7.5	7.6	6.4	8.3	8.2	6.3	8.2
Theale	20,589	7.9	7.7	7.9	6.0	8.6	7.8	4.9	8.1

²⁵ In one LSOA, E01016262, two libraries (Pangbourne and Theale) were of equal popularity and proximity. We allocated it to Pangbourne, but accept it could equally have been allocated to Theale.

6.4 Key points from this table are:

- Newbury has by far the largest catchment. More than double the number of the next largest, Thatcham. It covers 37 of the 97 LSOAs in the district, several of which are some distance from Newbury, including in the north of the area. This may reflect borrowers' work location or a willingness to travel to the library. The catchment scores low on barriers to housing and services, which is further evidence that it extends to some people in the rural parts of the district.
- Pangbourne is the least deprived catchment.
- Lambourn is the most deprived and is so on all domains, except living environment²⁶.
 There is a noticeable gap between its score on education, skills and training and the next most deprived.
- It is noticeable that the two libraries that are closest to each other, Burghfield Common and Mortimer, have the second and third smallest catchment populations. Overall, and on the domains other than health and disability, education, skills and training, the Mortimer catchment shows more deprivation than Burghfield Common.
- 6.5 It is helpful to overlay library activity patterns on some of the key aspects of the catchment analysis.

Library		opening hours per	active borrowers for library		Library visits (2019/20)	hour open	head of catchment	Multiple Deprivation	Barriers to Housing and Services (catchment)
Burghfield	7,675	19	957	12.5	18,206	958	2.4	8.4	6.6
Common									
Hungerford	9,470	26	1,076	11.4	40,175	1,545	4.2	7.5	6.8
Lambourn	4,245	15.5	455	10.7	11,085	715	2.6	6.3	4.0
Mortimer	5,816	19	558	9.6	12,876	678	2.2	7.7	6.0
Newbury	63,597	47	7,815	12.3	171,119	3,641	2.7	7.9	5.3
Pangbourne	18,751	22	949	5.1	19,388	881	1.0	9.4	6.6
Thatcham	28,307	33.5	2,346	8.3	41,021	1,225	1.4	8.1	6.3
Theale	20,589	23.5	1,082	5.3	23,562	1,003	1.1	7.9	4.9

- There are limitations to this analysis the library data is based on raw information about the particular library and will include some users from outside the defined catchment, although all active borrowers described here have West Berkshire post codes. Nevertheless, it indicates some trends:
 - The lowest percentage of active borrowers per population catchment is at Pangbourne, the least deprived catchment. It also has the lowest number of visits per head of catchment population. Theale also has low rates of borrowing compared with the catchment population.

²⁶ The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's <u>Statistical Release</u> of 26th September 2019 on IMD defines all the domains. "The Living Environment Deprivation Domain measures the quality of the local environment. The indicators fall into two sub-domains. The 'indoors' living environment measures the quality of housing; while the 'outdoors' living environment contains measures of air quality and road traffic accidents".

- Lambourn and Hungerford, are both in the higher half of percentages of active borrowers per population catchment. Both also score highly for the number of visits per head of catchment population. This may be an indicator of the strong community ownership or presence that they have (Hungerford operates as a community hub, supported by a charity, the Hungerford Library and Community Trust and Lambourn has active volunteer and friends groups, with good links to the racing community).
- Burghfield Common is the best used library in terms of active borrowers per population catchment.
- Newbury is the best used library, as would be expected from its position as the main library in the area and its large catchment. It is noticeable that it scores much higher than Thatcham on both percentage of active borrowers per population catchment and number of visits per head of catchment population.
- 6.7 Further trends about active borrowers can be seen in the series of maps below, which shows quintile analysis of the percentage of population in each LSOA that are active library borrowers at static libraries (based on 2019/20 data).

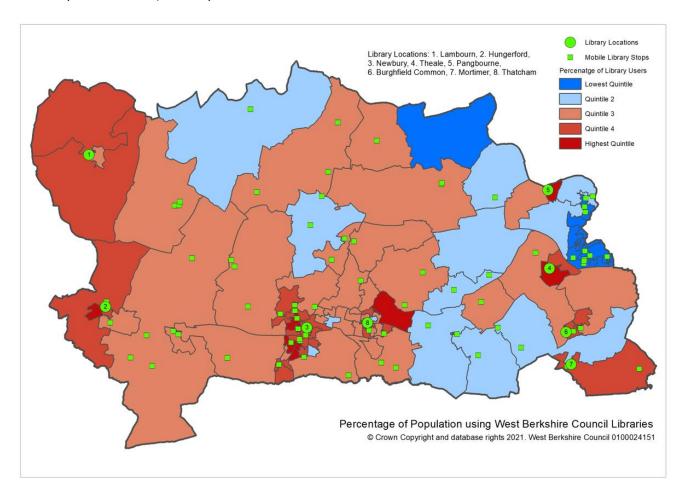


Figure 15: population rate using West Berkshire libraries by LSOA (all ages)

6.8 This map shows:

The density of borrowers is highest around library locations.

- The lowest quintile areas are relatively close to libraries in neighbouring authorities.
 These are Goring library for LSOA E01016257, which contains the parishes of Aldworth and Streatley; Reading Central and Caversham libraries, which are close to the block of low quintiles in the east of the area; and Tadley library in Hampshire, which is close to the Aldermaston area.
- There is some correlation between use and socio-economic conditions. The four most deprived LSAOs have use percentages at 6 or lower. These are in Newbury Greenham, Thatcham North East and in the Tilehurst South and Holybrook ward. However, there is a varied pattern among the least deprived LSOAs 13 of those with the lowest 10% of deprivation have use percentages of less than 10%, while 12 of them have use percentages between 10 and 17%.
- 6.9 In order to test more the level of correlation between active borrowing and library use, we created the scatter chart, shown below. This plots the IMD score (a national measure) of each LSOA against its percentage of active borrowers:

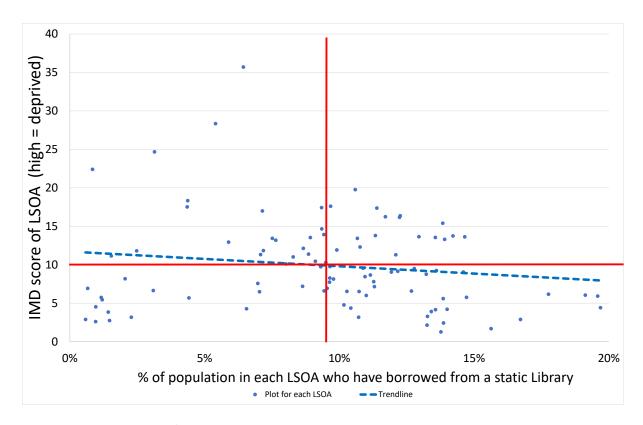


Figure 16: scattergraph of LSOAs by overall IMD rank and active borrower population percentage

- 6.10 This shows a slight trend towards least deprived areas (having lower IMD scores) being those where a greater proportion of people use libraries.
- 6.11 The trend is similar if we focus on the domain of barriers to housing and services. This indicates less library use in the more remote areas.

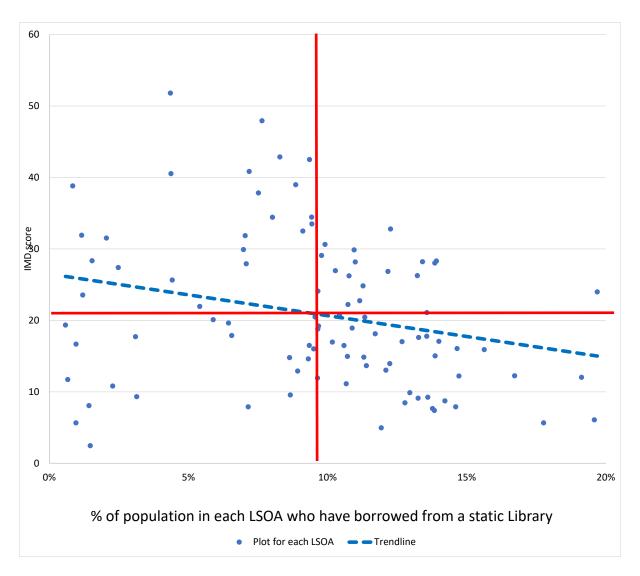


Figure 17: scattergraph of LSOAs by IMD barriers to services domain score and active borrower population percentage

6.12 Some further insights can be gained from maps for percentage of use based on age bands. Maps for junior users (0 to 17); adult users (18 to 74) and senior users (75+) are shown below.

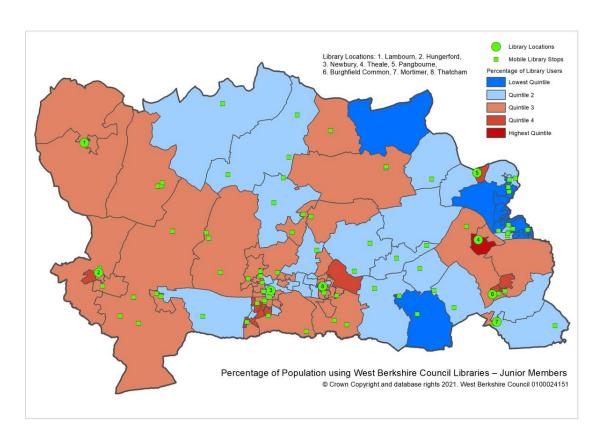


Figure 18: population rate using West Berkshire libraries by LSOA (ages 0 - 17)

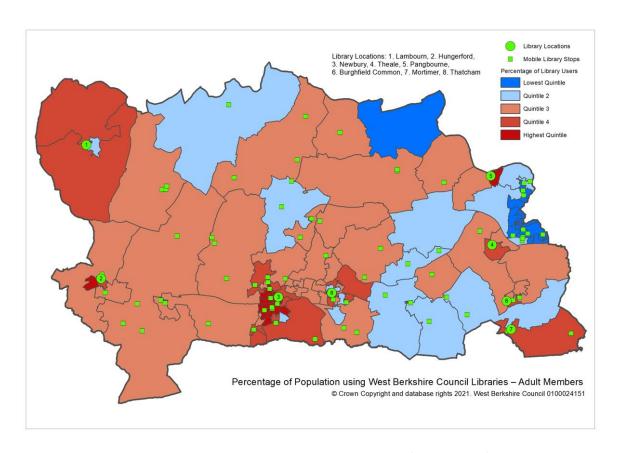


Figure 19: population rate using West Berkshire libraries by LSOA (ages 18 - 74)

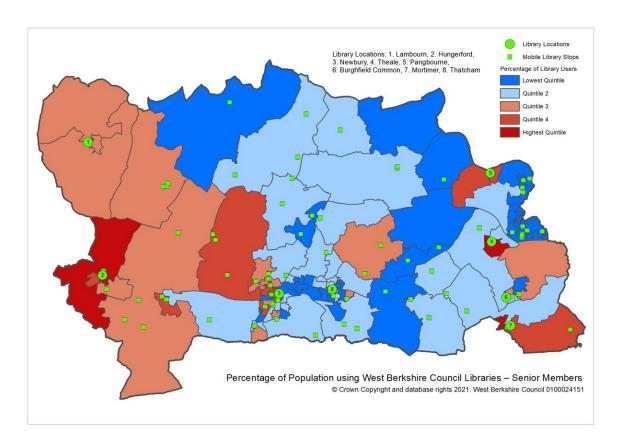


Figure 20: population rate using West Berkshire libraries by LSOA (age 75+)

6.13 This highlights some additional points:

- In the Lambourn area, junior engagement is in the middle quintile and adult activity is high, except for the area immediately around the town. This LSOA (E01016306) is in the bottom 20% for education, skills and training and may point to the need for a focus on intergenerational learning (see paragraph 5.8).
- Low junior engagement around Mortimer.
- Newbury and Thatcham. A corridor running east of Newbury towards Thatcham and around Thatcham is in the lowest quintile for over 75s. Parts of this corridor also have low use among junior members. The reasons for this are not clear. The average deprivation level is at or only one decile below the West Berks average on most IMD dimensions, although it is two below on education, skills and training.
- There is a clear drop off in library use among over 75s in the more remote parts of the district, particularly in the north.
- The areas to the west of Hungerford and Newbury seem to be very effective at engaging over 75s. LSOA E01016326, which covers the Speen, Boxford and Winterbourne parishes also has very high engagement of the "At Home" service.

Implications for the future of library locations

The interviews and evidence review for this needs assessment have highlighted a mix of needs and opportunities. These are set out below.

Thatcham

Thatcham Town Council's Town Plan 2014 – 19²⁷ noted how recent growth in population in Thatcham had not been matched by equivalent growth in services and infrastructure. Library staff described to us how the library building is too small for the town's needs and is also unattractive and hidden from view. Some improvements are planned, including changing the entrance area to help combat anti-social behaviour and to provide an accessible toilet. The town council provides £24,000 funding per annum, which is contingent on improvements being made. With new housing development coming, the Infrastructure Development Plan identifies the need for new library / community hub building in the town. Our analysis would support this as a way to promote more engagement in parts of surrounding area, particularly in Thatcham North East and among older people in the corridor to the west of the town. The current masterplanning exercise underway in Thatcham creates an opportunity for a strategic discussion about location and how to link library provision to other facilities.

Eastern part of the district

- 6.15 The four libraries in this area show varying patterns of use. Burghfield Common and Mortimer libraries are geographically quite close to each other and there is a contrast between their level of use (Burghfield Common relatively high in relation to its catchment population and Mortimer lower). The Mortimer building has been refurbished in the last five years and has a covenant requiring it to be used as a library. We understand that previous discussions with the parish council about creating a community hub space are currently paused due to the pandemic. The analysis of use suggests that this should be explored again as a way of improving engagement and access. The Burghfield Common building is part of Willink school with a locked door between the public library and the school. Recent discussions with the school have identified an appetite to merge the public and school libraries, with the aim of making better use of the space and promoting use by all age groups. This is clearly an opportunity to build on the good levels of use of the public library and to promote more engagement with the community. Some works would be needed to the current library building - essential maintenance only has been carried out in recent years while discussions took place with Burghfield Parish Council about the potential of relocating the library to be part of a proposed community hub. These plans were not progressed because of a change of plan by the Parish Council.
- Ose of the Theale and Pangbourne libraries are both low in relation to the population catchments. Pangbourne has a village centre location, which is a good basis on which to build greater community engagement. Theale scores poorly on the IMD access to housing and services domain, suggesting that exploration is needed of how to connect the library more closely with the community, especially in the area beyond the main settlement. Note that parts of the Theale building have been converted to offices, which provides income to make the location sustainable.

²⁷ Council Plan 2014 – 2019, Thatcham Town Council, 2014

Western part of the district

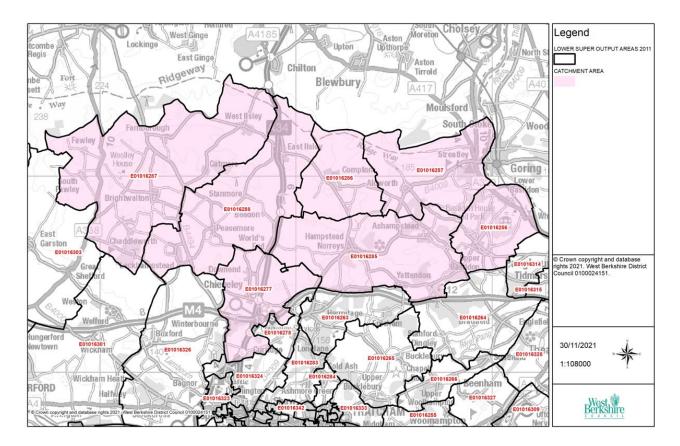
- 6.17 Our analysis shows Hungerford to be a very popular library across age groups and it has by some way the highest number of visits per head of catchment population. This suggests that the hub model is highly successful for attracting local people to the building and that adapting this model should be considered in other locations.
- 6.18 Lambourn library is centrally located in the main high street. It is well used in terms of visits per head of its catchment population and has above average percentage of active borrowers from its catchment population. An area to consider is how to reduce the difference between the relatively low quintile adult library use in the LSOA immediately to the east of the town centre compared with the high quintile use in the rest of the catchment.

Newbury

Newbury library is in a purpose-built 20+ year old building, which has enjoyed good investment, such as recent upgrading of the lighting. The recent masterplanning exercise for the town centre, which has involved public consultation, proposes new community use for a car park area very near the library. This is a major opportunity for new physical space to be linked to different community uses. The economic development team see this as a way to address skills and small business support needs by creating co-working areas including with facilities for small creative, digital or craft businesses. Such space could also provide opportunities for culture and heritage related activity. Extended and more flexible space could also be an opportunity to address the sometimes contradictory needs for quiet space (for example to enable computer training for people with learning disabilities) and more lively welcoming areas for less engaged young people.

Northern part of West Berkshire

6.20 It is striking that the library locations mark out a horseshoe shape along the east side of the district, along the Kennet valley and then up to Lambourn. A large area of the north and central part of the district is not served by a static library, although there are mobile stops in most LSOAs. Some new housing is indicated in the infrastructure development plan for the North Wessex Downs area (see paragraph 3.3). In order to help assess whether there is a need for a library in this area, we have created an imagined catchment for a library site in this area – see map below:



6.21 The key data for this catchment, compared with the average of the eight identified existing catchments, is shown below:

catchment		borrowers	borrowers as % of catchment	Overall Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	Income		Skills and Training	Health Deprivation and Disability			Living Environment
Northern	11,252	766	6.8	7.9	8.9	9.4	8.3	9.7	7.7	2.9	3.7
West Berks											
average	19,806	1,905	9.4	8.1	7.7	8.0	6.8	8.6	7.9	5.7	6.9

- 6.22 It would be smaller than average but larger than the catchment population for Burghfield Common, Hungerford, Lambourn and Mortimer. The active borrowers expressed as a percentage of catchment population is based on use of the existing libraries and is higher than the figures for Pangbourne and Theale. However, the level of deprivation on most dimensions is lower than average. On employment, education, skills and training, and health, it would be less deprived than any existing catchment. However, it is noticeably more deprived on barriers to housing and services and living environment. Any future library provision could have a role in addressing this, particularly if it was closely associated with provision of access to other public services.
- 6.23 Most library users in this notional catchment currently are active borrowers at either Newbury (71%) or Pangbourne (20%). Part of the east of this notional catchment would also be relatively close to Goring library in Oxfordshire.

Mobile library service

6.24 Looking at data from 2019/20, the number of active borrowers from the mobile library was 682. This is lower than all the static libraries, expect for Lambourn (489) and Mortimer (579). Many of these

are also using other library locations. The table below shows the borrowers who have only borrowed from the mobile library, in comparison with the other libraries and services:

Library or service	Borrowers only using this service
Burghfield Common	487
Hungerford	649
Lambourn	296
Mortimer	299
Newbury	3,768
Pangbourne	620
Thatcham	928
Theale	477
WB Mobile	313
At Home	41
Web	131

As noted in paragraph 4.13, use of the mobile service has declined in the last decade, although the trend has been more stable since the consolidation to one service. The map below gives an indication of the pattern of use of the mobile library, showing quintiles for the percentage of the population in each LSOA that is using the service.

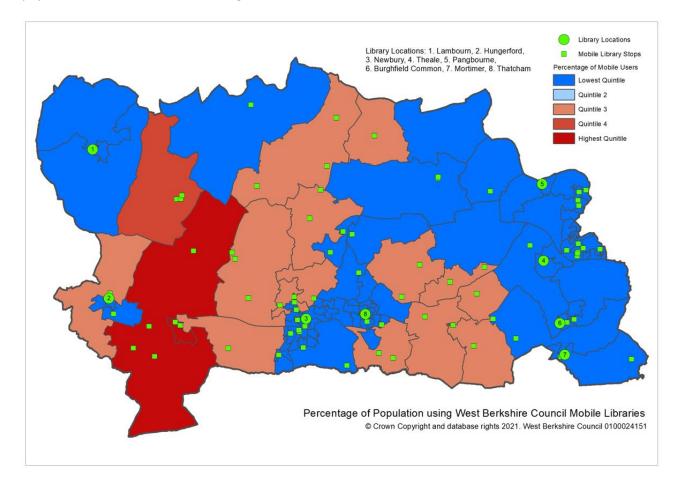


Figure 21: population rate using West Berkshire mobile library by LSOA (all ages)

6.26 Breaking the data down by age group shows that the service has greater take up by over 75s in some of the locations furthest from static libraries, as would be expected. 18 to 74 and under 18 use follows the overall pattern but with sparser use in some central and southern areas. In all cases, the low density of use in eastern areas is striking.

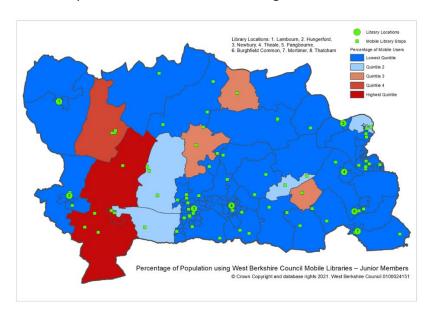


Figure 22: population rate using West Berkshire mobile library by LSOA (ages 0 - 17)

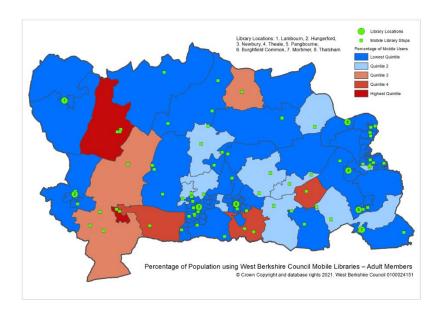


Figure 23: population rate using West Berkshire mobile library by LSOA (ages 18 - 74)

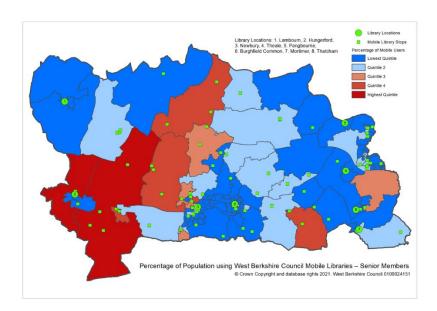


Figure 24: population rate using West Berkshire mobile library by LSOA (age 75+)

- 6.27 Our interviews identified an interest in exploring the wider outreach role of the mobile library and just over 30% of respondents to the staff survey identified the need for a little or a lot of improvement in the mobile service. One comment specifically talked about linking locations with schools, family hubs, community/day centres or leisure centres.
- 6.28 The current mobile vehicle is around 15 years old and is diesel powered. Age and sustainability considerations mean that it will need replacing in the short to medium term. We recommend that a feasibility study is carried out on the mobile service which should consider:
 - The scope and appetite to link it with other local services, including advice and social prescribing.
 - Customer engagement, about the balance of benefits between a mobile service and an enhanced "At Home" service.
 - Assess the constraints created by narrow rural lanes how far does this limit introducing a larger vehicle that could offer a blend of mobile council services?
 - Review data about previous stops that have been targeted at, for example, schools.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 This needs assessment highlights how the generally prosperous nature of West Berkshire masks some pockets of disadvantage. This is manifested through wide gaps between the best and worst performing figures in areas such as secondary school attainment and healthy life expectancy. It is also stark in employment, where the district ranks highest out of 150 authorities in terms of the employment rate for 23-28 year olds, but is 142nd for its net underemployment (the imbalance between the numbers of young people wanting to work more hours and the numbers wanting to work fewer). This needs to be set in the context of an area of ageing population and increasing imbalance between the number of retired and working age people and the challenges that creates for the sustainability of public services.
- 7.2 The Covid-19 pandemic has further shone a light on needs in areas such as social isolation, including of carers and people with learning disabilities, and the number of people with secondary mental health needs.
- 7.3 These trends point to four areas of important need in the district that the library service can do more to support:
 - e Engagement. Our research has highlighted the difficulty of engaging "hard to reach" communities and the headline indicator of this is the large secondary education gap. There is an important role for libraries to support wider efforts to address this, through a focus on intergenerational learning and wider prevention work. Serving this need will require consideration of approaches to marketing and how to create staff time for engagement and community activities. In order to gain results, outreach needs to be consistently delivered and regularly repeated and this requires resource to keep refreshing relationships with key partners such as schools. When community contacts leave, it is important to have capacity to develop relations with the new contacts to retain partnerships, and continue to provide a service which meets the needs of the whole community including "hard to reach".

 Discussions with staff for this needs assessment highlighted their view that they do not currently have the level of resourcing needed for this.
 - Access to information and services. With a large rural area and increasing digitisation of
 public services, there is a need to promote digital inclusion. For libraries this means building
 offers of assisted digital support, particularly to older people and vulnerable groups who lack
 the confidence to use self-service channels, or do not have access to suitable devices or
 reliable internet connection. Serving this need will also require more tailored support
 arrangements for public facing information technology equipment and creates a staff
 training need.
 - Community resilience. Particularly in the context of an ageing population, there is a growing need for communities to identify and harness their own strengths in connecting people to peer support, social interaction and community action. Libraries can support this by functioning as community hubs. This will need co-creation with communities and other

- public service organisations. It requires consideration of factors such as whether a library building can be open outside of library opening hours for wider community uses.
- Skills and employment. This is an area where the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated changes in the pattern of work, creating a need to provide space and facilities to support home workers, micro businesses and job seekers. More widely, there are the challenges of younger people's social mobility and the participation in the labour market for older and disadvantaged groups. These are factors that can be supported with changes to the configuration of physical library space and equipment and by encouraging support networks, with partners to use libraries.
- 7.4 While West Berkshire's population is projected to be stable in the medium term, it has seen considerable house-building in the last two decades and more is projected. There is a need to review the pattern of provision to reflect changing the demography:
 - East. There are four libraries relatively close together with varied patterns of use. There is a need to explore the potential for partnership to create more community hub style facilities that can promote engagement with the community. The recent discussions with Willink school about joint use and reconfiguration of the Burghfield Common site creates an opportunity to explore this. The level of community engagement in the west of the area in Hungerford, where the community hub is supported by a charity, and Lambourn, which is supported with active Volunteer and Friends Groups, also provide models which could be tested in the east..
 - Newbury and Thatcham. Masterplanning work in the town centres is an opportunity to tailor library provision better to local needs. In Newbury, there is an opportunity to extend the current facility in a way that would support the employment and skills agenda. In Thatcham, patterns of use indicate a need for more engagement in parts of its surrounding area. Staff report that the current facility is poorly located and its potential constrained by its small size creating a new facility that can better engage people needs to be explored in the planning exercise.
 - North. A large area of the north and centre of the district is not served by a local West Berkshire library and active library borrowers mainly travel to Newbury or Pangbourne. Modelling a potential catchment for a library in this area shows its level of need on most indices of deprivation is low. However, it is a rural area which ranks very poorly on access to housing and services. Through consultation with stakeholders, there is a case to explore linking some library provision with a wider community hub idea.

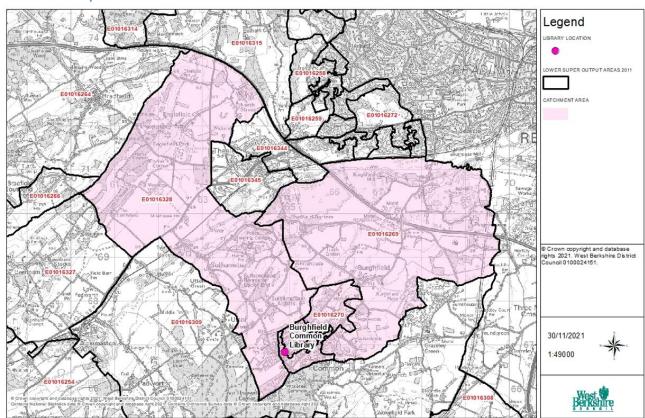
Appendix I – library profiles

This appendix presents short profiles of each library in West Berkshire. The intention is to bring together key library specific information as a reference to support the service review. Note that "issues" in the tables below refers to physical issues from the library concerned – it excludes elibrary downloads and web renewals which are not attributed to a particular library.

For the socio-economic profile we have used an average of the national decile rank for each LSOA in the catchment as this offers both a comparative West Berkshire and national perspective. IMD data can be presented in different ways and the table in Appendix III shows the decile rank information alongside the average calculated score for each catchment.

Burghfield Common

Catchment map



Library building

The library building is physically linked to Willink secondary school, but operates as a separate public library at the moment. The current building needs some attention as only essential maintenance work has been carried out for the last few years while discussions took place with Burghfield Parish Council about the potential for relocating the library to be part of a proposed community hub. These plans were not progressed because of a change of plan by the Parish Council.

More recently discussions have focussed on the possibility of a dual use library facility with Willink School.

Key data for 2019/20

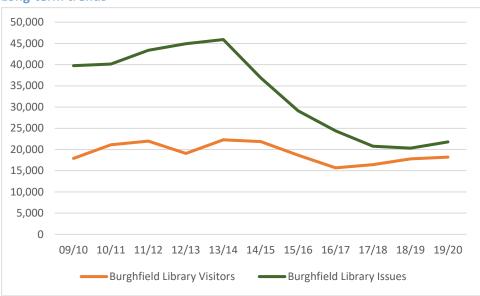
Catchment population	Active borrowers	Visits	Issues
7,675	1,008	18,206	21,801

Of the 1,008 active borrowers, 487 only borrowed items from Burghfield Common library. The most popular alternative location was Mortimer (109).

Burghfield Common has the highest percentage of active borrowers per catchment population. This is interesting, as it is also likely that some residents use Reading Library Services.

The library is open 19 hours a week and is busiest on Thursdays. Its busiest time for loans is between 3pm and 4pm on weekdays and between 11am and 12pm on Saturdays.

Long-term trends



Covid-19 related trends

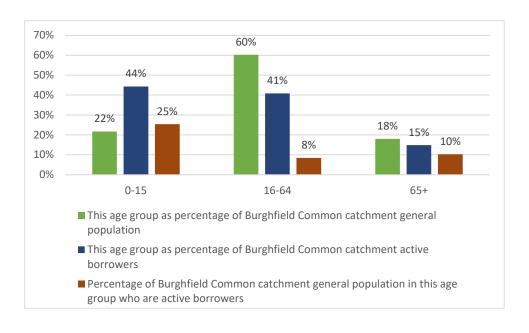
Comparing issue data from April 2019 to October 2019 with April 2021 to October 2021 shows an a drop over the period of 24%. This is slightly below average compared with the other libraries. Issues to children aged 0 to 10 have risen by 12% (it is one of four libraries to show an increase for this group).

Socio economic profile, based on IMD

Burghfield Common ranks as the second least deprived library catchment area in West Berkshire overall on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. It is slightly above average on all dimensions except for health and crime.

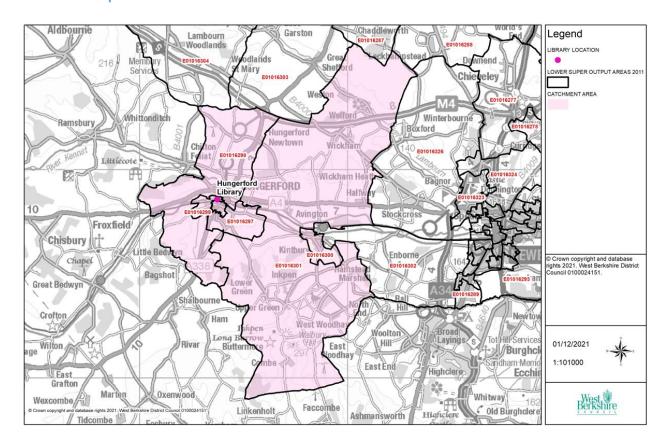
IMD dimension	Burghfield Common catchment decile	West Berks average decile
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	8.4	8.1
Income	8.2	7.7
Employment	8.6	8.0
Education, Skills and Training	7.6	6.8
Health Deprivation and Disability	8.0	8.6
Crime	7.4	7.9
Barriers to Housing and Services	6.6	5.7
Living Environment	7.6	6.9

User age profile



Hungerford

Catchment map



Library building

The library service now operates as part of the Hungerford Hub. The building is leased to the Hungerford Library and Community Trust and has been managed by them since 2018. It is used, outside of library hours, as a Hub for the people of Hungerford and the surrounding area and used to hold events such as workshops, talks and exhibitions. There is also a shop space for local artists and craftspeople to exhibit and sell their work. The space is also available to hire for local groups and individuals who need a small, comfortable space for their own events. This is a good example of how multi-purpose use in the right setting can work as a successful model.

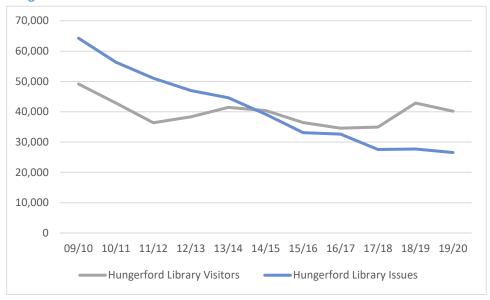
Key data for 2019/20

Catchment	Active	Visits	Issues
population	borrowers		
9,470	1,366	40,175	26,558

Of the 1,366 active borrowers, 649 only borrowed items from Hungerford library. The most popular alternative location was Newbury (316).

The library is open 26 hours a week and is busiest on Fridays. Its busiest time for loans is between 10am-11am or 11am and 12pm on weekdays and between 11am and 12pm on Saturdays.

Long-term trends



Covid-19 related trends

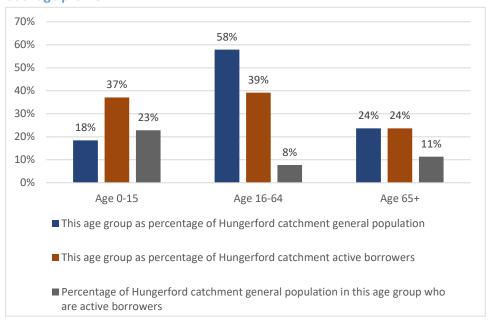
Comparing issue data from April 2019 to October 2019 with April 2021 to October 2021 shows a drop over the period of 26%. This is slightly below average compared with the other libraries. Its issue rate for adults aged 20 to 69 has dropped less than other libraries – a drop of 9% compared with an average of 24%.

Socio economic profile, based on IMD

On overall decile rank, Hungerford shows as a more deprived library catchment area compared with others in West Berkshire. However, it is important to note that this is strongly influenced by the living environment domain and to an extent by the income domain. On the others, it ranks close to or above average.

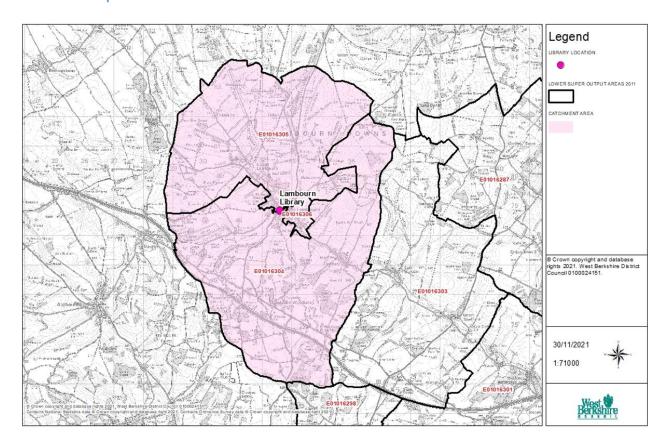
IMD dimension	Hungerford Catchment decile	West Berks average decile
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	7.5	8.1
Income	7.0	7.7
Employment	8.3	8.0
Education, Skills and Training	6.7	6.8
Health Deprivation and Disability	8.7	8.6
Crime	8.2	7.9
Barriers to Housing and Services	6.8	5.7
Living Environment	4.7	6.9

User age profile



Lambourn

Catchment map



Library building

The library is centrally located in the main high street as part of a block housing two shops and four residential flats above. It is leased on a long-term basis at a peppercorn rent.

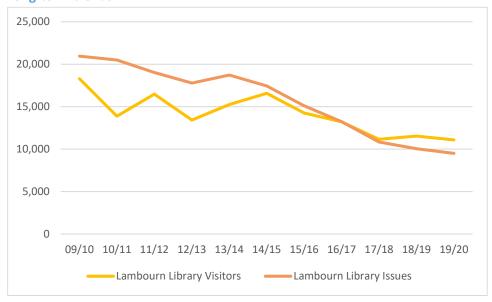
Key data for 2019/20

	Catchment population			Issues
ſ	4,245	489	11,085	9,501

Of the 489 active borrowers, 296 only borrowed items from Lambourn library. The most popular alternative location was Newbury (55).

The library is open 15.5 hours a week and is busiest on Fridays, which is the day on which it is open for longest. Its busiest time for loans on a Friday is between 11am and 12pm and on a Saturday is also between 11am and 12pm.

Long-term trends



Covid-19 related trends

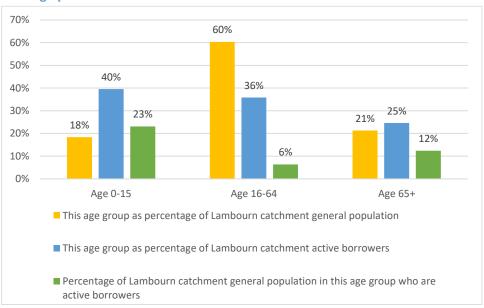
Comparing issue data from April 2019 to October 2019 with April 2021 to October 2021 shows a drop over the period of 40%. This is above average compared with the other libraries. The drop for the age group 11 to 19 has been noticeably sharp at 78%.

Socio economic profile, based on IMD

The Lambourn library catchment area ranks as the most deprived on all IMD domains except living environment.

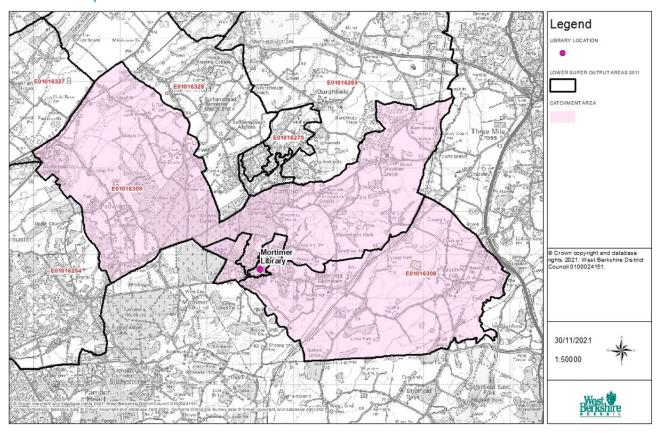
IMD dimension	Lambourn catchment decile	West Berks average decile
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	6.3	8.1
Income	5.7	7.7
Employment	7.3	8.0
Education, Skills and Training	3.7	6.8
Health Deprivation and Disability	7.7	8.6
Crime	5.7	7.9
Barriers to Housing and Services	4.0	5.7
Living Environment	5.7	6.9

User age profile



Mortimer

Catchment map



Library building

The library building was completely re-furbished in 2016, and is in a central location in the village. There is a covenant on the building stating that it must always be used as a library.

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council leases the conservatory at the rear of the building. There have been discussions about the Parish Council taking over the management and lease for the whole building, but negotiations have recently been paused because of the pandemic.

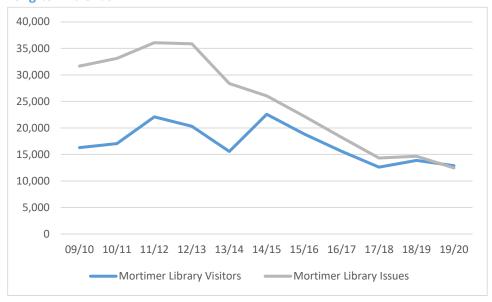
Key data for 2019/20

Catchment population	Active borrowers	Visits	Issues
5,816	579	12,876	12,469

Of the 579 active borrowers, 299 only borrowed items from Mortimer library. The most popular alternative location was Burghfield Common (109). It is also likely that some residents use Reading Library Services.

The library is open 19 hours a week and is busiest on Fridays. Its busiest time for loans is between 2pm and 4pm on weekdays and between 11am and 12pm on Saturdays.

Long-term trends



Covid-19 related trends

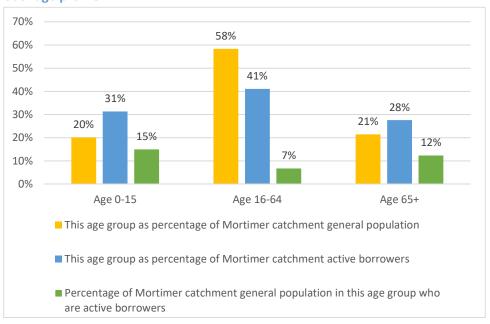
Comparing issue data from April 2019 to October 2019 with April 2021 to October 2021 shows an a drop over the period of 29%. This is very slightly above average compared with the other libraries. The drop for the age group 11 to 19 has been noticeably sharp at 79%.

Socio economic profile, based on IMD

On overall decile rank, Mortimer ranks as the third most deprived library catchment area in West Berkshire overall on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. It is below the district average on most dimensions, but performs noticeably better on education, skills and training.

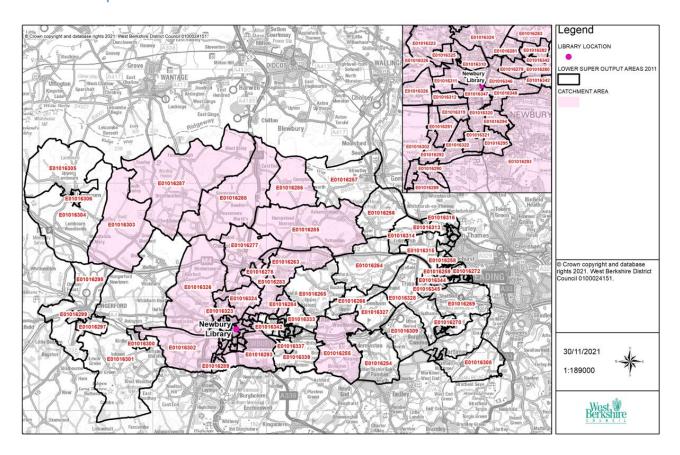
IMD dimension	Mortimer catchment decile	West Berks average decile
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	7.7	8.1
Income	7.3	7.7
Employment	7.7	8.0
Education, Skills and Training	7.7	6.8
Health Deprivation and Disability	8.3	8.6
Crime	6.7	7.9
Barriers to Housing and Services	6.0	5.7
Living Environment	3.7	6.9

User age profile



Newbury

Catchment map



Library building

A purpose-built library now 20 years old which is one of WBCs flagship buildings and located centrally in the Wharf area of the town centre. WBC has made significant investment in the building, most recently installing energy efficient LED lighting.

There may be a possibility to extend in line with Newbury Masterplan and Cultural Heritage Strategy to include, for example, a makerspace or space for small and medium sized businesses to rent.

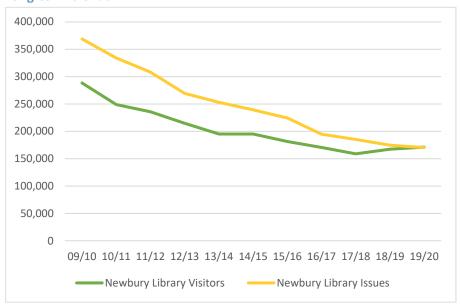
Key data for 2019/20

Catchment population	Active borrowers	Visits	Issues
63,597	8,816	171,119	170,458

Of the 8,816 active borrowers, 3,768 only borrowed items from Newbury library. The most popular alternative location was Thatcham (801).

The library is open 47 hours a week and is busiest on Saturdays. Its peak time for loans is between 11am and 12pm on most days though it remains busy well into the afternoons.

Long-term trends



Covid-19 related trends

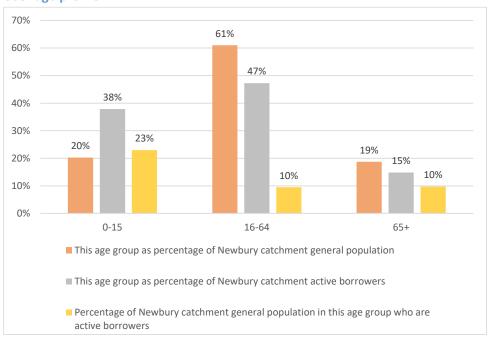
Comparing issue data from April 2019 to October 2019 with April 2021 to October 2021 shows an a drop over the period of 34%. This is slightly above average compared with the other libraries. Issues to children aged 0 to 10 have remained stable.

Socio economic profile, based on IMD

The Newbury catchment is close to the West Berkshire average on all domains of the Index of Multiple Deprivation. As the catchment covers more than a third of all the LSOAs this is to be expected.

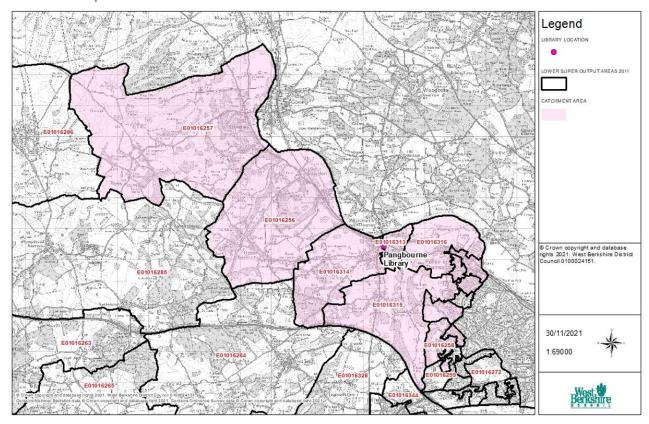
IMD dimension	Newbury catchment decile	West Berks average decile
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	7.9	8.1
Income	7.7	7.7
Employment	7.9	8.0
Education, Skills and Training	7.0	6.8
Health Deprivation and Disability	8.6	8.6
Crime	7.8	7.9
Barriers to Housing and Services	5.3	5.7
Living Environment	6.0	6.9

User age profile



Pangbourne

Catchment map



Library building

The library is a small building which was a former fire station. It is a good location in the centre of the village.

Key data for 2019/20

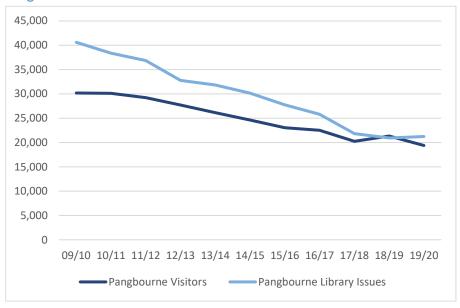
Catchment population	Active borrowers				
18,751	1,085	19,388	21,241		

Of the 1,085 active borrowers, 620 only borrowed items from Pangbourne library. The most popular alternative locations were Newbury (71) and Theale (69).

Pangbourne has the lowest percentage of active borrowers per catchment population. This may reflect its relative proximity to Caversham and Reading Central libraries, and Goring, in the neighbouring local authority areas.

The library is open 22 hours a week. Its busiest day is Friday and it is busiest on most weekdays between 11am and 12pm and between 11am and 12pm on Saturdays. On Mondays, it is only open in the afternoon and is busiest between 3pm and 4pm.

Long-term trends



Covid-19 related trends

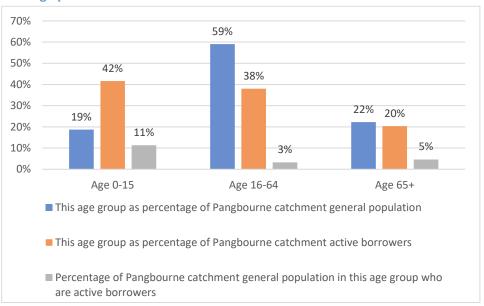
Comparing issue data from April 2019 to October 2019 with April 2021 to October 2021 shows a drop over the period of 22%. This is below average compared with the other libraries. Issues to children aged 0 to 10 have risen by 10% (it is one of four libraries to show an increase for this group).

Socio economic profile, based on IMD

Pangbourne library catchment ranks as the least deprived library catchment area in West Berkshire overall on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. It is above average on all dimensions.

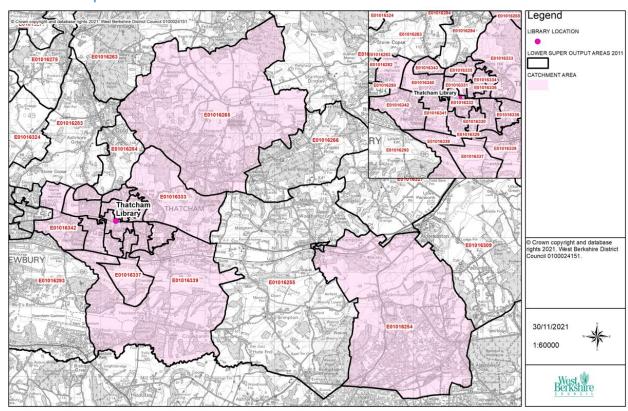
IMD dimension	Pangbourne catchment decile	West Berks average decile
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	9.4	8.1
Income	9.0	7.7
Employment	8.9	8.0
Education, Skills and Training	7.9	6.8
Health Deprivation and Disability	9.4	8.6
Crime	9.2	7.9
Barriers to Housing and Services	6.6	5.7
Living Environment	8.3	6.9

User age profile



Thatcham

Catchment map



Library building

The library was purpose built in the 1980s, but is now inadequate for a town the size of Thatcham where the population has rapidly increased. The location is slightly out of town and limited signage means that the building is hard to find as it is not on the main A4 and hidden behind a dental practice.

In 2021 a project commenced to make short term improvements to the building using capital funding. This involves the installation of an accessible toilet, and moving the entrance of the building to reduce anti-social behaviour.

In the longer term, the intention is to consider building a new larger facility as part of the Thatcham Masterplan and the need identified in the WBC Infrastructure Development Plan. This will provide an opportunity to consider co-location.

Key data for 2019/20

Catchment population	Active borrowers	Visits	Issues
28,307	2,403	41,021	45,745

Of the 2,403 active borrowers, 928 only borrowed items from Thatcham library. The most popular alternative location was Newbury (801).

The library is open 33.5 hours a week and is busiest on Fridays. On most weekdays, its busiest time for loans is between 10am and 11am and between 11am and 12pm on Saturdays.

Long-term trends



Covid-19 related trends

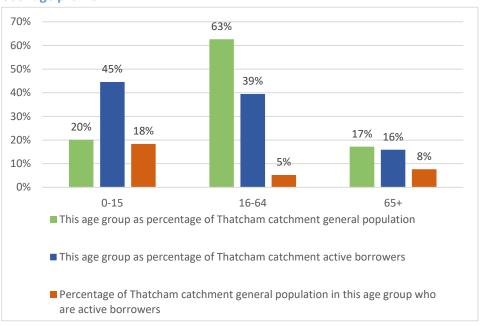
Comparing issue data from April 2019 to October 2019 with April 2021 to October 2021 shows an a drop over the period of 36%. This is slightly above average compared with the other libraries.

Socio economic profile, based on IMD

The Thatcham catchment is close to the average on most domains of the Index of Multiple Deprivation. It is well above average on living environment, and a little below on education, skills and training, health and employment.

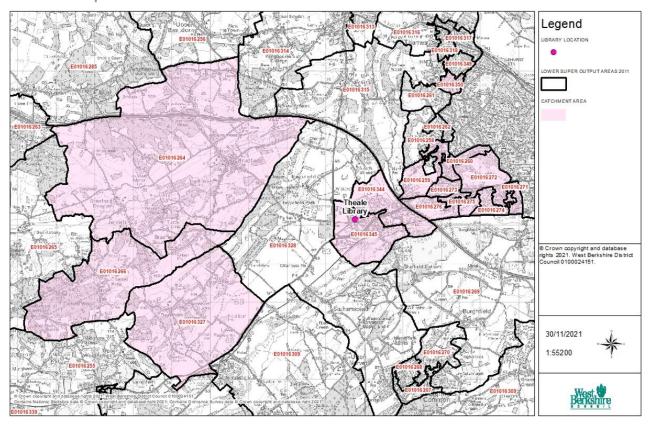
IMD dimension	Burghfield Common catchment decile	West Berks average decile
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	8.1	8.1
Income	7.5	7.7
Employment	7.6	8.0
Education, Skills and Training	6.4	6.8
Health Deprivation and Disability	8.3	8.6
Crime	8.2	7.9
Barriers to Housing and Services	6.3	5.7
Living Environment	8.2	6.9

User age profile



Theale

Catchment map



Library building

The library was a dual—use facility with Theale Green School until 2016 when the school withdrew from the agreement because of falling roll numbers. Initially there was a threat to the future of the library as the running costs for the building would have been too high just for the library.

To mitigate this, building alterations were made, and a suite of offices created in the part of the building formerly occupied by the school. These offices have been leased to the WBC Public Protection Partnership since 2017, therefore creating an additional income stream to make the current location sustainable.

Key data for 2019/20

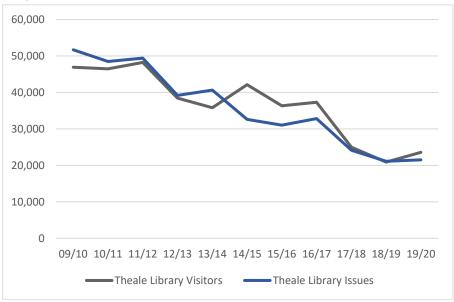
Catchment	Active	Visits	Issues			
population	borrowers					
20,589	1,171	23,562	21,504			

Of the 1,171 active borrowers, 477 only borrowed items from Theale library. The most popular alternative location was Newbury (123).

Theale has the second lowest percentage of active borrowers per catchment population. This may reflect its relative proximity to Reading Central and Caversham libraries, which are part of Reading Library Services.

The library is open 23.5 hours a week and is busiest on Wednesdays. Its busiest time for loans is between 3pm and 5pm on weekdays and between 11am and 12pm on Saturdays.

Long-term trends



Covid-19 related trends

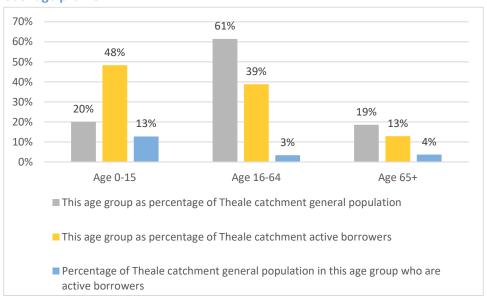
Comparing issue data from April 2019 to October 2019 with April 2021 to October 2021 shows an a drop over the period of 16%. This is the lowest of all the libraries. Issues to children aged 0 to 10 have risen by 25% (it is one of four libraries to show an increase for this group).

Socio economic profile, based on IMD

Theale library catchment is close the average on most of the Index of Multiple Deprivation domains. It is noticeably below average on education, skills and training and barriers to housing and services.

IMD dimension	Theale catchment decile	West Berks average decile
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	7.9	8.1
Income	7.7	7.7
Employment	7.9	8.0
Education, Skills and Training	6.0	6.8
Health Deprivation and Disability	8.6	8.6
Crime	7.8	7.9
Barriers to Housing and Services	4.9	5.7
Living Environment	8.1	6.9

User age profile



Appendix II – library catchments

The table below shows for each LSOA the percentage of active borrowers using its most used library. This determines which catchment each LSOA falls into.

LSOA	Most used library by	% active borrowers				
LSUA	Most used library by LSOA residents	using most used				
	LSOA residents	_				
E01016270	Durahfield Common	library 89.7				
E01016270	Burghfield Common	85.1				
E01016267	Burghfield Common Burghfield Common	83.0				
E01016269	Burghfield Common	82.9				
E01016328	Burghfield Common	64.4 87.0				
E01016298	Hungerford					
E01016299	Hungerford	86.2				
E01016296	Hungerford	81.3				
E01016297	Hungerford	81.1				
E01016300	Hungerford	50.5				
E01016301	Hungerford	49.5				
E01016306	Lambourn	91.9				
E01016305	Lambourn	83.7				
E01016304	Lambourn	74.8				
E01016307	Mortimer	83.9				
E01016308	Mortimer	76.8				
E01016309	Mortimer	50.0				
E01016320	Newbury	99.5				
E01016346	Newbury	99.3				
E01016288	Newbury	99.2				
E01016312	Newbury	98.5				
E01016289	Newbury	98.4				
E01016311	Newbury	98.4				
E01016319	Newbury	98.3				
E01016322	Newbury	98.1				
E01016291	Newbury	97.8				
E01016294	Newbury	97.7				
E01016310	Newbury	97.7				
E01016290	Newbury	97.7				
E01016292	Newbury	97.2				
E01016293	Newbury	96.5				
E01016325	Newbury	96.4				
E01016347	Newbury	96.3				
E01016321	Newbury	95.7				
E01016348	Newbury	95.7				
E01016279	Newbury	94.7				
E01016323	Newbury	94.2				
E01016324	Newbury	92.2				
E01016287	Newbury	91.9				
E01016326	Newbury	91.1				
E01016281	Newbury	91.0				
E01016295	Newbury	89.7				
E01016280	Newbury	89.0				
E01016277	Newbury	87.2				
E01016282	Newbury	82.4				
E01016286	Newbury	81.5				
E01016278	Newbury	80.3				
E01016302	Newbury	80.0				

LSOA	Most used library by	% active borrowers				
	LSOA residents	using most used				
		library				
E01016263	Newbury	78.7				
E01016285	Newbury	75.5				
E01016283	Newbury	55.6				
E01016284	Newbury	51.4				
E01016303	Newbury	44.1				
E01016255	Newbury	41.9				
E01016313	Pangbourne	94.4				
E01016314	Pangbourne	91.7				
E01016318	Pangbourne	85.3				
E01016256	Pangbourne	82.4				
E01016316	Pangbourne	79.7				
E01016317	Pangbourne	76.7				
E01016349	Pangbourne	70.6				
E01016315	Pangbourne	59.2				
E01016258	Pangbourne	50.0				
E01016257	Pangbourne	50.0				
E01016261	Pangbourne	44.4				
E01016262	Pangbourne	38.5				
E01016332	Thatcham	77.2				
E01016331	Thatcham	73.6				
E01016335	Thatcham	69.1				
E01016336	Thatcham	66.7				
E01016329	Thatcham	66.7				
E01016324	Thatcham	65.7				
E01016334	Thatcham	64.6				
E01016337	Thatcham	62.9				
E01016343	Thatcham	61.8				
E01016343	Thatcham	60.5				
E01016340	Thatcham	59.9				
E01016342	Thatcham	58.5				
E01016338	Thatcham	56.9				
E01016341	Thatcham	55.4				
E01016341	Thatcham	52.1				
E01016359	Thatcham	45.1				
E01016253	Thatcham	37.3				
E01016275	Theale Theale	91.7				
E01016276		90.9				
E01016345	Theale	90.8				
E01016344	Theale	90.8				
E01016273	Theale	87.5				
E01016274	Theale	81.0				
E01016260	Theale	76.2				
E01016272	Theale	75.9				
E01016264	Theale	56.3				
E01016271	Theale	54.5				
E01016327	Theale	52.8				
E01016350	Theale	52.4				
E01016259	Theale	46.7				
E01016266	Theale	38.1				

Appendix III – IMD averages by catchment

The table below shows the average IMD decile ranks and scores for the LSOAs in each library catchment.

Library catchment	Index of I Deprivation		Inco	me	Employment E		Education Skills and Training		Health Deprivation and Disability		Crime		Barriers to Housing and Services		Living Environment	
	(201 Decile	Score	Decile	Score	Decile	Score	Decile	Score	Decile	Score	Decile	Score	Decile	Score	Decile	Score
Burghfield Common	8.40	8.14	8.20	0.06	8.60	0.04						-0.54				11.60
Hungerford	7.50	10.89	7.00	0.07	8.33	0.05	6.67	14.04	8.67	-0.92	8.17	-0.67	6.83	17.99	4.67	26.38
Lambourn	6.33	15.70	5.67	0.09	7.33	0.06	3.67	28.09	7.67	-0.58	5.67	-0.09	4.00	25.87	5.67	18.71
Mortimer	7.67	11.25	7.33	0.07	7.67	0.06	7.67	7.64	8.33	-0.82	6.67	-0.26	6.00	21.20	3.67	27.11
Newbury	7.92	10.68	7.73	0.06	7.89	0.05	6.97	13.15	8.65	-0.92	7.76	-0.66	5.30	22.79	6.00	19.02
Pangbourne	9.42	5.51	9.00	0.04	8.92	0.04	7.92	8.26	9.42	-1.19	9.17	-1.03	6.58	17.11	8.25	9.22
Thatcham	8.06	9.68	7.47	0.07	7.59	0.06	6.35	15.07	8.29	-0.77	8.18	-0.68	6.29	18.49	8.24	9.35
Theale	7.93	10.47	7.71	0.06	7.86	0.06	6.00	16.01	8.57	-0.85	7.79	-0.70	4.86	23.59	8.07	10.79
West Berkshire Average	8.07	9.89	7.74	0.06	8.00	0.05	6.77	13.48	8.60	-0.89	7.92	-0.68	5.71	20.94	6.89	15.24
Northern (illustrative)	7.86	10.84	8.86	0.04	9.43	0.04	8.29	7.24	9.71	-1.31	7.71	-0.55	2.86	33.98	3.71	30.83

^{*} Notes

Decile rank (1 is most deprived)

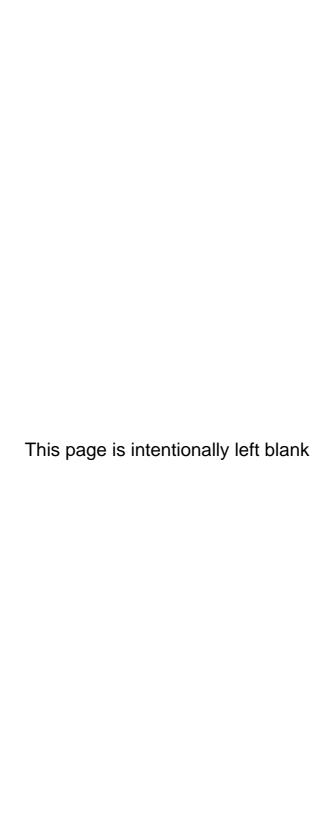
Score (higher numbers indicate more deprivation)



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Libraries peer challenge West Berkshire Council

April 2022

Feedback Report

1. Executive Summary

The Council's previous review of library services in West Berkshire (conducted in 2016/17) recommended that there should be a review of the library service after three years. The purpose of this review is to ensure the service meets the needs of residents, including any Covid-19 impacts, and delivers on wider aims cited in council strategies and plans. Phase 1 of the current review has now been completed, with the production of the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) by the consultants Shared Intelligence in December 2021. This peer challenge represents Phase 2 of the library service review. The findings of the peer challenge, along with the CNA, will inform the development of options for future service delivery for decision by elected members in September 2022.

The recently completed Community Needs Assessment (CNA) provides a comprehensive analysis of library usage and demographics, and identifies cross-cutting themes which the library service should be well placed to address to help achieve wider priorities for West Berkshire. It provides a helpful body of evidence on which to base the current review.

A new West Berkshire Council Strategy will be launched following the May 2023 local elections. This provides an opportunity to position the library service to support delivery of Council priorities. There is support from leading councillors in West Berkshire for the library service and an understanding of its contribution towards the achievement of wider outcomes in the community. However, they are looking for the service to deliver more from within its existing resource base, including meeting the challenge of providing access to the service in a predominantly rural area.

There may be scope to secure additional capital funding. The peer team heard that the Council has an appetite to invest in buildings as part of a 'one public estate' approach to asset management across West Berkshire. This gives scope for more co-location and joined up service delivery with leisure and other services, leading to greater engagement with library service users along with efficiency gains.

The Council has an ageing mobile library vehicle and recognises that decisions will need to be made around a replacement or alternative approaches. This gives an opportunity to rethink service provision to ensure an accessible and cost-effective service in rural areas.

There are opportunities to enhance the library services' engagement with other Council departments and external agencies. This should build on existing successes, such as that of the EduCafe in Newbury library in providing access to advice and support for a range of communities and increasing footfall through the library; the role of library staff in helping to maintain contact with vulnerable residents during the Covid-19 pandemic; and the early work the service is doing to promote the Health and wellbeing agenda. Such activities help to cement the perception of the libraries service as a potential solution to other services and partners' challenges in accessing residents and communities.

We present some options for consideration to build on the opportunities outlined above in providing strategic direction for the library service, including providing an accessible service in rural areas, increasing the usage and reach of the service and potential efficiency gains.

1

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Chief Executive: Mark Lloyd

2. Recommendations - suggested options for the way forward

The following are the main recommendations of the peer challenge, intended to help West Berkshire Council to develop future service options through the Library Service Review. There are further suggestions for improvement in the body of the report.

Strategic direction

- a) Establish and share a clear vision and strategy for the library service, which supports the delivery of the refreshed Council Strategy from May 2023 and provides the basis for the development of a combined Culture & Leisure strategy for West Berkshire
- b) Consider the location and future use of library buildings as part of a wider review of the Council's property assets, taking advantage of co-location with other council and partner services and informed by the evidence gathered in the Community Needs Assessment 2021

Providing accessible library services in rural areas

- c) Consider further partnership working with Town and Parish councils, including more shared use of village halls and the use of 'pop-up' library facilities
- d) Clearly identify the purpose and outcomes to be achieved by the mobile or equivalent library service to provide access to library services in the more remote rural areas of West Berkshire
- e) As part of any review of the mobile library, consider the potential for alternative approaches to achieve these outcomes including a tailored home delivery service which is integrated with the existing At Home service and digital offers.

Increasing usage, including engaging and retaining current non-users of the library service

- f) Ensure that libraries provide appropriate facilities and spaces for personal learning and flexible working
- g) Consider additional service offers to increase the footfall through libraries, building on recent successes such as the Educafe and develop a clear strategy to promote the library service to these new visitors

Potential efficiency gains to re-invest in service delivery

- h) Consider opportunities to make efficiency savings in the stock ordering, delivery and handling processes including the potential for stock delivery direct to branch libraries
- i) Consider opportunities for cost savings and reduced environmental impact as part of the review of the mobile library service
- j) Consider formally constituting Friends of Library groups so that they are in a position to bid for additional funding to support the delivery of library services

3. Summary of the Peer Challenge approach

This peer challenge is part of a programme of on-line peer challenges of council's cultural and library services supported by Arts Council England (ACE) and provided by the Local Government Association (LGA). These challenges follow the recognised principles adopted across the LGA's range of peer challenges, both corporate and service specific. They are intended to help councils improve their cultural and library services and generate wider learning for the sector.

3.1 The peer team

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced peers. The make-up of the peer team reflected your requirements and the focus of the peer challenge. Peers were selected on the basis of their relevant experience and expertise and agreed with you. The peers who delivered the peer challenge for West Berkshire were:

- **Julie Bell**, Interim Director Education, Skills & Culture, Lancashire County Council (substantive role Head of Libraries, Museums & Culture)
- Councillor Henry Higgins, member of London Borough of Hillingdon Council (formerly Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport & Leisure)
- **David Armin**, LGA challenge manager

3.2 Scope and focus

The purpose of the peer challenge was to enable West Berkshire Council to develop options as part of its Library Services review. The Council has commissioned a Community Needs Assessment, now completed, and intends to use this alongside the findings of the peer challenge to develop options for the future of the library service for decision by elected members in September 2022, to be followed by an action planning and implementation phase. These options may range from refining the current service delivery model to ensuring best use of resources, and to a more ambitious approach to re-shaping the service to increase engagement and drive improved outcomes. All options will be evaluated in the context of the constraints of existing budgets and competing Council priorities for investment.

In particular, the Council asked the peer team to focus on the following issue:

- How can we deliver the library service more efficiently in a largely rural area, including innovative ways in which to ensure access?
- This should include consideration of:
 - awareness raising amongst current users of what the existing service offers
 - how to engage with non-users to encourage them to use and remain using the library service.

3

3.3 The peer challenge process

The fundamental aim of each peer challenge is to help councils and their partners reflect on and improve their services and the outcomes they achieve for their communities. It is important to remember that a peer challenge is not an inspection, rather it provides a critical friend to challenge councils in assessing their strengths and identifying their own areas for improvement, along with opportunities to learn from practice elsewhere. The main elements this peer challenge were:

- A review of data and key documentation, including the Council's Community Needs Assessment
- Virtual meetings and interviews on 21st to 22nd April 2022. The peer team met
 with leading members and senior officers from the Council, managers from within
 the Library Service and from other services who work with the Library Service n
 West Berkshire.
- Discussion of emerging findings and potential service development options with managers from the Library Service and presentation of the team's key messages to leading members, senior officers and managers

By its nature, the peer challenge is a snapshot in time. We appreciate that some of the feedback may be about things you are already addressing and progressing. The peer team would like to thank colleagues in West Berkshire for their assistance in planning and delivering the peer challenge, and for their engagement and openness during the process.

Chief Executive: Mark Lloyd

4. Feedback

Context

West Berkshire is a unitary authority with a population of 158,500 (2019). It is 272 square miles in area, which is over half of the geographical area of the historic county of Berkshire. Nearly three quarters of West Berkshire is classified as part of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). West Berkshire is predominantly rural area, with the market town of Newbury being the urban centre of the district. Getting public transport to library branches can be difficult, and this presents challenges regarding levels of accessibility to those who are not car owners or who do not otherwise have access to private transport.

In 2016/17 West Berkshire Council conducted a review of library services based on an independent assessment of needs carried out by consultants Red Quadrant. The review resulted in major changes to the service which were implemented in 2017/18. These changes included:

- 44% reduction in library staff.
- The introduction of a new operational model where volunteers support staff to deliver the library service.
- Closure of one library service point which is now run independently by the community.
- Reduction of mobile libraries from two to one.
- A commitment to more partnership working with local communities and town and parish councils

The Council considers that the transformation of the library service following the 2016/17 Library Review has been largely successful. In the two years prior to the pandemic, library usage in the district increased which is in the contrast to the gradual decline in library usage nationally.

The outcome of the 2016/17 Libraries Review resulted in a level of library service that could not be met by the Council's service budget allocation alone. There was a £150k funding gap, and it was agreed that this budget shortfall could be met by requesting that town and parish councils consider making a voluntary contribution of £1 per resident based on the population of each parish for the next 3 years. Contributions averaged 90k per year for the first 3 years which created an annual budget pressure/deficit of £60k. Since then voluntary contributions from some town and parish councils have decreased.

West Berkshire will seek to learn from the experience of other library authorities in sharing funding pressures on the library service with town and parish councils through other aspects of the ACE / LGA culture and libraries support programme, rather than through the peer challenge. However, this does demonstrate the continuing pressure on funding for the libraries service in West Berkshire which the peer challenge should take into account.

5

The current library service

The library service is run out of eight static libraries (the principal library being in Newbury) together with one mobile library and an At Home scheme. There is an elibrary offering access to e-books, e-audio, e-magazines and e-newspapers.

The net budget for libraries for 2021/22 was £1,206,580. The library service is run by 46 staff (25.06 full-time equivalent posts) and 187 volunteers. The libraries budget is comprised of 65% for staff costs and 35% for services and premises costs. Some costs are centralised (for example book stock and IT systems).

In 2019/20 the library service had 15,648 active borrowers (who have been loaned at least one item in the preceding 12 month period). This equates to 9.88% of the West Berkshire population. (The Council considers the 2019/20 pre-pandemic active borrower numbers to give the most representative picture of library usage).

The 2021/22 Library Service Review

Chief Executive: Mark Lloyd

The 2016/17 Library Service Review recommended that there should be a review of the library service after three years. The purpose of the follow up review is to ensure the service meets the needs of residents, including any Covid-19 impacts, delivers on wider aims cited outlined in council strategies and plans, including the 2036 Vision for West Berkshire produced by the Health & Wellbeing Board, the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy for Berkshire West and the new Cultural Heritage Strategy.

Phase 1 of the current Library service review has now been completed, with the production of the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) by the consultants Shared Intelligence in December 2021. As part of their analysis, Shared Intelligence conducted interviews with relevant West Berkshire Council Heads of Service, representatives of community groups and services. In addition, the Council conducted surveys with the public (users and non-library users), library staff, and library volunteers.

This peer challenge represents Phase 2 of the library service review. The findings of the peer challenge, along with the CNA, will inform the development of options for future service delivery for decision by elected members in September 2022 (Phase 3). Following this, a Library Service Strategy and Delivery Plan will be developed to implement the agreed options (Phase 4).

The findings of the peer team are presented in the following sections and provide some reflections which should assist West Berkshire in developing options for future service delivery.

4.1 Opportunities to build on

The recently completed Community Needs Assessment (CNA) provides a comprehensive analysis of library usage and demographics, and identifies cross-cutting themes which the library service should be well placed to address to help achieve wider priorities for West Berkshire. These themes are:

- Engagement (especially to address the large secondary education gap)
- Access to information and services
- · Community resilience
- Skills and employment.

The peer team consider the CNA to be a significant body of evidence which should be used to inform the development of options for the future of the library service, with the cross-cutting themes placing it in an appropriate strategic context.

A new West Berkshire Council Strategy will be launched following the May 2023 local elections. This provides an opportunity to position the library service to support delivery of Council priorities. The new Chief Executive, who joined the council within the last year, has a clear ambition for a joined-up Culture & Leisure strategy which needs to incorporate a clear direction for the libraries service. The 2036 Vision for West Berkshire also provides a helpful framework of outcomes to which the libraries service can contribute.

There is support from leading councillors in West Berkshire for the library service and an understanding of its contribution towards the achievement of wider outcomes in the community. There is also an appreciation that the library service needs to deliver value for money and that there will be greater priorities for increased investment of finite council resources. Councillors are looking for the service to deliver more from within its existing resource base, including meeting the challenge of providing access to the service in a predominantly rural area.

However, there may be scope to secure additional capital funding. The peer team heard that the Council has an appetite to invest in buildings as part of more of a 'one public estate' approach to asset management across West Berkshire. This gives scope for more co-location and joined up service delivery with leisure and other services, leading to greater engagement with more potential library service users along with efficiency gains.

The Council has an ageing mobile library vehicle and recognises that decisions will need to be made around a replacement or alternative approaches. This gives an opportunity to re-think service provision to ensure an accessible and cost-effective library service in rural areas.

There are opportunities to enhance the library services' engagement with other Council departments and external agencies. This should build on existing successes, such as that of the EduCafe in Newbury library (which the peer team understand is to be expanded into several other libraries) in providing access to advice and support for a

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range of communities including the local black and minority ethnic population; the role of library staff in helping to maintain contact with vulnerable residents during the lockdowns due to the Covid-19 pandemic; and the early work the service is doing to promote the Health and Wellbeing agenda. Such activities help to cement the perception of the libraries service as a potential solution to other services and partner's challenges in accessing communities.

4.2 Challenges to address

Leaders and managers need to build and sustain the confidence of library staff through the current service review and beyond. They have experience of previous reviews that have led to a reduction in resources, in particular staffing, due to wider budget challenges. This confidence will be aided by developing and communicating a clear vision and ambition for the future of the service and its role in supporting wider Council priorities.

The library service has made good and imaginative use of section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds to invest in new ICT equipment in libraries and wider provision of study spaces with USB ports so that visitors can make use of their own devices to access the internet etc. This has also included self-service machines to take out library books and access other resources. However, the peer team heard that staff feel some frustration about aspects of the ICT infrastructure and in particular the availability of back-office support so that library staff and users can make the best use of the new ICT equipment. The peer team recognise that the service has taken steps to provide more on-going support in the use of these ICT systems, which should be sustained and further developed if possible.

There needs to be something of a shift in mindset so that the library service is more willing to promote what it is doing to a wider audience, not just internal stakeholders within the service so that libraries potential as a service delivery partner is better understood by both other council services and external partners. The opportunities to highlight existing successes and potential to do more with other Council services and wider partners have been identified above.

The service can build on the progress made to deliver the Universal Library Offer. As promoted by Libraries Connected nationally this identifies the four key offers as Culture & Creativity; Reading; Information & Digital and Health & Wellbeing. Following the Covid-19 pandemic Health & Wellbeing has acquired particular importance, along with supporting children to catch up on missed education and development opportunities through support with reading and school readiness work (given the adverse impact on young children in particular). The service has focused on the important issue of school readiness, but the peer team believe there is scope to do more around wellbeing and the ICT agenda. The library service should build on its existing work with partners to achieve these aims, and could link more with colleagues in other services and volunteers to supplement its limited resources.

A key challenge will be to address the revenue gap whilst maintaining an accessible library service. The service should seek to generate savings through efficiencies to invest in front line, accessible services. It should also be mindful of the potential

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revenue impacts of changes to service arrangements and policies which might exacerbate this gap. Opportunities should be taken to reframe the responsibilities of existing staff in support of efficiency gains where this is possible. The peer team understand that the service has taken advantage of vacancies when they arise to review the most effective use of a post.

4.3 The way forward – strategic direction

To take advantages of the opportunities presented to the service and to address the challenges being faced by West Berkshire's libraries, a clear vision and strategy is needed for the service. This needs to be well communicated so that it is understood and shared across all staff to ensure continuing commitment. The service strategy needs to align well with the Council Strategy due in 2023, the Cultural Heritage strategy and Leisure strategy and support the creation of a combined culture and leisure strategy in due course. This will provide the 'golden thread' from Council priorities to service delivery. The commitment of the Leader and Cabinet members to the library service as a vehicle to help drive forward wider council priorities will be facilitated by such strategic coherence.

It is estimated that about 80-90% of the population read and make use of books. It is well understood that those who read contribute to society and to our culture. This is what makes the library service important and its role in promoting print and digital literacy remains key. It falls to senior councillors to continue to give strong leadership so that the whole essence and ethos of the value of public libraries is recognised and maintained.

With this strategic framework established (as envisaged in Phase 4 of the Library Review), existing staff roles should be reframed as opportunities arise to align with the strategic vision for the library service. That vision should also enable more proactive collaboration with partners, both within the Council and externally. Enhanced partnership working could include greater use of volunteers to engage with specific groups or communities and establishing more Friends of Libraries groups with clear constitutions and terms of reference.

The peer team understand that there may well be a desire across the Council for a more corporate approach to property management. This presents the opportunity for the library service to be part of a wider review of assets with the potential to co-locate in more accessible locations for library users, and to engage with a wider market of potential users who are accessing other services through those locations. Librarians are information management professionals so they should be able to offer sign posting and access to other services and information as part of such co-location.

4.4 Future service delivery options – accessible library services in a rural area

The Community Needs Assessment (CNA) provides a strong analysis of existing users and the demographics of the communities served by Newbury and the seven branch libraries across West Berkshire. This has also highlighted the lack of a branch library to serve large parts of the north of the area (across the North Wessex Downs). The service has sought to help ameliorate this lack of provision by providing joint library cards with neighbouring authorities.

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The CNA provides the evidence needed to review the provision of fixed libraries across West Berkshire. However, this needs to be aligned with opportunities to deliver alternative provision and decisions on other aspects of service delivery. The main factors here are:

- Potential for co-location with other council services (or other agencies);
- Partnership working with town and parish councils; and
- Decisions on the future of the mobile library service.

Further partnership working with town and parish councils should be explored. This could include more shared use of village halls, including the potential for 'pop-up' libraries provided at certain times of the week. More generally, flexible shelving can be used to release space in a library for creative, performance and other uses.

As noted previously, the Council needs to review its mobile library provision as the vehicle is ageing and will be in need of replacement. This review needs to begin by considering the outcome that the mobile library service is intended to achieve – this may well be access to library books and other library and information services in the more remote, rural areas of West Berkshire. A secondary objective could be social engagement for users of the service.

There may be different ways of meeting this need, such as envisaging a tailored home delivery service linked to on-line selection of books through amalgamation with the existing At Home service. This could be more cost effective and have a smaller environmental footprint than a large mobile library vehicle on which users select a book or service. This may be a more familiar concept to residents now given the experience of service delivery through the pandemic. Figures on use of the existing mobile library provided by West Berkshire show that of the 670 active borrowers using the service in 2019-20 (i.e. prepandemic), 319 only used the mobile. By inference, the remaining 351 were accessing the library service by other means too which could in turn be accommodated within a tailored home delivery approach. The Council would need to explain the purpose of any reconfiguration of the mobile service to local communities and town and parish councils, and how the desired service outcomes are achieved by a different approach.

4.5 Future service delivery options – increasing usage, engaging and retaining current non-users

It is widely recognised that when the library service is delivered well, people love and use their libraries a great deal and can become ambassadors for the service to others. The key elements of a well delivered service are outlined below. Some or most of these elements may well be in place across West Berkshire's libraries – the peer team were not in a position to form a view on this – but the Council should ensure that the following are in place across all points of access to library services.

Buildings need to be attractive, safe, well stocked and welcoming for all residents and display attractive collections of stock. The books need to be clean, abundant, well selected and clearly laid out. They should provide facilities and flexible spaces for personal learning and flexible working which are clean, private, dignified and well equipped. The experience through the Covid-19 pandemic and the more widespread adoption of hybrid working

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arrangements suggests a growing demand for flexible working spaces, which could help underpin the local economy and economic activity, including among more disadvantaged groups.

Libraries are an ideal resource to encourage children of all ages to find what they might enjoy reading. Popularity with children is a powerful way to market the library service, to their parents, other family members and beyond.

Libraries need to make sure their collections address the needs of all the cultures in their local community - at all ages and for all purposes. The success of the EduCafe in Newbury demonstrates how to meet these needs and increase footfall through the library by a different approach, which is now to be extended to other areas. The service then needs to ensure that these new potential users passing through the library become regular users through promotion of the wider service offer. Although West Berkshire has found the installation of hot drinks machines in some libraries to be unsuccessful, in the experience of the peer team the provision of café facilities offering coffee and cake etc. can increase visits to libraries and provide valuable social and community engagement. Friends of Libraries groups can be helpful partners in providing such café facilities.

The library service should continue to monitor and evaluate digital resources as they are required to maintain a modern library service, to provide appropriate accessibility and take account of any longer term trends emerging following the Covid-19 pandemic. The library website is an important resource as people have become accustomed to finding their reading material on the web. It should offer the means to find things quickly and provide information on the full range of library services, whilst maintaining a clear link to West Berkshire Council as the funder and responsible authority for the library service. West Berkshire's Libraries app is an important development to assist users in finding and reserving books and e-books, as well as monitoring their library accounts.

4.6 Potential efficiency gains to invest in service delivery

There is scope for efficiency gains that can support reinvestment in the library service. The following are suggested examples that flow from the previous analysis of service delivery options.

The Council could consider different arrangements for stock deliveries, with new stock potentially going directly to branches rather than initially to a central point for redistribution. This may release staff time that could be directed towards other priorities. There will be further opportunities to continue to evaluate staff roles and reframe these so that they can be utilised for a specific or emerging needs as the service develops.

In terms of the mobile library, we have suggested that the Council consider a smaller, more cost-effective vehicle as part of a tailored delivery service. This vehicle (potentially a Transit van or similar) would have scope to be used for multiple purposes, more flexible in routing along narrow country lanes, be less expensive to run and have a lower carbon footprint. Wakefield Libraries provides an example in practice of how smaller vehicles have been used to replace a mobile library. With developing technology, adopting a smaller vehicle now offers the potential that such a vehicle could be electric, with the associated environmental benefits.

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Friends of Library groups can be used to raise funds for additional investment in local libraries, alongside being a source of volunteer support. With an appropriate constitution to confirm their legal status and to operate a bank account, Friends Groups can access sources of funding which may not be open to councils. Lancashire County Council have experience of such arrangements and will be able to share an example constitution for a Friends Group.

4.7 Signposting to additional LGA support

The LGA has a range of free-to-access support, across the themes highlighted in the report. It is recommended that relevant strategic officers register for the programmes highlighted below:

Economic growth

- In July the LGA is running an economic growth round table. The topic is: supporting small businesses with digital skills – to join the waiting list email productivity@local.gov.uk
- A bank of economic growth case studies is available to access on the <u>LGA</u> economic growth web pages

Library and cultural improvement

Working with Arts Council England, the LGA is running an online senior officer leadership pilot, running between 6 June and 18 July 2022.

The pilot will support lead/senior officers for culture and libraries to:

- Develop a greater understanding of the role of cultural and library services in the future economic growth of the local area
- Develop skills to lead entrepreneurial thinking within their services and the confidence to apply those skills
- Build and strengthen their peer networks, share information, knowledge and expertise. The pilot will be attended by both library and culture senior staff supporting a unique opportunity for peer to peer learning across these specialisms.
- Develop a vision about how their services can contribute to tackling social challenges in the post-COVID context, for example, mental health challenges and social isolation
- Develop an understanding of change theory and how to apply it
- Refresh the tools and knowledge officers have to be cultural and library leaders through peer to peer learning.
- Learn from a wide range of inspiring case studies presented by LA peers and external speakers.
- Be more aware of the strategic work of ACE and the opportunities to work more closely
- Explore the potential for arts, culture and libraries to work with officer and political stakeholders to deliver across council agendas

- Access a learning pathway through the LGA (for officers who have taken part in a Peer Challenge or Recovery and Renewal Panel).
- Identify how to share their learning within the organisation and with partners

To find out more email cts@local.gov.uk

Digital

As digital services and systems have been mentioned within the recommendations, we are including signposting to further digital support offered by the LGA:

- Join the transformation and Digital Inclusion Networks as an opportunity for peer to peer learning and networking with other like-minded councils
- Find out more about a cyber resilience review:
- The LGA Cyber Security Programme is providing grant funding for a cohort of Chief Executives, Deputy Chief Executives and those who have been through the SOLACE Springboard and Total Leadership programmes, to improve their understanding of cyber security. The funding should be used to enrol on a university-led course for leaders. For example, Oxford University's Cyber security for business leaders programme, for which they have offered a discounted rate. We're currently taking expressions of interest from those wanting to enhance their understanding of cyber risk to enable better strategic decision making for a cyber-resilient future. Places are limited and will be funded on a first come first serve basis. For further information and for expressions of interest please email LGAcybersecurity@local.gov.uk

5. Next steps

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We appreciate you will want to reflect on these findings and suggestions with your senior managerial and political leadership and partners in order to determine how the Council wishes to take things forward through its Library Services Review.

As part of the peer challenge, there is an offer of further activity and signposting to support you in taking forward the findings of the peer challenge. The regional Principal Adviser, Mona Sehgal, is the main contacts between your authority and the LGA. Her contact details are: mona.sehgal@local.gov.uk or tel. 07795 291006. Helen Hull, Adviser, is the specific point of contact in respect of the culture and libraries peer challenge programme. Her contact details are helen.hull@local.gov.uk or tel. 07825 531558.

In the meantime, we are keen to continue the relationship we have formed with you and colleagues through the peer challenge. We will endeavour to provide additional information and signposting about the issues we have raised in this report to help inform your ongoing consideration.

Item 15:

Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 9 February 2023.

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 Housing, Leisure and Culture:

"Nearly two years after the Housing Strategy Action Plan committed the Council to funding a specialist contractor to carry out a private sector housing stock condition survey and over a year after it was supposed to be completed, what can the Executive Member tell us about the sector and the work that will be needed to keep private renters in particular in healthy warm homes?"

B. Question submitted by Councillor Alan Macro to the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance and Strategic Partnerships:

"The government has announced that voters will be required to show a photo ID when they attend a polling station to vote in the local elections on 4th May. Many residents will not have one of the approved forms of photo ID. Such residents may apply for a "Voter Authority Certificate", however, the application process for this must be initiated online. Many of these residents will either not have the IT equipment or the confidence to do this. Will the council therefore do the following to minimise the risk of residents being disenfranchised: 1. Train public library staff on the Voter Authority Certificate application process, 2. Equip public libraries with digital cameras or smartphones to enable library staff to take the required photo, 3. Encourage residents to attend public libraries to apply for the Voter Authority Certificate?"

C. Question submitted by Councillor Martha Vickers to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care:

"The Phoenix Centre in Newtown Rd. Newbury has a sizeable performance space which is under used because of the restrictions on hours and the planning condition which limits its use to a Day Centre as this is such a valuable resource. Could the Council consider reviewing its hours of use, particularly in the evening, so that it can be used by local performing arts groups?"

D. Question submitted by Councillor Tony Vickers to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Countryside:

"If the Executive had taken account of the economic impact of a prolonged planned closure of the Kings Road / Boundary Road / Hambridge Road intersection being necessary in order to connect utility services to the new Sterling Gardens development, would you not agree that the planning of the works should have made a much stronger attempt to insist that the Construction Management Plan Planning Condition included provisions for keeping traffic flowing, or building the Hector's Way before the utility connection works were done, or negotiating with the Racecourse to have their private road used – for a substantial fee – while the works took place?"

Item 15:

Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 9 February 2023.

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

E. Question submitted by Councillor Martha Vickers to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Leisure and Culture:

"Following the tragic death of a two year old due to mould in the family home Michael Gove has written to Council Leaders and Chief Executives highlighting the need to ensure rented properties in all sectors are of a decent standard. What is this Council's response to this letter?"