

# Notice of Meeting

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## **Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission**

**Tuesday, 18 September, 2012 at 6.30pm**  
in Council Chamber Council Offices  
Market Street Newbury

Date of despatch of Agenda: Friday, 7 September 2012

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Elaine Walker on (01635) 519441  
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**Agenda - Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission to be held on Tuesday, 18 September 2012 (continued)**

**To:** Councillors Brian Bedwell (Chairman), Dominic Boeck, Jeff Brooks (Vice-Chairman), Marcus Franks, Dave Goff, David Holtby, Mike Johnston, David Rendel, Tony Vickers, Virginia von Celsing, Quentin Webb and Emma Webster

**Substitutes:** Councillors Peter Argyle, Jeff Beck, Alan Macro, Gwen Mason, Graham Pask, Andrew Rowles, Julian Swift-Hook and Keith Woodhams

**Other Officers & Members invited:**

## Agenda

<b>Part I</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
1. <b>Apologies for Absence</b> To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any),	
2. <b>Minutes</b> To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on *.	1 - 10
3. <b>Declarations of Interest</b> To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members.	
4. <b>Actions from previous Minutes</b> To receive an update on actions following the previous Commission meeting.	11 - 14
5. <b>West Berkshire Forward Plan September to December 2012</b> <i>Purpose: To advise the Commission of items to be considered by West Berkshire Council from September to December 2012 and decide whether to review any of the proposed items prior to the meeting indicated in the Plan.</i>	15 - 24
6. <b>Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Work Programme</b> <i>Purpose: To receive, agree and prioritise the work programme of the Commission, the Health Scrutiny Panel and the Resource Management Working Group for the remainder of 2011/12.</i>	25 - 30
7. <b>Items Called-in following the Executive on 6 September 2012</b> To consider any items called-in by the requisite number of Members following the previous Executive meeting.	



**Agenda - Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission to be held on Tuesday, 18  
September 2012 (continued)**

8. **Councillor Call for Action**  
*Purpose: To consider any items proposed for a Councillor Call for Action.*
9. **Petitions**  
*Purpose: To consider any petitions requiring an Officer response.*
10. **Youth Clubs** 31 - 34  
*Purpose: To agree final recommendations in relation to the provision and support of youth clubs in West Berkshire.*
11. **Repair of Pot Holes** 35 - 58  
*Purpose: to receive a report examining the methodology in operation for the repair of pot holes.*
12. **Health Scrutiny Panel** 59 - 60  
*Purpose: To provide an update on the work of the Health Scrutiny Panel.*
13. **Resource Management Working Group** 61 - 62  
*Purpose: To provide an update on the work of the Resource Management Working Group.*
14. **Scrutiny Recommendations Update** 63 - 68  
*Purpose: To provide the Commission with an update on the progress of recommendations resulting from scrutiny reviews.*

Andy Day  
Head of Strategic Support

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## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 31 JULY 2012**

**Councillors Present:** Brian Bedwell (Chairman), Dominic Boeck, Jeff Brooks (Vice-Chairman), Marcus Franks, Dave Goff, David Holtby, Mike Johnston, David Rendel, Tony Vickers, Quentin Webb and Emma Webster

**Also Present:** Mel Brain (Housing Strategy Manager), Nick Carter (Chief Executive), June Graves (Head of Care Commissioning, Housing & Safeguarding) and Maureen Phillips (Youth Service Operations Manager), Councillor Roger Croft (Strategy, Council Plan, Housing), Margaret Goldie (WBC Corporate Director), Jim Holah (Sovereign Housing Association), David Lowe (Scrutiny and Partnerships Manager), Sue Mackie (Citizens Advice Bureau), Kelly McArthur (Sovereign Housing Association), Councillor Irene Neill (Children and Young People, Youth Service, Education), Jan Rothwell (West Berkshire Citizens Advice Bureau), Elaine Walker (Principal Policy Officer) and Councillor Keith Woodhams

**Apologies for inability to attend the meeting:** Angela Gibson and Councillor Virginia von Celsing

**Councillor(s) Absent:**

#### **PART I**

#### **27. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2012 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

- Councillors Absent: Councillor David Holtby explained that he had given his apologies for the meeting but that these had not been passed on for recording in the minutes.

#### **28. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Marcus Franks declared an interest in Agenda Item 10, but reported that, as his interest was personal and not prejudicial, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

Councillor Franks declared an interest in Agenda Item 11, and reported that, as his interest was personal and prejudicial, he determined to remain to take part in the debate but would not vote on the matter.

Councillors Tony Vickers, Jeff Brooks, David Rendel, David Holtby, Mike Johnston and Dave Goff declared an interest in Agenda Item 11, and reported that, as their interests were personal and not prejudicial, they determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

Councillor Rendel declared an interest in Agenda Item 13, but reported that, as his interest was personal and not prejudicial, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

#### **29. Actions from previous Minutes**

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION - 31 JULY 2012 - MINUTES

The Commission received an update on actions from the previous meeting. Comments were received regarding item 2.3.

Councillor Rendel asked if the updated report regarding the speed limit change on the A4 at Padworth had been circulated to the Commission. He understood that reports that related to Individual Decisions would be circulated to all Members. This was confirmed.

### 30. **Items Called-in following the Executive on 19 July 2012**

No items were called-in following the last Executive meeting.

### 31. **Councillor Call for Action**

There were no Councillor Call for Action.

### 32. **Petitions**

There were no petitions to be received at the meeting.

### 33. **Key Accountable Measures and Activities 2011/12: Year End Results.**

The Commission considered a report that set out the year end outturn against the key accountable measures and activities for the year 2011/12.

The Chairman highlighted to the Commission three areas where the Council had achieved notable success within Adult Social Care, Children in Care and Customer Focus.

Councillor Rendel commented that the report presented to the Commission contained the same mistakes that had been noted when it had been seen by the Executive and asked that in future mistakes were corrected.

Councillor Brooks believed that the current system for monitoring performance did not enable issues to be highlighted at an early stage, and that this resulted in the Commission not being able to recommend corrective action in a timely way. An example of this was that resource issues within the Planning department were not flagged to the Commission early. The Chairman informed the Commission of information that he had been shown illustrating the improvement in performance that had been achieved in Planning due to recent recruitment. Nick Carter explained that the quarterly indicators did provide an early warning that the year end target might not be achieved. Councillor Emma Webster raised the point that whilst the quarterly indicators could be useful, the Commission were unable to act on them until two quarters later when it would be too late to put remedial action in place.

Councillor Brooks was concerned that performance against the target to achieve 50% of service users and carers in receipt of Self Directed Support (including personal budgets) was far below the expected level. Margaret Goldie responded with the following points:

- The service had reported from quarter two that they would not reach the year end target providing sufficient time for scrutiny and remedial recommendations to be made;
- The target had been set according to the previous government's priorities, but that there was less pressure to meet this target under the current government;
- The priority over the year had been to reduce the Service's overspend. As a result, limited resources were being used to assess and place clients, and personal budgets were not being promoted. This was taking place at a time when day services were being closed resulting in a greater number of assessments being required;

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION - 31 JULY 2012 - MINUTES

- Approximately 1500 clients were older people who were more resistant to adopting personal budgets. Of the remaining client base, approximately 75% had personal budgets, representing good performance;
- In order to achieve the target of 50% for all clients, the Council would need to set a default position that placed everyone on personal budgets unless they expressly opted out and this would not be sensible;
- The overall number of clients had reduced over the year as a result of efforts to reduce the overspend.

Councillor Vickers expressed concern that the Commission had not been involved in the target setting process as had been agreed the previous year. Councillor Webster advised the Commission that a Task Group had been established and at its first meeting had reviewed both local and national targets. Nick Carter advised that a second meeting was to be convened once the year end outturn figures were available.

The Chairman suggested that the Task Group consider the issues that had been raised around timing of reports and target setting, and report to the Commission with suggested solutions.

Councillor Webster asked what had been implemented to recruit more Mathematics teachers. Councillor Webster voiced a particular concern as young people who did not achieve a Mathematics grade C or higher were often ruled out of employment opportunities automatically, and requested an update on the position after the term started in September. Margaret Goldie responded that whilst schools undertook their own recruitment, the Council had put in place a number of activities including supporting local leadership, coaching and mentoring activities between primary and secondary schools and developing a clear career structure. These were set out in the exception report within the overall year end report. Margaret Goldie advised the Commission that the national plans to ensure all young people remained in education, or employment with training, until the age of 18, would have the effect of ensuring that students not achieving grade C or higher in both Mathematics and English by the age of 16 would be required to continue to study these subjects until they were 18.

Councillor Rendel expressed disappointment that the number of children who received free school meals who achieved 5 A\*-C grades at GCSE had not been maintained at the previous years level of almost 29%.

The Chairman suggested that the Head of Education be invited to the next meeting of the Commission to discuss these issues.

The Chairman highlighted the improvement in the number of primary schools below the national floor standards. Councillor Brooks asked what intervention possibilities were available to the Council. Margaret Goldie informed the Commission that, although reduced in size, there remained a School Improvement Advisory Service targeting advice to schools most in need. Once the moderated results were available they were expected to show that most of the six remaining schools would be above the floor target. Councillor Franks asked whether the School Improvement Advisory Service was chargeable to schools, to which Margaret Goldie confirmed it was and that many schools and Academies bought this service from the Council.

Councillor Franks requested clarification regarding the removal of the target for young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS). Margaret Goldie advised that once the participation age reached 18 there would no longer be a measure for NEET young people aged 17 and 18. She also advised that young people with disabilities generally remained in education until the age of 19 and subsequently in further education until the age of 21 or 22.

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The Chairman noted that the core strategy had now been to full Council and had been published.

In relation to Customer Service call handling Councillor Brooks believed that the quality of the response received was of equal or greater importance than receiving a quick response. The Commission agreed and were pleased that quality was a priority for the Service.

### **RESOLVED that:**

- The Performance Task Group report to the Commission suggested solutions to address the timing of target setting and receipt of performance reports;
- The Head of Education be invited to the next meeting of the Commission to discuss performance results relating to education.

### **34. Repair of Pot Holes**

Councillor Brooks expressed a desire to consider this item with relevant Officers present, and proposed that as none were at the meeting, the item be deferred until the next meeting. Councillor Holtby seconded the proposal.

The Chairman reminded the Commission that the Task Group had conducted the scrutiny review which had included questioning of Officers. However the Commission agreed to defer the item until the next meeting.

Councillor Webster suggested that the Portfolio Holder also be invited.

### **RESOLVED that:**

- The report from the Repair of Pot Holes Task Group be deferred until the next meeting;
- The Portfolio Holder and Highways Officers be invited to attend the next meeting to assist the discussion.

### **35. Youth Clubs**

*(Councillor Franks declared a personal interest in Agenda item 10 by virtue of the fact that he was the project coordinator for the Greater Greenham Project. As his interest was personal and not prejudicial he was permitted to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).*

The Commission considered a report advising the Commission of the process undertaken to manage the transfer of youth clubs from local authority control.

David Lowe explained that the item had been deferred from the meeting of 26 June 2012.

Councillor Brooks expressed his disappointment that the report did not provide the level of detail he had expected, in particular the medium and long term financial viability of the seven remaining youth clubs. Councillor Brooks believed that unless the youth clubs mentioned in the report had a level of ongoing funding, or an employed person to run them, he expected their future to be uncertain. Margaret Goldie explained that the purpose of the report had been to provide details of the seven youth clubs that remained following budget cuts, but that the Council had disinvested from universal youth services, and would no longer have an ongoing role in respect of these seven facilities. The Council did not fund or run these seven clubs, and it no longer had the resources within the Youth Service in order to do so.

Councillor Brooks asked whether young people had access to the music room at the Moorside Centre, and whether volunteers were being sought to allow the 'Blue Bus' to visit Mortimer, Purley, Beenham, Bradfield and Burghfield. Maureen Phillips responded



## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION - 31 JULY 2012 - MINUTES

that the recording studio was available to young people if they were able to source a professional to accompany them as had always been the case. She continued that the resources no longer existed to support the 'Blue Bus'.

Councillor Rendel questioned how the report showed a comparison between the previous situation and the current one. Margaret Goldie explained that the tables showed the previous situation, and the bullet points following each table explained the current situation. In future, there would be limited oversight by the Council of these facilities, as they were now run by local communities and not by the Council's Youth Service.

Councillor Franks commented that a service level agreement had been established with the Berkshire Association of Clubs for Young People (BACYP) regarding the 'Rural Navigator' mobile provision, and asked if similar service level agreements had been set up for other services. Maureen Phillips confirmed that they had been.

The Chairman commented that whilst surveys had indicated that facilities for young people were the top priority amongst residents when they had been surveyed on the matter, the attendance figures shown in the report did not support this. Councillor Irene Neill stated that parents showed a desire to have more facilities for young people, but that young people did not want to be organised formally and would prefer more casual arrangements. Margaret Goldie expressed the view that if parents placed importance on the provision of facilities for young people, it could be expected that they would support local initiatives to retain youth clubs on a voluntary basis.

Councillor Webster asked whether information was available to show whether youth clubs had closed due to a lack of attendance, a lack of volunteers or a lack of funding. Margaret Goldie responded that in making funding decisions, these considerations had been taken into account. Alongside this, the Directorate had had to prioritise funding for its different activities – for instance, comparing the priority given to youth work with that given to social work. In a situation where resources were much reduced, statutory work had to take precedence. The remaining youth clubs would therefore have to rely on local community effort to survive.

Councillor Brooks was concerned that if there was a need for youth facilities, then the youth clubs should not have been closed. Councillor Vickers expressed the view that the Council should be aware of what facilities were available across the district. Margaret Goldie repeated that the Council had disinvested from this area of work as a consequence of reductions in Government funding; and the Council no longer had the resources to either run similar levels of youth provision as in the past, or keep an overview of what facilities were available now. The Commission discussed how the Council could discover what facilities were in place across West Berkshire for young people. Margaret Goldie explained that there was such a breadth and variety of activities available that it would not be possible to provide an exhaustive list, nor were there any resources still available to undertake such an activity. The Chairman suggested requesting the information from Parishes. Councillor Holtby did not agree as he felt this would raise an expectation that we could support Parishes in providing facilities.

Councillor Neill advised that a booklet had been produced in 2011 listing activities in the area and suggested it be circulated to members of the Commission.

Councillor Brooks suggested that the Council website be offered for the promotion of local activities along with an updated and re-released booklet. Margaret Goldie responded that the use of the web-site could certainly be promoted, but there were no longer resources available to update and release printed information. Councillor Brooks also expressed concern about the risk that clubs could be formed by anyone, including those with ill-intentions. Margaret Goldie responded that this would be the case whether the Council funded youth clubs or not. Uniformed organisations and other clubs affiliated

to national or regional bodies required their staff to be CRB checked, but anyone was able to open a club without conforming to these requirements if they chose to do so.

The Chairman recognised that no recommendations would be forthcoming at this meeting and suggested that Members consider the issues and return to the next meeting with their suggested recommendations.

**RESOLVED that:**

- The booklet 'Youth Activities in West Berkshire' be circulated to members of the Commission alongside information about the six facilities which had been closed;
- Members of the Commission to consider the issues raised and suggest recommendations at the next meeting.

**36. Housing and Homelessness**

*(Councillor Franks declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 11 by virtue of the fact that he was employed by Sovereign Housing Association. As his interest was personal and prejudicial he determined to take part in the debate but would not vote on the matter).*

*(Councillors Vickers, Brooks, Rendel, Holtby, Johnston and Goff declared an interest in Agenda item 11 by virtue of the fact that they were landlords. As their interest was personal and not prejudicial they were permitted to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).*

David Lowe introduced the item explaining that the issue of homelessness had been raised at the Commission's meeting of 17 April 2012, and subsequent meetings had resulted in a request to invite the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Officers from the Housing Service and representatives of Sovereign Housing Association and the Citizens Advice Bureau to this meeting in order to discuss the issues that were leading to homelessness and consider possible solutions.

Councillor Vickers informed the Commission that the question had initially been raised due to a concern regarding the accuracy and clarity of the numbers of people presenting as homeless and those being assessed to be homeless. The figures indicated a four fold increase in those to which the Council owed a duty of care which was at odds with the 11% being reported. It was confirmed that the 11% referred to an increase in homeless preventions and not homelessness approaches.

Councillor Roger Croft informed the Commission that for the year 2010/11, 14 people or households were assessed as being homeless compared to 53 the following year. This represented an increase of 29 people or households.

The Chairman asked what was being done to halt the increase.

Councillor Webster commented that whilst it was interesting to be informed of the number of people to whom the Council had a duty to assist; her concern was for those who presented themselves as homeless, but who did not meet our criteria to be classed as homeless.

Mel Brain responded that the Council would owe a duty to assist approximately one third of those presenting as homeless. However the Council worked with many more households who required housing options and advice, not just those who were homeless. In 2011/12, approximately 2900 households had approached the housing service for advice and assistance. For those who were homeless or threatened with homelessness, the primary focus was prevention, for example through negotiations with landlords, mortgage rescue, or help in paying rent arrears. If homelessness could not be prevented and was likely within 28 days, a homelessness application could be taken. Mel Brain

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commented that the proportion of people being assessed as homeless was small in comparison to the number being helped by the service. June Graves informed the Commission that the assistance given to people requesting advice was proactive and recorded.

Jan Rothwell (Citizens Advice Bureau) presented information indicating an increase in the number of people threatened with homelessness, those actually homeless, and those requesting access to accommodation. The Citizens Advice Bureau had found that in many cases, the trigger for homelessness was the breakup of a relationship (including between parents and children) or loss of employment. The key barrier to preventing homelessness was a lack of affordable housing in the area. Jan Rothwell reported that in the first quarter of 2012/13 there had been 21 homeless people seeking advice and 69 people who were staying with friends or family. This trend appeared to be continuing with five homeless people seeking advice in July.

Jan Rothwell informed the Commission that the role of the Citizens Advice Bureau was to advise clients of their options and which organisations could help them. In certain circumstances small amounts of money could be made available.

Jim Holah (Sovereign Housing Association) reported to the Commission that his organisation was involved at both ends of the homeless cycle. As landlords, they could be the cause of homelessness if people were defaulting on rent payments despite assistance offered by Sovereign to enable people to maintain their tenancy. Also, Sovereign were a supplier of housing to those assessed by the Council as being homeless.

Councillor Webster asked what assistance was given to tenants who were in danger of defaulting on their rent. Jim Holah responded that when tenants notified them of a potential issue early on, Sovereign would provide advice and support around Housing Benefit or debt advice as appropriate. It was recognised that rent arrears mounted quickly and those most at risk of being evicted were people who did not request assistance early.

Councillor Webster asked whether Jim Holah had a view as to the future situation regarding homelessness related to redundancy in particular. Councillor Webster hoped to use the expectations of Sovereign to provide a proxy for private landlords and thereby form a greater understanding of the total level of homelessness in the area in the future. Jim Holah replied that whilst eviction figures for the previous year had reduced, Sovereign had identified the Welfare Benefit Reform programme as presenting a significant risk in the future, and in addition to further redundancies it was expected that there would be more homelessness.

June Graves agreed that the Welfare Reform Bill was likely to have a significant impact on homelessness, and suggested that people would be most affected on the anniversary of their assessment. June Graves indicated a further risk that had been identified, that of slow growth in home ownership meaning that people were staying in private rented property for longer, reducing the available properties which kept prices high. A further issue was the need for smaller, more affordable houses in the future.

Councillor Vickers expressed a desire to find more options to assist those finding themselves homeless and suggested lobbying for a change in local housing allowance.

Councillor Goff asked how many people would have nowhere to go that night. Mel Brain responded that previous rough sleeper counts had estimated there were likely to be around six people but that there was a direct access hostel and people could register for a room. In addition, an emergency plan was in place during extreme weather meaning that no-one needed to sleep rough when the weather fell below a certain temperature. Mel Brain went on to inform the Commission that those the Council had a duty to assist

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION - 31 JULY 2012 - MINUTES

was set out in legislation. Factors that might prevent the Council from accepting a homelessness duty included their immigration status or being at fault for losing their accommodation.

Councillor Rendel raised a concern that whilst the Core Strategy required the inclusion of affordable housing in developments of several houses, it was possible for a developer to later apply for an exemption to this rule on the basis of the development not being viable. Councillor Rendel suggested that the high cost of land in West Berkshire contributed to this.

The Chairman asked Councillor Vickers for a proposed recommendation. Councillor Vickers commented that not all relevant organisations were present including Two Saints and Loose Ends. Councillor Vickers therefore proposed a further half day meeting to include other agencies, where possible solutions could be discussed. Councillor Croft advised the Commission that the proposed Homelessness Strategy was to be consulted on in the coming months and that this might form a foundation for discussion. The Commission supported this proposal and requested that all members of the Commission be involved.

Councillor Webster requested that the discussion include consideration of the Section 106 affordable housing programme finances. June Graves responded that this budget was currently over committed and further monies were awaited.

The Chairman suggested that Sovereign Housing Association and the Citizens Advice Bureau continued to be involved in discussions along with service users who could share their experiences. Jim Holah expressed his interest and requested to be involved in the structure of the day. He proposed discussions around the implications of the Welfare Reform Act, Universal Credit, Bedroom Tax and any other upcoming risks. Jan Rothwell also expressed a wish to be involved in the discussion.

Councillor Webster requested that the day be held soon in order to fit with the budget setting timetable.

**RESOLVED that** the Housing Service involve members of the Commission and external agencies in the consultation programme for the proposed Homelessness Strategy.

### 37. **Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Annual Report**

The Commission considered the annual scrutiny report 2011/12.

The Chairman advised that the report provided a summary of the work undertaken by the Commission, the Health Scrutiny Panel and the Resource Management Working Group over the previous year, and that the information contained within the report had previously been available to Members and the public within the minutes of each meeting.

**Resolved that** the Commission receive the annual scrutiny report each year.

### 38. **Health Scrutiny Panel**

*(Councillor David Rendel declared an interest in Agenda Item 13, by virtue of the fact that his wife was a GP in West Berkshire. As his interest was personal and not prejudicial, he was permitted to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.)*

The Commission considered a report on the work of the Health Scrutiny Panel (HSP).

Councillor Webb confirmed that at the meeting of the Health Scrutiny Panel held on 19 June 2012 the following topics had been discussed:

- Dignity and Nutrition in Hospitals
- The Anti-Child Poverty Strategy

- An update on the Health and Wellbeing Board

Councillor Webb reported that the next meeting of the Health Scrutiny Panel was 11 September 2012.

**Resolved that** the report be noted.

**39. Resource Management Working Group**

The Commission considered a report on the work of the Resource Management Working Group (RMWG).

Councillor Vickers confirmed that the Resource Management Working Group had last met on 2 July 2012 and had discussed the following items:

- Asset Management
- Establishment Report 2011/12
- Provisional Financial Outturn Report 2011/12

Councillor Vickers confirmed the meeting scheduled for 7 August 2012 had been cancelled, and the next meeting would therefore be 25 September 2012.

**Resolved that** the report be noted.

**40. West Berkshire Forward Plan August 2012 to November 2012**

The Commission considered the West Berkshire Forward Plan for the period covering August 2012 to November 2012.

**Resolved that** the Forward Plan be noted.

**41. Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Work Programme**

The Commission considered its work programme and that of the Health Scrutiny Panel and Resource Management Working Group for 2011/12.

Councillor Webb reported that the first meeting of the Domestic Abuse Task Group had been held on 20 July 2012, and four further meetings had been arranged in September and October.

**Resolved that** the work programme be noted.

*(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 9.05 pm)*

**CHAIRMAN** .....

**Date of Signature** .....

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# Agenda Item 4.

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Actions from previous meetings</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 September 2012

**Purpose of Report:** To advise the Commission of the actions arising from previous meetings

**Recommended Action:** To note the report

Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman	
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# Executive Report

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission with an update on the actions arising from its previous meeting.

## 2. Resolutions

- 2.1 **Resolution:** The Performance Task Group report to the Commission suggested solutions to address the timing of target setting and receipt of performance reports;

**Action / response:** The Performance, Research and Consultation Manager has provided the following information: The task group met in April to provide input into the draft corporate reporting framework. Due to the nature of the service planning cycle, this was whilst service delivery plans were still in draft stage and the feedback was usefully fed back to the relevant service heads.

Provisional targets were provided at this stage. The process of confirming these did not start to take place until year end outturns were available in May.

The process of agreeing targets for 2012/13 and the subsequent 3 years proved to be a more complex and iterative process than initially envisaged with a number of targets not confirmed until towards the end of Q1. This was a result of service planning now taking place more strategically over a 4 year time frame and deliberations wrapped around directorate Capped Expenditure Limits (CELs) and individual Service Expenditure Levels (SELs).

As a result there proved little time between receiving confirmed targets from heads of service, these being formally approved at Corporate Board level before being able to be scrutinised by members ahead of outturns being collated for Q1.

Whilst this is not as satisfactory as would have hoped, the process should be smoothed out for 2013/14 as notional activities / measures and associated targets will already have been scoped out this current year - taking account of any amendments strategic and operational objectives.

As a result, although scrutiny's initial role in ensuring the published accountable measures / activities are an appropriate reflection of the Council's priorities and core business was achieved, it is envisaged that the second element of assuring targets will be more fully achieved for 2013/14.

- 2.2 **Resolution:** The Head of Education be invited to the next meeting of the Commission to discuss performance results relating to education.

**Action / response:** The Head of Education advised that information would not be available in time for the Commission's meeting in September and that he would be able to provide this information in October.

- 2.3 **Resolution:** The report from the Repair of Pot Holes Task Group be deferred until the next meeting;



**Action / response:** This item is considered under a separate agenda item.

- 2.4 **Resolution:** The Portfolio Holder and Highways Officers be invited to attend the next meeting to assist the discussion.

**Action / response:** This item is complete

- 2.5 **Resolution:** The booklet 'Youth Activities in West Berkshire' be circulated to members of the Commission alongside information about the six facilities which had been closed.

**Action / response:** The booklet was circulated on 01 August 2012. The remaining information is reported in a separate agenda item.

- 2.6 **Resolution:** Members of the Commission to consider the issues raised [in relation to the discussion regarding Youth Clubs] and suggest recommendations at the next meeting.

**Action / response:** This item is considered under a separate agenda item.

- 2.7 **Resolution:** the Housing Service involve members of the Commission and external agencies in the consultation programme for the proposed Homelessness Strategy.

**Action / response:** Following the meeting, the Chairman and Vice Chairman agreed that this activity should be led by officers from Strategic Support. A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission will therefore be held, with homelessness as the only item, when the service has the capacity to support it in October or November.

- 2.8 **Resolution:** the Commission receive the annual scrutiny report each year

**Action / response:** The annual report will be added to the agenda each year.

## Appendices

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There no appendices to this report.

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# Agenda Item 5.

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>West Berkshire Forward Plan</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 September 2012

**Purpose of Report:** To advise the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission of items to be considered by West Berkshire Council from September to December 2012 and decide whether to review any of the proposed items prior to the meeting indicated in the plan.

**Recommended Action:** That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission considers the West Berkshire Council Forward Plan and recommends further action as appropriate.

<b>Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman</b>	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Councillor Brian Bedwell – Tel (0118) 9420196
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	bbedwell@westberks.gov.uk

<b>Portfolio Member Details</b>	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Councillor Graham Jones - Tel (01235) 762744
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	gjones@westberks.gov.uk

<b>Contact Officer Details</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	Elaine Walker
<b>Job Title:</b>	Principal Policy Officer
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## **Supporting Information**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Forward Plan attempts to cover all decisions, not just those made by the Executive, which the Authority intends to take over the next 4 months. The Forward Plan, attached at Appendix A, for the months of September to December 2012, also shows the decision path of each item including Council, Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.
- 1.2 In order to hold the Executive to account, Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Members are asked to identify any areas of forthcoming decisions which may be appropriate for future scrutiny.

### **Appendices**

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Appendix A – West Berkshire Council Forward Plan – September to December 2012

# West Berkshire Council Forward Plan – September to December 2012

Reference	Decision and Purpose	Decision Body	Decision Path	Directorate	Contact	Lead Member (Portfolio Holder for . . .)	Part II	Date Report Published	Consultee(s)	Notes	Decision Month
<b>SEPTEMBER 2012</b>											
ID2432	<b>Adoption of Parish Plans</b> <i>To adopt Parish Plans.</i>	ID	01/09/12	Resources	Jo Naylor	Partnerships, Equality, The Visions, Communities		TBC	Local Members and Stakeholders		September 2012
ID2444	<b>Approval of Village Design Statements</b> <i>To approve Village Design Statements.</i>	ID	01/09/12	Environment	Paula Amorelli	Planning, Transport Policy, Property		TBC	Local Members and Stakeholders		September 2012
ID2470(a)	<b>A4 Bath Road, Padworth, proposed 50 mph speed limit</b> <i>To consider the recommendations that have been made in respect of this item following call-in.</i>	ID	03/09/12	Environment	Andrew Garratt	Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT & Corporate Services, Customer Services		23/08/12	OSMC		September 2012
ID2533	<b>Annual Report of the West Berkshire Fostering Service and West Berkshire Fostering Service Statement of Purpose</b> <i>To report on the work of the Fostering Team and to enable Members to scrutinise the operation of the Fostering Service.</i>	ID	03/09/12 ID	Communities	June Kemp	Children and Young People, Youth Service, Education		23/08/12			September 2012
ID2420	<b>West Berkshire Forward Plan - October 2012 to January 2013</b> <i>To advise Members of items to be considered by West Berkshire Council over the next four months.</i>	ID	13/09/12	Resources	Moir Fraser	Leader of Council		05/09/12	All Members, published on website for local residents	Not subject to call in.	September 2012
ID2518	<b>Petition for removal of proposed parking charges at Burwood Centre car park, Thattham</b> <i>To respond to a petition that has been submitted to the Council.</i>	ID	26/09/12 ID	Environment	Mark Cole	Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT & Corporate Services, Customer Services		18/09/12	Local Stakeholders		September 2012

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 ID = Individual Executive Member Decision  
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The items included in the Forward Plan were correct at the time of publication. The Forward Plan may, however, change and you are advised to contact Moira Fraser – Tel: 01635 519045 or e-mail: [mfraser@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:mfraser@westberks.gov.uk) to confirm the contents of any agenda before attending a meeting. Executive decisions may be taken by the Executive acting as a collective body or by officers acting under delegated powers.

# West Berkshire Council Forward Plan – September to December 2012

Reference	Decision and Purpose	Decision Body	Decision Path	Directorate	Contact	Lead Member (Portfolio Holder for . . .)	Part II	Date Report Published	Consultee(s)	Notes	Decision Month
EX2528	<b>Community Care (Adult Social Care) Compliments and Complaints Report</b> <i>To outline the approach to handling complaints for Adult Social Care and to provide information about the number and type of complaints within Community Care (Adult Social Care). To highlight the number and nature of compliments received from April 2011 to March 2012. To illustrate how complaints and compliments are logged and monitored, and review the actions taken as a result of the lessons learned.</i>	EX	06/09/12 EX	Communities	Mary Page	Community Care, Insurance		28/08/12			September 2012
EX2514	<b>County Archive</b> <i>To seek approval to continue with the current joint arrangement.</i>	EX	06/09/12 EX	Environment	Amanda Loaring	Countryside, Environmental Protection, 'Cleaner and Greener', Culture		28/08/12			September 2012
EX2478	<b>Financial Performance Report – Quarter 1 (2012/13)</b> <i>To note the council's latest financial position.</i>	EX	06/09/12 EX	Resources	Joseph Holmes	Finance, Economic Development, Health & Safety, Pensions		28/08/12			September 2012
EX2535	<b>Key Accountable Measures and Activities 2012/13. Update on progress: Q1 outturns</b> <i>To note progress against the Council's key accountable measures.</i>	EX	06/09/12 EX	Resources	Jason Teal	Performance, Strategic Support, Emergency Planning, Community Safety		28/08/12			September 2012

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EX2409	<b>London Road Industrial Estate Redevelopment</b> (Paragraph 3 - information relating to financial/business affairs of a particular person) <i>To present the findings of the LRIE Strategic Feasibility Study to the Executive and approve the next steps in site redevelopment</i>	EX	06/09/12 EX	Communities	Bill Bagnell	Partnerships, Equality, The Visions, Communities	Yes	28/08/12			September 2012
EX2520	<b>Insurance Tender</b> (Paragraph 3 - information relating to the financial/business affairs of a particular person)	EX	06/09/12 EX	Resources	Ian Priestley	Community Care, Insurance	Yes	28/08/12			September 2012
GA2534	<b>Bribery Act 2010</b> <i>To outline a proposed Bribery Policy for the Council</i>	GA	10/09/12 GA	Resources	Ian Priestley	Performance, Strategic Support, Emergency Planning, Community Safety		31/08/12			September 2012
GA2524	<b>Annual Governance Statement 2011/12</b> <i>To review the Annual Governance Statement.</i>	GA	10/09/12 GA	Resources	Ian Priestley	Performance, Strategic Support, Emergency Planning, Community Safety		31/08/12			September 2012
GA2525	<b>Heads of Service Assurance Statements</b> <i>To outline the areas of concern raised by Heads of Service in their Assurance Statements.</i>	GA	10/09/12 GA	Resources	Ian Priestley	Performance, Strategic Support, Emergency Planning, Community Safety		31/08/12			September 2012

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GA2539	<b>Annual Governance Statement - Statement in Support by the Section 151 Officer</b> <i>To provide evidence and independent verification of governance matters which may impact on the Annual Governance Statement from the viewpoint of the S151 Officer</i>	GA	10/09/12 GA	Resources	Andy Walker	N/a		31/08/12			September 2012
GA2540	<b>Annual Governance Statement - Statement in Support by the Monitoring Officer</b> <i>To provide evidence and independent verification of governance matters which may impact on the Annual Governance Statement from the viewpoint of the Monitoring Officer</i>	GA	10/09/12 GA	Resources	David Holling	N/a		31/08/12			September 2012
C2459	<b>Changes to the Constitution, Parts 9 and 10</b> <i>To consider changes to the Financial Rules of procedure and Protocols in light of legislative changes.</i>	C	27/09/12 C 10/09/12 GA	Resources	Joseph Holmes	Leader of Council		31/08/12			September 2012
C2501	<b>Proposed Member Development Programme for 2012 to 2015</b> <i>To ask Council to agree the Member Development Programme for 2012/13</i>	C	27/09/12 C	Resources	Jude Thomas	Leader of Council		19/09/12	Members		September 2012
C2522	<b>Pre Planning Application Advice Fees</b> <i>To seek Council authority to charge for pre planning application advice and for Council to delegate authority to amend the charging scheme to the Head of Planning and Countryside</i>	C	27/09/12 C	Environment	Gary Rayner	Planning, Transport Policy, Property		19/09/12	Development Industry Panel (Planning Service Customer Panel) will be consulted on 29th June 2012		September 2012

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# West Berkshire Council Forward Plan – September to December 2012

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C2541	<b>Appointment of Independent Persons</b> <i>To appoint the Council's Independent Persons as required by the Localism Act 2011.</i>	C	27/09/12 C	Resources	David Holling	Leader of the Council		19/09/12			September 2012
C2543	<b>Election of Leader of the Council</b> <i>To appoint the new Leader of the Council.</i>	C	27/09/12 C	Resources	Robin Steel	Leader of the Council		19/09/12			September 2012
<b>OCTOBER 2012</b>											
ID2433	<b>Adoption of Parish Plans</b> <i>To adopt Parish Plans.</i>	ID	01/10/12	Resources	Jo Naylor	Partnerships, Equality, The Visions, Communities		TBC	Local Members and Stakeholders		October 2012
ID2445	<b>Approval of Village Design Statements</b> <i>To approve Village Design Statements.</i>	ID	01/10/12	Environment	Paula Amorelli	Planning, Transport Policy, Property		TBC	Local Members and Stakeholders		October 2012
ID2421	<b>West Berkshire Forward Plan - November 2012 to February 2013</b> <i>To advise Members of items to be considered by West Berkshire Council over the next four months.</i>	ID	18/10/12	Resources	Moir Fraser	Leader of Council		10/10/12	All Members, published on website for local residents	Not subject to call in.	October 2012
ID2521	<b>A343 Andover Road, Newbury - Relocation of Pedestrian Crossing</b> <i>To inform the Executive Member for Highways and Transport of the results of the consultation of a proposal to relocate a pedestrian crossing and allow a decision to be made as to whether to proceed with the proposal.</i>	ID	22/10/12	Environment	Neil Stacey	Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT & Corporate Services, Customer Services		12/10/12			October 2012

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EX2513	<b>Director of Public Health (needs a different title - AD to confirm)</b> <i>To agree a model for public health across the six Berkshire Unitaries.</i>	EX	18/10/12 EX	Resources	Andy Day	Leader of the Council		09/10/12			October 2012
EX2515	<b>Home Care Reablement Reconfiguration</b>	EX	18/10/12 EX	Communities	Stephen Stace	Community Care, Insurance		09/10/12			October 2012
EX2492	<b>Localising Support for Council Tax in England</b> <i>To make a decision on the scheme to be adopted by West Berkshire Council as a replacement for Council Tax benefit</i>	EX	18/10/12 EX	Resources	Bill Blackett	Finance, Economic Development, Health & Safety, Pensions		09/10/12	Formal consultation with Taxpayers and major precepting authorities is a requirement of the legislation introducing Localisation of Council Tax support		October 2012
EX2500	<b>Residential and Nursing Placement Policy</b> <i>To seek approval of the policy post consultation.</i>	EX	18/10/12 EX	Communities	Tandra Forster	Community Care, Insurance		09/10/12	wider consultation with stakeholders		October 2012
EX2527	<b>School Funding Reform April 2013</b> <i>To agree the required new funding formula for schools in West Berkshire</i>	EX	18/10/12 EX	Resources	Claire White	Finance, Economic Development, Health & Safety, Pensions		09/10/12	All maintained and Academy Schools, Schools Forum		October 2012
EX2350	<b>Proposal for Redevelopment of Taceham House</b> (Paragraph 3 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person) <i>To consider the options for Taceham House and agree best course of action.</i>	EX	18/10/12 EX	Communities	Mel Brain	Strategy, Council Plan, Housing	Yes	09/10/12			October 2012

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<b>NOVEMBER 2012</b>											
ID2434	<b>Adoption of Parish Plans</b> <i>To adopt Parish Plans.</i>	ID	01/11/12	Resources	Jo Naylor	Partnerships, Equality, The Visions, Communities		TBC	Local Members and Stakeholders		November 2012
ID2446	<b>Approval of Village Design Statements</b> <i>To approve Village Design Statements.</i>	ID	01/11/12	Environment	Paula Amorelli	Planning, Transport Policy, Property		TBC	Local Members and Stakeholders		November 2012
ID2422	<b>West Berkshire Forward Plan - December 2012 to March 2013</b> <i>To advise Members of items to be considered by West Berkshire Council over the next four months.</i>	ID	15/11/12	Resources	Moir Fraser	Leader of Council		07/11/12	All Members, published on website for local residents	Not subject to call in.	November 2012
EX2491	<b>Schools and Early Years Settings - Place Strategy 2013-2018.</b> <i>To determine a strategy for managing school organisation and ensure that there are sufficient school places to meet overall demand; there are sufficient school places in the right locations to meet demand; the provision of school places are managed in a cost effective manner.</i>	EX	29/11/12 EX	Communities	Caroline Corcoran	Children & Young People, Youth Service, Education		20/11/12	Schools, relevant Council Officers		November 2012
EX2530	<b>Financial Performance Report Q2</b> <i>To inform Members of the latest financial performance of the Council.</i>	EX	29/11/12 EX	Resources	Joseph Holmes	Finance, Economic Development, Health & Safety, Pensions		20/11/12			November 2012

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# West Berkshire Council Forward Plan – September to December 2012

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<b>DECEMBER 2012</b>											
ID2435	<b>Adoption of Parish Plans</b> <i>To adopt Parish Plans.</i>	ID	01/12/12	Resources	Jo Naylor	Partnerships, Equality, The Visions, Communities		TBC	Local Members and Stakeholders		December 2012
ID2447	<b>Approval of Village Design Statements</b> <i>To approve Village Design Statements.</i>	ID	01/12/12	Environment	Paula Amorelli	Planning, Transport Policy, Property		TBC	Local Members and Stakeholders		December 2012
ID2423	<b>West Berkshire Forward Plan - January 2013 to April 2013</b> <i>To advise Members of items to be considered by West Berkshire Council over the next four months.</i>	ID	13/12/12	Resources	Moira Fraser (2045)	Leader of Council		05/12/12	All Members, published on website for local residents	Not subject to call in.	December 2012
C2507	<b>2013/14 West Berkshire Council Timetable of Public Meetings</b> <i>To agree the timetable of public meetings for the year 2013/14.</i>	C	13/12/12 C	Resources	Moira Fraser	Leader of Council					December 2012

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# Agenda Item 6.

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Work Programme</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 September 2012

**Purpose of Report:** To receive, agree and prioritise the Work Programme of the Commission, Health Scrutiny Panel and Resource Management Working Group.

**Recommended Action:** To consider the current items and any future areas for scrutiny.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Councillor Brian Bedwell – Tel (0118) 9420196
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Contact Officer Details	
<b>Name:</b>	Elaine Walker
<b>Job Title:</b>	Principal Policy Officer
<b>Tel. No.:</b>	01635 519441
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	ewalker@westberks.gov.uk

## **Supporting Information**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission, Health Scrutiny Panel and Resource Management Working Group is attached at Appendix A for the Commission's consideration. Members are also asked to consider any future areas for scrutiny.

### **Appendices**

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Appendix A – Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Work Programme

# OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

Reference	Subject/purpose	Methodology	Expected outcome	Review Body	Dates	Lead Officer(s)/ Service Area	Portfolio Holder(s)	Status: In Progress Completed	Comments
OSMC/11/104	<b>Anti-Child Poverty Strategy</b>	To monitor the strategy	Monitoring item	HSP	Start: On-going End: April 2012	Julia Waldman – 2815 Children and Young People	Cllr Irene Neill	In Progress	To report back...
OSMC/11/105	<b>Dignity and Nutrition – Hospitals</b> To review the Care Quality Commission report on Dignity and Nutrition - Hospitals	To survey and hold focus groups detailing information		HSP	Start: July 2011 End: October 2012	LINK, Age UK	Cllr Joe Mooney	In Progress	Consultation / survey to commence in July 2012. Update from LINKs.
OSMC/11/107	<b>Update on the Health Service in West Berkshire</b>	To update members on the changes to Health Service in West Berkshire	Monitoring item	HSP	Ongoing	Bev Seattle - Director Joint Partnerships and Commissioning	Cllr Joe Mooney	In Progress	
OSMC/11/119	<b>Continuing Healthcare (CHC)</b> To examine the operation of the NHS CHC scheme in the NHS Berkshire West area	In meeting review		HSP	Start: Jan 2012 End: April 2012	Jan Evans – 2736 Adult Social Care	Councillor Joe Mooney	In Progress	Awaiting results
OSMC/12/122	<b>Home Care</b> To understand and critically appraise the systems and process in place for the provision of Home Care	TBD		HSP	Start: TBD End: TBD	Jan Evans – 2736 Adult Social Care	Councillor Joe Mooney	To be scheduled	Item incorporated at OSMC meeting of 21/02/12. Scope and ToR to be provided at the meeting of 17/04/12
OSMC/12/124	<b>The effect of health service reorganisation on local provision and private finance initiatives (PFI).</b>			HSP	Start: TBD End: TBD		Councillor Joe Mooney		
OSMC/09/02	<b>Performance Report for Level One Indicators</b> To monitor quarterly the performance levels across the Council and to consider, where appropriate, any remedial action.	In meeting review with information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officers.	Monitoring item	OSMC	Start: each Q End:	Jason Teal – 2102 Policy & Communication	Councillor Anthony Stanfeld	In Progress	Quarterly item. Q1 2012/13 to Sept meeting
OSMC/11/120	<b>Potholes</b> To examine the methodology in operation for the repair of pot holes	Task group review with information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officers and external partners.		OSMC	Feb-12	Mark Edwards – 2208 Highways & Transport	Councillor Keith Chopping	In Progress	- Item to begin following the completion of Item 78, Councillors Brian Bedwell, Emma Webster, Keith Woodhams participating. - First meeting held on 29/03/12. - Report to be presented to OSMC on 31/07/12; 18/09/12
OSMC/11/129	<b>Housing Allocations policy</b> To contribute to the development of a new policy	In meeting policy development supported by task group and individual Member activity.		OSMC	Feb-12	Mel Brain - 2403 Social Care Commissioning and Housing	Councillor Roger Croft	In Progress	- Added to work programme at the 10 January 2012 meeting, following a suggestion by Corporate Board - Following consultation exercise by Housing Service, expected to return to OSMC in early 2013

# OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

Reference	Subject/purpose	Methodology	Expected outcome	Review Body	Dates	Lead Officer(s)/ Service Area	Portfolio Holder(s)	Status: In Progress Completed	Comments
OSMC/12/123	<b>Domestic Abuse</b> To understand and critically appraise the systems and process in place for the management of domestic abuse in the District	TBD		OSMC	Start: Sept 2012 End:	Davy Pearson, Robin Rickard (TBC)	Councillor Anthony Stanfeld	To be scheduled	- Item incorporated at OSMC meeting of 21/02/12. Scope and ToR to be provided at the meeting of 17/04/12 - First meeting on 20/07/12; Series of meetings arranged during September including external stakeholders; Expected to conclude in Oct 2012 - Item raised in response to performance reported at Q2 2011/12. See agenda and minutes of 21/02/12. - To be heard at OSMC in September 12
OSMC/12/128	<b>Youth Justice</b> To review the outcomes being achieved following the changes made to police interventions with young people and the resultant drop in people entering the youth justice system.	In meeting review with information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officers.		OSMC	Start: Oct 2012 End: Oct 2012	Susan Powell, Robin Rickard	Councillor Anthony Stanfeld		
OSMC/12/130	<b>Consultation</b> The effectiveness of consultation undertaken by the Council	Task group review with information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officers and external partners.		OSMC	Start: TBD End: TBD	Jason Teal – 2102 Strategic Support	Councillor Anthony Stanfeld	To be scheduled	Item incorporated at OSMC meeting of 2012-04-17
OSMC/12/131	<b>Youth Clubs</b> To review the process undertaken to manage the transfer of youth clubs from local authority control and the arrangements in place resultanty.			OSMC	Start: 31/07/12 End: 18/09/12		Councillor Irene Neill	In Progress	- Item incorporated at OSMC meeting of 29/05/12. for discussion on 26/06/12. - Brought to meeting on 31/07/12 - Recommendations expected on 18/09/12
OSMC/12/134	<b>Housing and Homelessness</b> To consider the factors contributing to an increase in homelessness.	In meeting review with representatives from Sovereign Housing and CAB		OSMC	Start: 31/07/12 End:	June Graves	Councillor Roger Croft	In Progress	- Item incorporated at OSMC meeting of 26/06/12. - Brought to meeting on 31/07/12 - Housing Service to lead on consultation activity; further scrutiny to take place in late 2012
OSMC/12/135	<b>Annual target setting</b> To examine the annual targets being set for 2013/14.	Task group working directly with PM officers	Annually recurring	OSMC	Start: September End:	Jason Teal – 2102 Strategic Support	Councillor Anthony Stanfeld	In Progress	Independent work, unsupported by scrutiny officers. Output directly into the following year's Council Plan.
OSMC/12/137	<b>GCSE results</b> To understand the current attainment levels in English and maths and the effect of previous measure taken to improve them.	In meeting review		OSMC	Start: 30/10/12 End:	Ian Pearson - 2729 Head of Education	Councillor Irene Neill	In Progress	Agreed at the meeting of 31 July 2012
OSMC/09/57	<b>Revenue and capital budget reports</b> To receive the latest period revenue and capital budget reports To consider any areas of concern.	Information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officer via in meeting review	Monitoring item	RMWG	Latest report to each meeting	Andy Walker – 2433 Finance	Councillor Alan Law	In Progress	May lead to areas for in depth review.



# OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

Reference	Subject/purpose	Methodology	Expected outcome	Review Body	Dates	Lead Officer(s)/ Service Area	Portfolio Holder(s)	Status: In Progress Completed	Comments
OSMC/09/63	<b>Establishment Reports</b> To receive the latest report on the changes to the Council's establishment.	Information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officer via in meeting review	Monitoring item	RMWG	Consider quarterly reports. Q1/3 summary rept. Full rept for Q2/4	Robert O'Reilly – 2358 Human Resources	Councillor Anthony Stanfeld	In Progress	May lead to areas for in depth review.
OSMC/11/10	<b>Energy Saving</b> To review the Council's policies and procedures for Energy Saving.	In a meeting review the Council's procedures to Energy Saving		RMWG	Start: April 2012 End: April 2012	Adrian Slaughtier	Councillor Hilary Cole	Complete	Review to be undertaken in April 2014.
OSMC/11/11	<b>Risk Register</b> To scrutinise individual items on the Risk Register on an annual basis.	In meeting review and scrutinise individual items on Risk Register.	Monitoring item	RMWG	Ongoing	Ian Priestley	Councillor Roger Croft	In Progress	Next request Sept 2012
OSMC/11/12	<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy</b> To review the role and format of the MTFS	In meeting review of the MTFS		RMWG	Start: Oct 2012 End: Oct 2012	Andy Walker	Councillor Alan Law	In Progress	Discussed by RMWG - 27/12. Item to cover the impact on the MTFS from the intro of the Local Gov Finance Bill in 13/14 and beyond as well as the potential impact of Bus Rate Reform.
OSMC/11/13	<b>Procedures for Blue Badge Holder</b> To review the operation of the new procedures, criteria and rules of use for Blue Badge holders following the introduction of them in January 2012.	In meeting review.		RMWG	Start: Jan 2013 End: Jan 2013	Mark Edwards	Councillor Keith Chopping	In Progress	Requested by RMWG on 26 July 2011
OSMC/12/121	<b>Asset Management</b> To understand and critically appraise the systems and process in place for the management of the Council's assets	In meeting review with information supplied by, and questioning of, lead officers.		RMWG	Start: July 2012 End: July 2012	John Ashworth	Councillor Keith Chopping	Complete	Considered in depth on 27/12. Possible return to a future meeting with consideration of process for Taceham House as an example.
OSMC/12/132	<b>School Academies</b> To consider the impact of Local Authority maintained schools converting to academy status on the Council's finances.			RMWG	Start: TBD End: TBD		Councillor Irene Neill	To be scheduled	Item incorporated at OSMC meeting of 2012-06-26

**Key:**  
OSMC

HSP

RMWG

Overview and Scrutiny Management  
Commission  
Health Scrutiny Panel  
Resource Management Working Group

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<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Changes to local universal youth provision</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2012

**Purpose of Report:** To update the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission on changes to universal youth provision and club activities which are no longer financed by the Council

**Recommended Action:** To note the content of the report

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## Executive Report

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 During the Commission's 31 July 2012 examination of the Council's handover of provision of youth clubs in the district, members requested further information. This report amplifies the position with regard to the open access youth clubs formerly run by West Berkshire Council, delivery of which changed between March and September 2011 as a result of a refocusing of the youth service away from universal provision due to significant budget reductions.
- 1.2 Significant officer time from the Acting Head of Youth Services and Commissioning, Youth Services Manager and Youth Service Operational Managers and area co-ordinator was spent working with local communities and organisations to support and enable the sustainability and development of local youth provision over a period of eighteen months from November 2010.
- 1.3 Several clubs accessed support from the Community Solutions Fund, which was established as a time limited fund to try and address any gaps created by withdrawal of Council funding. Currently Children's Services provides funding to Berkshire Youth to deliver support to local community youth clubs, and to enable them to access the member benefits of this organisation.
- 1.4 There are no plans within the Directorate at this time to have any further input into these youth services, which now need to be run by community volunteers if they are to continue. The Directorate currently has no funding which would allow for further

youth-work support or activity. The next section details changes to specific provision across the district.

## **2. Senior Youth Club at Riverside**

### *Previously:*

Tuesday evenings: 7:30 - 9:30pm  
Venue: Riverside Community centre  
Age group: 13 -19 yr. olds  
Nos. attending - Average of 10 per session

### *Update:*

This provision had closed prior to the Youth Service vacating Riverside in March 2011, not primarily as a result of budget reductions. However, WBC worked closely with the Clay Hill Residents Association to develop an agreement for this group to run the building for community use.

The Youth Service continues to work with young people in the community via the detached provision delivered in the Clay Hill area.

CHRA (Clay Hill Residents Association), in collaboration with Berkshire Youth, now runs a fortnightly senior club, with members of the community volunteering their time to run it.

There is also a successful junior club.

## **3. Senior Youth Club at Greenham**

### *Previously:*

Monday Evenings: 7-9pm  
Venue: Greenham Community Centre  
Age group: 13 -19yr. olds  
Nos. attending - Average of 8 per session

### *Update:*

This club was handed over to the Greenham Community Youth Project, with a grant from the Youth Service to help maintain the provision in an area of high need, and it continues successfully.

The Youth Service continues to work with local young people via the detached provision delivered in the Greenham area.

## **4. John O'Gaunt Lunch Club and senior club**

### *Previously:*

Tuesday/Thursday/Friday: 1 - 1:45pm  
Venue: John O'Gaunt Youth Club  
Age group: Rotation of all year groups  
Nos. attending - Between 20 and 30 per year group

### *Update:*

This club was closed as it no longer met the criteria for the Youth Service work with vulnerable young people, and as the Youth Service vacated that premise due to the budget reductions.

Collaboration between Wired Rock Café, the Town Council and others, with support from West Berkshire Council, has taken on management of the JOG Youth and Community Centre and Wired Rock Café runs a range of youth related activities including the senior club.

## **5. Lunch time sessions in schools x 4**

### *Previously:*

Venues: Denefield, Little Heath, Theale and John O'Gaunt 1 - 1:45 pm

Age groups: All years

Purpose- To raise awareness of youth provision for pupils during their break time, so the numbers engaged with varied.

### *Update:*

These sessions were closed as they no longer met the criteria for Youth Service work. Young People in those localities can access the detached provision delivered in the area.

## **6. Waterside Junior Club**

### *Previously:*

Tuesday evening 6:30 - 8pm

Venue: Waterside Centre

Age group: 8 -12 yr. olds

Nos. attending - Average of 20 per session

### *Update:*

This club was closed as a result of the Youth Service move to targeted work with 13+ young people. Newbury Town Council was informed of this closure, although thus far we are not aware of any response from community to revive this club.

Adventure Dolphin continues to deliver universal activity-based provision from the Waterside Centre.

## **7. Theale Junior Club**

### *Previously:*

Tuesday evenings: 6:30 - 8:30pm

Venue: Theale Youth Centre -Theale Green School site.

Age group: 8 -11yr olds

Nos. attending - Average 30 per session

### *Update:*

The centre was one of those lost in the cuts, resulting in the closure of the club.

Berkshire Youth were alerted and meetings held between them and Theale Parish Council. We are not aware that any replacement has started due to Young People not showing an interest in attending.

## **8. Other clubs developed with support of WBC since 2010**

Horizon Youth Club at the Moorside Centre is now running through the support of the Town Council and Berkshire Youth.

Lambourn Youth Club - due to open in September 2012.

Kintbury Youth Club juniors and seniors.

## **9. Conclusion**

9.1 The commitment and hard work of local community members and organisations, the expertise and practical support of Berkshire Youth, officer and Member time from the Council, and funding from WBC and Greenham Common Trust has ensured that there continues to be a strong and vibrant provision of open access youth clubs in West Berkshire despite the loss of core funding.

9.2 However, in the current financial climate, there is unlikely to be the possibility of further financial or staffing support from the Council towards these or other new facilities.

## **Appendices**

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There are no Appendices to this report.

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Repair of Pot Holes</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 September 2012

**Purpose of Report:** To outline the results of the investigation into the processes in place for the repair of pot holes.

**Recommended Action:** That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission endorses the recommendations of the Task Group prior to their consideration by the Executive.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman	
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# Executive Report

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting of 31 July 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission resolved to defer consideration of the item Repair of Pot Holes until the following meeting. The Commission requested that the Executive Member for Highways and Highways Officers were present during the discussion.
- 1.2 The final report from the Scrutiny review into the process in place for the repair of pot holes is shown at Appendix A.

## Appendices

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Appendix A – Scrutiny review into the process in place for the repair of pot holes.



## Appendix A

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Scrutiny review into the process in place for the repair of pot holes</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	31 July 2012

**Purpose of Report:** To outline the results of the investigation into the processes in place for the repair of pot holes.

**Recommended Action:** That the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission endorses the recommendations of the Task Group prior to their consideration by the Executive.

Task Group Chairman	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Councillor Brian Bedwell – Tel (0118) 942 0196
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# Executive Report

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following receipt of a Motion to Council by Councillor Keith Woodhams on 22 September 2011 on the Council's approach to dealing with potholes, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) agreed at its meeting of 22 November 2011 to conduct a review of the subject.
- 1.2 This report provides the findings and recommendations arising from the review and provides detail on its Terms of Reference and methodology.
- 1.3 For the purpose of brevity, the term 'potholes' used throughout this report includes reference to sunken drain covers.

## 2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 The Terms of Reference for the task group were to review the Council's approach to filling potholes and attending sunken drain covers and in particular:
- The systems and processes currently in place;
  - Alternative operational models and practices in use elsewhere;
  - The most effective method of obtaining value for money; and
  - Report to the OSMC thence the Executive with recommendations as appropriate.

## 3. Methodology

- 3.1 The review has been conducted by a small, cross-party task group, working with Council officers. The members of the working group were Councillors Brian Bedwell, Keith Woodhams and Emma Webster. Councillor Bedwell was elected as the Chairman.
- 3.2 The task group held the meetings outlined in the table below.

<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Meeting focus</b>
Thursday 29 March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Election of the Chairman</li><li>• Agreement of the Terms of Reference</li><li>• Presentation of Councillor Woodham's pre-review research</li><li>• Briefing on the operational practice in West Berkshire (Melvyn May, Highway Manager)</li><li>• Briefing on the trends for insurance claims (Ian Priestley, Chief Internal Auditor)</li></ul>
Tuesday 22 May 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow up on the matters arising from the first meeting</li><li>• Consideration of the findings from the national review of pot hole repair</li><li>• Draft formulation of recommendations</li></ul>

3.3 The minutes from these meetings are shown at Appendices A and B respectively.

#### **4. The national report – *Prevention and a Better Cure***

4.1 During the course of the review, a national report (*Prevention and a Better Cure*) was issued by the Department for Transport. The task group considered the findings and recommendations of this report and they were incorporated into its own work.

4.2 The recommendations arising from the Department for Transport's review are structured around three key messages:

- (a) Prevention is better than cure – intervening at the right time will reduce the amount of potholes forming and prevent bigger problems later
- (b) Right first time – do it once and get it right, rather than face continuous bills. Guidance, knowledge and workmanship are the enablers to this
- (c) Clarity for the public – local highway authorities need to communicate to the public what is being done and how it is being done.

#### **5. Acknowledgements and thanks**

5.1 The Chairman and Members of the task group would like to acknowledge and thank all those who supported and gave evidence to the review, including Councillor Keith Woodhams for his preparatory work.

#### **6. Findings**

6.1 The findings of the task group are outlined below.

##### *Background*

- (1) West Berkshire Council's highway network comprises:
  - 1,270 km or approximately 6 million m<sup>2</sup> of road (610km of classified A, B and C roads, and 660km of unclassified roads)
  - 850 km or approximately 1.3 million m<sup>2</sup> of footway
  - 29,000 road gullies
  - 2,800 kerb weirs.
- (2) The Council has in place a Term Contract for Highways and Bridgeworks based on the New Engineering Contract 3 (NEC3) Term Maintenance form of contract to deliver the following highway services:
  - Response to emergencies
  - Routine highway and footway maintenance
  - Major highway and footway improvements
  - Cyclic maintenance (gully cleansing etc)
  - Drainage maintenance
  - Winter service
  - Bridge maintenance.

- (3) The Council's Term Maintenance contractor is Volker Highways Ltd which is a major player within the UK's construction industry. The majority of maintenance schemes are managed through this contract.

#### *Reporting potholes*

- (4) In order to identify the location of potholes, the Council employs routine highways inspections, reports from the public, elected members and officers. Non-inspection reports from members of the public play an important part in allowing the authority to understand where potholes are located outside of surveyed areas. All known pothole locations are recorded on to an electronic mapping system.
- (5) Although the authority does not actively promote the methods by which the public can report potholes, they are able to do so directly to the Council by telephone (through Customer Services), via the website, e-mail and by letter. Defects can also be reported through the websites Fix My Street, Fill That Hole and Directgov. There may however be scope for improved communication with the general public and specific groups.

#### *Dealing with potholes*

- (6) There are four broad approaches that can be taken to the fixing of potholes. These are:
- Resurfacing to full width sections of road greater than 100m in length, carried out as part of the Three Year Highway Improvement Programme
  - Machine patching, used to deal with targeted larger scale patches within the road where a machine planes away the defective section and a new surface is re-laid
  - Hand patching, undertaken by the Council's contractor squaring the hole, or pothole plug, cleaning, filling and compacting the material
  - Plugging the hole, used when an instant fix is required for safety purposes to enable the Council to meet its duties under the Highways Act 1980.
- (7) The occurrence of potholes increases during periods of bad weather.
- (8) Following the 2009 and 2010 severe winter weather events the Council introduced a dedicated pothole repair team to carry out permanent repairs to potholes through a prioritised programme. This change of approach has led to the number of potholes being reported to the Council falling year on year. In 2011/12 the number was 794, a fall from 1426 the previous year and 1842 for 2009/10. The practice of other highway authorities around the country is coming broadly into line with that in West Berkshire.
- (9) Based on the current evidence, providing a dedicated 'find and fix' team would be difficult to justify in the current economic climate in cost /benefit terms, however, with additional funding, there could be scope

for the introduction of one to supplement the proactive and reactive programmes currently in use. The introduction of any such team could however never ensure that the Council would always be aware of the existence of every pothole on every road. Any expectation to the contrary is unrealistic. It should also be borne in mind that the Council cannot repair potholes the existence of which it is unaware.

- (10) Guidelines issued by the Department for Transport stipulate the factors that must be taken into account when determining whether action must be taken on a pothole and the time within which it should occur. They include:
  - the size and depth of the pothole
  - traffic type, speed and volume
  - road alignment
  - visibility
  - the position in relation to road width.
- (11) If the circumstances of the pothole are assessed by highways inspectors as requiring immediate action then it will be made safe, by plugging, within either 2 or 24 hours. Lower risk potholes are programmed for repair as part of the planned schedule.
- (12) As the Council retains, through its contractor, control of all of the resources required for repair (plant, labour, material and traffic management), it is able to push down operating costs. The cost of addressing potholes in West Berkshire is around £40/m<sup>2</sup> which compares extremely favourably with the national average of around £75/m<sup>2</sup>. This is achieved in large part by non-reliance on expensive, branded/proprietary materials.
- (13) It is assessed by Highways officers that only around 5% of pothole repairs fail and the term contract with Volker incorporates arrangements for the making good of sub-standard work identified within three months of completion. The figure highlighted at (11) above indicates that even if the cost for rework is included within the price of the contract, the Council is still achieving good value for money.
- (14) All Council officers and contractors have received appropriate training in the use of the materials and techniques used for repair that are recommended by national guidance.

- (15) As the number of pothole reports has decreased, through the combination of less severe winter weather and improved maintenance practices, so has the amount of materials needed by the Council to plug them.

Tonnes of repair material used.	2008/09 t	2009/10 t	2010/11 t	2011/12 t
Canadar	526	628	740	325
3mm Bitumen Macadam	99	158	197	68
Viafix	-	-	2.5	0.8
Instarmac	-	-	25	25
<b>Totals</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>419</b>

- (16) To some extent this reduction has however been offset by the introduction in June 2011 of the dedicated hand patching team, which for the part of 2011/12 during which it operated applied some 452 tonnes at a cost of £35/m<sup>2</sup>. This structured, 'right first time', programmed approach to pothole maintenance has further reduced operating costs.
- (17) The Council is already complying in large part with the recommendations made by the Department for Transport in its report *Prevention and a Better Cure*. Further detail is shown as part of Appendix B.
- (18) Customer satisfaction with the Council's performance in the prevention and treatment of potholes is not monitored. This gives rise to the risk of anecdotal evidence being given undue credence.

#### *Insurance claims*

- (19) The number of insurance claims made to the Council for damage caused by potholes to vehicles is falling, after rising to a peak of 237 during 2009/10. Despite any perception to the contrary, the expenditure by the authority on the settlement of all highways claims is very modest and has reduced drastically – with a continuing downward trend – from a peak in excess of £20,000 in 2007/08 to only £260 in 2010/11 (the last full year for which figures are available). The 2007/08 figure included settlements for two personal injury claims that were unrelated to potholes. The average payout is around £250 per claim.
- (20) Comparison by the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) of West Berkshire Council data for public liability claims for highways – an element of which will encompass those relating to potholes – shows that the Council's performance is well above the average for highways authorities.
- (21) The Council is only liable for payment for damage arising from potholes if it does not have a robust maintenance programme in place or if it has been made aware of a pothole and not taken the required action within an appropriate timescale.

- (22) The administrative overhead for the processing of claims for damage caused by potholes is not significant, it being absorbed within the duties of a single member of staff.

## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1 Although anecdotally there appears to be some public concern about potholes in the district, generally the Council is dealing with them. Specifically, and in relation to the Terms of Reference:
- The systems and processes in place in West Berkshire are effective at mitigating the effect of potholes;
  - Systems in operation by the Council are generally similar to those in operation in other highways authorities and in some cases in advance of them. The Council's practice is in line with the national thinking as articulated in *Prevention and a Better Cure*;
  - The Council is obtaining significant value for money.
- 7.2 There is however, as always, scope for improvement, particularly in the Council's communication with the general public and specific groups.
- 7.3 *Prevention and a Better Cure*, provides a sound framework for the Council to continue to drive upwards its performance in the way that it seeks to prevent rather than cure, get it right first time and provide clarity for the public.

## 8. Recommendations

- 8.1 The Task Group recommends that the Executive Member for Highways should:
- (1) Comply fully with the recommendations arising from the Department for Transport's report *Prevention and a Better Cure*.
  - (2) Establish and promote a 'spot the pot hotline' for the public reporting of pothole locations.
  - (3) Develop and deliver a communications plan to engage the public in the reporting of potholes. This might be achieved through the publication of leaflets, through the Council's website or through advertising. Any materials should be written in ways that do not required prior technical knowledge.
  - (4) Arrange for the authority's approach to the handling of potholes to be explained to parish councils at the District/Parish Conference.
  - (5) Arrange for the authority's approach to the handling of potholes to be explained to Members of Thatcham Town Council.
  - (6) Arrange for the authority's approach to the handling of potholes to be explained to Members of the Council at a Member Development Seminar.
  - (7) Produce and distribute to all Member of the Council guidance on the methodology in place for pothole maintenance.

- (8) Give consideration to the introduction of a permanent 'find and fix' team to complement the existing proactive schemes already in place.
- (9) Give consideration to the Council taking part in the national MORI survey every two years, in order to monitor the public's satisfaction with the Council's pothole maintenance activities.

## **Appendices**

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Appendix A – Minutes of the task group meeting held on 29 March 2012

Appendix B – Minutes of the task group meeting held on 22 May 2012



## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP**

### **The Process in Place for the Repair of Pot Holes**

#### **MINUTES**

**Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

**Present:** Councillors: Brian Bedwell (Chairman), Keith Woodhams  
Others: Ian Priestley (Chief Internal Auditor), Melvyn May (Highway Manager), David Lowe (Scrutiny and Partnerships Manager), Elaine Walker (Principal Policy Officer)

**Apologies:** Councillor Emma Webster

#### **1. Election of Chairman**

Councillor Keith Woodhams nominated Councillor Brian Bedwell to be Chairman. This was agreed and Councillor Brian Bedwell was elected Chairman.

#### **2. Agreement of the scope and Terms of Reference**

Councillor Brian Bedwell began by stating that this meeting was intended to discuss and agree the Terms of Reference for the Task Group including what information would be required, who would be invited to participate and where agreed activity might sit.

Melvyn May queried this approach, stating that several changes had been made to the procedures for reporting and responding to pot holes since a previous review approximately a year ago.

It was agreed that a discussion would be held to understand whether the changes that had taken place were sufficient to address the concerns stated in the motion that had been raised at Council by Councillor Keith Woodhams. Any outstanding issues would be included in Terms of Reference for this Task Group.

#### **3. Background Briefing**

Councillor Keith Woodhams presented a summary of a report he had compiled, explaining that evidence to support his statements had been provided anecdotally by local residents and garages. They key points raised in his report were:

- The need for early reporting of pot holes;
- Streamlining the administration of processes;
- Altering the materials used to repair pot holes;
- Reducing the number of claims being received;
- Reducing the cost of claims;

- Improving the Council's reputation;
- Reducing the cost of administering the claims received.

#### **4. Pot hole repair practice in West Berkshire**

The Task Group received a report from Melvyn May regarding the current processes in place for the reporting and repair of pot holes. He reported that the information supplied was reflective of the changed processes that had come into effect as a result of a previous review approximately one year previously. The processes are currently in line with those used by Hampshire County Council.

Melvyn May drew attention to the statistics in his report showing a significant reduction in the number of reported pot holes from 1842 in 2009/10 to 794 in 2011/12, also reflected in a reduction in the cost of materials required for repair.

Following some discussion, it was understood that the current process meant that once a pot hole had been reported, either to the Council directly, through inspection, or via third party reporting, an assessment would take place of the relative urgency for repair. Repairs were categorised to be undertaken within 2 hours, 24 hours or 28 days as appropriate.

In all cases, a temporary repair would be undertaken initially, with the location being built into a rolling programme of works for a later, permanent, repair. The order of repairs would be largely dependent on a risk assessment and location.

Councillor Keith Woodhams stated that residents had brought to his attention a number of instances where a significant amount of time had passed between the pot hole being seen, and a white line being marked around it. He quoted two examples which had not been reported so they could be monitored. Melvyn May responded that pot holes must be reported, as there was no guarantee that routine inspections would locate them quickly. Councillor Keith Woodhams believed that there was a lack of confidence that the Council would repair the pot hole successfully even if it was reported and suggested that this may be why not all pot holes are reported. He suggested that it would be beneficial to promote reporting to the public. Melvyn May responded that the Council would need to be prepared for a potential increase in workload, and therefore costs, to deal with the additional pot holes reported. He also pointed out that pot holes reported to the Council were generally less specific about severity, and so further work was often needed to confirm how quickly a response would be required. However, on balance, he considered that it could be beneficial to produce a leaflet explaining the reporting and repair process.

Councillor Keith Woodhams further stated that he had been told of incidents where the repair to pot holes had been dislodged within a short time by heavy vehicles, and these had not been refilled. He asked whether the materials used were suitable for the job. Councillor Woodhams asked why the Council did not use Viafix as he understood that this was used elsewhere as a permanent repair and could be used quickly. Melvyn May responded that Viafix does not provide a suitably sound permanent repair, and is prohibitively expensive to use in high quantities; the Council's amended processes are now able to capture hand repaired pot holes within three months. He agreed to contact Islington Council for their conclusions from a trial of Viafix.

Melvyn May explained to the Task Group that where issues were identified in the current process, these were addressed. For example an individual contractor had

been identified as requiring further training and this was undertaken.

Melvyn May reported that a 'Find and Fix' team were now operating reactively to temporarily repair identified pot holes. Evidence had been received in the form of public comments that this was resulting in improvements.

Councillor Brian Bedwell asked whether it would be possible to undertake a permanent repair on some occasions rather than always undertaking a temporary repair and following up with a permanent repair. Melvyn May responded that consideration was being given to providing a permanent repair in the first instance for any pot hole allocated a 28 day order. Whilst it would be possible in most instances to allocate this within the rolling programme of works, there would be a budget implication which might prevent the plan from going ahead. Ian Priestley explained that a planned maintenance programme was cheaper to run than a reactive programme. Melvyn May agreed to confirm with Hampshire County Council whether they were able to undertake any permanent repairs in the first instance.

Councillor Brian Bedwell requested further information about the possibility of a greater number of permanent repairs being undertaken initially in order to reduce the cost of following a temporary repair with a permanent one. Melvyn May responded that aside from the costs, the conditions were often prohibitive – the weather being a key factor in when a permanent repair could be carried out. He was also concerned that making ad hoc changes to the new process, which had shown improvement, would be confusing and difficult to maintain. Melvyn May explained that the increased cost associated with immediate permanent repairs should be considered against the risk of a claim arising from the pot hole. Current information suggested that the increased cost could not be justified.

David Lowe suggested that it might be useful to compare the unit costs of each method and benchmark these to another area, with a similar rural/urban environment.

Councillor Brian Bedwell queried the number of roads in Thatcham that appeared to have more requirement for repair than other areas. Melvyn May responded that many roads in Thatcham had been built using concrete with a layer of bitumen and tar on top. These suffered from delamination where sections of the top layer came away. Although not dangerous, they were aesthetically displeasing, and the public often appeared to judge a road's safety by its appearance.

Melvyn May informed the Task Group that a Members seminar had been held in November to clarify the processes and issues around pot holes. He suggested a further seminar may be of use to new Members and those who had been unable to attend. He also queried whether this may be a suitable subject for a future District Parish Conference. Councillor Keith Woodhams suggested meeting with Thatcham Town Council to explain directly.

Melvyn May explained to the Task Group that an annual road condition survey was undertaken which provided a holistic view of areas needing attention. He explained that advances were being made to allow more accurate locating of pot holes as opposed to other anomalies. Councillor Brian Bedwell asked if there was any equipment available that would help improve the road condition. Melvyn May responded that although there were improved processes that could be put in place, the cost of these would be high and would need to be weighed against the risk of not implementing them.

David Lowe asked whether it would be possible to benchmark the condition of

West Berkshire Roads with those in other, similar, areas to understand whether the area has an actual problem or a perceived problem. Councillor Keith Woodhams stated that he believed this to be an actual problem and quoted two specific cases:

- Northfield Road
- Mini roundabout at Bowling Green Road and Northfield Lane

Melvyn May agreed to check these cases specifically.

Councillor Brian Bedwell asked how the size of a pot hole was determined. Melvyn May responded that the easiest and quickest method was to use a spirit level and tape measure as this could account for any size, shape and location of pot hole. He further confirmed that a sketch of the pot hole was included on the report form which was signed and may form part of the evidence in a claim. Additionally, a photograph was taken where a claim is made.

Councillor Keith Woodhams expressed concern that some pot holes may not meet the nationally set criteria to require intervention, but they still posed some risk to drivers. He asked whether an inspector would consider how likely the condition or size of a pot hole would worsen, and not rely solely on the measurement of the pot hole at the time he was there. He asked whether an immediate repair could be undertaken to prevent a pot hole from worsening. Melvyn May responded that these pot holes would still be recorded, and where possible and appropriate, they would be included in the rolling programme of maintenance. He added that there currently was no client 'find and fix' team (working proactively). This could be explored; however there would be associated costs around health and safety, training and insurance.

**Actions:**

- Melvyn May to confirm with Hampshire County Council whether they are able to undertake any permanent repairs in the first instance.
- Melvyn May to contact Islington Council for their conclusions from a trial of Viafix.
- David Lowe to compare the unit costs of each method and benchmark these to another area, with a similar rural/urban environment.
- Melvyn May to check the specific cases quoted by Councillor Keith Woodhams.

**Proposed Recommendations:**

- To engage the public and promote the reporting of pot holes.
- To publish an information leaflet about reporting pot holes
- To communicate the processes of reporting and repair of pot holes:
  - through holding a second Member's seminar
  - at a future District Parish Conference
  - by meeting with Thatcham Town Councillors.
- To instigate a permanent client 'Find and Fix' van for proactive repair.

## **5. Insurance Claims**

Ian Priestley informed the Task Group that the figures that had been provided to the Task Group detailing insurance claims were based on the insurance year which

ran from November to October. He further noted that the number and value of claims had dropped significantly since 2007; however he noted that the high value paid in 2007 did include two personal injury claims that were not related to pot holes.

Ian Priestley agreed that there was still potential for the value of claims in 2010/11 to be significant as there was a number outstanding, however he explained that there was an expectation of 96% or more of claims to be repudiated, and on average £250 to be paid per claim upheld.

Councillor Brian Bedwell asked what were the staffing costs for processing claims. Ian Priestley did not have this information available, but agreed to provide it at a later date.

Confirmation was requested on when a claim could be repudiated. Ian Priestley explained that this would happen when the Council was found to have correctly dealt with a pot hole according to national standards, ie:

- if the Council was not aware of the pot hole and it had a robust maintenance programme in place, it would not be liable for claims resulting from it;
- if it was aware of the pot hole and had processed it correctly for appropriate repair within the appropriate timescale, again, it would not be liable for claims made.

Councillor Keith Woodhams raised a concern about the time between a pot hole appearing, and it being reported to the Council. He was concerned that during this time, the pot hole could cause damage to a number of vehicles, the drivers of which would not be able to make a claim. He queried whether it would be possible to address this.

David Lowe questioned whether the Council should allow residents to believe they are entitled to payment in all cases.

The Group recognised that there had been a reduction in the number of pot holes recently. Melvyn May suggested that this could be due to improvements in the process and methods of repair, in addition to less severe winter weather conditions.

David Lowe asked if there was information available to benchmark the level of insurance claims against other areas. Ian Priestley responded that the information was being collected through a CIPFA benchmarking exercise, but would not be available for some months.

**Actions:**

- Ian Priestley and Melvyn May to investigate staffing costs for processing claims.

## **6. Refinement of the scope and Terms of Reference**

Councillor Brian Bedwell summarised the meeting, stating that a lot of information had been received and it was clear from the figures provided as well as anecdotal evidence that both the number of pot holes, and the number of claims resulting from pot holes, had reduced over the past year. He suggested that no further analysis would be required for this Task Group, and he requested that actions agreed during this meeting be undertaken prior to one further meeting, and that should any further recommendations be forthcoming, they be raised at the final meeting. This was agreed.

## **7. Agreement of future meeting dates and activity**

Councillor Brian Bedwell requested one further meeting to summarise findings and agree final recommendations. A meeting date was to be agreed towards the end of April.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP**

### **The Process in Place for the Repair of Pot Holes**

#### **MINUTES**

**Tuesday 22 May 2012**

**Present:** Councillors: Brian Bedwell (Chairman), Keith Woodhams  
Others: Mark Edwards (Head of Highways and Transport), Ian Priestley (Chief Internal Auditor), David Lowe (Scrutiny and Partnerships Manager), Elaine Walker (Principal Policy Officer)

**Apologies:** Councillor Emma Webster, Melvyn May (Highway Manager)

#### **1. Minutes and Matters Arising**

Councillor Brian Bedwell welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the scrutiny review subject for the benefit of Mark Edwards who had not been present at the previous meeting.

Mark Edwards reported the results of Melvyn May's enquiries to Hampshire County Council and Islington Council into repair methodology and materials. He explained that Islington Council had used Viafix for some years but due to its expense it was only used where another material was not suitable, such as heavily trafficked roads. Hampshire County Council used a range of materials dependent on the circumstances, reflecting West Berkshire's approach. Mark Edwards continued that the quality of a repair was dependent on the work of the contractor, and recognised that weather conditions or other circumstances might prevent a repair being made to the expected standard.

Councillor Keith Woodhams stated that contractors required guidance as to how to repair pot holes to the required standard. He believed that confidence needed to be built with the public that materials were suitable and repairs were being undertaken rapidly as they appeared to fail too quickly. Mark Edwards informed the group that a relatively small number of repairs failed (estimated to be approximately 5%), and where this happened, the contractor undertook to repair the pot hole for a second time at no cost to the Council. He further noted that should a claim arise between the first and second repair, these would be directed to the contractor. Councillor Woodhams concluded that if this was an issue of the public's perception of incorrect materials or inadequate repair, then this needed to be addressed.

Mark Edwards disputed the fact that this was an area of significant concern for members of the public due to the fact that only a few reports were being made.

Councillor Woodhams responded that members of the public would often report pot holes to local councillors as they did not have confidence that the Council would make a repair appropriately.

Councillor Bedwell asked what information was available regarding the cost of processing claims. Ian Priestley presented estimated information from the past five years. He stressed that the basis for working out the financial values had been estimated through speaking with the officer who dealt with claims. He noted that the Council were rarely required to pay claims due to the methods used by the Highways Service to manage pot holes. He further drew attention to the fact that should the number of claims be reduced, it would not save significant sums of money as only one officer dealt with the workload and this was alongside other work.

Councillor Woodhams stated that the number of claims was weather dependent. Mark Edwards agreed relating that in March, a dry month, there had been two claims, and in April, a wet month, there had been ten claims. He also noted that sometimes the weather contributed by obscuring the pot hole from sight for example if it was full of water or snow. Councillor Woodhams noted that whatever the reason for the pot hole, and whether or not a claim was successful, the motorist would still have potentially sizeable repair bills for their car, and this was what he wanted to address.

## **2. National Pot Holes Review Report**

Councillor Bedwell introduced a national report that had been published in April 2012 entitled 'Prevention and a Better Cure – Pot Holes Review'. David Lowe explained that although the group had been aware that this work was being undertaken, it had been fortuitous that the report had been published to coincide with the Council's scrutiny review. He suggested that the group consider the report and its recommendations, and decide how it might impact on this scrutiny review. He asked whether Highways were considering the recommendations outside of this review. Mark Edwards responded that Highways had been expecting this report for some time, and welcomed it as there had never been a code of practice around pot holes before. He noted that this would provide a common approach to national activity, and was pleased to note that many of the recommendations reflected the Council's current or planned practice, for example around hand-patching.

Councillor Woodhams asked Mark Edwards to explain the different types of repair that could be made. Mark Edwards replied that there were four broad categories of road maintenance in use:

- 1 – Plugging the hole. This was undertaken in situations where an instant fix was required for safety purposes.
- 2 – Hand Patching. This involved the contractor squaring the hole, or pot hole plug, cleaning, filling and compacting the material.
- 3 – Machine Patching. This was intended to deal with larger scale patching repairs but not full width resurfacing. A machine would plane away the whole section of road and relay the surface.



#### 4 – Resurfacing, or other surface treatment.

The Group requested further information about hand patching. Mark Edwards explained that there was a dedicated vehicle and crew capable of hand patching approximately 30 small areas each day. The vehicle was owned and managed by the contractor, and they were given a map that all pot holes had been plotted onto, including those previously plugged, and instructed to deal with the worst areas first. This has been ongoing for the last year, and funding would allow this to continue until October. It was noted that despite the increased use of hand patching, there would remain a need for pot hole plugging to be carried out.

Councillor Bedwell asked whether there would be any benefit in the Council owning its own vehicle for this purpose. Mark Edwards explained that a decision had been taken 12 years previously that the best approach would be for a contractor to undertake repairs, whilst the Council concentrated on inspection, management and design of the highways.

Councillor Bedwell requested further information on how the pot hole map was managed. Mark Edwards replied that all reported pot holes were mapped. Areas for repair were decided by removing from consideration areas that were due to be resurfaced in the next year (approximately 50 roads), and working around the rest of the area. He commented that the process would never be complete as pot holes continued to arise.

Councillor Bedwell requested that the process be circulated to the group to clarify what happened.

Councillor Woodhams informed the Group of two pot holes situated by the Bear Hotel on the A4 in Hungerford which had been there for at least a week without being repaired or highlighted with a white line. He believed that the public felt that the Council had responsibility for repairing each pot hole instantly, and when this did not happen, they lost faith in making the report. He also believed that when the public saw what they felt to be a bad repair, or a plug being dislodged, they lost confidence in the process. In his opinion, this lack of confidence needed to be addressed by correcting the public's perception, and circulating a leaflet to explain the process and encourage reporting. Mark Edwards confirmed that this section of road was due for resurfacing in the summer but reported pot holes would continue to be repaired until that time.

The group discussed the public's reticence in reporting pot holes and agreed that people needed to take some responsibility for the matter, and that it was unreasonable to expect pot holes to be repaired if they were not reported. Mark Edwards noted that public reports were relied upon between inspections.

Councillor Woodhams requested clarification on the claim that if a repair failed, then the second fix would be at the expense of the contractor. He asserted that the cost of the second fix would merely be absorbed elsewhere in the contract. Mark Edwards responded that only completed work was paid for and this was measured by the metre. He clarified that the second fix was only free if the original repair failed within three months and there were no extenuating circumstances not within the control of the contractor.

In response to a questions, Mark Edwards explained that pot holes that had been

plugged were more likely to fail than those that had been hand patched, however it was possible for these to fail too. Councillor Woodhams asked whether it was sensible to continue to plug pot holes if they failed easily and asked if this was exacerbating the problem. David Lowe responded that the national review addressed this in recommending that pot holes were repaired properly first time wherever possible. Mark Edwards confirmed that this was the approach used. David Lowe continued by asserting that public perception appeared to consider that plugging the hole was the routine response, but the reality was that this was only undertaken in emergency situations. Councillor Bedwell requested a written description of the different types of repair to be circulated to Members to assist them when they were approached by the public. Councillor Woodhams also requested that a simplified version be produced for the public.

Councillor Woodhams asked for further information regarding the inspector's role. Mark Edwards explained that the inspector would assess pot holes that were reported and those on their inspection routes, and would instruct contractors to repair them if appropriate. He noted that reports, particularly those received from members of the public were often not accurate in respect of location or dimension and needed to be inspected before allocating resources to repair them.

Returning to the national review and its recommendations, Councillor Bedwell recognised that they were in line with the Council's review and asked David Lowe to lead the group through a discussion of each one.

Taking the recommendations in the order they were presented in the report's executive summary:

#### **THEME: PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE**

##### **Recommendation 4 - Economic Benefits of Highway Maintenance**

To evaluate and justify the need for investment in maintenance of the local highway network, the Department for Transport should work in conjunction with local highway authorities to develop advice on determining economic costs and benefits.

**Response:** This was a national recommendation and not one for the Council.

##### **Recommendation 5 - Commitment of Highway Maintenance Budgets**

The Government should commit to establishing budgets for highway maintenance for the full four years of Comprehensive Spending Review periods. This will provide greater budget certainty for the highway sector. Local highway authorities should ensure their funding for highways maintenance is aligned to this time period.

**Response:** The majority of this recommendation related to national policy. However Mark Edwards explained to the group that the DfT used to set a fixed grant for one year, with further finance being provisional. This year the government had confirmed a three year grant providing certainty for activity within this timescale. The Council's MTFS was for three years which did not fully align.

##### **Recommendation 6 - Prevention is Better than Cure**

Local highway authorities should adopt the principle that 'prevention is better than cure' in determining the balance between structural, preventative and reactive maintenance activities in order to improve the resilience of the highway network

and minimise the occurrence of potholes in the future.

**Response:** Mark Edwards confirmed that this was already the Council's approach.

**Recommendation 7 - Informed Choices**

Local highway authorities should ensure that appropriate competencies are available to make the right choices when designing and specifying techniques and materials for the maintenance and repair of highways. These competencies can be secured through training, collaboration with neighbouring authorities or external advice.

**Response:** Mark Edwards confirmed that all inspectors and contractors were fully and appropriately accredited. Training was maintained and included updates on new materials as they became available.

**Recommendation 8 - Guidance on Materials**

Comprehensive guidance should be made available in the design, specification and installation of materials for the maintenance and repair of highways, to ensure the use of appropriate materials for the right site. This guidance should be produced by the sector for the sector.

**Response:** Mark Edwards informed the group that the intent was for the trade to produce this guidance. Councillor Bedwell referred back to his earlier request for guidance to be produced by Highways.

**Recommendation 15 - Co-ordinating Street Works**

All parties undertaking works on the highway should share and co-ordinate short and long term programmes of work for up to four years in advance, based on good asset management practice.

**Response:** Mark Edwards confirmed that this was already the Council's approach

**Recommendation 16 - Minimising Highway Openings**

All parties involved in reinstatements must consider the need to minimise long term damage from the installation, renewal, maintenance and repair of utility and highway apparatus through alternative and innovative ways of working. Trenchless technology should be considered as part of this decision making process.

**Response:** Mark Edwards confirmed that this was already the Council's approach

**THEME: RIGHT FIRST TIME**

**Recommendation 14 - Quality of Repairs and Reinstatements**

To drive up standards, a quality scheme similar to a National Highway Sector Scheme should be developed by the sector to cover all aspects of manual surfacing operations, including pothole repairs and reinstatements, and its use specified by local highway authorities and utility companies.

**Response:** This was a national recommendation and not one for the Council.

**Recommendation 13 - Guidance on Repair Techniques**

Local highway authorities should consider the guidance provided in the ADEPT report Potholes and Repair Techniques for Local Highways and adopt as

appropriate to their local circumstances.

**Response:** Mark Edwards advised that this was a technical version of the national report intended for use by highways management. It had only just been published and the Highways team were still working through the findings.

**Recommendation 11 - Inspection and Training**

Local highway authorities should utilise inspection manuals to support implementation of their inspection policies. They should also ensure that highway inspectors are trained, qualified and competent in the identification and assessment of defects, including potholes, through a scheme accredited by the Highway Inspectors Board.

**Response:** Mark Edwards explained that this recommendation had been included as, in some areas it was possible that some contractors and employees were not accredited. He confirmed that anyone undertaking this work for the Council was accredited and drew the group's attention to the results of an internal audit which found the contract to be well controlled.

**Recommendation 12 - Technology**

Local highway authorities should consider using proven technology and systems for the effective identification and management of potholes.

**Response:** Mark Edwards explained that as part of the routine safety inspections GPS hand held technology was used to record all pot holes on a single WDM system.

**Recommendation 17 - Research and Innovation**

The sector will benefit from supporting, co-ordinating, contributing and disseminating research on all aspects of pothole operations. Innovation from such research may continue to provide opportunities for improvement of pothole management and operations.

**Response:** The group did not consider this to be a recommendation requiring action.

**THEME: CLARITY**

**Recommendation 3 - Public Communications**

Local highway authorities should have an effective public communications process that provides clarity and transparency in their policy and approach to repairing potholes. This should include a published policy and details of its implementation, including the prevention, identification, reporting, tracking and repair of potholes.

**Response:** Councillor Bedwell summarised earlier discussions by requesting that a leaflet be produced for the public which explained how to report a pot hole, and what they could expect from the Council. He further requested a slightly more detailed document for use by Members including the different levels of repair, and particularly asked for information about the white lines drawn around pot holes.

Mark Edwards informed the group that a draft leaflet had been prepared with the intention of making it available to the public on the website as well as in normal leaflet distribution areas. He agreed to distribute this to the group for comment.

Ian Priestley requested that the leaflet included some information about the Highways Act in order to manage the public's expectation around claims and compensation.

Mark Edwards confirmed that Customer Services, who receive reports from the public, were aware of how to record them and that the system was able to identify repeat reports.

Councillor Bedwell requested the subject be taken to the next District Parish Conference.

### **Recommendation 2 - Public Opinion Surveys**

Local highway authorities should monitor public satisfaction with road, footway and cycleway condition and repair annually through the National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey or their own surveys. The findings can be used to benchmark performance and taken into consideration in local highway maintenance policies.

**Response:** David Lowe stated that there was no longer a Council survey from which to draw results. Mark Edwards informed the group that a national survey was run by MORI which the Council had been involved in one year; however it was prohibitively expensive to take part every year. He reported that Councillor David Betts had recommended that the Council take part every two or three years. Councillor Bedwell agreed that this group could recommend this approach.

### **Recommendation 10 - Permanent Repairs Policy**

Local highway authorities should adopt permanent repairs as the first choice. Temporary repairs should only be used where safety cannot be managed using alternative approaches and in emergency circumstances.

**Response:** Mark Edwards confirmed that this was already the Council's approach as had been discussed earlier by the group.

### **Recommendation 9 - Definition of Potholes**

To provide clarity, local highway authorities should adopt dimensional definitions for potholes based on best practice as part of their maintenance policy. Response times and treatment of potholes should be based on local needs, consideration of all highway users, and an assessment of risk.

**Response:** Mark Edwards confirmed that this would be explained in the document circulated to Members.

### **Recommendation 1 - Strengthen Well-maintained Highways**

Well-maintained Highways should be revised and strengthened to include all recommendations of this Review which are relevant to local highway authorities.

**Response:** The group accept this recommendation.

Councillor Bedwell drew the group's attention to Councillor Woodhams' draft recommendations noting that they were broadly in line with the national report. He asked whether Councillor Woodhams thought his recommendations had been addressed, or whether he would like to raise any further points.

Councillor Woodhams noted in particular his recommendation to engage the public

with a 'Spot the Pot' hotline, stating that he believed this title would be beneficial. Councillor Bedwell did not believe that the reporting line could be renamed and suggested that a press release be prepared using this phrase, at an appropriate time to highlight the work being undertaken.

Councillor Woodhams continued by saying that the national recommendations did cover what he was looking to achieve.

#### **4. Final Recommendations and Activity**

##### **Actions:**

- Mark Edwards to circulate to the group the processes involved in repairing pot holes.
- Mark Edwards to circulate to the group a draft leaflet for the public which explained how to report a pot hole, and what they could expect from the Council.
- Mark Edwards to produce a document for distribution to Members which included the different levels of repair, and use of white lines.

##### **Recommendations:**

- A leaflet be published by Highways to inform the public of the pot hole repair process.
- An information pack be distributed to Members to provide greater information about the process of pot hole repair.
- Highways to take part in the national MORI survey every two years in order to monitor public satisfaction.
- A press release be prepared including the phrase 'Spot the Pot' to highlight highways work.
- The next District Parish Conference agenda to include an item on pot holes to support improved communication with the public.

# Agenda Item 12.

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Health Scrutiny Panel</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 September 2012

**Purpose of Report:** To provide an update on the work of the Health Scrutiny Panel.

**Recommended Action:** To note the information.

Health Scrutiny Panel Chairman	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Councillor Quentin Webb – Tel (01635) 201435
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	qwebb@westberks.gov.uk

Contact Officer Details	
<b>Name:</b>	Elaine Walker
<b>Job Title:</b>	Principal Policy Officer
<b>Tel. No.:</b>	01635 519441
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	ewalker@westberks.gov.uk

# Executive Report

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Health Scrutiny Panel has not met since the report made at the last Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission

## 2. Next Meeting

- 2.1 The Health Scrutiny Panel was due to meet next on Tuesday 11 September 2012. This meeting was cancelled, and the next meeting is now due on Tuesday 4 December 2012. The agenda is yet to be confirmed.

## 3. Work Programme

- 3.1 The latest work programme for the Health Scrutiny Panel is contained within item 7 of this agenda.

## Appendices

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There are no Appendices to this report.



# Agenda Item 13.

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Resource Management Working Group</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 September 2012

**Purpose of Report:** To provide an update on the work of the Resource Management Working Group.

**Recommended Action:** To note the information.

<b>Resource Management Working Group Chairman</b>	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Councillor Tony Vickers – Tel (01635) 230046
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	tvickers@westberks.gov.uk

<b>Contact Officer Details</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	Stephen Chard
<b>Job Title:</b>	Policy Officer
<b>Tel. No.:</b>	01635 519462
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	schard@westberks.gov.uk

## **Executive Report**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Resource Management Working Group has not met since the report made at the last Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.

### **2. Next meeting**

- 2.1 The meeting scheduled for 25 September 2012 has been rearranged to 2 October 2012. The following items are on the draft agenda:

- (1) MTFS – item to particularly focus on the impact on the MTFS from the introduction of the Local Government Finance Bill in 2013/14 and beyond as well as the potential impact of Business Rate Reform.
- (2) Latest budget report.
- (3) Risk Register.
- (4) Establishment Summary Report – Quarter One 2012/13

### **3. Work Programme**

- 3.1 The latest work programme for the Working Group is contained within item 7 of this agenda.

## **Appendices**

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There are no appendices to this report.

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Recommendations Update Report</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 September 2012

**Purpose of Report:** To inform the Commission of the progress of scrutiny recommendations approved by the Commission during the previous year.

**Recommended Action:** To note the information.

<b>Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman</b>	
<b>Name &amp; Telephone No.:</b>	Councillor Brian Bedwell – Tel (0118) 9420196
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	bbedwell@westberks.gov.uk

<b>Contact Officer Details</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	Elaine Walker
<b>Job Title:</b>	Principal Policy Officer
<b>Tel. No.:</b>	01635 519441
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	ewalker@westberks.gov.uk

# Executive Report

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Commission of the progress of scrutiny recommendations approved by the Commission.
- 1.2 The Commission approved 37 recommendations for submission through the Executive cycle, of which 30 were adopted by the Executive.
- 1.3 To date, 17 recommendations are recorded as having been implemented within 12 months.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members of the Commission note the update and consider any further action as appropriate.

## Appendices

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Appendix A – Scrutiny Recommendations Update

NB: Red text indicates changes from the original recommendation made by the Executive.

Month presented to the Executive	Review title	Recommendation	Date Adopted by Executive	Implemented within 12 months?
Jun-11	Council's Common Housing Register	To ensure that people are not wrongly removed from the CHR, the <b>Housing Strategy and Operations Manager</b> should consider amendments to the review process including changes to the letter/follow up letters, an improved form and provision of a pre paid envelope. <del>Amendment to the letters should include notification that data will be shared with their Ward Member(s) (in line with recommendation 5).</del>	16/06/11	yes
		The Housing Strategy and Operations Manager should examine whether the support offered to vulnerable people on the CHR is adequate and effective.	16/06/11	yes
		The Head of Policy and Communication should recommend to elected Members, post the May 2011 local elections, that they register with the Information Commissioner in order to process data as WBC's registration does not cover Members in their constituency role.	No	
		The Scrutiny and Partnerships Manager should arrange for data protection training/a briefing to be held for Members, post the May 2011 local elections, to help raise awareness.	16/06/11	yes
		The Housing Strategy and Operations Manager should arrange for Ward data to be included on Locata which can then be shared with Ward Members to allow them to assist in the review process, possibly through a pilot project in the first instance. As part of this, Ward Members will need to be briefed on the process for this activity.	No	
		The Housing Strategy and Operations Manager should arrange for Locata to be upgraded to allow data to be filtered by Ward, if investigations find that the current version of Locata does not allow for this.	No	
Sep-11	Scrutiny Review of HR Establishment Reporting	The Head of Human Resources should establish a mechanism whereby Heads of Service provide the relevant data to Human Resources to enable a forecast to be added to future Establishment Reports for both Council and joint/externally funded posts	No	
Oct-11	Scrutiny Review into the Project to Transfer the Council's CCTV	The Procurement Team should produce an advice note for Heads of Service to outline the circumstances when services can or can not be 'partnered' with other local authorities. This may have avoided the four weeks delay in starting the project.	25/10/11	yes
		Officers letting contracts should seek advice from the Council's Head of Legal and Electoral Services in agreeing terms and conditions with a view to protecting the Council's position <b>through Liquidated Damages where possible</b> in the event that the contractor fails to perform. In the unlikely event that BT were prepared to vary their standard terms and conditions and allowed the Council to add penalty clauses, then the Council may have been able to obtain compensation and or reduce the period of delay in BT completing their works.	25/10/11	yes



Month presented to the Executive	Review title	Recommendation	Date Adopted by Executive	Implemented within 12 months?
		<p>(9) The Head of Education Service should ask the Secretary of State to ensure that academies are required to cooperate with other schools and the LA, specifically, in the areas of accepting children who move into the area in year and sharing the names of the children on their roll, with the LA.</p> <p>(10) The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People and the Youth Service should distribute the approved report to West Berkshire's Members of Parliament to seek their help with pursuing the concerns raised and potentially arranging a meeting with a representative of the Department for Education.</p>	25/10/11	yes
Jul-12	<b>Facilities Available for Young People</b>	<p>a. The Executive Member for Children and Young People and Youth Service should work, including through the networks available to Elected Members, to encourage schools to enable community groups to access the use of their facilities.</p> <p>b. The Executive Member for Finance, Property and Health and Safety should take steps to allow and promote the use of Council property by community groups. This should include through tenancy agreements for let assets.</p> <p>c. The Executive Member for Partnerships, Equality, the Visions and Communities should encourage town and parish councils to allow the use of their property by community groups.</p> <p>d. The Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT and Customer Services should critically examine the opportunities for the Council to allow the public use of the Council's own transport fleet, particularly in locations where there is an expressed need for community transport, working to remove bureaucratic burdens and obstacles where they exist.</p> <p>e. The Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT, Customer Services should introduce a mechanism to assess the extent to which Council transport assets are being utilised by community groups.</p> <p>f. The Executive Member for the Environment, "Cleaner Greener", Public Protection, Culture and Leisure should identify measures to encourage and increase the use by community groups of the Council's leisure facilities, for example sports and leisure centres.</p> <p>g. When considering change of use applications by and for community groups, the Executive Member for Planning and Housing should ensure that planning policies to allow favourable weighting and consideration of the wider societal benefits that their activities usually generate.</p> <p>h. The Executive Member for Children and Young People and the Youth Service should continue to support organisations, such as the Berkshire Association of Clubs for Young People, that enable community groups to operate effectively, for example through the provision of training and CRB checks.</p>	19/07/12	yes
			19/07/12	
			19/07/12	
			19/07/12	
			No	
			19/07/12	
			19/07/12	
			No	
			19/07/12	

Month presented to the Executive	Review title	Recommendation	Date Adopted by Executive	Implemented within 12 months?
		<p>i. The Executive Member for Children and Young People and the Youth Service should implement a comprehensive plan, which includes the use of social media, to communicate to young people the wealth of spare time opportunities and activities that are available to them.</p> <p>j. The Executive Member for Children and Young People and the Youth Service should create and promote guidance on the key steps to be taken on the establishment of youth community groups. This might take the form of a 'Youth Club Starter Pack'.</p> <p>k. The Executive Member for Children and Young People and the Youth Service should take steps to identify and the remove those Youth Service practices that prevent or obstruct the use of its facilities by community groups.</p> <p>l. The Executive Member for Partnerships, Equality, the Visions and Communities should establish a mechanism to allow the sharing across community groups of resources such as training opportunities, skills, expertise and knowledge.</p> <p>m. The Executive Member for Partnerships, Equality, the Visions and Communities should encourage communities developing parish plans to consider items and activities that have a lower purchase/build cost but provide better value than more expensive but less flexible items such as Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs).</p> <p>n. The Executive Member for Strategy, Performance and Community Safety should ensure that budgets allocated for the provision of Community Wardens, across all contributing organisations, are protected to enable their invaluable work to continue.</p> <p>o. The Executive Member for Children and Young People and the Youth Service should ensure that budgets allocated for the provision of detached youth workers are protected to enable their invaluable work to continue.</p>	<p>19/07/12</p> <p>19/07/12</p> <p>19/07/12</p> <p>19/07/12</p> <p>19/07/12</p> <p>19/07/12</p> <p>19/07/12</p>	