

Notice of Meeting



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Executive

Thursday 14 October 2021 at 5.00pm

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

Note: This meeting can be streamed live here: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/executive/ve>

Date of despatch of Agenda: Wednesday 6 October 2021

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

e-mail: executivecycle@westberks.gov.uk

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



To:	Councillors Steve Ardagh-Walter, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Hilary Cole, Lynne Doherty, Ross Mackinnon, Richard Somner, Jo Stewart and Howard Woollaston
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Agenda

Part I

	Pages
1. Apologies for Absence To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).	5 - 6
2. Minutes To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 2 September 2021.	7 - 16
3. Declarations of Interest To remind Members of the need to record the existence and nature of any personal, disclosable pecuniary or other registrable interests in items on the agenda, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct .	17 - 18
4. Public Questions Members of the Executive to answer questions submitted by members of the public in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution. Please note that the list of public questions is shown under item 4 in the agenda pack.	19 - 20
5. Petitions Councillors or Members of the public may present any petition which they have received. These will normally be referred to the appropriate Committee without discussion.	21 - 22

Items as timetabled in the Forward Plan

	Pages
6. Update on Wokingham Exit from the Public Protection Partnership (EX4115 & EX4145) Purpose: 1.1 To provide an update on the progress of the project detailing the withdrawal of Wokingham Borough Council (Wokingham) from the Public Protection Partnership (PPP) in line with the requirements of the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) (EX4145).	23 - 78



Agenda - Executive to be held on Thursday, 14 October 2021 (continued)

- 1.2 To clarify the approach being taken on 'Traded Services', which is essentially the agreement between West Berkshire Council (the Council) and WOK to maintain a contractual relationship for elements of the public protection service and reduce the overall financial risks for all parties (EX4115).

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7. **Voluntary and Community Sector Support (EX4148)** 79 - 142
Purpose: To summarise the outcome of engagement with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and to set out recommendations for VCS support in West Berkshire.
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8. **SEMH/Autism Secondary Resource Provision - Consultation (EX4089)** 143 - 168
Purpose: to propose:
(1) the transfer of the former primary school site in Theale (the former site) to WBC from the Oxford Diocese Trustees (the Diocese); and
(2) the long term future use of the site as the location of a provision for secondary aged children with SEMH/ASD needs.
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9. **Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities) Contract Award Report (EX4111)** 169 - 178
Purpose: To award the contract for the supply/provision of Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities) following a tender process.
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10. **Members' Questions** 179 - 180
Members of the Executive to answer questions submitted by Councillors in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution.
Please note that the list of Member questions is shown under item 10 in the agenda pack.
11. **Exclusion of Press and Public** 181 - 182
RECOMMENDATION: That members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items as it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information of the description contained in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 specified in brackets in the heading of each item. [Rule 8.10.4 of the Constitution refers.](#)



Part II

12. **SEMH/Autism Secondary Resource Provision - Consultation (EX4089)** 183 - 208
(Paragraph 3 - information relating to the business affairs of a particular person)
Purpose: to propose:
- (1) the transfer of the former primary school site in Theale (the former site) to WBC from the Oxford Diocese Trustees (the Diocese); and
 - (2) the long term future use of the site as the location of a provision to meet the needs of secondary aged children with SEMH and ASD needs.
13. **Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities) Contract Award Report (EX4111)** 209 - 220
(Paragraph 3 - information relating to the business affairs of a particular person)
Purpose: To award the contract for the supply/provision of Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities) following a tender process.

Sarah Clarke
Service Director: Strategy and Governance

West Berkshire Council Strategy Priorities

Council Strategy Priorities:

PC1: Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes

PC2: Support everyone to reach their full potential

OFB1: Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire

GP1: Develop local infrastructure to support and grow the local economy

GP2: Maintain a green district

SIT1: Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships

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



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Item 1 – Apologies for absence

Verbal Item

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DRAFT

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

EXECUTIVE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 2021

Councillors Present: Steve Ardagh-Walter, Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Hilary Cole, Lynne Doherty, Ross Mackinnon, Richard Somner and Howard Woollaston

Also Present: Kofi Adu-Gyamfi (Waste Manager), Melanie Booth (Group Executive (Lib Dems)), Melanie Ellis (Chief Accountant), Susan Halliwell (Executive Director - Place), Joseph Holmes (Executive Director - Resources), Andy Sharp (Executive Director (People)), Jake Thurman (Group Executive (Cons)), Councillor Adrian Abbs, Councillor Phil Barnett, Councillor Jeff Brooks, Stephen Chard (Democratic Services Manager), Councillor Jeremy Cottam, Councillor Carlyne Culver, Councillor Lee Dillon, Councillor Owen Jeffery, Jack Karimi (Democratic Services Officer), Councillor Royce Longton, Councillor Alan Macro, Councillor Steve Masters, Councillor Erik Pattenden, Shiraz Sheikh (Service Lead - Legal and Democratic), Councillor Jo Stewart and Councillor Tony Vickers

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor David Marsh

PART I

21. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2021 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Leader.

22. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

23. Public Questions

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

- (a) A question standing in the name of Mr Nigel Foot on the subject of activities made available for young people in Newbury was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education.
- (b) A question standing in the name of Mr Ian Hall on the subject of the funding allocated for construction and stands at Newbury Rugby Club would receive a written response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (c) A question standing in the name of Mr William Beard on the subject of whether the Council's procurement arrangements would be limited to companies with a published carbon reduction plan was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development.
- (d) A question standing in the name of Mr Simon Pike on the subject of the statutory duties of the Council's highway works was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (e) A question standing in the name of Mr Paul Morgan on the subject of the Council forming its own housing development company was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development.
- (f) A question standing in the name of Mr Graham Storey on the subject of the potential improvements to the format of asking questions at Council and Executive meetings was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture.

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- (g) A question standing in the name of Mr Vaughan Miller on the subject of the costs of the recycling centre permit scheme and the booking system would receive a written response from the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (h) A question standing in the name of Mr John Gotelee on the subject of the treatment of empty buildings in West Berkshire Council was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development.
- (i) A question standing in the name of Mrs Sam Coppinger on the subject of traffic movements and whether these were restricted by hours of work planning restrictions was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (j) A question standing in the name of Ms Bridgette Jones on the subject of the development of a master plan for Membury Airfield Industrial Estate was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (k) A question standing in the name of Mr Nigel Foot on the subject of mental health support provided to students was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education.
- (l) A question standing in the name of Mr Ian Hall on the subject of the measuring of the water table on the existing football pitch would receive a written response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (m) A question standing in the name of Mr Simon Pike on the subject of the time taken to install dropped kerbs in Henwick Lane in Thatcham was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (n) A question standing in the name of Mrs Sam Coppinger on the subject of the experience and qualifications of the Council's planning officers was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (o) A question standing in the name of Ms Bridgette Jones on the subject of the development of the Membury Airfield Industrial Estate would receive a written response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (p) A question standing in the name of Mr Simon Pike on the subject of contractual responsibilities for the movement of utility poles needed for the completion of the pavement on Henwick Lane would receive a written response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (q) A question standing in the name of Mr Nigel Foot on the subject of which body was responsible for the removal of dead trees, branches and other debris that had fallen into the River Kennet would receive a written response from the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (r) A question standing in the name of Mr Simon Pike on the subject of whether the Council had a written policy or standard in place for the assessment of maintenance of pavements would receive a written response from the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.

24. Petitions

There were no petitions presented to the Executive.

25. Separate Food Waste Collection (EX4009)

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 6) which provided an update on progress made towards the introduction of free, weekly separate food waste collections from households in the district; highlighted potential opportunities, risks and issues for the project; and sought approval to enable separate food waste collections to be introduced.

Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter advised that capital funding of £900,000 had been provided to enable a separate, additional, weekly food waste collection service to be run from next year. This would enable the Council to save money as it would no longer have to pay additional costs for disposal of food waste and allow residents to dispose of food

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waste more frequently than at present. To date, the proposal had attracted cross-party support and negotiations with Veolia were drawing to a close with a commitment for funding to purchase the necessary food waste vehicles for a proposed launch of the service in the first quarter of next year. However, the lead time estimates had increased significantly to c. 10 – 12 months for the supply of these vehicles, likely due to the high number of Councils who were planning to introduce similar services in the near future. It was hoped that approval by Executive to the proposal would maintain pressure on the supply chain to enable a launch of the service as originally intended.

A question was asked as to the benefits for residents and the Council by introducing this service. Councillor Ardagh-Walter explained that this would be an entirely new service in comparison to the previous food waste service. The previous scheme saw food waste caddies emptied by green waste vehicles but the new scheme would be run by a specific service independent of green waste services. This would enable communications, publicity and encouragement to be much more forthcoming and for the service to be run on a weekly basis, which was not the case previously.

Councillor Carolyne Culver welcomed the initiative as a positive way of dealing with food waste and asked Councillor Ardagh-Walter to pass on her thanks to Kofi Adu-Gyamfi and his colleagues for their help in answering local queries and for their work on this important initiative. Councillor Culver sought clarification on the planned consultation with the public, how the scheme would work for residents living in flats and what would happen with the organic soil improver that would be produced as a result of the initiative. Councillor Ardagh-Walter said the public consultation had happened in several parts, most recently as part of the Environmental Strategy Delivery Plan, which had achieved a high level of enthusiasm and public support. The key area of consultation and engagement would be immediately prior to launch by communicating through as many channels as possible in order to encourage uptake. With regard to residents living in flats, the detail for collection of food waste had not yet been finalised but the need to make an attractive offer to those residents had been recognised. With regard to the soil improver, the food waste would be composted at the Padworth facility and was already being sold to and used by local farmers and horticultural businesses, and there was ample capacity to increase this. Councillor Culver asked if it would be possible for residents to have access to that soil improver. Councillor Ardagh-Walter was not able to give an answer to this question but agreed it would be an attractive idea and said he would consult with the team.

Councillor Vickers said that in light of the Government considering making Councils responsible for free collection of garden waste – which would include composted food waste – was this still the case or had this consideration been replaced by the separate collection of food waste? In addition, had the issue of reduction in food waste been looked at which would rely on an improvement in communication with the public by educating residents in how to achieve this. Councillor Ardagh-Walter agreed that the Government had been pressing local authorities for free garden waste collection, an area which was still very unclear and which had seen a financial push-back at regional and national level. It was hoped that funding would be available for this to be implemented but until such time the costed service would remain in place. With regard to educating and communicating with residents, it was hoped there would be a greater coordination between local authorities, Central Government, industry and other bodies in terms of messaging around the benefits and need for reducing food waste. Councillor Lynne Doherty added that as Portfolio Holder for Communications, she was very aware of what the team were doing around campaigns being undertaken in terms of recycling and reinforcing the message of how to achieve a reduction in food waste, particularly in the lead up to COP26.

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Councillor Adrian Abbs highlighted the risk of the delivery lead time of 10-12 months as a risk for the provision of the waste truck vehicles but also mentioned the national shortage of drivers which had an impact on the need for an additional six drivers for the proposed weekly food waste collection. This risk was reinforced by Veolia publicly stating they already had issues with availability of drivers in certain locations. For these reasons, Councillor Abbs cast doubt on the service being launched in the first quarter of next year and sought clarification on the financial impact to the Council if this indeed was the case. Councillor Ardagh-Walter said the lorry driver risk had already been noted and remained a consideration. With regard to vessel composting, Councillor Abbs sought clarification on what materials currently went in there. Councillor Ardagh-Walter said this was currently all garden waste and food waste. Councillor Abbs said that as food waste was currently allowed in green bins, and the report stated that food waste would be deposited in exactly the same place as green waste, rather than wait for food waste trucks to be purchased, why not remove the green bin charge and implement a food collection strategy along with more green waste to fill capacity and move towards carbon reduction. Councillor Ardagh-Walter said a charge needed to be made for green waste because of the financial cost to the Council of not doing so.

Councillor Macro said the report stated the IVC facility at Padworth had suitable, spare capacity but he remembered two or three years ago he had received confirmation that there were times when the amount of soil or compost being produced there was greater than the demand and was consequently being given away to farmers, and he therefore sought confirmation that this was not likely to occur again. With regard to the issue of the lack of use of green bins for food waste, Councillor Macro asked why, when the green bin charge was introduced, did the Council not encourage people to retain their green bins to be used for food waste. Lastly, Councillor Macro said he noted that vehicles and caddies would be funded by the Council but procured by Veolia and he wondered where the ownership of the vehicles and caddies would lie, for example if ownership was with Veolia but they ceased to trade, what would happen to the vehicles? Councillor Ardagh-Walter said he was unable to comment on what might or might not have occurred in the past with regard to capacity, but currently there was spare capacity at Padworth for composting material so there would be no issue when the food waste service was launched. With regard to funding and ownership, the PFI contract set up in 2005 stated that vehicles were legally owned by Veolia, a large and reputable long-standing company and therefore should Veolia cease to exist, the newly procured vehicles would consequently form a very small part of a much bigger problem for the Council. With regard to residents continuing to use green bins for food waste, Councillor Ardagh-Walter said this had very much been encouraged and many residents were currently using their green bins in this way.

Councillor Somner said he had been encouraged by the positive messages that had been received about the scheme. He had seen the scheme carried out in Reading which had largely been received positively by residents and felt the proposed scheme in West Berkshire would eliminate problems such as flies as a result of food being left out in warm weather. Councillor Somner said he was in full support of the proposed scheme and was happy to second it.

RESOLVED that approval be granted for the introduction of separate food waste collections in the district.

Other options considered: Alternative options outlined in paragraph 6.1 of the report.

26. **Revenue Financial Performance Report - Q1 of 2021/22 (EX4012)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 7) concerning the financial performance of the Council's revenue budgets and which provided a year-end forecast.

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There was a predicted underspend at year end of £0.3m taking into account under and over spends across the Directorates. In the People Directorate, there was a forecast overspend of £59,000 after the use of Government Covid-19 funding and service specific risk reserves which were allocated to the Adult Social Care and Children and Families Services budget in March 2021 which recognised the increased volatility, inherent in the ASC modelling in particular, as a result of the pandemic. In the Place Directorate, additional staffing costs were forecast reflecting pressures relating to the Local Plan and ecological assessments contributing towards a forecast over spend of £0.2m.

In the Resources Directorate there was a forecast overspend of £0.4m arising from less income than expected due to a number of schools leaving the Council insurance service in favour of cheaper Risk Protection Arrangements offered by the Department for Education and also additional temporary staff costs in the Finance Service. However, Capital Financing forecast a £1m underspend due to more efficient treasury management and more judicious use of lower interest rates and short-term borrowing.

In summary, the revenue budget was forecast to be underspent by just 0.2% which reflected the continued strong and robust financial management of the Council.

Councillor Lynne Doherty said the report highlighted the difficult circumstances the Council was still in with regard to the effects of Covid-19 as well as the uncertainty of funding going forward. Councillor Doherty thanked the Finance team for their excellent work in these uncertain times which were likely to remain for the remainder of the financial year. Councillor Doherty was disappointed to note from the report that the overspend in Children and Family Services was due to partners choosing not to contribute into the Family Safeguarding Model which was felt to be rather short-sighted given the impact on children and young people in the district.

Councillor Lee Dillon raised a concern over the use of risk reserves at this stage of the financial year and queried if those risk reserves were robust or would there be a call on general reserves to top up risk reserves at Q2? Councillor Ross Mackinnon said he felt the risk reserves were robust and could be relied upon, although it was generally recognised that any forecast or model might not prove to be accurate at the end of this financial year. With regard to reserves usage, Councillor Mackinnon pointed out that Covid-19 had hugely increased the volatility into that model and this had been recognised in the budget.

Councillor Carlyne Culver referred to paragraph 4.3 of the report which noted a spend of £0.5m in the Chief Executive's Office and queried what this spending activity related to. Councillor Mackinnon said the Chief Executive's Office was an administrative and back-office function but did not have the detail for the spend and would endeavour to answer this query as soon as possible.

Councillor Erik Pattenden sought clarification on the overall loss of £100,000 caused by what looked like the Department for Education undermining the Council and offering an alternate source of insurance. Councillor Mackinnon said this was not the case but thanked Councillor Pattenden for pointing it out.

With regard to partner agencies not currently contributing to the Family Safeguarding Model, Councillor Pattenden asked whether there was a risk to that service being cut if partner agencies continued not to contribute. Councillor Dominic Boeck said it was extremely disappointing that the CCG and Thames Valley Police had not seen fit to replicate the commitment to funding this model as they had done in earlier years and which they had been encouraged to continue to do so by both Members and Officers. Nevertheless, Councillor Boeck felt there was no risk to the service and all efforts would

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be made to continue with the service as it had become part of the culture in West Berkshire.

Councillor Adrian Abbs said the report mentioned the natural carbon reduction methods project and asked for clarification as to what this related to. Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter was unable to advise at the present time but would look into it and report back.

Councillor Alan Macro noted in the report that Long Term Services were overspent by £2.1m due to higher client numbers than modelled – 1,734 vs 1,689 – and asked whether the latter was the original model number or whether the number had been adjusted as a result of Covid-19. Councillor Jo Stewart said that as far as she was aware the figure of 1,689 was the original model number. The model was one of those conversations that appeared every quarter and took place with Finance Officers who helped to build the model along with information and expertise provided by the Adult Social Care team and Commissioning team. The model was built on known data, i.e. things that had actually happened, and then expected to predict what would happen. If the situation then changed substantially, it could appear that the model was incorrect even though it had relied on known data. The report showed the model numbers as well as a forecast line and Councillor Stewart suggested that it was the forecast line that should be worked with as that was based on actual numbers and she had asked the Finance and Adult Social Care teams to work out how the model could be tested if numbers did not appear to match what was happening in reality. Councillor Stewart said the strategy for care homes was also being looked at as there were some clients with complex needs which the Council's own care homes were unable to meet, necessitating a need to approach the external market. This review might lead to an expansion in the Council's care home provision or a change in the services provided which would involve a consultation with the public, though there was no timeframe for this currently.

Councillor Mackinnon said from a budgetary perspective of the model, it should be recognised that the volatility relating to Covid-19 had hugely increased and prudent measures had been put in place to deal with it to the Council's credit. Councillor McKinnon thought it was fair to point out that by their very nature models would never be 100% accurate and were therefore subject to regular update. Councillor Dillon suggested that in terms of the modelling review Councillor Stewart had referred to, there might be merit in benchmarking against other Councils modelling to see how accurate their modelling was compared to West Berkshire's and whether the LGA could offer any support.

RESOLVED to note:

- the year-end forecast of £0.3m under spend. The year-end forecast took account of provision that was made in reserves for specific risks at the time of budget setting. Without this provision, the forecast would be an over spend of £0.5m.
- the ongoing impact that Covid-19 would have on the 2021/22 budget as the Council saw increased demand for some services, but continued to be supported by external funding.

Other options considered: None.

27. Capital Financial Performance Report - Q1 of 2021/22 (EX4013)

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 8) which outlined the forecast outturn position for financial year 2021/22 as at Q1.

The capital programme invested in the future of the district with new schools, improved roads, an active transport infrastructure, outstanding new sports facilities and environmental projects. The projected capital investment for the year was £56.5m, a

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forecast under spend of £3.7m. The under spend did not mean that projects had been lost but were merely delayed and the reasons for delay were project-specific. Overall, the vital capital programme remained on track to deliver outstanding new amenities and environmental improvements for all residents.

Councillor Tony Vickers asked for more detail on the re-design of the Robin Hood roundabout and the delays on the A4. Councillor Richard Somner stated that the re-design being looked at was to take further opportunity for active travel funding and to build that into the previous draft design so that the outcome would be bigger and better than was originally planned.

Councillor Erik Pattenden asked why there had been a delay with the i-College project. Councillor Dominic Boeck said it had been very difficult to reach agreement over the tenancy of the site that would now be developed. However, Councillor Lynne Doherty said, having been involved with the project for some time, she was very pleased to see that it was now progressing.

RESOLVED that the proposed reprofiling of £4.3 million of future expenditure from 2021/22 into financial year 2022/23 be approved.

Other options considered: None.

28. **Key Accountable Performance 2021/22: Quarter One (EX4000)**

The Executive considered a report (Agenda Item 9) which sought to provide assurance that the core business and Council priorities for improvement measures in the Council Strategy 2019-2023 were being managed effectively. During Q1, strategic management and Members of the Executive had identified additional outcomes to be included in the Council Strategy Delivery Plan and arrangements were being made to include them in the Q2 performance report.

The report highlighted successes and, where performance had fallen below the expected level, presented information on the remedial action taken, and the impact of that action.

Councillor Howard Woollaston said the statistics in the report showed the outstanding performance of the Council and he thanked Officers for their efforts in difficult times. Some of the previous quarter's indicators had been seriously impacted by Covid-19, including the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates as well as Ofsted inspections but these were now back to normal levels. Councillor Woollaston flagged two areas – appraisals and training – though these had measures in place to allow them to return to previous acceptable levels.

Councillor Lynne Doherty drew the Executive's attention to paragraphs 5.8, 5.9, 5.10 and 5.11 of the report which showed several awards had been made to West Berkshire Council. These were noteworthy in particular as they had been achieved over the last 18 months when it had been very difficult to continue business as usual whilst responding to a global pandemic. Councillor Doherty said it was also reassuring to see some of the positive economic indicators considering the concerns with regard to recovery following the impact of Covid-19.

Councillor Jo Stewart clarified that the provisional numbers on the dashboards on page 79 of the report were because the majority of the Adult Social Care figures had to be given final sign-off from the Department of Health and Social Care to make sure that the Council aligned internally with what was reported statutorily.

Councillor Lee Dillon noted that the average number of days to make a full decision on new housing benefit claims was 20 which was one day over the target of 19 days and the rationale was that the team was down one member of staff, the vacancy for which was

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currently being advertised. In addition, self-isolation grants were due to end in September 2021 and recruitment would take place for an additional staff member. Councillor Dillon asked for clarification as whether it was intended therefore to recruit one or two new additional staff members and whether the need for additional resource should have been recognised earlier. Councillor Ross Mackinnon said as far as he was aware the intention was to recruit two new staff members. The Revenue and Benefits team had proved to be an invaluable resource throughout the pandemic and had been redeployed across the Council in various guises to form a rapid response team across many different services. The Government had provided financial support but unfortunately no additional staff had been provided in order to administer it. Rather than it being the case that the need for additional resource had not been recognised, it was more a case that staffing and recruitment had been a challenge and there had been an inability to bring in staff with the appropriate skills and expertise.

Councillor Alan Macro drew attention to paragraph 5.29 of the report which stated *“the Regulation 19 consultation to inform the submission of a New Local Plan for examination (Strategic Goal) in November 2022 is on track and in line with the Local Development Scheme agreed in April 2020”* and asked whether that had been updated since the Local Plan had been put on pause. Councillor Doherty said she believed the report had been published before the pause of the Local Plan so there was likely to be a change for Quarter 2.

Councillor Tony Vickers noted that paragraphs 5.13 and 5.23 referred to child protection issues for which reporting of these had understandably increased since lockdown and he asked where West Berkshire stood against their peers, whether this reflected a national pattern and what action was being taken to deal with this increase. Councillor Dominic Boeck confirmed there had been an increase in referrals and incidents to Children’s Services. Close working was being undertaken with partner agencies and Social Workers were focused on supporting those families who were at greatest risk. Councillor Boeck added that some of the issues children were facing were affected by their home circumstances but also that some of the referrals were at the extreme end of the spectrum that started with anxiety in schools. Councillor Doherty said the increase in referrals was a reflection of the national picture and issues that had been hidden over the last 18 months had now come to the surface. Councillor Boeck said that in 2020, the Council’s Psychologists had warned there was a hidden problem and subsequently the department had prepared themselves for the realisation of the concerns that were being raised.

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

Other options considered: None.

29. Members' Questions

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

- (a) A question standing in the name of Councillor Adrian Abbs on the subject of additional costs incurred following the fire at Faraday Road was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development.
- (b) A question standing in the name of Councillor Phil Barnett on the subject of the disturbance that could be caused by drones was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Transformation.

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- (c) A question standing in the name of Councillor Martha Vickers on the subject of the Council's previous car club contract with Co-Wheels would receive a written response from Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (d) A question standing in the name of Councillor Tony Vickers on the subject of the funding collected from developers since the start of the Newbury Car Club and how much funding was unallocated at the time the Council changed its service provider was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (e) A question standing in the name of Councillor Jeremy Cottam on the subject of the Council's highway maintenance programme and the policy for cutting back overgrown shrubs and trees on urban roads was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (f) A question standing in the name of Councillor Alan Macro querying whether any consultation had been undertaken regarding the effectiveness and popularity of the booking system used for the Council's two HWRCs (outside of the centres themselves) was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (g) A question standing in the name of Councillor Royce Longton on the subject of how people booked to visit the HWRCs without internet access was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (h) A question standing in the name of Councillor Erik Pattenden on the subject of the decision path taken in deciding to maintain the HWRC booking system that restricted residents to one visit per week (until this was recently lifted) was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (i) A question standing in the name of Councillor Owen Jeffery on the subject of why the HWRCs had not extended their opening hours in the spring and summer months was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (j) A question standing in the name of Councillor Lee Dillon on the subject of why it was considered to be unfair on other users if a resident visited the HWRCs more than once a week was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (k) A question standing in the name of Councillor Jeff Brooks on the subject of what communications had taken place with Vodafone regarding Vodafone's retrenchment of their office space at their Headquarters was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development.
- (l) A question standing in the name of Councillor Adrian Abbs on the subject of why a booking system remained in place for the Council's HWRCs was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (m) A question standing in the name of Councillor Phil Barnett on the subject of whether one visit per week to the HWRCs was enough for each household, particularly during spring and summer, was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (n) A question standing in the name of Councillor Jeremy Cottam on the subject of the Council's footpaths maintenance programme and policy for cutting back overgrown shrubs and trees on urban paths was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.
- (o) A question standing in the name of Councillor Martha Vickers on the subject of methods for payment of the green bin charge would receive a written response from Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (p) A question standing in the name of Councillor Tony Vickers on the subject of Member involvement or public consultation of Car Club members that took place prior to the change to the Car Club contract was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport.

EXECUTIVE - 2 SEPTEMBER 2021 - MINUTES

- (q) A question standing in the name of Councillor Jeremy Cottam on the subject of direct debit payment processes would receive a written response from Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (r) A question standing in the name of Councillor Jeff Brooks on the subject of whether any savings had been negotiated with Veolia as a result of an, until recently, restricted service was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (s) A question standing in the name of Councillor Tony Vickers on the subject of restrictions to commercial operators as opposed to residents to HWRCs was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.
- (t) A question standing in the name of Councillor Jeff Brooks on the subject of what the cost and effort has been of providing a telephone contact within the Waste Service so that residents could book extra visits to the HWRCs was answered by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste.

(The meeting commenced at 5.00pm and closed at 7.38pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

Executive – 14 October 2021

Item 3 – Declarations of Interest

Verbal Item

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Item 4:

Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 14 October 2021.

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

(a) **Question submitted by Alison May to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste:**

"The Environment Strategy commits to achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2030. Can you provide a Carbon Neutrality 2030 progress update report on actions achieved to date and the forward plan for the next 12 months?"

(b) **Question submitted by Gareth Beard to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste:**

"There appears to be a delay in being able to use the new EV chargepoints around the district. Could the executive give an update on the roll out programme please?"

(c) **Question submitted by Nigel Foot to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste:**

"West Berkshire Council is the riparian owner of the land through which the River Kennet flows in Newbury, from Northcroft Park in the west, to the area on the north bank of the river in the east, opposite Newbury Marina and Chandlery. Can West Berkshire Council contact the Environment Agency, as a matter of urgency, about the obstructions (branches, dead trees and other debris) along this stretch of river?"

(d) **Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance, Leisure and Culture:**

"Who is responsible for the decision not to insure the football club house building? Put simply where does the buck stop?"

(e) **Question submitted by Paul Morgan to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

"Can the Council please confirm what contracts have been placed with Alliance Leisure and / or Alliance Building Services, when these contracts were placed, the value of these contracts and the scope?"

(f) **Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

"Please would the Council list the present members of the LRIE steering group?"

(g) **Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport:**

"Would the Council kindly advise the target date for the draft Local Flood Risk Management Delivery Plan, assuming the LFRM Strategy 2021-2026 is adopted by the Executive at their December 2021 meeting?"

Item 4:

Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 14 October 2021.

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

(h) **Question submitted by John Gotelee to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport:**

"Since the councils own design guidance documents advise that drainage and similar infrastructure underpins good design and should be considered at the start of planning. What consultations with the councils drainage engineers have taken place in respect of the LRIE regeneration?"

(i) **Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

"Regarding the public question answer (h) at the Full Council meeting 9th of September 2021.

"Only properties within the Councils red line freehold ownership form this specific part of the contract which you refer, the properties you refer to fall outside the red line"

Please would the Council confirm if the two residential properties Braunton and Nonesuch RG14 2BA were included in any other part of the LRIE development contract they signed with St. Modwen Developments Ltd?"

(j) **Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport:**

"Please will the LLFA agree to issue Scoping details for an existing LLFA Project for the Northbrook Stream as visibility of the Delivery Plan is somewhat off and its existence was identified in a recent public meeting attended by a representative for the Lead Local Flood Authority?"

(k) **Question submitted by Paula Saunderson to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport:**

"Will the LLFA consider undertaking briefing sessions to Planning Officers & Planning Committee members on the importance of considering and including Nature-Based Sustainable Drainage solutions and Principle 8 in Applications which come before the Officers and Committees. (This relates to the promulgating the wider use of the excellent SuDS SPD (2018) introduced in November 2018)?"

Executive – 14 October 2021

Item 5 – Petitions

Verbal Item

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Update on Wokingham Exit from the PPP

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	14 October 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Hilary Cole
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	23 September 2021
Report Author:	Paul Anstey
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4115 and EX4145 merged

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the progress of the project detailing the withdrawal of Wokingham Borough Council (Wokingham) from the Public Protection Partnership (PPP) in line with the requirements of the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) (EX4145).
- 1.2 To clarify the approach being taken on 'Traded Services', which is essentially the agreement between West Berkshire Council (the Council) and WOK to maintain a contractual relationship for elements of the public protection service and reduce the overall financial risks for all parties (EX4115).

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Agree to the principle of pursuing 2 years of efficiency loss compensation as detailed at 5.4.
- 2.2 Agree to consider the proposed revenue investment bids as detailed at 5.7 within the Council's budget setting process.
- 2.3 Support the negotiation parameters for Traded Services, as listed at 5.14.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The Councils aim is for this project to be cost neutral. As a contingency, the project has a budget of £55k (based on the request to Wokingham via Joint Public Protection Committee [JPPC] in March 2021). With a revised project closure date of 31/3/2022 the new forecast is £78k. This remains subject to liability negotiation.

	<p>Parameters for the risks of redundancy costs for the PPP have now been estimated. A detailed analysis can be found at Appendix A.</p> <p>In summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Central risk to overall cost is the ability of Wokingham to attract staff. 2. There are currently disagreements in the approach towards operational structures and how they are implemented. 3. Based on this we have profiled cost estimates on a 25%, 50%, 75% and 100% recruitment success profile. This does not include a technical assessment of job matching and the impact of Traded Services. 4. WOK have requested to see the figures both as averages and worst case. This means taking the staff in each group and collating their individual redundancy calculations. 5. WOK worst case is therefore 25% recruitment at 100% liability = £837k 6. WOK best case is therefore 100% recruitment at 34% liability = £19k 7. PPP worst case is 25% recruitment at WOK 34% liability = £552k 8. Traded Services, in value terms, accounts for about a 1/3rd of the WOK budget so will reduce any bill by that amount. <p>Another factor to consider is the ability to use vacant posts as a negotiation tool. There is currently approx. £200k of vacant posts and the project teams are evaluating the situation. Most likely time to make the decision will be after step 2 consultation i.e. when we know how many expressions of interest we have for the Wokingham structure.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>Step 1 consultation for Organisational Change closed on 27th August with Step 2 documents issued on 7th September. Full documentation is at Appendix B.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>A 'without prejudice' meeting has taken place, key actions are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the content of the Exit Plan. Outstanding items include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Finalised costs/liabilities for redundancies, pension strain and capital projects. 2. Finalise the Heads of Terms for Traded Services.

	<p>3. Make a provisional ‘offer’ to Wokingham on a without prejudice basis.</p> <p>This will enable both parties to consider their options under the dispute resolution process as outlined in the IAA. These matters were confirmed by email.</p>			
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>The project governance board have been provided a series of project highlight reports to identify risks and proposed mitigation, the broad categories of risk is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management capacity - Staff morale - Operational response to COVID -19 matters - Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) (interpretation dispute and operational disruption) - Media communication/coverage - Financial liabilities - Contracts with suppliers - Single Case Management System project - Inter Authority Agreement interpretation dispute - Availability of key staff over summer holiday period 			
<p>Property:</p>	<p>There are no direct property implications from this report. Consideration will need to be given to the use of Theale Gateway as part of future PPP operations but this is not a short term issue.</p>			
<p>Policy:</p>	<p>Consideration will need to be given to the PPP policy framework as part of the process. At this stage nothing has been identified.</p>			
	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>Negative</p>	<p>Commentary</p>
<p>Equalities Impact:</p>				

Update on Wokingham Exit from the PPP

A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		The step 1 consultation aims to engage staff and unions to ensure the process is fair, open and transparent.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		As above
Environmental Impact:		X		No impact arising from this paper.
Health Impact:		X		None.
ICT Impact:			X	There will be some small resource requirements from ICT to support data migration. This has been discussed and confirmed with the Applications Development Manager who will act as gatekeeper.
Digital Services Impact:			X	As a result of this paper there will be workload demand on Digital Services to assist in changes to PPP online content. This is being mitigated through the project by using external resources, due to be paid for by Wokingham as part of negotiations on cost liabilities.
Council Strategy Priorities:			X	Termination of a long term partnership does impact on the Council's abilities to deliver its strategic priorities but there are a range of mitigation measures to reduce the impact.
Core Business:			X	There are inevitably demands placed on the PPP Management Team to facilitate

				requests for information from Wokingham.
Data Impact:			X	As part of the wider ICT implications there are a range of data risks to manage. This is being dealt with through the project governance in liaison with ICT colleagues.
Consultation and Engagement:	Rebecca Bird (HR), Shiraz Sheikh and Claire Say (Legal), Matt Scalpello (ICT), Ian Wiggington and Carolyn Loosen (Finance), Sean Murphy (PPP), Damian James and Kevin Gibbs (Bracknell Forest), PPP staff consultation.			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 Following the previous update to the Joint Public Protection Committee this paper combines items EX4145 and EX4115 on the Forward Plan.
- 4.2 The Council are clear that there should be no financial liabilities as a result of Wokingham’s decision. As part of the risk management process a worst case scenario has been established which looks at an outcome from these negotiations where Wokingham’s position on liabilities is confirmed and the PPP is due to pay 66% of the total cost (estimate at this stage) which is £552k. This assumes Wokingham recruit 25% of the required staff to their structure. A successful negotiation with Wokingham on Traded Services reduces this by 1/3rd i.e. adjusted liability of £368k. If the best case scenario arises the Council will have no costs to pay.
- 4.3 The project team have estimated Wokingham’s termination to result in £315k total lost efficiency per year. This is based in the principles of the disinvestment methodology previously decided through the JPPC. In discussion with Bracknell Forest, it is considered a suitable negotiation position to seek 2 years compensation i.e. £630k, this would be in addition to the capital liabilities of £163k, making the opening without prejudice offer £793k (no adjustment for Traded Services).
- 4.4 The PPP has experienced large volume increases in workload during COVID-19 relating to matters beyond COVID-19 such as housing, environmental protection and trading standards and is not showing any signs of reducing in recovery. As a result revenue investment bids totalling £250k per year have been put forward. The reduction of 34% revenue contribution from Wokingham from April 2022 will inevitably impact on service resilience and loss of collective efficiency. Bracknell Forest have indicated their support for this approach and would be split 60/40 i.e. the Council would contribute £150k.
- 4.5 Step 1 of the organisational change consultation process has concluded on 27th August, staff had 3 opportunities to engage in person and feedback was minimal. A report was published on the 2nd September. Step 2 has begun, with a range of staff meetings and 1-1s where requested, and is due to complete on October 5th.

- 4.6 A draft Heads of Terms for Traded Services has now been exchanged with Wokingham, whilst many areas have been agreed there remains disagreement on the issue of financial liabilities. The key risk to manage is the legacy redundancy and pension strain costs of staff involved in the arrangements. This is being managed through negotiation with Head of Legal at Wokingham, the principle being to ensure no liabilities are passed back to the Council inadvertently. The estimated benefit is that all redundancy and pension strain costs would reduce by 1/3rd based on the relative budgets being negotiated.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 The project has reached a critical phase, with detailed financial risk modelling and staff consultation beginning on the organisational change process required as a result of Wokingham's termination notification.

Background

- 5.2 Since Wokingham's decision to exit the PPP the Council has sort to:
- Support the legal position that negotiations proceed on the basis that Wokingham are 100% liable for redundancy costs.
 - Support the ICT position that the Council does not offer to host PPP data for Wokingham beyond March 2022.
 - Agree that any established pressure bids, resulting from operational gaps in the PPP as a consequence of budget reductions and increased workloads should be submitted to Budget Board in August 2021 (net of any costs recovered from Wokingham as part of negotiations).
 - Support the principle of Traded Services where it is established that it reduces the financial risk to the Council and adds value to the new PPP that will form once Wokingham's exit is finalised.
- 5.3 This report details the progress made in light of these decisions and the implications of the finalised organisational change document.

Costs Liabilities

- 5.4 These break down as follows:
- Redundancy – estimates detailed at **Appendix A**.
The Council position is that there should be no costs arising from Wokingham's exit. After conducting some risk management assessments the worst case scenario for the Council is that Wokingham's position on liabilities is upheld and the PPP is due to pay 66% of the total cost (estimate at this stage) which is £552k. This assumes Wokingham recruit 25% of the required staff to their structure. There are still a range of mitigation options which can positively impact on this position e.g. vacancies, job matching, suitable alternative employment, redeployment and Traded Services.

Update on Wokingham Exit from the PPP

- Compensation – loss of efficiency for the remainder of the IAA (5 years). This is based in the logic of the ‘Disinvestment Methodology’ which is disputed by Wokingham.

34% management team efficiency = £182k per year

34% case management efficiency = £64k per year

34% intelligence efficiency = £69k per year

Total lost efficiency per year estimated at £315k. If this was sought for the remainder of the contract total compensation would be £1.575M. This assumes that no staff would be made redundant in these areas and PPP would continue to employ to current levels. In discussion with Bracknell Forest, it is considered a suitable negotiation position to seek 2 years compensation i.e. £630k. More detailed work is being done to confirm the accuracy of the actual number.

These figures would significantly reduce if vacancies can be cashed and Traded Services are agreed based on current scope of functions and services to be commissioned.

- Organisational change challenge risks (Employment Tribunal)
This has been estimated by Bevans (external Counsel) as 1 year gross salary of each affected member of staff, capped at £84k.
- Project costs
Current forecast is £78k. This includes external legal costs.
- Capital repayments
These have been highlighted to Wokingham and estimated at £163k, broken down as follows:
 - Tascomi – 34% of £290k project = £98.6k (needs adjusting based on leave date and repayments already made)
 - Theale Gateway Lease – 34% for 5 years = £44k
 - Theale Gateway Building Works = £10k
 - 34% of Rental agreements for lease cars = £5.5k
 - Website and rebranding = £5k

5.5 It is also noted at this stage that costs arising from dispute resolution as laid out in the IAA could reach £50k.

ICT

5.6 This matter has now been resolved and Wokingham have progressed 2 new projects dealing with data migration and their customer journey (integrated with their customer contact centre) that should see data migration completed by March 2022.

Revenue Investment Bids

5.7 The PPP Manager has established 2 bids, the summary text for each bid is detailed below:

- ***Funding sought is 2 posts in private sector housing at Grade I and 1 post in Environment Quality at Grade I. Total annual cost with on costs of £150K with West Berkshire contribution being approximately 60% i.e. £90K.***

The Public Protection Service is facing unprecedented levels of demand. Demand in terms of service requests are some 35% higher than in 2019/20. Although these increases cut across all aspects of the service they are particularly marked in the areas of private sector housing standards (including caravan sites) and environmental quality.

A lot of this can be tracked to increased levels of demand resulting from increased development on the West Berkshire / Bracknell areas resulting in an increase in planning applications to be considered, commercial nuisance relating to development and matters arising from the types of development and significant increase in private sector rentals and issues related to private sector property arising from conversions of former commercial and industrial accommodation often to a poor standard or giving rise to safety issues.

There are also issues arising from the ways that people now live and work with a much bigger emphasis on home working and a lower tolerance of nuisance issues. Finally there is also work arising from changes to property safety with new legislation post Grenfell.

- ***The total amount sought is £100K per annum for management arrangements post Wokingham.***

Management of the new two authority service as a result of the decision by Wokingham to leave the shared service arrangement (34% reduction in financial contribution). This deals with investigation oversight, performance and risk monitoring, complaint and FOI response, policy and procedure development, governance and communications. Currently there are 4 managers reporting into the PPP Manager, 3 are part time and Joint Management Board has determined that this level is the minimum requirement to manage the service risks. If this bid is unsuccessful there will be a re-evaluation of pro-active service levels to accommodate the costs.

West Berkshire contribution would be approximately 60% with BFC funding the other 40%. BFC have indicated this is likely to get support from members.

5.8 Bracknell Forest have indicated their support for both bids. This is in recognition of the inevitable backlog of pro-active workloads that have had to be paused whilst COVID-19 response work has been conducted. Local data, Regional and National organisations are all reporting that COVID-19 recovery will have a disproportionate impact on regulatory services and those who have been heavily involved with public health incident management. There is widespread coverage in both Trading Standards and Environmental Health professional journalism that there is a shortage of staff to deal

with these pressures. This is also magnified by the impending changes as a result of Brexit.

5.9 If these bids are unsuccessful the PPP will need to re-evaluate its service planning and key performance indicators to adjust for the reduced headcount and higher demands.

Organisational Change

5.10 There has been ongoing dialogue with Human Resources colleagues, both internally and with Wokingham, to establish the approach to organisational change. The Step 1 consultation (to establish the process) closed on 27th August. Step 2 (detailed consultation and the inclusion of Wokingham's proposed structure) was issued to staff on 7th September. The documents are details in **Appendix B**.

5.11 Based on current estimates the worst case scenario for the number of staff likely to be put at risk is 19. The cost for this is estimated to be £837k. If the Council's position on liability i.e. that Wokingham are 100% liable, is not upheld this would lead to a PPP liability of £552k.

'Traded Services'

5.12 The latest draft Heads of Terms are detailed in **Appendix C**.

In summary the Services being offered are as follows:

- Trading Standards:
 - Food standards including quality, labelling and food fraud;
 - Animal Health and Welfare – on farm and establishments including contingency planning;
 - Fair Trading including: travel, estate agency, lettings;
 - Fraud, theft and money laundering including doorstep crime;
 - Intellectual property crime;
 - Metrology (weights and measures);
 - Product safety;
 - Age restricted products;
 - Road traffic – weight restrictions, overloads;
 - Support with confidence; and
 - Tobacco and alcohol harm reduction programme.
- Intelligence:
 - Assessment of Client data to provide day to day operational support in effective investigation and resource planning; and
 - Contribution towards Client strategic and tactical assessment.
- Case Management:
 - Case management and legal advice from beginning to end of case for all public protection cases in-house or contracted;
 - Court file preparation;
 - Court Work;

Update on Wokingham Exit from the PPP

- Trial work (if not instructed to external Counsel);
 - First Tier and Employment Tribunal Input;
 - Financial Investigator;
 - Advice and checking of procedural applications;
 - Checking notices and expert instructions; and
 - Senior Appropriate Officer provision for Proceeds of Crime.
- Air Quality:
 - Changing and maintenance of air quality monitoring stations and diffusion tubes;
 - Keeping under review action areas:
 - Appropriate liaison Client internal services to enable effective co-ordination of air quality data for Client decision making;
 - Analysis of data and drafting and submission of annual status reports; and
 - Management of the DEFRA funded particulate project on behalf of the Client.
 - General Service Development; a commitment to support Wokingham in implementing Microsoft PowerBI for the listed Functions and Services.

5.13 Cost Benefit Analysis of Traded Services. The PPP continues to have a range of successful grant funded services. This activity accounts for a good proportion of income and the management team are well accustomed to managing client relationships. In financial terms it is worth £439k (1/3rd of Wokingham's current payment for Services under the IAA) in year 1 revenue and has a positive impact of between £30k and £180k on the PPP's overall redundancy liability (accounting for different levels of recruitment into the new Wokingham structure). The detailed profiles for redundancy liability estimates are at **Appendix A**.

Service/Function	Service Levels without Traded Services	Service Levels with Traded Services	Redundancy Costs RAG Rating	Resilience RAG Rating
Trading Standards	R	G	R	A
Intelligence	R	G	A	R
Case Management	A	G	A	R
Air Quality	R	G	A	A
Management	A	G	A	R

PPP Joint Management Board have already stated that the management team must not be reduced, there are only 4 managers reporting to the PPP Manager, 3 of whom are part time.

Case Management is also an area which provides high levels of operational efficiency and effectiveness. Both would be unchanged in the event of an unsuccessful negotiation on Traded Services.

Risks associated with no Traded Services

- Reduced ability to seek and succeed in attracting external funding.
- Loss of specialisms across the profession.
- Reduced resilience in the following areas:
 - Online investigations;
 - Vulnerable witness support;
 - Victim support;
 - Accredited financial investigations;
 - Directed surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence;
 - Investigation procedure and oversight;
 - Links with partner organisations e.g. Thames Valley Police;
 - Data analysis for developing strategic and tactical assessments;
 - Court file preparation;
 - Advocacy at Magistrates and Crown Court;
 - Trial and tribunal work; and
 - Proceeds of Crime arrangements.

5.14 The key area requiring clarification and the most likely topic of disagreement is the termination liabilities. The current negotiation parameters are as follows:

- Do not agree to a term shorter than that of the existing IAA;
- Do not have any general termination clauses that allow Wokingham to terminate/break early and therefore bypass the existing IAA arrangements, which based on Council interpretation is 100% liability;
- Allow for break clauses based around performance and costs issues; and
- Negotiate on liabilities for break clause subjects, but aim for no more than 40% (current agreed %age)

Proposals

5.15 Agree to the principle of pursuing 2 years of efficiency loss compensation as detailed at 5.4.

5.16 Agree to the revenue investment bids as detailed at 5.7 to be considered through the budget planning process.

5.17 Support the negotiation parameters for Traded Services, as listed at 5.14.

6 Other options considered

6.1 A more aggressive line of negotiation would be to seek greater levels of compensation given the IAA has a further 5 years to run post Wokingham termination i.e. the full £1.575m, but this is seen as counterproductive to the overall process i.e. project delays have wider organisational costs and reputation risks.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 There has been progress made since the Council last considered this issue and there is an improved understanding of the legal, HR and financial risks, with the relationship with Wokingham remains productive.
- 7.2 The PPP has been very heavily impacted by COVID-19 and based on all available information from local, regional and national reports demand levels during recovery will remain. The revenue investment bids are a reflection of this and are inevitably impacted by the budget changes that will result from Wokingham's termination. The management team are regularly reviewing their operational risk and resilience registers to balance reactive and proactive workloads, loss of revenue budget has historically led to reduced proactive work being carried out.
- 7.3 The negotiations have led to agreement that a without prejudice offer should be made to establish whether there is a possible commercial decision to be made rather than pursuing formal dispute resolution as detailed in the Inter Authority Agreement, which have their own costs associated with them. The opening position should be sufficient to cover 2 years of potential structural pressures, giving suitable flexibility to assess impact and encourage dialogue with Wokingham representatives.
- 7.4 The remaining cost liability mitigation options of Traded Services, vacancies, job matching, suitable alternative employment and redeployment should all be viewed positively and it remains the position of the Project Team that a deal can be done that works for all parties.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Analysis of financial risk from redundancy
- 8.2 Appendix B – Organisational Change Process Document
- 8.3 Appendix C – Draft Traded Services Document

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

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

Wards affected: all

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Document Control

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

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			

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a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	Adjustment for BuyBack (33% reduction based on budget value)		
Staff Group	Current Total No of Staff	PPPMKII Structure	No of Staff 'At Risk' if all staff choose to stay in current roles	Proposed new WOK Total	No of Staff in WOK (Internal Appointment Rate 25%)	No of Staff 'At Risk' (WOK Internal Appointment Rate 25%)	No of staff WOK need to externally recruit	WOK 100% Averaged Redundancy Cost	WOK 34% Averaged Redundancy Cost	WOK 100% Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	WOK 34% Worst Case Redundancy Cost '000s	PPP Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ 000s	WOK Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	WOK 34% Worst Case Redundancy Cost '000s	PPP Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ 000s
Management	14	14	0	6	0	0	6.0	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Enforcement Officer with Professional Qualifications	26	17	9	16	2	6.8	13.8	£ 270,601	£ 92,004	£418,544	£ 142,305	£ 276,239	£ 279,029	£ 94,870	£ 184,159
Enforcement without Professional Qualifications	37	25	12	8	3	9	5.0	£ 203,182	£ 69,082	£383,327	£ 130,331	£ 252,996	£ 255,552	£ 86,888	£ 168,664
Support	13	9	4	2	1	3	1.0	£ 33,610	£ 11,427	£35,118	£ 11,940	£ 23,178	£ 23,412	£ 7,960	£ 15,452
Specialist	10	10	0	2	0	0	2.0	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
	100	75	25	34	6	18.75	27.75	£ 507,393	£ 172,514	£ 836,989	£ 284,576	£ 552,413	£ 557,993	£ 189,718	£ 368,275

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	Adjustment for BuyBack (33% reduction based on budget value)		
Staff Group	Current Total No of Staff	PPPMKII Structure	No of Staff 'At Risk' if all staff choose to stay in current roles	Proposed new WOK Total	No of Staff in WOK (Internal Appointment Rate 50%)	No of Staff 'At Risk' (WOK Internal Appointment Rate 50%)	No of staff WOK need to externally recruit	WOK 100% Averaged Redundancy Cost	WOK 34% Averaged Redundancy Cost	WOK Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	WOK 34% Worst Case Redundancy Cost '000s	PPP Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ 000s	WOK Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	WOK 34% Worst Case Redundancy Cost '000s	PPP Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ 000s
Management	14	14	0	6	0	0	6.0	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Enforcement Officer with Professional Qualifications	26	17	9	16	5	5	11.5	£ 180,401	£ 61,336	£ 316,327	£ 107,551	£208,776	£210,885	£71,701	£139,184
Enforcement without Professional Qualifications	37	25	12	8	6	6	2.0	£ 135,454	£ 46,055	£ 274,412	£ 93,300	£181,112	£182,941	£62,200	£120,741
Support	13	9	4	2	2	2	0.0	£ 22,407	£ 7,618	£ 24,349	£ 8,279	£16,071	£16,233	£5,519	£10,714
Specialist	10	10	0	2	0	0	2.0	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£0	£0	£0	£0
	100	75	25	34	13	13	21.5	£ 338,262	£ 115,009	£ 615,088	£ 209,130	£405,958	£410,059	£139,420	£270,639

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	Adjustment for BuyBack (33% reduction based on budget value)		
Staff Group	Current Total No of Staff	PPPMKII Structure	No of Staff 'At Risk' if all staff choose to stay in current roles	Proposed new WOK Total	No of Staff in WOK (Internal Appointment Rate 75%)	No of Staff 'At Risk' (WOK Internal Appointment Rate 75%)	No of staff WOK need to externally recruit	WOK 100% Averaged Redundancy Cost	WOK 34% Averaged Redundancy Cost	WOK Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	WOK 34% Worst Case Redundancy Cost '000s	PPP Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ 000s	WOK Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	WOK 34% Worst Case Redundancy Cost '000s	PPP Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ 000s
Management	14	14	0	6	0.0	0	6.0	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -

Enforcement Officer with Professional Qualifications	26	17	9	16	6.8	2	9.3	£ 45,100	£ 15,334	£134,769	£45,821	£ 88,948	£ 89,846	£ 30,548	£ 59,298
Enforcement without Professional Qualifications	37	25	12	8	9.0	3	-1.0	£ 33,864	£ 11,514	£72,953	£24,804	£ 48,149	£ 48,635	£ 16,536	£ 32,099
Support	13	9	4	2	3.0	1	-1.0	£ 5,602	£ 1,905	£12,200	£4,148	£ 8,052	£ 8,133	£ 2,765	£ 5,368
Specialist	10	10	0	2	0.0	0	2.0	£ -	£ -	£0	£0	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
	100	75	25	34	19	6.25	15.25	£ 84,566	£ 28,752	£219,922	£74,773	£ 145,148	£ 146,615	£ 49,849	£ 96,766

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	Adjustment for BuyBack (33% reduction based on budget value)		
													WOK Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	WOK 34% Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	PPP Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s
Staff Group	Current Total No of Staff	PPPMKII Structure	No of Staff 'At Risk' if all staff choose to stay in current roles	Proposed new WOK Total	No of Staff in WOK (Internal Appointment Rate 100%)	No of Staff 'At Risk' (WOK Internal Appointment Rate 100%)	No of staff WOK need to externally recruit	WOK 100% Averaged Redundancy Cost	WOK 34% Averaged Redundancy Cost	WOK Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	WOK 34% Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	PPP Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	WOK Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	WOK 34% Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s	PPP Worst Case Redundancy Cost^ '000s
Management	14	14	0	6	0.0	0	6.0	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Enforcement Officer with Professional Qualifications	26	17	9	16	9.0	0	7.0	£ -	£ -	£0.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Enforcement without Professional Qualifications	37	25	12	8	8.0	4	0.0	£ 45,151	£ 15,352	£95,675	£ 32,529	£ 63,145	£ 63,783	£ 21,686	£ 42,097
Support	13	9	4	2	2.0	2	0.0	£ 11,203	£ 3,809	£24,349	£ 8,279	£ 16,071	£ 16,233	£ 5,519	£ 10,714
Specialist	10	10	0	2	0.0	0	2.0	£ -	£ -	£0	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
	100	75	25	34	19	6	15	£ 56,355	£ 19,161	£120,024	£ 40,808	£ 79,216	£ 80,016	£ 27,205	£ 52,811

REORGANISATION CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Step 2 The Proposals

A shared service provided by
Bracknell Forest Council,
West Berkshire Council and
Wokingham Borough Council



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council has continued to work closely with its partners to ensure that the necessary organisational change processes are conducted in an open and fair manner. It is important that employees feel that they are being listened to and there is trust in the system. This Step 2 document is designed to carry on that approach and sets out a more detailed explanation of the proposals and the reasons for them, and gives employees and trade unions the opportunity to give their views.

2. The Process for Managing Change

2.1. Step 1 – Initial Consultation on draft proposals

This has now been completed. Based on the queries and responses, no changes to process have been deemed necessary.

2.2. Step 2 – Detailed consultation with employees and unions

The consultation is based on the following groupings:

- A. Employees where TUPE applies;
- B. Management (Principal Officer and above);
- C. Professionally qualified field-based and/or enforcement employees;
- D. Non-Professionally qualified field based and/or enforcement employees; and
- E. Support employees (Customer Delivery, Applications, Finance, Systems, Intel, Governance and Engagement).

Each employee will be identified within one of these groups. You will be made aware of the group you have been placed into when you receive your meeting invite.

At this stage, detail on proposed organisation structures for both the remaining PPP and Wokingham services will be available with clear reporting lines, job descriptions, grades etc.

Each group will have a dedicated meeting and every employee will be offered an individual meeting with management. This consultation will last up to 5 weeks.

2.3. Step 3 – response to consultation

The Councils will provide a full response to the Unions and employees detailing any changes made and an explanation for any suggestions discounted. There will be an opportunity for individual employee meetings on specific concerns.

2.4. Step 4 – Communication of final structure

This will include the final structures, job descriptions and grades. The Council will also produce a detailed implementation plan (this document when finalised) that explains the timetable for individual meetings for all affected employees. Support will be provided and there will be an opportunity for discussion with individuals where requested.

2.5. Once the 4 steps are completed the process to implement the new staffing structures will begin.

3. Current Position

3.1. Budget

For 2021/22 the total PPP budget is £3.876M. This is broken down as follows:

Bracknell Forest £1,001,000 (25.83%)

West Berkshire £1,549,110 (39.96%)

Wokingham £1,326,470 (34.21%)

3.2. Structure

The current structure of the PPP has developed through the response to Covid 19 and has been discussed through a range of summary papers presented to the Joint Public Protection Committee (JPPC), starting in June 2020. It has been designed to maximise the effectiveness of addressing priority functions as agreed by the partners. The PPP has also been very clear in its approach towards recovery and how the structure will deal with the re-introduction of statutory services once Covid restrictions begin to ease. In line with the latest update to JPPC, the PPP is currently organised as follows:

Management positions;

1 Public Protection Manager (1FTE)

4 Strategic Managers (3.18FTE)

7 Principal Officers (6.81FTE)

1 Team Manager – Partnership Support

Employees are organised into six groups, namely;

- Case Management Unit (6.39FTE)
- Community and Trading Standards (31.49FTE)
- Compliance and Programme (14.9FTE)
- Environmental Quality and Licensing (12.82FTE)
- Partnership Support (13.95FTE)
- Projects and Governance (3FTE)

3.3. Fixed Term, Agency and Casual Employees

All fixed term employees who occupy posts which are joint funded will be offered an individual meeting to discuss the impact of the proposals. If there are any fixed term employees working on multi-authority

projects they will be informed if their project means they are in scope for this organisational change process.

All fixed term, agency and casual staff who are externally funded (not through one or more of the partners) will not be affected by these proposals and will be retained in line with their funding limited project.

4. Proposed Changes

- 4.1. There is no proposed change to the way the existing PPP teams are organised but the number of employees employed in the PPP will need to reduce to reflect the withdrawal of £1,326,470 (Wokingham's 34.21% of the total budget).
- 4.2. The intention is that all the reductions in the PPP structure will correspond to a new job existing in the Wokingham structure. This should mean that there is no overall reduction in jobs but they may be in different locations and, subject to consultation, some changes to job descriptions.
- 4.3. The Council has been engaged in negotiations with Wokingham on the possibility of entering into a new agreement for the provision of services. This has been referred to as 'Buy-Back' for PPP Services and is designed to reduce the overall financial risk to all parties. These proposals are being considered by the Joint Committee with a view to it recommending that the following functions be commissioned by Wokingham from the PPP:
 - Trading Standards:
 - Food Standards including quality, labelling and food fraud;
 - Animal Health and Welfare – on farm and establishments including contingency planning;
 - Fair Trading including: travel, estate agency, lettings;
 - Fraud, theft and money laundering including doorstep crime;
 - Intellectual property crime;
 - Metrology (weights and measures);
 - Product safety;
 - Age restricted products; and
 - Road traffic (weight restrictions, overloads etc).
 - Intelligence:
 - Assessment of Client data to provide day to day operational support in effective investigation and resource planning; and
 - Contribution towards Client strategic and tactical assessment.
 - Case Management:
 - Case management and legal advice from beginning to end of case for all public protection cases in-house or contracted;
 - Court file preparation;
 - Court Work (if required by Wokingham legal services);
 - Trial work (if not instructed to external Counsel);
 - First Tier and Employment Tribunal Input;
 - Financial Investigator;
 - Advice and checking of procedural applications;

- Checking notices and expert instructions; and
 - Senior Appropriate Officer provision for Proceeds of Crime.
- Air Quality:
 - Changing and maintenance of air quality monitoring stations and diffusion tubes;
 - Keeping under review action areas;
 - Appropriate liaison Client internal services to enable effective co-ordination of air quality data for Client decision making;
 - Analysis of data and drafting and submission of annual status reports;
 - Management of the DEFRA funded particulate project on behalf of the Client; and
 - Upon request providing scientific advice about the potential impact of different air quality mitigation components.
 - General Service Development; a commitment to support Wokingham in implementing Microsoft PowerBI for the listed Functions and Services.

At this stage the Step 2 Consultation is proceeding on the basis that 'Buy-Back' is not agreed and it is recommended that interested staff do express interest in Wokingham posts in line with the information included in this Step 2 consultation. A decision on 'Buy-Back' is expected on or just before 20th October 2021 and the decision will be communicated as a priority.

4.4. PPP Structure

Given the reduction in budget the PPP estimate the following impact on their structure based on the current establishment list:

- Management Team (PPM, SM's and Principals) – no change
- EQ and Licensing - reduction of 4 posts (-34%)
- Case Management – no change
- Projects and Governance – reduction of 1 post (-34%)
- Compliance and Programme – reduction of 5 posts (-34%)
- Partnership Support – reduction of 5 posts (-34%)
- Community and TS – reduction of 11 posts (-34%)

As mentioned above these numbers will change if 'Buy-Back' is agreed by all parties.

5. Wokingham Borough Council's Proposed Structure

5.1. There are 2 Wokingham structures being shown in this document, to reflect the differences between how the service will operate with 'Buy-Back' and without.

5.2. Wokingham Borough Council's proposed structure with 'Buy-Back' is 29.5FTE.

As the proposed offer for 'Buy-Back' services needs to go via all three (West Berkshire, Wokingham and Bracknell) Council's approval process, a final decision will not be made until **20th October 2021**.

Structure 1 details the proposed organisation for Wokingham Borough Council of the Enforcement and Safety Service should 'Buy-Back' proposals get approved.

- 5.3. Wokingham Borough Council's proposed structure without 'Buy-Back' services is 36FTE.

Structure 2 details the Service should all functions be delivered in-house. It is anticipated that proceeds of crime and financial investigation activities will be aligned with the PPP. The exact process for doing this needs agreement and should not impact on any staff.

- 5.4. Both of the Wokingham proposed organisation structures will have the Service Managers reporting into the Head of Enforcement & Safety Services.

This position is currently advertised externally, having disappointingly been unsuccessful in filling this via internal channels as a priority. Recruitment is taking place across September 2021. The Head of Service role is graded at SM2.

Structure
1

Commercial
Food Safety
Food standards
H&S
Infection Control
Exhumations

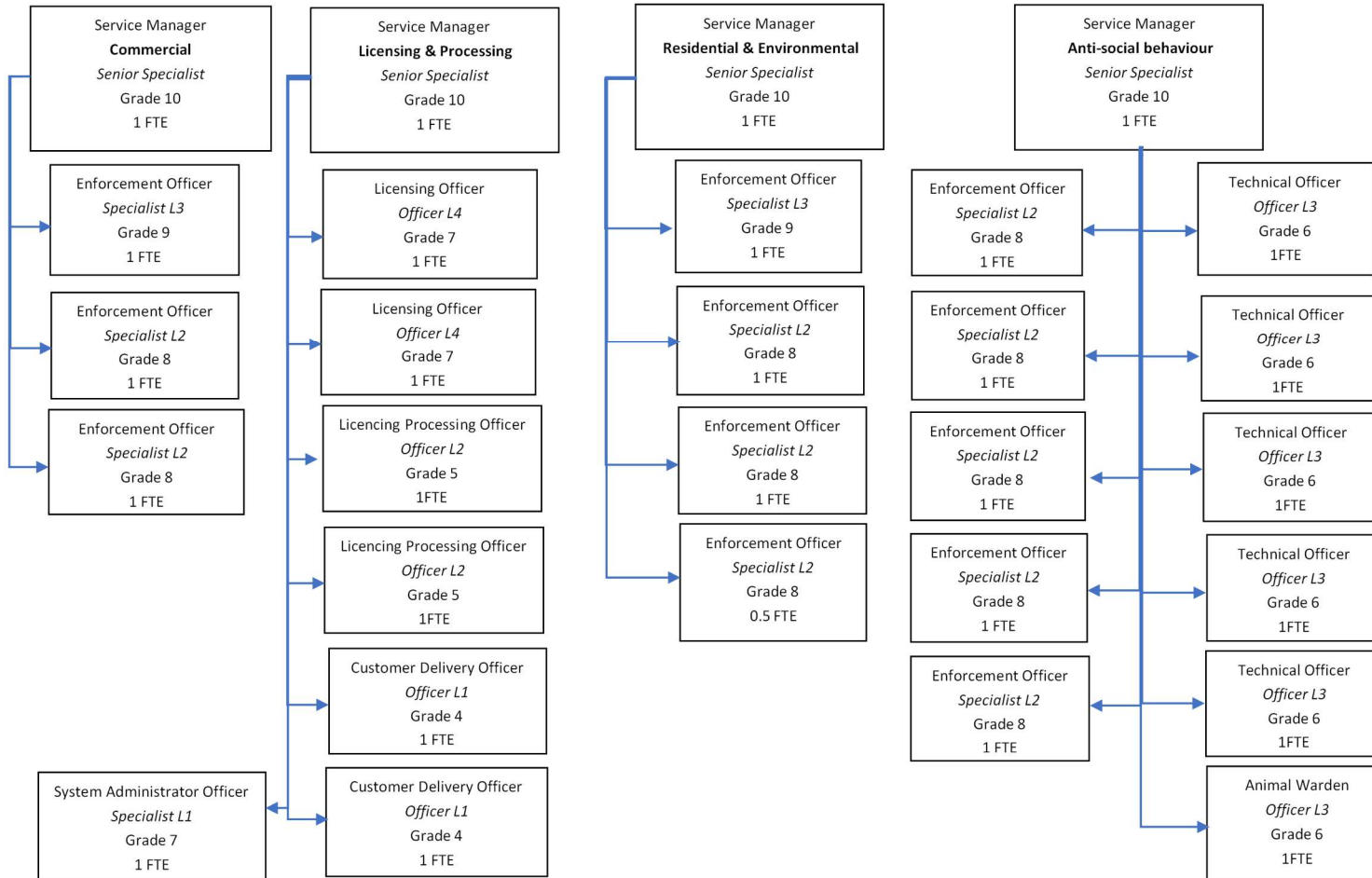
Licensing & Processing
Licensing
Permits
Appin. processing
Env Info Reg requests
Service-wide IT
Service-wide admin
SAG secretariat

Residential & Environmental
Private Housing
Structural nuisances
Caravan sites
Filthy & verminous
Contaminated land
Private water supplies
Integrated Pollution Control

Anti-social behaviour
Anti-social behaviour
Public nuisance
Drainage
Pest enforcement
Animal warden
Planning consultations
Licensing consultations

**Wokingham Borough
Proposed Enforcement &
Safety
With PPP Services**

PPP Services
Fair trading
Metrology
Product Safety
Restricted Products
COVID secure
Proceeds of crime
Financial investigation
Food standards
Air quality
Animal feedstuffs
Farm welfare & biosecurity
Case work support



Structure
2

Commercial
Food Safety
Food standards
H&S
Infection Control
Exhumations

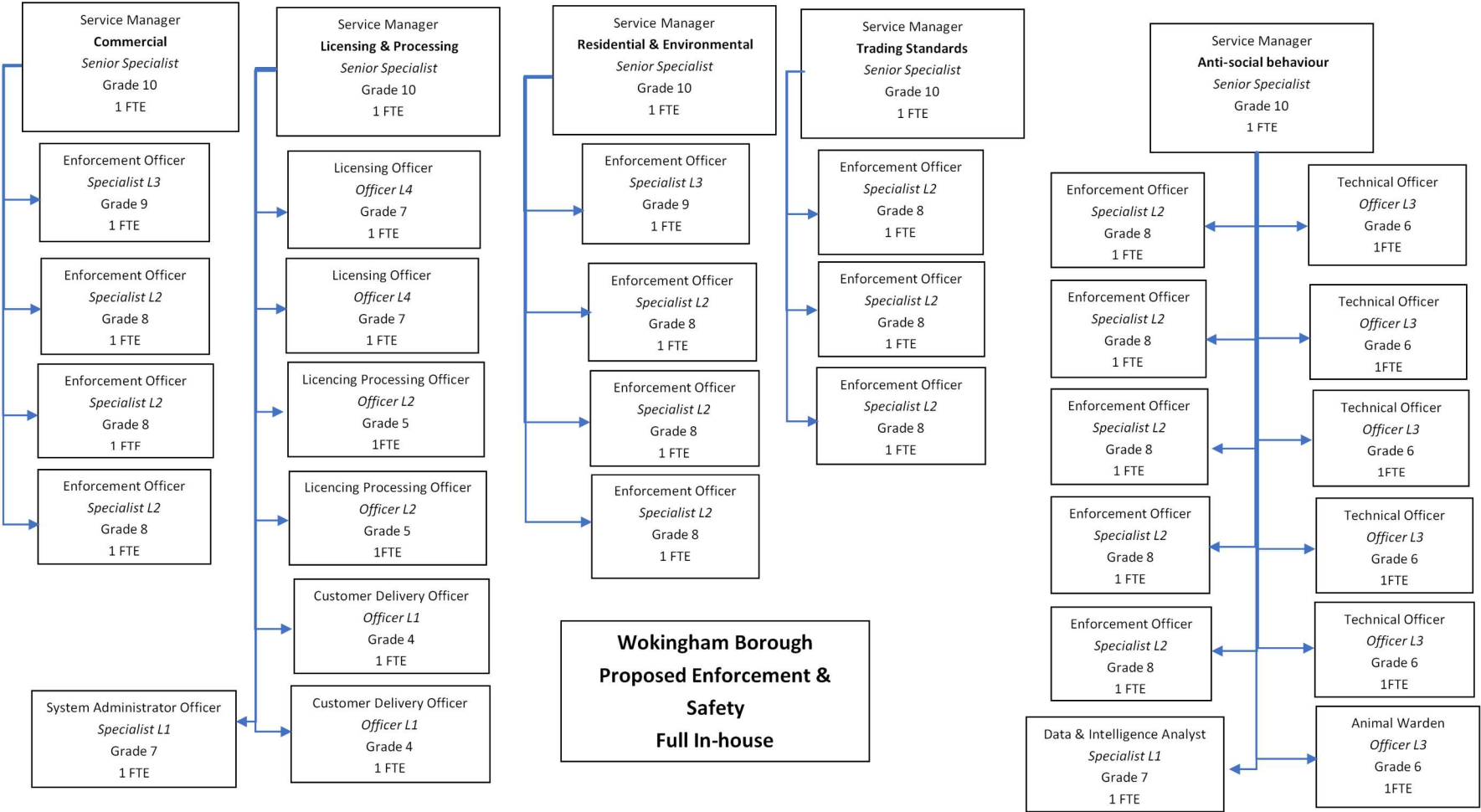
Licensing & Processing
Licensing
Permits
Appin. processing
Env Info Reg requests
Service-wide IT
Service-wide admin
SAG secretariat

Residential & Environmental
Private Housing
Structural nuisances
Caravan sites
Filthy & verminous
Air quality
Contaminated land
Private water supplies
Integrated Pollution Control

Trading Standards
Fair trading
Metrology
Product Safety
Restricted Products
COVID secure
Animal feedstuffs
Farm welfare & biosecurity
Case work support

Anti-social behaviour
Anti-social behaviour
Public nuisance
Drainage
Pest enforcement
Animal warden
Planning consultations
Licensing consultations

PPP Services
Proceeds of crime
Financial investigation



6. Salary Comparisons

6.1. Role grading salary comparison West Berks and Wokingham Borough

PPP West Berks Job roles	Salary Range	Wokingham Job roles	Salary Range
Public Protection Manager = Grade M	£50.6-63.4k	Head of Service = Lead Specialist Grade SM2	£63.8-70.5k
Strategic Manager = Grade L	£43.9-52.5k	No equivalent	
Principal Officer = Grade K	£37.9-45.9	Service Manager = Senior Specialist Grade 10	£44.9-49.9k
(Snr) EHO/TSO = Grades H/I/J	£27.7-40.9k	Enforcement Officer (professionally qualified) = Specialist level 3 Grade 9 = Specialist Level 2 Grade 8	* £38.9-43.9k £33.8-37.9k
(Snr) Environmental Control Officer/Food Safety Officer/Fair Trading Officer/Licensing Officer = Grades F/G/H	£21.7-32.9k	Licensing Officer (without professional qualifications) = Officer level 4 Grade 7	£29.6-32.9k
Field based Technical Officer/Leads = Grade F/G	£21.7-29.6	Technical Officer = Officer level 3 Grade 6	£25-28.7k *
Intel Analysts = Grade H/I	£27.7-36.9	Data and Intel Analyst = Specialist level 1 Grade 7	£29.6-32.9k
Regulatory Info Analysts = Grade F/G	£21.7-29.6	System Administration Officer = Specialist level 1 Grade 7	£29.6-32.9k
Office based Technical Officers/Leads = Grades E/F	£20.1-25.5k	Licensing Processing Officer = Officer level 2 Grade 5	£22.2-24.4k
Finance Technical Officer/Support Officer = Grade C/D	£18.5-20.9k	Customer Delivery Officer = Officer level 1 Grade 4	£20.1 - £21.8

* A separate pay element is under review for the ten proposed roles within the Anti-Social Behaviour team, to recognise the impact of the evening, weekend and bank holiday shift working that will be required.

7. Proposed Job Descriptions

7.1. Wokingham Job Descriptions

Please find attached in the appendix the Role Specs, Service & Role Scopes.

8. Anti-Social Behaviour Team

- 8.1. The Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) team are proposed to provide a Wokingham Borough service coverage across 7 days a week, during peak times when this behaviour needs to be addressed. As such, a number of factors need to be considered for this proposal.
- 8.2. A pay element is under review for recognising the need for the ASB team of ten to work across evenings, weekends and bank holidays on a shift system basis. The proposal will be shared once it has been reviewed by Wokingham's Personnel Board.
- 8.3. The proposed shift structure is still very much work in progress. It is proposed that each employee will be on shift for five days out of the seven. Please note:
 - The proposed ASB service opening hours are subject to change depending on customer demand and seasonal variations;
 - **The example rota provided is created just by way of demonstration** as to how such a shift system could work. It is subject to change and may evolve over time as reviews take place to ensure the purpose of the function is being achieved.
 - We welcome input and feedback for the design of the shift rota, so we can identify how best it might work for maximum impact for residents.

Example shift rota

This example classifies shifts within the team into three categories:

- **Primary shift individuals** are shown in bold colour, these individuals would be required to start and finish at the specified times, without flexibility.
- **The Cover shift individuals** would be expected to work a primary shift time in the event of planned or unplanned absence or for additional service demands, e.g. a large planned event. If no cover is anticipated to be required by the day before then this could revert to a flexible shift.

If demand for visits by primary shift individuals is more than they can deal with, then these individuals will be expected as next in line to handle these matters.

- **The Flexible shift individuals** should preferably start and finish during the shift service times, however employees will be able to agree with their manager the start and finish hours to suit their needs on those days.

Non-responsive work including assessment, and response to planning and licencing consultations will primarily fall to those on the flexible shifts.

In the highly unlikely event that service opening hours cannot be staffed by primary and cover shift individuals, it is possible that flexible shift individuals will be asked to fulfil those duties and hours.

Post	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Time	0900 > 1700	0900 > 1700	0600 > 1400	1100 > 1900	1000 > 1800	1800 > 0200	1800 > 0200	1300 > 2100	0900 > 1700	0900 > 1700	0600 > 1400	1100 > 1900	1000 > 1800	1800 > 0200	1800 > 0200	1300 > 2100
PAIRINGS	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	1
EHO 1 Technical Officer 1																
EHO 2 Technical Officer 2		Cover Cover														
EHO 3 Technical Officer 3			Cover Cover	Cover Cover	Cover Cover					Cover Cover						
EHO 4 Technical Officer 4	Cover Cover										Cover Cover	Cover Cover	Cover Cover			
EHO 5 Technical Officer 5						Cover Cover	Cover Cover	Cover Cover	Cover Cover							

Post	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Time	0900 > 1700	0900 > 1700	0600 > 1400	1100 > 1900	1000 > 1800	1800 > 0200	1800 > 0200	1300 > 2100	0900 > 1700	0900 > 1700	0600 > 1400	1100 > 1900	1000 > 1800	1800 > 0200	1800 > 0200	1300 > 2100
PAIRINGS	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	1
EHO 1 Technical Officer 1	Cover Cover															
EHO 2 Technical Officer 2						Cover Cover	Cover Cover	Cover Cover	Cover Cover	Cover Cover						
EHO 3 Technical Officer 3																
EHO 4 Technical Officer 4		Cover Cover														
EHO 5 Technical Officer 5			Cover Cover	Cover Cover	Cover Cover					Cover Cover						

Post	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Time	0900 > 1700	0900 > 1700	0600 > 1400	1100 > 1900	1000 > 1800	1800 > 0200	1800 > 0200	1300 > 2100
PAIRINGS	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	1
EHO 1 Technical Officer 1		Cover Cover						
EHO 2 Technical Officer 2			Cover Cover	Cover Cover	Cover Cover			
EHO 3 Technical Officer 3	Cover Cover							
EHO 4 Technical Officer 4						Cover Cover	Cover Cover	Cover Cover
EHO 5 Technical Officer 5								

KEY:								
Primary shift worker								
1st shift substitute	Cover							
Flexible shift								

If anyone would like larger copies of this shift information please ask David Thrale by email.

- 8.4. It is proposed that all team members should be doing a minimum of 15% of weekly hours across non-office hours (17:30 – 9:00). This proposed rota would provide for service cover as below, to include bank holidays, with only the exception of the following three bank holidays: Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day.

Day	Times
M-T	9:00 – 17:00
Wed	6:00 – 14:00
Thu	11:00 – 19:00
Fri	10:00 – 18:00
Fri	18:00 – 2:00 (Sat)
Sat	18:00 – 2:00 (Sun)
Sun	13:00 – 21:00

Each team member is proposed to work 5 shifts a week, which are 8 hours in duration. For each shift a 30 minute unpaid break would apply, save for 1 day a week where a 1 hour break can be taken provided there are 2 pairings scheduled, so the longer break could be staggered around service delivery.

As part of this proposal three of the eight bank holidays will be taken due to service closure on those days – Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year’s Day. The other five bank holidays will be added to the annual leave allowance and be subject to booking and approval rules. If an individual is not working on one of the five bank holiday days when the service is open, then they would be required to book it and take it as annual leave.

Annual leave taken where an individual is scheduled on a primary shift, would only receive approval where there is pre-agreed availability from a ‘cover shift individual’ to take on that primary shift.

9. Benefit Comparison

9.1. Contractual

Term or condition	PPP West Berks	Wokingham Borough Council
Salary Review	<p>Incremental progression each year dependent upon an annual performance review, until the maximum salary is reached.</p> <p>If performance is satisfactory increments are awarded on the 1 April annually or if commenced employment between 1 October and 31 March, 6 months following start date.</p>	<p>Subject to satisfactory service salary will rise by annual increments until the maximum spinal column point (scp) of the scale has been reached.</p> <p>Increments are awarded on the 1 April annually or if commenced employment between 1 October and 31 March, 6 months following start date.</p>

Pay Date	Last working day of the month	28 th of each month																				
Pension	Local Government Pension Scheme. All employees will be automatically enrolled into the scheme upon appointment. They may opt out of the scheme after enrolment. Life Assurance benefit provision for those in the pension scheme	Local Government Pension Scheme. All employees will be automatically enrolled into the scheme upon appointment. They may opt out of the scheme after enrolment. Life Assurance benefit provision for those in the pension scheme																				
Annual Leave	<p>Part time employees' leave entitlements are calculated pro rata</p> <p>Those starting or leaving employment during the year are entitled to annual leave proportionate to the number of completed months service during the year.</p> <p>Leave must be taken during each leave year, which runs from 1st April to 31st March or from date of commencement for the first year.</p> <p>Full time annual leave entitlements across 52 weeks per year are as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Band A – C</td> <td>26 days (5.2 weeks)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Band D – G</td> <td>27 days (5.4 weeks)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Band H – K</td> <td>28 days (5.6 weeks)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Band L – CE</td> <td>29 days (5.8 weeks)</td> </tr> </table> <p>One additional week's leave upon completing 5 years' Local Government continuous service</p> <p>Paid leave is given for public holidays. 8 days. Pro-rata if part time</p> <p>Leave listed above is inclusive of all statutory entitlement.</p>	Band A – C	26 days (5.2 weeks)	Band D – G	27 days (5.4 weeks)	Band H – K	28 days (5.6 weeks)	Band L – CE	29 days (5.8 weeks)	<p>Part time employees' leave entitlements are calculated pro rata</p> <p>Those starting or leaving employment during the year are entitled to annual leave proportionate to the number of completed months service during the year.</p> <p>Leave must be taken during each leave year, which runs from 1st April to 31st March or from date of commencement for the first year.</p> <p>Full time annual leave entitlements across 52 weeks per year are as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Grade 1 – 4</td> <td>24 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grade 5</td> <td>26 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grade 6 - 7</td> <td>27 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grade 8</td> <td>29 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grade 9 – 11</td> <td>30 days</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SM grades</td> <td>30 days</td> </tr> </table> <p>One additional week's leave upon completing 5 years' Local Government continuous service</p> <p>Paid leave is given for public holidays. 8 days. Pro-rata if part time</p> <p>Leave listed above is inclusive of all statutory entitlement.</p>	Grade 1 – 4	24 days	Grade 5	26 days	Grade 6 - 7	27 days	Grade 8	29 days	Grade 9 – 11	30 days	SM grades	30 days
Band A – C	26 days (5.2 weeks)																					
Band D – G	27 days (5.4 weeks)																					
Band H – K	28 days (5.6 weeks)																					
Band L – CE	29 days (5.8 weeks)																					
Grade 1 – 4	24 days																					
Grade 5	26 days																					
Grade 6 - 7	27 days																					
Grade 8	29 days																					
Grade 9 – 11	30 days																					
SM grades	30 days																					
Working Hours	<p>Full time working hours are 37 per week. An employee's hours of work and work pattern will be agreed with the line manager.</p> <p>The Council operates a scheme of flexible working ('flexitime'), which is available to</p>	<p>The normal working week if full time will be 37 hours, from Monday to Friday. Some posts require a work pattern on a rota basis which can include working weekends.</p> <p>The Council operates a non-contractual 'Flexi-time' scheme and Smart Working</p>																				

	most employees subject to service requirements.	Policy. The service and role requirements impact their application and both are subject to line management agreement.															
Company Enhanced Sick Pay	<i>During 1st year of service</i> 1 month full pay	<i>During 1st year of service</i> 1 month full pay															
	<i>(and after completing 4 months service)</i> (2 months half pay)	<i>(and after completing 4 months service)</i> (2 months half pay)															
	<i>During 2nd year of service</i> 2 months full pay and 2 months half pay	<i>During 2nd year of service</i> 2 months full pay and 2 months half pay															
	<i>During 3rd year of service</i> 4 months full pay and 4 months half pay	<i>During 3rd year of service</i> 4 months full pay and 4 months half pay															
	<i>During 4th and 5th years of service</i> 5 months full pay and 5 months half pay	<i>During 4th and 5th years of service</i> 5 months full pay and 5 months half pay															
	<i>After 5 years service</i> 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay	<i>After 5 years service</i> 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay															
Notice	Employees are required to give the following minimum notice of their intention to terminate their employment with the Council:	Employees are required to give the following minimum notice of their intention to terminate their employment with the Council:															
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Band A – F</td> <td>One Month</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Band G – J</td> <td>Two Months</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Band K – M</td> <td>Three Months</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Band N/CD/CEx</td> <td>Three Months</td> </tr> </table> <p>The minimum period of notice to be given by the Council to terminate employment is one month, or statutory notice (up to 12 weeks) if that entitlement is greater.</p>	Band A – F	One Month	Band G – J	Two Months	Band K – M	Three Months	Band N/CD/CEx	Three Months	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Grade 1 – 6</td> <td>1 month</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grade 7 – 11</td> <td>2 months</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Senior Management roles</td> <td>3 months</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fixed Term Contracts</td> <td>According to their contract</td> </tr> </table> <p>The same notice period is required to be given to you by the council (or the minimum statutory period, whichever is longer).</p>	Grade 1 – 6	1 month	Grade 7 – 11	2 months	Senior Management roles	3 months	Fixed Term Contracts
Band A – F	One Month																
Band G – J	Two Months																
Band K – M	Three Months																
Band N/CD/CEx	Three Months																
Grade 1 – 6	1 month																
Grade 7 – 11	2 months																
Senior Management roles	3 months																
Fixed Term Contracts	According to their contract																
Work Locations	Theale Gateway (principal office) Market St, Newbury and Time Square, Bracknell (secondary)	24 Hour Access: Westcott Annexe, Goodchild Road, Wokingham. Hours 7am-7pm Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays: Shute End Offices, Wokingham.															
Car Benefit	Essential Car Users: Employees in post as at 30 th June 2017 who hold ECU status (on the basis of mileage or the nature of the job) have this as a contractual right which can only be withdrawn by mutual agreement as long as the employee remains in the same	Roles required to travel using private owned vehicles receive either: - Casual User Status, where only mileage is claimable. Or															

	<p>post.</p> <p>Employees in post as at 30th June who do not hold ECU status (i.e. are Casual Car Users), but who claimed at least 1500 business miles in the last financial year, can <u>apply to their manager</u> to become ECU.</p> <p>Allocation of ECU status means that the employee receives a lump sum allowance £120.00 per annum (paid on a monthly basis). Business miles claimed will be paid at the essential user rate.</p> <p>The employee is also allocated a free car parking space if he/she works at one of the Council's corporate buildings.</p>	<p>- High Mileage User Status, for employees that are doing in excess of 1,000 business miles a year. Where this happens an allowance of £385 per annum is payable on top of mileage claims.</p>
Parking	<p>Non-contractual, see the non-contractual table.</p>	<p>Employees were offered reduced charges for car parking at Wokingham Council pay and display car parks, including Shute End.</p> <p>On a non-contractual basis, since remote working due to Covid-19, car parking at Wokingham Council offices changed to free and has remained free for those attending the office, that will continue until 31 March 2022. Parking remains under review currently as part of the Work Place Reimagined project and a clearer position on the longer term plans will be provided in the near future.</p>
Other Terms	<p>The salary scale for West Berkshire Council is based on that agreed annually by the National Joint Council for Local Government Employees (Green Book), although the Council reserves the right not to implement national changes to the pay scale, subject to local agreement. Information on current payscales is available on the HR and Payroll intranet pages. The grade for each job is determined through the Councils Job Evaluation Procedure which can be found on the intranet.</p>	<p>National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (this is commonly referred to as the 'Green Book') with the exception of Part 2 where we have a local agreement in place.</p>

	<p>Part time employees have their salary and other entitlements calculated pro rata to full time employees.</p> <p>Other conditions of service are available on the Council's intranet.</p>	
Policies	<p>All employees have recourse to and are subject to the Council's Grievance, Disciplinary and Capability Procedures as set out on its intranet, alongside the full range of employment policies and procedures. All employees are subject to the Code of Conduct.</p>	<p>Disciplinary, Capability and Grievance Procedure</p> <p>All employees will be subject to these procedures currently in place, as agreed by the Council. The Council's Disciplinary Rules are included in the Disciplinary Procedure. These procedures can be viewed on the Council's Intranet. They may be varied by the Council following consultation.</p> <p>Official Conduct</p> <p>The Council's Conduct Policy is enclosed with this contract and it is a requirement that you read this policy. By signing the Acceptance Form you are confirming your understanding of our Conduct Policy and acceptance of it.</p>
Training	<p>Mandatory e-learning is required. Further information available on the intranet.</p>	<p>Mandatory online training requirements to ensure compliance with legal working requirements.</p>

9.2. Non-Contractual

Term or condition	PPP West Berks	Wokingham Borough Council
<p>Family Leave to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maternity - Adoption - Parental - Paternity - Shared Parental - Time off for Dependents 	<p>All policies recognise statutory entitlements</p>	<p>All policies recognise statutory entitlements</p>
<p>Maternity and Adoption Occupational Pay</p>	<p>Maternity: An employee with at least one year's continuous service in local government at the beginning of the 11th week before the EWC (i.e. 63 weeks' continuous service by the EWC) will be entitled to receive a</p>	<p>An employee with at least one year's continuous service in local government at the beginning of the 11th week before the EWC (i.e. 63 weeks' continuous service by the EWC) will be entitled to receive a further 12 week's salary at half</p>

	<p>further 12 week's salary at half pay. This is on the condition that she returns to work for a period of at least three months.</p> <p>See intranet for full policy.</p>	<p>pay. This is on the condition that she returns to work for a period of at least three months. This can be paid as a lump sum on return to work, or in conjunction with Statutory Maternity or Adoption Pay - but if paid in advance, it would be reclaimed if the employee does not return to work for the 3-month period after the leave ends.</p>
Union Membership	<p>Employees are encouraged to join a recognised trade union and to take part in its activities. Recognised trade unions are GMB and UNISON</p>	<p>Wokingham Borough Council will communicate information about its activities to all employees and recognised Trade Unions on a regular basis and encourages ideas and feedback to management on all aspects of its operations. Information on how to join Unison is available via the intranet</p>
Professional Membership Fees	<p>PPP pay professional fees for those roles where it is essential and where it is assessed as having CPD benefits i.e. discounted training</p>	<p>Wokingham Borough Council policy is to pay professional subscriptions if it is an essential requirement of the job. Funding details found under the L&D Policy, to be budgeted for by management where there is a requirement to fund this.</p>
Car Parking	<p>Employees with Essential Car User status, or with West Berkshire Council service from 2007 or earlier are entitled to free car parking when they work at a council office.</p>	<p>Further to Covid-19, car parking at WBC offices have remained free for those attending the office and that will continue until 31 March 2022. Parking remains under review currently as part of the Work Place Reimagined project and a clearer position on the longer term plans will be provided in the near future.</p>
Eligibility to Government Child Care Cost Support	<p>Childcare vouchers if already in the scheme or Tax Free Childcare</p>	<p>Tax Free Childcare for new and transferring employees</p>
Employee Assistance Programme	<p>For all employees 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, currently provided by Sodexo.</p>	<p>For all employees 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, currently provided by Vita Health Group.</p>
Discretionary Cycle Scheme	<p>The Cycle to Work Scheme gives staff the option to purchase a new bike and safety equipment up to £10K in value, through a salary sacrifice scheme. This gives a substantial saving on the cost of a new bike, which is between 32%</p>	<p>Wokingham Borough Council, in partnership with Cyclescheme, offers a cycle to work package so that employees can save money on the cost of a new bike, safety and security accessories through a tax-efficient salary exchange scheme</p>

	and 42% on the overall cost, depending on your personal tax circumstances. West Berkshire Council has partnered with an organisation called 'Cyclescheme' to run this for staff.	
Car Loans / Lease Cars	The Lease Car scheme is available to employees whose employment with West Berkshire Council commenced before 1st April 2007 OR essential car users whose employment with West Berkshire Council commenced between 1st April 2007 and 31st March 2009. The car lease scheme was closed to all new staff in 2009. See intranet for full policy.	No current applicable schemes
Car Loans	The Car Loan Scheme is available to those employees of the Council designated as Essential Car Users or staff at grade K or below returning their lease cars and opting out of the scheme permanently who wish to purchase their lease car. See intranet for full policy.	No current applicable schemes
Redundancy Payments	Discretionary Policy providing for calculations based on: - Actual weekly salary - 1.5 x statutory redundancy payment calculator.	Statutory payment calculator, enhanced to be based on actual weekly salary instead of the statutory figures.
Private Health Cover	No current applicable schemes	Available to all employees (excluding casual) with over one year's contract. Cover for employee and partner/family. Individual quotes available on request as fixed rates are not available. Payment via salary deduction. Current provider – BUPA.
Redeployment Salary Protection	The employee will have his/her pay protected at the level of the original job for a period of; • one year for employees who have been employed by West Berks for less than three years;	Provided for employees with two or more years Local Government Continuous Service. This applies where employee selected to one grade lower. Payments as: • 12 months at 100% of difference between old & new salary

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 months for employees who have been employed by West Berks for three years or more. <p>At the end of the salary protection period the employee's salary will be reduced to the maximum scale point of the substantive salary band for the new post.</p> <p>The salary protection payment will end if the employee voluntarily applies for and is appointed to another post at a higher grade within the salary protection period.</p> <p>For full details see Organisational Change procedure, available on the intranet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 months at 50% of difference between old & new salary <p>Employees placed at maximum point on grade at the end of 18 months.</p> <p>Further details in the Organisational Change Policy</p>
Season Ticket Loans	Available to all employees, subject to approval by Head of Service. Recovered by equal monthly instalments deducted from pay. See intranet for full policy.	Available to all employees (except those on fixed term contracts for less than a year, casual or temporary staff, or employees who already receive high mileage user allowance.) Minimum loan is £100 & no maximum. Available for periods of three months to a year. Recovered by equal monthly instalments deducted from pay.
Additional Voluntary Contribution (AVC) Facilities	AVC scheme through Prudential is a cost-efficient way to top up your pension pot, run as a salary sacrifice arrangement.	AVC scheme through Prudential is a cost-efficient way to top up your pension pot, run as a salary sacrifice arrangement.

9.3. Pension – both Councils offer the Local Government Pension Scheme, subject to the same terms and conditions.

9.4. Policies – employees transferring to Wokingham through TUPE or voluntary transfer would move across onto the working policies and receive employee provisions via providers contracted with Wokingham Borough Council. These are necessary measures as part of a transfer and whilst some policies and provisions may have slight differences, it is anticipated that there is no material difference and that overall, the terms are no less favourable in variation.

10. TUPE

10.1. What is TUPE?

TUPE is the Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment. It is legislation that provides protection for employees transferring from one employer to another, enabling them to enjoy the same terms and conditions, with continuity of employment, as before.

There may be some changes, referred to as 'Measures' where there is an operational necessity to provide a term in a slightly different way, as we are not able to replicate it. These will not be material changes, for example the employers may use different benefit providers or may operate the holiday year at different start and end points. Any measures that apply will be shared during consultation.

Pensions are not protected under TUPE, however both West Berkshire and Wokingham Council provide the same pension scheme. There is an obligation for employees moving onto a payroll to be auto-enrolled and employees then have the option to withdraw from the scheme.

10.2. Which roles are in scope?

This group has been identified and will be consulted as a separate group with opportunities for one-to-one meetings. Meetings for those employees will be arranged early in the consultation period.

It is important to note that all roles proposed to transfer under TUPE are not affected by the 'Buy-Back' proposals.

10.3. Proposed measures

The below proposed measures are based upon information sharing to date. Should further measures be identified during consultation, these will be confirmed.

Policies & Procedures – You will move onto Wokingham Borough Council policies, to include Organisational Change Policy, Code of Conduct, Family Friendly, Leave and all other work related processes and policies found on the intranet pages.

Work location – the Council premises proposed to be used by the Wokingham Enforcement & Safety Team are Westcott Annexe and Shute End Offices, both located centrally in Wokingham.

Pay date – this would change from the last day of the month to 28th of the month.

Providers for services such as EAP and other benefits – would be provided by external parties contracted to provide the services for Wokingham Borough Council.

10.4. No other Economic, Technical or Organisational (ETO) measures are proposed at this stage

- 10.5. Proposed TUPE transfers would take effect on 1st April 2022, employees would remain an employee of West Berkshire Council until 31st March 2022.

11. Appointment into Roles Process

11.1. Expression of Interest process

A form will be provided, proposed template detailed in the appendix, and Wokingham Borough Council request that employees make clear the priority for all roles they are interested in. All expressions of interest will then be reviewed in order of the groupings:

- Management Team;
- Field-based enforcement officer possessing professional regulatory qualification;
- Field-based enforcement officer not possessing professional regulatory qualification;
- Support Staff.

11.2. Timelines

The Expression of Interest process is anticipated to commence on Friday 15th October 2021, with 8 calendar days to submit your interest using the proposed form. The deadline for submissions is 5pm on Wednesday 27th October 2021. Assessments will then commence and it is hoped all assessments will be concluded by 12th November 2021.

- 11.3. As there is no Management reduction planned for the PPP structure, the proposed Wokingham Service Manager posts are not subject to PPP ringfencing, it is therefore proposed that external adverts will be placed for Service Manager vacancies at the same time as the Expression of Interest process.

As there will be no role matching process, and to meet timescales, we wish to ensure both processes run in parallel so that the filling of these roles may be successfully completed shortly after the Expression of Interest stage closes.

In a drive to retain our talent across PPP, these opportunities will be open to interest from any employee or worker of the PPP service. Where any PPP applicant meets the essential criteria for the Service Manager vacancies, they will be prioritised for interview ahead of external applicants. Internal applicants meeting all requirements after assessment will be offered the post, where a suitable PPP applicant is not identified then external applicants will be considered.

Interest in the Wokingham Service Manager roles will be dealt with first and any member of the PPP service who is interested in leading a Wokingham functional team should submit an expression of interest. If you would like to discuss the opportunity informally, please contact David Thrall, Wokingham's Interim Public Protection Consultant, ahead of the expression of interest application deadline of 27th October 2021.

11.4. Field Based enforcement officers possessing professional regulatory qualifications

This group will be ring-fenced and in broad terms this covers those officers who have one or more of the following:

- EHORB
- Diploma in Trading Standards, DCATS (60pts inc Food and Weights and Measures)
- Accredited Financial Investigator (National Crime Agency)

This relates to employees currently working as Snr/Environmental Health Officers, Snr/Trading Standards (not required if Buy-Back is agreed by all parties) and Accredited Financial Investigators (not required if Buy-Back is agreed by all parties).

If any employee has one of these qualifications but works in a role outside this list and wishes to express an interest in these roles, please also notify Paul Anstey by email.

11.5. Field Based enforcement officers not possessing professional regulatory qualifications

There is wide recognition that the PPP workforce is very well qualified and it is acknowledged that some employees have many different levels of qualification. This group will be ring-fenced and at this stage has been populated based on what essential criteria exist in their current JD's.

If any employee has any qualifications beyond the essential criteria in their JD and wishes to express an interest in roles for a different area, please also notify Paul Anstey by email.

11.6. Support staff

In this context, this group refers to all PPP employees who work alongside field-based staff but do not conduct any visits, inspections or investigations.

As with the other groups, it is acknowledged that the PPP has a well-qualified workforce in this area and if any employee has qualifications and previous experience of field-based enforcement and wishes to express an interest for roles in a different group, please also notify Paul Anstey by email.

11.7. Ring Fencing

With the exception of the Service Manager posts, all other Wokingham roles will be ring-fenced to employees of the PPP who are currently in similar roles during the initial Expression of Interest process.

11.8. Assessment for the roles

Wokingham will conduct any assessment via interview and where there are multiple applications for a role, an activity may also be added as an additional assessment method. The assessments will be based around the Wokingham Job Descriptions. Examples of an additional assessment would be a short presentation on a topic, to trouble shoot a situation and outline steps to be taken.

11.9. Wokingham appointments

Where employees accept a role with Wokingham it is proposed that they will be offered Wokingham Borough Council terms and conditions, which overall are no less favourable than those for their West Berkshire role. Continuous service dates from West Berkshire (or Bracknell / Wokingham for employees who previously transferred into the PPP) will be recognised by Wokingham on transfer. Start dates for all appointments will be agreed on a case by case basis, with latest start dates being 1 April 2022.

12. Vacancies after Internal Wokingham Recruitment

- 12.1. After completion of the expression of interest and appointment process, any remaining vacancies in the Wokingham structure will then be advertised externally for applications. At this stage all members of PPP are welcome to apply for any opportunity in the proposed Wokingham structure, including roles that are in a different area or more senior.
- 12.2. The external adverts will run in parallel to any redundancy and redeployment process led by West Berkshire (see section 7 below). Where redundancy consultation is necessary, Wokingham vacancies will remain open for role matching purposes, so that any staff at risk of redundancy will have priority. Once any redundancy process has concluded, applications from external adverts will progress and roles will then be filled via the recruitment activity that follows.

13. Redundancy and Redeployment

- 13.1. It is of primary importance to all parties that the risk of redundancy is reduced or if possible removed all together. However, it must be noted that although the total number of jobs across the 2 new structures is more than the total of current PPP jobs, there are proposed changes in the way those jobs are allocated across teams.
- 13.2. If the Voluntary Transfers process does not lead to enough employees for the Wokingham structure, and an excess of employees in the PPP structure, then West Berkshire will undertake a further consultation exercise with relevant pools of employees. West Berkshire will inform employees of the pools where there is excess staffing and employees in these pools will be informed that they are at risk of redundancy because there is a need to delete roles in their group. Voluntary redundancies will be sought before implementing any formal redundancy selection process.
- 13.3. Vacancies remaining within the Wokingham structure will be assessed for job matches by West Berkshire based on this criteria, based largely on the Organisational Change policy:
 - Job purpose and status;
 - Job location and working arrangements;
 - Job content (including the proportion of time spent on different aspects of the role);
 - Level and breadth of responsibility;

- Skills and experience required; and
- Pay and grading.

13.4. The criteria for accepting voluntary redundancy will be as follows:

- There should be no job-matched role available in the PPP or Wokingham Enforcement and Safety structures; and
- The financial cost of redundancy and any pension strain must be reasonable and acceptable to West Berkshire.

13.5. Where there is an excess staffing in any pools within the PPP structure, it will be necessary to conduct a compulsory redundancy selection process. It is proposed that the selection criteria for the PPP structure will be based on skills and experience, specific to the pool of jobs impacted. Assessment will be through interview, with those scoring lowest being selected for redundancy.

13.6. An assessment will be made for any suitable vacancies within the Wokingham structure. Where a matched job is available, this will be offered to the West Berkshire employee as suitable alternative employment. Where a job match is identified no redundancy compensation will be due, as set out in the Redundancy Modification Order.

13.7. After job matching reviews are concluded, notice will be given to those selected for redundancy. Any roles affected are anticipated to be deleted with effect from 31st March 2022. Re-deployment support will continue during notice and redundancy payable if no suitable redeployment is found.

13.8. Employees who disagree with any job match will have the right to appeal that decision, but only on the grounds that they have suffered a detriment as a result.

13.9. All employees who are at risk of redundancy as a result of the process will be supported with redeployment by West Berkshire HR. Wokingham and Bracknell Forest will share all their vacancy information and provide prior consideration for employees on the at-risk register.

13.10. Where employees are successful in securing redeployment, no redundancy compensation will be payable, in accordance with the Redundancy Modification Order.

13.11. Any redundancy payment and/or pension strain costs are subject to approval by West Berkshire Council, by Executive where costs are above £10,000.

13.12. Once notice has been issued, redeployment is voluntary. If further job matched vacancies arise in either the PPP or Wokingham structures, these can be offered to those serving notice, and posts can be accepted on a voluntary basis. Redundancy compensation would not then be due under the Redundancy Modification Order. West Berkshire will not withdraw notice arbitrarily in this situation.

14. Share your views – Step 2

- 14.1. This paper starts Step 2 of Consultation. It is issued to all PPP staff by email on 7th September 2021. It has also been shared with GMB and UNISON as trade unions recognised by West Berkshire Council, the current employer.
- 14.2. Group consultation meetings will be held by Zoom video conferencing on the dates detailed in section 9 Timetable. Trade Union colleagues are also welcome to attend. Questions and Answers will be gathered during these sessions and published both through West Berkshire systems, and also on the Wokingham microsite.
- 14.3. During Step 2 of consultation, staff are invited to send any questions, views, suggestions and alternative proposals to Paul Anstey on paul.anstey@westberks.gov.uk . These questions and answers, where applicable to the wider group of staff, will be included in the published Q&A.
- 14.4. **Step 2 Consultation ends on Tuesday 5th October at midnight.**

15. Support

- 15.1. We recognise that this period of uncertainty may be stressful for employees and we wish to provide support wherever possible. You are encouraged to seek support from your trade union representative.
- 15.2. The Employee Assistance Programme is also available to all employees 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They can provide both emotional support and counselling, but also advice on a wide range of topics including employment and financial matters. The contact details are below.
- 15.3. If you are finding this time particularly stressful you are also encouraged to share this with your line manager or Paul Anstey, so further support can be offered.

<p>NEW EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME For all corporate staff call Freephone 0808 168 2143 or login at www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk using Username: westberks Password: employee</p>	<p>Care first sodexo</p>	
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16. Appendix

Proposed Expression of Interest Form



Wokingham Borough Council Expression of Interest Form

This form is to express your interest in roles within the Wokingham Borough Council Enforcement & Safety service.

Forms should contain key information relevant to the roles of interest, be maximum of 3 pages in length and we welcome submissions of up-to-date CVs alongside Expression of Interest forms. All forms must be received by: **5pm Wednesday 27th October 2021**

Once completed please e-mail the completed form to: PPP@wokingham.gov.uk

Name:	
Home Address:	
Phone Number:	
Current Job Title:	
Current Team:	
Current Line Manager:	
Please list all roles of interest in order of preference.	
1:	
2:	
3:	
4:	

Referring to the Role Specification(s) and Main Job Description(s) for the roles of interest please complete the following details:

Relevant Qualifications:	Qualification Title	Date Completed	Awarding Body
Technical Skills: Please detail relevant technical skills that you possess and that are required for the role(s) you are interested in.			

<p>Knowledge & Experience:</p> <p>Please detail all relevant knowledge you have acquired, providing examples of how you've acquired this and experience relative to the role(s) of interest. List most relevant and recent experience examples first and working back to previous roles.</p> <p>This section should contain the most detail, with examples of most relevant work experience achievements. Also demonstrating the achievements using the technical skills listed above.</p> <p>Please attach a copy of your CV if you wish to share your full work experience history</p>	
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Once completed please sign each page and e-mail the completed form to: PPP@wokingham.gov.uk

Should you have an up-to-date CV, please attach a copy alongside your completed expression of interest form.

SIGNED	PRINT NAME	DATE

Timeline

Stage	Description	Completed By
1	Head of Service advert sent to all existing management team (Principal Officers and above)	16 th July 2021
2	HoS recruitment - Closing date and shortlisting	2 nd Aug 2021
3	HoS Interview and decision making	4 th Aug 2021
4	Step 1 Employee and Trade Unions consultation on organisational change process launched	13 th Aug 2021
5	Step 1 Employee Consultation Meetings by Zoom x 2	16 th , 17 th Aug 2021
6	Step 1 Consultation closes	27 th Aug 2021
7	Publish Step 1 Consultation response	2 nd Sept 2021
8	Step 2 – Staff and unions consultation launched with employee groups (detailed consultation meeting timetable to follow)	7 th Sept 2021
9	Step 2 consultation closes	5 th Oct 2021
10	Full response to Step 2 consultation PLUS Wokingham implementation plan published	13 th Oct 2021
11	Final structures communicated to all employees. Ring-fenced expressions of interest process and Wokingham appointments begin.	15 th Oct 2021
12	Ring-fenced expressions of interest process and Wokingham appointments end.	12 th Nov 2021
13	Redundancy consultation starts with PPP pools. At Risk letters issued and volunteers for redundancy sought if necessary.	15 th Nov 2021
14	Consultation deadline and deadline for volunteers.	29 th Nov 2021
15	Review takes place. Any offers of voluntary redundancy confirmed and others declined.	3 rd Dec 2021
16	Compulsory redundancy selection exercises, where necessary.	w/b 6 th Dec 2021
17	Selection for compulsory redundancy confirmed.	By 15 th Dec 2021
18	Approval of any West Berks redundancy costs at Executive.	16 th Dec 2021
19	Notice letters issued for any voluntary and compulsory redundancies in West Berkshire Council.	By 31 st Dec 2021
20	Redeployment support continues, with vacancies shared across Bracknell, Wokingham and West Berks	Up to 31 st March 2022
21	Wokingham service begins, final date for employee transfers to take effect.	1 st April 2022

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Heads of Terms

PUBLIC PROTECTION – COMMISSIONED FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES
DRAFT VERSION 8

SUBJECT TO CONTRACT

PARTIES:

Client: Wokingham Borough Council
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

Correspondence for project david.thrale@wokingham.gov.uk

Host: West Berkshire District Council
Council Offices
Market Street
Newbury
RG14 5LD

Correspondence for project: Paul Anstey Paul.Anstey@westberks.gov.uk

SOLICITORS:

Client: Wokingham Borough Council
Legal Services
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

Correspondence: Mr Sean O'Connor sean.oconnor@wokingham.gov.uk
0118 908 8177

Host: West Berkshire District Council
Legal & Strategic Support
Council Street Offices
Market Street, Newbury
RG14 5LD

Correspondence: Miss Claire Say Claire.Say@westberks.gov.uk
01635 519640

October 6, 2021

TERMS:

Purpose of the Agreement: The Agreement is for the provision of certain regulatory functions and activities by one public body to another at cost with the aim of ensuring that public services are provided with achieving common compliance with their statutory duties and such co-operation is solely for the public interest.

Services: The Services and the Service Specification are contained within the Appendix to these Heads of Terms (the "Services").

Procurement: The Host and the Client warrant that operation of the Agreement shall comply with regulation 12(7) of the Procurement Contract Regulations 2015 at all times.

Term: Commencing 1st April 2022 and terminating 8th January 2027.

TUPE on Commencement: The Host and the Client agree that TUPE is not expected to apply and the Client shall procure that no Client personnel shall transfer to the employment of the Host on the commencement of the Term.

Break Clause: The Agreement may be terminated by either party in the following circumstances:

- (i) For convenience giving a minimum of 12 months' notice, to be given at any time. This can be provided for part or whole of the Services;
- (ii) 1 month's written notice if there is a breach of the Agreement and resolution has not been agreed after Escalation Performance Default stage has completed; or
- (iii) 6 months written notice if the Client requests a Variation and agrees to pay the resulting Charges and the Host does not agree to the Variation within 6 weeks of request.

Charge:

The cost of the Charge will be a share of the following reasonable and proper costs directly incurred to perform the Services:

- i. Staff costs including on-costs and pension;
- ii. Buildings, IT and assets;
- iii. Insurance;
- iv. Support costs in IT, HR, Legal and Comms;
- v. Training, professional registrations
- vi. Management Charge;
- vii. any other reasonable and proper costs directly incurred to perform the Services

The share of the costs will be an apportioned share of the Client's usage of the costs as compared to the total costs.

The estimated total Annual Cost for provision of Services in year 1 is £439,000 which shall be the Charge payable by the Client to the Host. This is made up of:

- Trading Standards £340,000
- Intelligence £27,000
- Case Management £40,000
- Financial Investigations £15,000
- Air Quality £17,000

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- Management Charge £20,000 (based on 0.25FTE of Strategic Manager (West Berkshire Grade L, SCP 51).

The above charges includes all costs, charges and expenses including recharges, on-costs and pensions. The charge does not include disbursements or fees payable.

Income: Any third party income received by the Host solely in connection with the delivery of the Services to the Client under the terms of this Agreement will be returned to the Client on 6 monthly intervals or credited against the Charges (as nominated by the Client).

Fees & Disbursements: These will be payable by the Client. The Host will either (i) pay the fee on behalf of the Client or (ii) arrange direct payment only where the Client agrees to the fee and undertakes to pay this.

All charges shall be payable in advance in quarterly instalments. Any VAT matters will be raised with the Wokingham Client Officer as soon as reasonably practicable and supported by a valid VAT invoice.

Budget Setting: The Charge shall be reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process, meeting the Host cost recovery principles as set by the JPPC and required by Regulation 12(7) of PCR2015. The budget setting will include how activity will be measured and how the Charges will be apportioned between the councils (the Proportions) including any ARIS surpluses.

The Host will provide a draft budget and service specification by October including the total estimate cost for the year. The Client will notify the Host of the budget and service specification if any Variations are required. The Host will provide the Services within that budget and specification. Where the budget and specification changes the Host will notify the Client if it considers that a Variation has occurred.

Proportions: Where resources are shared with the Host and any other party, the budget setting shall include explanation of a fair, transparent and reasonable methodology of apportionment of costs between the parties based upon predicted utilisation. The methodology shall be the most accurate method of measuring utilisation and may be different for each budget line or services. Example methodologies include number of hours, number of cases held, number of inspections to be performed, number of responses to public etc

In Year Budget Variance: Monitoring of forecast spend against actual within the Host budget will be provided to the Client as part of the performance monitoring on a bi-monthly basis. Where actual spend is +/- 5-10% of the profiled budget, then the JMB will meet to determine if a Variation is required.

End of Year Budget Variance: The Host will provide end of year accounts for the Services by 31st May after the relevant financial year. The accounts include all Costs actually incurred and the apportionment of costs payable by the Client calculated in the same methodology when determining the Proportions. Where the Client has underspent then the balance shall be returned. Where the budget is overspent the Client shall pay the balance to the Host.

Variation: Variation to the scope of the Services may occur at any time but also includes by external factors such as by reason of changes in the law and where such changes occur, the implications will be discussed between the parties. Variation to the scope of the Services may also be proposed by either party and may only be made in writing. Where, subject to operational deliverability the Host agrees such Variation proposed by the Client, the Client agrees to pay any additional Costs to be

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incurred by the Host as a consequence of the Variation (calculated on the same cost recovery basis as the Budget). Any Variation leading to a reduction in Services shall lead to a Capital Liability.

TUPE on Termination or Expiry: On expiry or earlier termination, the Client and the Host agree that TUPE may apply in respect of the provision thereafter of any service equivalent to the Services but the position shall be determined in accordance with the law at the expiry date or the termination date as the case may be.

Capital Liability: This is staff costs (pension strain, redundancy etc) and project costs (costs of transacting or the activity associated with the action). In relation to Capital Liability the costs will be apportioned in the same methodology to calculate the Proportion other than the Proportion shall be an average of previous years Proportions from the date of the agreement to the date of the change.

Expiry & Termination (Variation): On expiry of the Term and Termination (Variation) then the staff costs and project costs shall be borne by the parties in the Proportions.

Variation: A Variation required by either party that reduces the scope or volume of Services will result in any subsequent staff costs and/or project costs being borne by the party requesting the variation

Variation (change in law): A variation required by a change in law shall require the Client to pay the staff costs. Project costs shall be paid by the parties in the Proportions unless the change only impacts on the Services provided by the Host to the Client.

Termination (breach): The staff costs and project costs shall be payable by the party in breach of the Agreement.

Termination (convenience): The project costs will be paid by the party triggering the termination. The staff costs shall be payable in accordance with the Proportions. The costs shall be shared using an alternative methodology where either:

- i. As a result of the termination of the IAA dated 6th January 2017 the parties (acting by respective Directors) formally sign a memorandum agreeing an alternative method of apportionment for the IAA and this Agreement; or
- ii. As a result of the operation of clause 22 ['Disputes'] the parties accept the decision of a mediator or arbitrator; or
- iii. In absence of i. and ii, where a party issues proceedings where the Court determines the apportionment of liability between the parties.

and in the case of ii or iii, that the Disputes mechanism is commenced by 1st April 2023.

Hourly Rate: Any work agreed as a Variation beyond those detailed in the Services will be charged at an hourly rate (£59 per hour in respect to the first year), reviewable annually in line with the budget setting process approved through the JMB.

Joint Management Board (JMB): All governance arrangements will be managed through the JMB. This is made up of the Host Officer, the Client Officer and Officer from Bracknell Forest Borough Council. All three authorities shall have an equal status in agreeing the business plan for the delivery of the Services. It is the role of the JMB to provide a recommendation in reports being submitted to the JPPC (or other decision making committee/group required by the Parties), any differences in approach can be reflected through this mechanism with any resource implications and mitigation plans included.

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Business Plan: Strategic level description of how the Services will be delivered on a year to year basis will be presented to the JMB in October of each year. This will include the following:

- Approach to cost recovery, fee setting and income generation;
- Approach to risk management, business continuity and emergency incidents;
- Approach to setting operational priorities;
- Investigation oversight and liaison with legal services;
- Service complaints, data protection and FOI's procedures;
- KPIs;
- Statutory reporting requirements (e.g. Food and Feed Enforcement Plan); and
- Organisational change and workforce planning.

Reviewable annually by JMB.

Incident Management and Emergency Response: Under exceptional circumstances, for example when one of the parties declares a major incident, convenes an Emergency Operations Centre or is called upon for mutual aid as part of local resilience forum requirements, the JMB will determine what Services will continue to be delivered and the impact on Charges. This will be conducted in line with the business continuity arrangements included in the Service Plan.

Performance Monitoring: All reporting to be conducted through the JMB with dedicated agenda item for Host Services;

There will be bi-monthly reporting against Key Performance Indicators and budgets. The KPI will be agreed with the approval of the Business Plan.

In addition, there will be:

- 2 operational meetings per month with Client Officer (Head of Enforcement and Safety or Assistant Director: Place); and
- Annual report on all KPI's and Budgets provided in June following the relevant financial year.

Reserved Matters: the officers will have the authority under s113 LGA1972 to act as the Client officers whilst performing the Services. The Agreement will include those matters where authorisation is required from the Client before performing an activity associated with the Services. These reserved matters shall be updated and amended by the Client from time to time. The reserve matters include decisions to:

- i. to issue certain agreed enforcement action;
- ii. to issue prosecutions or any action in a court or tribunal;
- iii. any decision with a likely material impact on the budget;
- iv. any decision with a significant impact on the residents of the Client or a group of residents (unless authorised in the business plan); and
- v. any decision with a negative reputational risk to the Client

The reserved matters may be authorised in general terms by the relevant Client officer or in the Business Plan.

Client Officer Operational Meetings: The Host will monitor all of the following activities in the delivery of Wokingham Commissioned Functions and Services:

Annual Report: The Joint Management Board will approve a report before May 31st each year which summarises the key themes of the operational meetings and KPI assessment.

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Performance Default: In the first instance it would be expected that the Joint Management Board seek to resolve any performance default. At any time the Client Officer can escalate any matter deemed by them to be a default to the Executive Director of West Berkshire.

Escalated Performance Default: In the event that a Performance Default is not resolved by the Executive Director of West Berkshire to the reasonable satisfaction of the Wokingham Client Officer within 14 days, a meeting of the Chief Executives of all parties shall be convened within a further 14 days with a view to settle the matter. The Chief Executives shall have a further 14 days to settle the dispute.

Court: Either party may refer a dispute to a the matter to the Court provided always that before doing so attempts are made to settle the dispute by mediation, in accordance with the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution ('CEDR') Model Mediation Procedure 2001 (the 'Model Procedure') or such later edition as may be in force from time to time..

Staff Delegated Authority: The Agreement will provide for any delegation to a Host officer together with any conditions necessary to exercise the delegation. Where not delegated the Agreement shall provide for the authorisation required from the Client. Any staff identified by the Host as requiring to operate in the Wokingham area will be duly authorised to do so under the Agreement. All staff will be operating under s113 of the 1972 Act.

Transparency and Audit: Information shall be collated by the Host to deliver the Services and will be made available to the Client on request as appropriate.

Data Protection: All information held by the Host to deliver the Services will be held in compliance with the relevant obligations of the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

Insurance: All staff employed by the Host to provide Services will be insured as appropriate by the Host.

Agreement Costs: Each party to bear own costs to conclude this agreement (not linked to wider costs which are dealt with separately).

Commissioning Agreement: The agreement for Services will be conditional on the Agreement being signed and the relevant authorisations required within the Client and the Host.

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Appendix

The Services

The Services will be provided within the following local authority functions or duties (broadly categorised as Trading Standards, Intelligence, Case Management and Air Quality):

- Trading Standards:
 - Food standards including quality, labelling and food fraud;
 - Animal Health and Welfare – on farm and establishments including contingency planning;
 - Fair Trading including: travel, estate agency, lettings;
 - Fraud, theft and money laundering including doorstep crime;
 - Intellectual property crime;
 - Metrology (weights and measures);
 - Product safety;
 - Age restricted products;
 - Road traffic – weight restrictions, overloads;
 - Support with confidence; and
 - Tobacco and alcohol harm reduction programme.
 - Intelligence:
 - Assessment of Client data to provide day to day operational support in effective investigation and resource planning; and
 - Contribution towards Client strategic and tactical assessment.
 - Case Management:
 - Case management and legal advice from beginning to end of case for all public protection cases in-house or contracted;
 - Court file preparation;
 - Court Attendance and representation;
 - Trial work (if not instructed to external Counsel);
 - First Tier (Housing) and Employment Tribunal (Health and Safety);
 - Advice and checking of procedural applications;
 - Financial Investigator;
 - Checking notices and expert instructions; and
 - Senior Appropriate Officer provision for Proceeds of Crime.
 - Air Quality:
 - Changing & maintenance of air quality monitoring stations & diffusion tubes;
 - Keeping under review action areas;
 - Appropriate liaison Client internal services to enable effective co-ordination of air quality data for Client decision making;
 - Analysis of data and drafting and submission of annual status reports; and
 - Management of the DEFRA funded particulate project on behalf of the Client.
-
- a commitment to enable integration of Microsoft PowerBi for real-time data analysis

Service Levels & Specifications

The specifications and service levels will be confirmed in the Agreement.

Key Performance Indicators

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The KPI's will be agreed as part of the Agreement and subsequent Business Plans. In relation to the financial year 2022/23 the KPI's will be agreed by the parties by August 2022. The following will be operational measures and where appropriate identification as a KPI (but not limited to the following):

In-house & PPP

- ALL - cases: new [number of]
- ALL - cases: closed [number of]
- ALL - cases: open [number of]
- ALL - cases: age of oldest case [calendar days]
- ALL - cases: average end-to-end time (of cases closed this period) [calendar days]
- ALL - cases: service request completed within 12-month period subject to subsequent similar SR (of cases closed this period) [number of]
- ALL - MEs - closed outside SLA (of cases due this period) [number of]
- ALL - FOIs & SARs - closed outside SLA (of cases due this period) [number of]
- ALL - complaints - closed outside SLA (of cases due this period) [number of]
- ALL - complaints - escalated to stage 2 [number of]
- ALL - sickness - days absent [number of]
- ALL - staff: vacancies [FTEs]
- ALL - staff: agency [FTEs]
- ALL - Management of budget to within 1% of baseline
- ALL - Management of income to within 5% of budget

In-house

- ASB - reports subject to on-site assessment within one working day[%]
- ASB - community trigger cases without case review [number of]
- ASB - licence consultation representations submitted within deadline [%]
- ASB - planning consultations submitted within deadline [%]
- ASB - Temporary Event Notices submitted within deadline [%]
- ASB - joint ASB field work operations with external partners [number of]
- ASB - community blights resolved by Partnership Tasking Group joint work [number of]
- ASB - % stray dogs collected within 4 hours : [%]
- PHS - dwellings brought up to standard [number of]
- PRIVATE HOUSING - mandatory HMOs currently licensed [number of]
- PRIVATE HOUSING - mandatory HMOs licensed [% estimated]
- PRIVATE HOUSING - long term empty homes brought back into use [number of]
- PRIVATE HOUSING - private high-rise dwellings with unsafe cladding [number of] only include if we have any high-rises
- PRIVATE HOUSING - private high-rise dwellings with unknown cladding [number of] only include if we have any high-rises
- PRIVATE HOUSING - caravan sites unlicensed or with MAJOR breach [number of]
- H&S - 'A category' businesses or high-risk activities overdue for inspection [number of]
- FOOD HYGIENE - overdue statutory food hygiene inspections [number of]

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- FOOD HYGIENE - establishments in broad compliance [% - excluding unrated]
- FOOD HYGIENE - establishments not in broad compliance [number of - excluding unrated]
- FOOD HYGIENE - establishments unrated more than 30 days after registration [number of]

PPP

- FOOD STANDARDS - overdue statutory food standards inspections [number of]
- FOOD STANDARDS - establishments unrated more than 30 days after registration [number of]
- TRADING STANDARDS - failure rate for age-related test purchases [%]
- TRADING STANDARDS - overdue high-risk inspections [number of]
- TRADING STANDARDS - businesses receiving three or more complaints within rolling 12-month period [number of]
- TRADING STANDARDS - businesses with MAJOR breach that was identified at a previous visit
- TRADING STANDARDS - Net proceeds of crime funds received : [total value]
- ANIMAL WELFARE - TBD
- AIR QUALITY - annual status report submitted to DEFRA on time
- CASE MANAGEMENT – Levels of detriment avoided

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	14/10/21
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Graham Bridgman
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	01/10/21
Report Author:	Sam Shepherd, Programme Manager, Local Communities
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4148

1 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to summarise the outcome of engagement with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and to set out recommendations for VCS support in West Berkshire.

2 Recommendations

2.1 That the Executive resolves:

- a) That the Council provides specialist safeguarding support and awareness raising programme to support the VCS in West Berkshire (as set out in paragraphs 6.12 - 6.13 of the Report).
- b) To procure “General VCS Support” in West Berkshire to include support for voluntary organisations and community groups in fund raising, business management, organisational development, sector communication, advocacy and networking.
- c) To provide a contribution to the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire to facilitate volunteer brokerage amongst the VCS in West Berkshire (as set out in paragraph 6.11 of the Report).

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	The budget for investment in VCS support was agreed by the Executive in September 2020 with £100k to be funded from reserves in 2022-23 and then £100k per year for up to four years from 2023-24 to 2026-27.

	<p>A contribution from the Council’s existing budget for VCS support which totals £13,739 will be added to the overall budget for this project, making the Council’s commitment a total of £113,739 per annum.</p> <p>Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), has partnered with the Council on this project so will also make a contribution. The contribution from the CCG is £12,000 per annum towards VCS support.</p> <p>This means the total budget for project planning is £125,739 which breaks down as follows against four elements of VCS support:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="606 645 1391 873"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Support element</th> <th>Budget</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>General VCS support</td> <td>£59,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>Volunteering brokerage</td> <td>£36,739</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>Safeguarding</td> <td rowspan="2">£30k</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>Raising Awareness</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Total</td> <td>£125,739</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In the event that budgets are reduced in future, any funding will be subject to termination upon providing at least six months’ notice.</p> <p>To ensure VCS support is sustainable over the longer term, it is suggested that at least £100k per year is put in the Council’s budget plans beyond 2027 for VCS support.</p>	Support element		Budget	A	General VCS support	£59,000	B	Volunteering brokerage	£36,739	C	Safeguarding	£30k	D	Raising Awareness	Total		£125,739
Support element		Budget																
A	General VCS support	£59,000																
B	Volunteering brokerage	£36,739																
C	Safeguarding	£30k																
D	Raising Awareness																	
Total		£125,739																
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>The provision of VCS support around safeguarding and statutory sector awareness raising has direct implications on the staff providing safeguarding training. The additional costs incurred by the Council for provision of safeguarding training, policy advice and guidance will be met by the project budget, with £30,000 per annum retained by the Council to provide additional capacity or backfill to free capacity.</p>																	
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>In relation to the contributions from the CCG, ensure that there is a binding agreement in place to ensure certainty around the financial level and the term.</p> <p>In relation to General VCS Support a compliant procurement exercise would need to be facilitated. A general specification would need to be developed to enable a robust contractual arrangement.</p> <p>In relation to the grant contribution to Volunteer Centre West Berkshire, we understand a grant funding agreement will need to be put in place.</p>																	

Risk Management:	The risks arising from this report are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Insufficient bids: no Providers willing to provide the services as specified and within budget. b) Resources and capacity to bid may be affected due to Covid. c) Future organisational (Council or CCG) budget reductions 			
Property:	There are no property implications for the Council arising from this report or its proposals.			
Policy:	There are no national policies which relate to this report or its proposals.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:	X			
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			The proposals outlined in this report will have a positive impact on protected characteristic as it seeks to drive greater equality and inclusion.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The proposals outlined in this report will have a positive impact on protected characteristic as it seeks to drive greater equality and inclusion.
Environmental Impact:		X		There are no direct environmental implications for the Council arising from this report or its proposals.
Health Impact:	X			The proposals outlined in this report will help deliver the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy which seeks to deliver on all aspects of improved health and wellbeing.

ICT Impact:		X		There are no IT implications for the Council arising from this report or its proposals.
Digital Services Impact:		X		There are no digital implications for the Council arising from this report or its proposals.
Council Strategy Priorities:	X			<p>The proposals in this report will help to improve the following Council strategy priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships • Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes • Support everyone to reach their potential • Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire. <p>The proposals outlined in this report directly deliver an action in the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023 and in the Recovery and Renewal Plan 2021.</p>
Core Business:	X			The proposals outlined in this report will support a stronger and more innovative VCS. This will help the Council deliver services in partnership or via commissioned services, where a VCS organisation is involved.
Data Impact:			X	There are no data or data protection implications for the Council arising from this report or its proposals.
Consultation and Engagement:	Following two phases of engagement, the views of 161 VCS representatives were captured in quantitative surveys and 27 representatives gave their views in explorative, qualitative interviews or workshops. It is estimated ¹ that more than 20% of the local VCS views have been fed in to this work.			

¹ Estimation based upon a sector size of 700 organisations.

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 In recognition of the valuable contribution that the local VCS makes to local quality of life, West Berkshire Council has committed to deliver improved support for the sector. The Council has committed £100,000 per annum (for up to five years).
- 4.2 The Council makes a £13,739 contribution from its current budget for VCS support which will be added to the overall budget for this project. Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), has partnered with the Council on this project; their contribution is £12,000 which makes the total budget available for VCS support in excess of £125,739.00.
- 4.3 VCS support is a key priority for both West Berkshire Council and Berkshire West CCG. Improved support will help deliver the following strategic strategies and plans:
 - The West Berkshire Vision 2036
 - The Berkshire West Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2030
 - The Council Strategy 2019-2023
 - Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023
 - The Council's Recovery and Renewal Plan 2021.
- 4.4 To best shape VCS support for West Berkshire, two phases of engagement were undertaken. One in November 2020 and a further and wider phase commenced in June 2021. The latter phase of engagement was co-designed alongside sector colleagues.
- 4.5 This report first sets out some guiding principles for the VCS support and explores how sector support is currently provided both locally and elsewhere before describing the sector-support needs which have been identified. The report then outlines and appraises options for VCS support and sets out a recommended course of action for the Council and Berkshire West CCG to respond most effectively to local VCS need within the available budget.

5 Supporting Information

Background

- 5.1 Community life and social connections are all factors that have a vital contribution to people's health and wellbeing. These aspects of community build control and resilience and can help buffer against disease and reduce inequalities; this is often referred to as social capital². There is already a wealth of community activity taking place across West Berkshire in neighbourhoods, villages and through clubs, interest groups and community organisations. Many of these activities take place with the support and involvement of local VCS organisations and groups.
- 5.2 The local VCS plays a vital role in supporting and improving our society; the sector also makes a significant contribution to the local economy. VCS organisations and groups are the biggest builders of social capital, and provide crucial support to people and

² What Makes Us Healthy (2012) <http://www.assetbasedconsulting.co.uk/uploads/publications/WMUH.pdf>

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

communities, often to those that are hardest to reach and experience disparities in outcomes (inequalities).

- 5.3 In recognition of the contribution the VCS makes to individuals, local communities and overall local health and wellbeing, West Berkshire Council and Berkshire West CCG have committed to funding improved support for the sector. This commitment supports a number of strategic documents, including the Berkshire West Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and it is an action in the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023 and Covid Recovery and Renewal Plan 2021.
- 5.1 To best shape VCS support for West Berkshire, two phases of engagement were undertaken. The first phase commenced in November 2020 and was designed to inform a specification for a 'Voluntary Sector Support Organisation' (VCSSO) that the Council had committed to. Sector feedback led the Council to a decision to delay planned commissioning of this VCSSO to allow wider engagement. There was also a shift in focus to understanding sector need and how best to meet that need; the aim of which was to ensure that the solution(s) for sector support were not pre-determined and instead, need-led.

VCS engagement

- 5.2 During Phase I of VCS engagement between November and December 2020, 76 representatives responded to a digital survey, 24 attended a workshop and eight took part in one to one interviews. Phase II of the engagement was carefully co-designed with sector colleagues: 25 VCS organisations participated in online sessions to co-produce an engagement plan that set out the questions for engagement, the methods needed to ensure the engagement was inclusive, who we needed to engage and a sensible timeframe for the engagement.
- 5.3 The following methods were deployed during the co-designed second phase of engagement which took place between June and August 2021:
- A one-stop-shop online engagement webpage, hosting a digital survey (which had 121 responses);
 - One to one interviews (taken up by three organisations);
 - Workshops;
 - Option to send an email;
 - Option to send a video;
 - Frequently Asked Questions;
 - Examples of voluntary sector support from elsewhere.
- 5.4 Invitations to participate were sent far and wide. Thanks are offered to all organisations and representatives that took the time to engage in both phases. Thanks are also recorded to the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire, Greenham Trust, Connecting Communities Berkshire and Penny Post for their assistance with sharing information about the engagement with their networks and newsletters.
- 5.1 With 76 survey responses in Phase I, and 121 in Phase II, there was a total of 197 responses; as some respondents took the time to feedback in both phases, we had 161

unique responses during the two phases. In addition, 27 representatives gave their views in explorative, qualitative interviews or workshops. It is estimated³ that more than 20% of the local VCS views have been fed in to this work. A full report of the results of the VCS Engagement is attached as Appendix A.

5.2 The remainder of this document draws upon the VCS Engagement Report to set out some guiding principles for improving VCS support. It then describes the services currently in place locally and how support is provided elsewhere before describing the sector-support needs identified through engagement. It moves on to outline and appraise options to meet the identified needs before proposing a recommended course of action.

Principles

5.3 During VCS engagement, local organisations and groups shared some candid and insightful feedback about their organisations, the support they currently access, their support needs for now and the future and what support they would specifically like from the Council and statutory agencies. As a result of this feedback, the following guiding principles for moving forward with VCS support have been identified.



5.4 The following expands on the rationale for each of these principles:

- (a) **Evidence-led.** By applying an evidence-based approach, VCS support for West Berkshire will be based upon established need and proven methods of delivery. Furthermore, because the practical experience of VCS organisations and groups are

³ Estimation based upon a sector size of 700 organisations.

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at the centre, this ensures that the solutions are equally needs-led and are therefore likely to be the most effective solutions.

(b) **Inclusive.** The geography and diversity of West Berkshire's communities means that inclusivity is a corner stone of ensuring that not only do all parts of the VCS thrive; its essential to enable those the VCS supports to thrive too. Regardless of organisation size, location, longevity or focus; we need to ensure sector support is fully inclusive; with the appropriate capacity to be so.

(c) **Sustainable.** In this context, sustainability refers to a need to make sure that the models of VCS support which are pursued at this time are sustainable for the future. There is a need to learn from the past cycles of investment and disinvestment to invest wisely. This will ensure that sector support is not only sustainable in the long term, but also empowers the sector to strengthen and innovate for the future.

(d) **Collaborative.** There is enormous strength in collaboration; no person has all the answers, but by working together, we can better understand, generate more solutions and share the skills, knowledge and resources we have available. The local VCS are already making use of the strengths which exist in their sector peers; by making collaboration a key principle, there is recognition of these strengths from which to build.

Current VCS Support in West Berkshire

- 5.5 There has been a history of investment and disinvestment in the local VCS support which, was identified by local groups and organisations as being unhelpful for the sector which has had a significant negative impact on the trust and relationships between the Council and the VCS.
- 5.6 The Council currently provides £13,739 (per annum) of funding to the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire (VCWB) for support for *initiatives to develop their services and for premises for developing volunteering and running the community transport schemes*. Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group also fund some VCS support with VCWB totalling £12,000 per annum. Neither the Council nor CCG provide any other funding for the support of local VCS organisations or groups in West Berkshire.
- 5.7 From April 2015 the Council changed the way that it commissioned services from the voluntary sector through the introduction of the Voluntary Sector Prospectus (VSP) which facilitated the transfer to a model of commissioning preventative services based on outcomes to promote transparency, stimulate innovation and collaboration in the VCS. A total of eight organisations are involved in the delivery of the VSP priority outcomes including: promote independence in old age, support self-management, reduce loneliness, access employment, support carers and give a voice to vulnerable adults. None of these organisations offer support services to the VCS.
- 5.8 The engagement identified that VCS support services are being accessed by the sector in a variety of ways for a variety of things, these include:
- **Peer networks.** These are key for many different aspects of support. They are used by more than a quarter of respondents in the sector for:
 - Demonstrating the impact of funding

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

- Managing the 'business' side of their group or organisation (e.g. finance, risk, performance and future planning)
- Talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests.
- Outcome report writing
- Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard
- Knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general
- Safeguarding
- Representing the interests of a group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy)
- Providing information in other formats, e.g. braille/other languages.
- **Volunteer Centre West Berkshire (VCWB).** VCWB services are used by a third of VCS respondents for volunteer recruitment, by 20% for funding sources and availability and almost 20% for talking to and meeting other groups or organisations.
- **West Berkshire Council.** Almost 60% of sector respondents use the Council for having discussions and a relationship with local authorities. 27% of respondents to represent the interests of a group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy).
- **Online support** is accessed by 43% of respondents for support with legislative changes and for 25% of respondents in providing information in other formats, e.g. braille/other languages.
- Other support routes are identified in the table below

Sources of support	% of respondents
Local businesses/community	34%
National organisation	31%
Connecting Communities Berkshire	6.25%
Basingstoke Voluntary Action / Basingstoke and Deane BC	6.25%
Greenham Trust/ Good Exchange funding	6.25%
Berkshire Association of local councils	3.1%
Health bodies	3.1%

Table 1. Other sources of support identified by VCS

- 5.9 Despite most VCS organisations not currently accessing support services; they are highly valued by those that do use them with 100% of those responding to engagement reporting that support services were responsive to their needs.
- 5.10 A key message was that existing support services have significant skills, knowledge and experience but are restricted by capacity. This feedback was particularly true of VCWB who were noted to have picked up support services following historical disinvestment. Where services were said to need improvements, capacity was an issue, as was a need for services to more inclusive and help more with fundraising (sources

of funding and advice on applications). There was also an identified need for those in the statutory sector to have a better understanding of the VCS sector.

VCS support elsewhere

- 5.11 There is a commitment in this work to take an evidence-based approach, to ensure VCS support for West Berkshire is based upon established need and proven methods of delivery. Alongside the feedback from engagement, it is therefore vital to consider models used elsewhere. The following highlights some examples:
- 5.12 *Community Base, Brighton*. This organisation is a home for community and voluntary groups in Brighton and Hove, supporting charities and community groups to work together and share expertise. Income from services, including the provision of office space and meeting rooms is used to fund their accessible building close to the station which also includes a reception team to greet visitors and provide information about local services and volunteering and community job opportunities.
- 5.13 *Action Together, Oldham*. This is a free membership-based organisation supporting community action in Oldham, Rochdale & Tameside. Action Together advocates for the work that the sector contributes and facilitates opportunities to be involved in decision making about things that matter to partners. They enable networking between organisations and the promotion of groups and their services or activities in a community activities directory.
- 5.14 *Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL) / Doing Good Leeds website*. VAL is a free membership organisation supporting groups and organisations in local communities of place and interest to develop and achieve positive social change from within. VAL Essentials is an optional annual subscriber package to organisations working in line with the VAL's values. The cost is tiered to organisational income and offers discounts on training courses, meeting room hire, job adverts etc. Any profits are used to help organisations do good in Leeds
- 5.15 The Doing Good Leeds website is managed by VAL but draws together the combined experience of organisations that give support to the third sector and advocate on their behalf. Voluntary Action Leeds hosts the Young Lives Leeds Forum, a strategy and development partnership for third sector organisations working with children, young people and their families.
- 5.16 *Gloucestershire VCS Alliance*. A free membership, open to all Alliance whose mission is to be the independent voice that informs, strengthens and develops the voluntary and community sector in Gloucestershire. Their strategic aims include a communications strategy to build trust and reputation, an information strategy focusing on what is valuable to stakeholders, a "better together" strategy to improve sector resilience and increase influence and a continuous learning strategy to build expertise.
- 5.17 *Voscur, Bristol*. Voscur is an agency that supports, develops and represents the VCS in Bristol. It supports collaboration between local groups to improve the quality and impact of services for local people, and to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of local organisations. They work with the investors who commission and fund the work of the VCSE sector, to ensure they make informed decisions and design effective services.

Identified need

- 5.18 When we asked VCS respondents about their support needs now and in the future, the sector told us that the biggest support need for the sector is related to funding; two thirds found funding difficult now and almost 40% said funding was a barrier to them achieving a long term vision. Aside from help with promoting a group's activity, it was the most significant support need (71%).
- 5.19 At least 50% of the VCS organisations that responded have at least one support need for now or the future. Top needs for now are promoting a group or organisation, funding sources and availability and training. Top needs for the future are outcome report writing, governance advice, safeguarding and understanding changes to legislation.
- 5.20 Preferred routes for receiving support included the following:
- **Peer support.** This was seen as important for getting support with shared resources or back office functions and managing the 'business' side of a group (e.g. finance, risk, performance and future planning) and for knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general.
 - **VCWB.** Almost 60% of respondents wanted to receive support for volunteering from VCWB and a third of respondents wanted to receive support from VCWB for a) demonstrating impact of funding b) talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests c) funding sources and availability and d) knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general and e) talking to parts of the community who are less well heard.
 - **WBC.** More than 55% of respondents would like to receive support for safeguarding from West Berkshire Council. The Council was also seen important as a means of providing governance advice and legislative updates.
 - **Online.** 38% of respondents would like to receive support for new or changes to legislation from online sources.
- 5.21 Although sector feedback demonstrated a preference for different routes to access support, some colleagues shared they would like support services to be in a 'one stop shop'.

6 Proposal

- 6.1 The engagement which has taken place with the West Berkshire VCS has shown that there is a need for additional capacity and some focused support for the local sector. It is therefore proposed that the Council, in partnership with Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group ensure services are engaged to help meet the identified need.
- 6.2 The following outlines the proposed support which would meet the identified need for VCS support.

General VCS Support

- 6.3 It is proposed that general VCS support be commissioned for West Berkshire. This will include a detailed scoping exercise to develop an outcome based service specification based upon the extensive engagement undertaken with the VCS and strategic partners.

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

- 6.4 A general support service would build on the strong peer networks within the sector to facilitate greater networking and promotion of groups and their services. These strong peer networks support sustainability for the future, because it uses a 'grow-our-own' approach. A support service would also support collaboration between local groups to improve the quality and impact of the VCS for local people and communities.
- 6.5 Based upon feedback from the local VCS and delivery models from elsewhere, general VCS support in West Berkshire would include the following:

Free membership

- 6.6 Basing a local model on evidence of delivery elsewhere, a free membership-based service is envisaged for West Berkshire as part of the general sector support. Free membership would give organisations access to all support services, resources, networks, information, advice and guidance. This would in turn create a database and map of the VCS organisations that make up the local sector for improved communication and engagement with the sector and between the VCS and statutory organisations.
- 6.7 Membership of the 'West Berkshire Community Network' would encourage and create a sense of an inclusive and collaborative sector which offers opportunities to strengthen peer-to-peer support opportunities, it also encourages sharing and mutual pursuit of VCS-led goals. The 'Community Network' would help enable, support and empower grass-roots initiatives.

Funding and fundraising

- a) Find and share funding sources and availability
- b) Assistance with applying for funding. This includes support with bid writing, advice for applications
- c) Encourage and facilitate local innovation and collaboration in the VCS to attract greater levels of funding to West Berkshire (e.g collaborative pilots to demonstrate impact and then develop opportunities to attract further investment)
- d) Advice and guidance on demonstrating impact of funding
- e) Guidance (hints and tips) on grant monitoring and outcome report writing to demonstrate value for money.

Business management

- a) Support for managing the 'business' side of a group, e.g. legal structures, finance, risk, performance and future planning
- b) Support and signposting for HR e.g. health and safety, payroll, performance management, DBS, remote working
- c) Support and advice for setting up accounting books/systems, record keeping and budgeting; Advice and guidance on developing and checking policies; including understanding legal obligations, governance structures and governance processes

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

- d) Facilitate connections and provide advice for organisations to encourage the sharing of best practice and experience/skills within the sector (for peer support). This may include encouraging the sharing of resources or back office functions.

Organisational development (training, mentoring and skills development)

- a) Find and signpost to training for VCS organisations to improve skills, knowledge and understanding; including on leadership development
- b) Encourage and facilitate collaborative mentoring support amongst VCS networks (this may include a pool of mentors / local expert volunteers to link with projects on and hoc/as required basis)
- c) Broker peer mentoring/coaching to support small/grass roots VCS groups to start up.

Sector communications

- a) Provide and sharing weekly VCS-sector relevant news, funding/training opportunities, stories and celebrating success across the sector
- b) Support to the VCS for sharing messaging, best practice and maximising media coverage
- c) Guidance on website and social media development and management.

Advocacy

- a) Provide representation and feed in sector views to relevant local policies and strategies; ensuring that the sector-view is sought to do so (e.g. to the Council/CCG/other statutory organisations)
- b) Represent the interests of the VCS as a whole at strategic statutory and partnership meetings (e.g. Health and Wellbeing Board) and in negotiations with statutory bodies (e.g. social prescribers)
- c) Represent the interests of the residents, customers and communities that the local VCS is working with to statutory bodies and strategic partners
- d) Advocate for the voice of smaller VCS groups and seldom heard communities through relevant meetings and structures. This includes specific engagement and subsequent representation of the parts of the community who are less well heard.

Sector networks

- a) Create, facilitate and administrate peer network opportunities to help VCS organisations to know about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general
- b) Create, facilitate and administrate peer forums to help VCS organisations to talk to and meet with other groups or organisations with similar interests
- c) Signpost VCS organisations and groups to services that can provide information in other formats, e.g. braille/other languages
- d) Encourage and facilitate social value brokerage (i.e. connecting business needs with offers and opportunities within the local sector to fulfil social value need).

6.8 It is recommended that this element is procured through a competitive process. It is proposed the budget for this should be £59,000 per annum for a period three years with an option to extend for another two years.

Volunteering brokerage

6.9 In addition to general VCS support, sector feedback and delivery models elsewhere demonstrate the need for volunteer brokerage, which will help match local people who wish to volunteer to local opportunities to volunteer. It is therefore recommended that a contribution is provided for specialist volunteer brokerage in West Berkshire of £36,739 per annum for a period of three years with an option to extend for another two years.

6.10 The Council has identified the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire (VCWB), a local charity with over 40 years of experience to be a suitable recipient of the contribution on the following facts:

- VCWB hold and use an extensive database of local people looking to volunteer within the West Berkshire area. Along with strict adherence to GDPR legislation, the creation of such a database requires unique trust and brand loyalty for people to hand over personal details. No other organisation holds this information, or uses this matching methodology in the West Berkshire area; and all of these factors are critical to successful delivery of a local volunteering brokerage service.
- Similarly; in relation to a database of organisations needing volunteers; VCWB holds and uses this database within the West Berkshire area. Again; along with strict adherence to GDPR legislation, the creation of such a database requires unique trust and brand loyalty for organisations to offer details of their needs. Similarly to the database of local volunteers (described above); no other organisation holds information like this, or the matching methodology in the West Berkshire area for organisations seeking volunteers. This underlines the unique factors which are critical to successful delivery of a local volunteering brokerage service.
- VCWB have been driving the local volunteering culture since 1974 and therefore have totally bespoke understanding of West Berkshire's volunteering landscape and how to meet the needs of both local volunteers and organisations. Building such a strong volunteering ethos, and culture requires sustained and consistent effort to ensure local people are matched with local opportunities. It is believed VCWB are the only supplier providing such services.
- VCWB is the local VCS sector's choice of volunteering brokerage services. Feedback from organisations shows almost 60% of local organisations identified a need for volunteering support and wanted to receive this from VCWB.
- The quality of VCWB services, and its trusted position within the local sector has been verified through sector feedback; where 100% of respondents report that services were responsive to their needs.

6.11 The contribution from the Council will assist in VCWB being better equipped to help realise the following outcomes:

- a) Provide a system to match local people to local need for volunteers

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- b) Work with organisations to develop their needs and specification for volunteer roles
- c) Provide advice and guidance on writing volunteer role descriptions to ensure they are clear and attract the right volunteers
- d) Provide advice and support for organisations and their volunteers needing a DBS check
- e) Create and manage a database of volunteering opportunities available across West Berkshire according to interests, location, volunteer requirements and other relevant information (e.g. length of commitment)
- f) Advertise and promote volunteering opportunities across the area
- g) Create, develop and manage a database of people wishing to volunteer according to their interests and requirements (e.g. time available/accessibility needs)
- h) Provide advice and guidance for organisations on the training and managing volunteers
- i) Promote and encourage volunteering across the whole of West Berkshire; this includes holding an annual volunteer recruitment fair
- j) Introduce schemes to support and encourage those with specific needs (e.g. disability, learning difficulty or mental wellbeing issues) to take up volunteering roles which support their wellbeing. This involves linking to the NHS social prescribing service where relevant.

Safeguarding

6.12 In addition to the above, sector feedback demonstrates the need for support with safeguarding. It is therefore recommended that VCS support contains specialist safeguarding support provided by West Berkshire Council. This would include the following:

- a) Provide general and specialist safeguarding advice and training; including safer recruitment advice and training (including DBS check advice where necessary)
- b) Advice, guidance and standardised templates for VCS groups to develop safeguarding policies and processes
- c) Develop and share best practice hints and tips for VCS organisations and groups on safeguarding
- d) Assurance for VCS organisations and groups on their safeguarding policies, processes and procedures.

6.13 It is recommended that this is provided by the Council utilising its internal expertise.

Statutory sector awareness

6.14 In addition to the above, sector feedback demonstrates the need for support from statutory services to recognise and work with the sector to maximise their potential. It is therefore recommended that VCS support contains an awareness raising programme amongst statutory sector staff.

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- 6.15 Ensuring that the VCS is supported by statutory services, embraces the principles of this work; collaboration and sustainability. With regards to sustainability; if the statutory sector better understands the return on investment with the VCS, future disinvestment may be less likely. In addition; the potential for collaboration is likely to increase as understanding increases; thus making collaborative solutions more likely in future.
- 6.16 An awareness raising campaign for statutory sector colleagues would include the following:
- Outline of the size, diversity and make-up of the local VCS
 - Return on investment in the VCS; including delivery of social value
 - The value of volunteers and volunteering to West Berkshire
 - 'How to' guide for working with VCS organisations; points to consider.
- 6.17 It is recommended that this is provided by the Council utilising its internal expertise.
- 6.18 Investment will be needed by the Council in the safeguarding and awareness raising areas to deliver internally; estimated to be a total of £30,000 to fund safeguarding training and policy/advice/guidance for VCS organisations. Further work is required to determine the most effective and efficient means of delivering this internally (e.g. through back-fill or additional capacity).

7 Estimated Spend

The following funding has been identified:

Support element		Budget (p.a)
A	General VCS support	£59,000
B	Volunteering brokerage	£36,739
C	Safeguarding	£30k
D	Raising Awareness	
Total		£125,739

- 7.1 The budget for VCS support was agreed by the Executive in April 2020 as £100k per year, from April 2022. The budget has been allocated for up to five years, taking it to the end of March 2027. The annual contribution from the Council's current budget for VCS support (£13,739) is added to the overall budget for this project.
- 7.2 Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), has partnered with the Council on this project so will also make a contribution of £12,000 per annum. This makes the total budget available for VCS support in excess of £125,739.00.

8 Conclusion

- 8.1 In recognition of the valuable contribution that the local VCS makes to local quality of life, West Berkshire Council and Berkshire West CCG have committed a £125,739 per annum for up to five years for sector support.

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

- 8.2 Following significant engagement with the local VCS sector, this report has set out guiding principles for providing VCS support which will meet the self-identified sector need. Feedback concludes that West Berkshire Council itself needs to provide support for the sector in the form of safeguarding support and awareness-raising training for the statutory sector. Funding to support this activity will be made available from the overall project budget.
- 8.3 The Report recommends that on the basis of evidence regarding sector need, as well as evidence of what works elsewhere, the Council and Berkshire West budget can respond most effectively to local VCS need within the available budget by:
- Putting in place a specialist safeguarding support and awareness raising programme to support the VCS in West Berkshire;
 - Procuring “General VCS Support” to support voluntary organisations and community groups in West Berkshire; and
 - Providing a contribution to Volunteer Centre West Berkshire to facilitate volunteer brokerage in West Berkshire.

9 Appendices

Appendix A – Voluntary and Community Sector Engagement Report 2021

Background Papers:

[9. Working with the VCSE Exec 30 4 20.pdf \(westberks.gov.uk\)](#) (Executive Report, 30th April 2020)

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

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

Wards affected: All

Officer details:

Voluntary and Community Sector Support

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Job Title: Programme Manager: Local Communities
Tel No: 07920 101875
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Engaging and Enabling our Local Communities: Voluntary and Community Sector Support Engagement Report

August 2021



1 Introduction

- 1.1 In recognition of the valuable contribution that the local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) makes, West Berkshire Council has committed to deliver improved support for the sector. This work supports delivery of the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023 and Covid Recovery and Renewal Plan 2021. The local VCS makes a significant contribution to delivering the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as such; Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group has partnered with the Council on this project.
- 1.2 To best shape VCS support for West Berkshire, two phases of engagement were undertaken. The first phase commenced in November 2020 and was designed to inform a specification for a 'Voluntary Sector Support Organisation' (VCSSO) that the Council had committed to. Sector feedback led the Council to a decision to delay planned commissioning of this VCSSO to allow wider engagement. There was also a shift in focus to understanding sector need and how best to meet that need; the aim of which was to ensure that the solution(s) for sector support were not pre-determined and instead, need-led.
- 1.3 A further and wider phase (Phase II) of engagement commenced in June 2021. This latter phase of engagement was co-designed alongside sector colleagues.
- 1.4 This report summarises the methodology and approach taken to the engagement. It then draws together feedback from both phases; which will then inform the next steps for West Berkshire Council and Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group to respond most effectively.
- 1.5 Thanks are offered and recorded to all those VCS colleagues who took the time to feed in their views, to co-design the second phase of engagement and for promoting the engagement across the sector.

2 Methodology

Phase I

- 2.1 Phase I of engagement commenced in November 2020 and was scheduled to take place to ensure the results could inform a planned commissioning timeline. The following methods were deployed in Phase I of the VCS engagement:
 - Digital survey;
 - One to one interviews;
 - Workshops.
- 2.2 Invitations to participate in the engagement were shared with a representative range of voluntary sector organisations, community groups, statutory organisations, commissioners and strategic partners. A number of organisations declined to participate and the invitation to engage; citing concerns around duplicating the role of existing VCS support provided by the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire (VCWB).

Phase I Survey

- 2.3 The questions for the Phase I survey were compiled by West Berkshire Council and some key partners organisations were offered the opportunity to include questions in the survey eg Volunteer Centre West Berkshire (VCWB), Greenham Trust. The

purpose of the questions were to inform a specification for the commissioning of a Voluntary Sector Support Organisation (VCSO).

2.4 The survey was distributed to:

- Voluntary organisations and community groups listed on the West Berkshire Directory;
- Small groups identified by service leads that may not be otherwise known;
- Known charities in West Berkshire;
- Community Support Hub – COVID-19 Response Groups;
- Parish Councils.

2.5 The survey was directly shared with 494 organisations and individuals and received 76 responses, equating to 15% participation.

2.6 The survey was initially open from 4 to 18 November 2020 and was reopened from 25 November to 8 December 2020 to ensure a number of organisations who wanted to participate could do so. The extended period generated three additional responses.

Phase I workshops and interviews

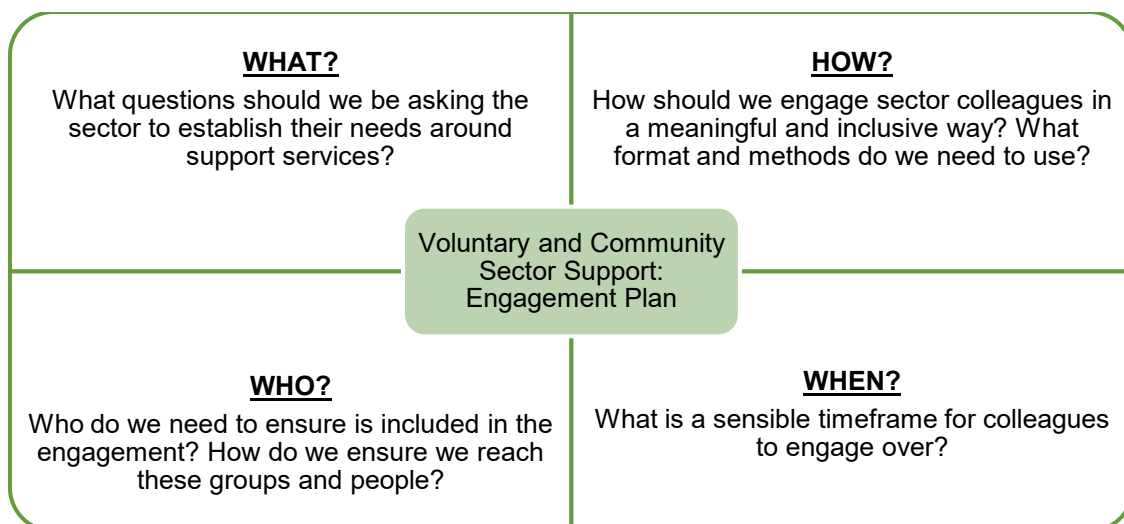
2.7 24 organisations attended one of three peer workshops. Each workshop included organisations or community groups of similar size to support networking and confidence for open conversation and maximum contribution.

2.8 Eight organisations participated in a one to one interview at their convenience.

Phase II

2.9 Following Phase I feedback, it was clear that further engagement was needed to seek the views of all those across the sector, both on their needs and how those needs could be best met.

2.10 To ensure that the second phase of engagement was fit-for-purpose and delivered sector-led results, it was co-designed with 25 VCS organisations in April 2021. Thanks are offered to all colleagues that participated in the co-designing process; representatives took part in online sessions to address:



2.11 The final engagement plan can be seen in Appendix A. In implementing this plan, the following methods of engagement were deployed:

- A one-stop-shop online engagement webpage, hosting:
- Digital survey;
- One to one interviews;
- Workshops;
- Option to send an email;
- Option to send a video;
- Frequently Asked Questions;
- Examples of voluntary sector support from elsewhere.

2.12 Questions for the Phase II survey were compiled according to the co-designed engagement plan. Some of the questions about organisations asked in Phase I were repeated in Phase II to establish a greater insight to the sector itself.

2.13 In addition to the Phase I list of organisations, the invitation to participate was distributed via the newsletters and networks of VCWB, Greenham Trust, Penny Post and Connecting Communities in Berkshire (CCB). Thanks are offered and recorded to the VCWB, Greenham Trust, CCB and Penny Post for their assistance with sharing information about the VCS engagement with their networks.

2.14 Even with wide ranging options to engage, participants chose two routes to engage; 121 responses to the survey were received and four organisations requested and took part in one to one interviews.

3 Survey Results

General

3.1 The Phase I survey generated 76 responses and the Phase II survey generated 121 responses. Many organisations took the time to feedback to us in both phases, so in total there were 161 unique responses to the VCS engagement survey. It is estimated the local VCS sector has approximately 700 organisations within it; the engagement response therefore represents an estimated 23% of the sector.

3.2 Results of Phase I demonstrated the need for wider understanding of the sector and that there were key and valued existing VCS support services which needed to be understood and considered in the overall picture. Existing VCS support services are provided through a number of routes; including the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire, Connecting Communities in Berkshire, faith networks, peer networks, national associations and several online sources.

About the sector

3.3 The results of Phase I showed that the majority of the VCS sector in West Berkshire is not connected with a bigger, national charity or structure. 64% said they were not part of a larger national organisation.

Voluntary and Community Sector Support: Engagement Report

- 3.4 In Phase II, when asked how long an organisation had been running for, 74% responded to say at least six years, only 5% replied to say that they had been going for less than a year. This shows that the sector in West Berkshire is relatively stable, with the majority having been established for a number of years.
- 3.5 The results from Phase I show that the VCS sector in West Berkshire is volunteer-led. In Phase I, 58% of those that responded said their organisation was led by volunteers. It was similarly the case in Phase II, where only 5% of organisations responded to say were run by paid staff only. 36% of organisations from Phase I have no paid staff at all and with a further 36% having up to five paid staff in the organisation.
- 3.6 When asked about the numbers of volunteers in an organisation, 22% of respondents in Phase I indicated they had more than 50 volunteers connected with their organisation. When this number is extrapolated against the number of organisations having 50 or more volunteers (of which there were 16), it means that there are over 800 volunteers connected to these 16 organisations.
- 3.7 With regards to which sections of the community the local VCS support, organisations across phases I and II are serving and supporting all parts of the community. There are comparatively fewer organisations that responded who are supporting diverse communities (36% on average) than are supporting children and young people (56% average), older adults (54% average) or vulnerable adults (52% average) of the West Berkshire Community.

	Phase I	Phase II	Average of PI/PII
Children and young people	51.43%	60.18%	56%
Diverse communities	32.86%	38.94%	36%
Families	50.00%	54.87%	52%
Older adults	55.71%	53.10%	54%
Vulnerable adults	54.29%	49.56%	52%
Other (please specify)	28.57%	27.43%	28%

- 3.8 When asked about the services that groups are providing in West Berkshire, the following table shows the responses against types of services provided by the VCS locally. It illustrates that there are a significant proportion of the VCS sector providing support or services in the health and wellbeing arena (46% of respondents on average) and in running a club or support group (36% of respondents on average). Those undertaking support or services related to interpretation or non-verbal communication and environmental services are comparatively few (an average of 3% and 6% respectively).

Services provided	Phase I	Phase II
Advocacy	14.29%	7.89%
Community buildings and facilities	15.71%	14.91%
Community safety	8.57%	9.65%
Counselling	8.57%	7.02%
Education, training and employment	31.43%	21.93%
Environmental or conservation services	4.29%	8.77%
Health and Wellbeing	51.43%	42.11%
Information, advice and guidance	41.43%	27.19%
Interpretation and non-verbal communication services	4.29%	1.75%

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Services provided	Phase I	Phase II
Open spaces	7.14%	12.28%
Play or child care services	11.43%	13.16%
Run a club, social group or support group	37.14%	35.09%
Rural services or transport	14.29%	2.63%
Sport, leisure or arts/culture activities	27.14%	27.19%
Other (please specify)	35.71%	40.35%

3.9 With regards to the above, 'other' services which were identified by the 40% of respondents in Phase II, the following categories were identified:

- Children & young people/families (5.7%);
- Schools support (2.4%);
- Information and advice (2.0%);
- Transport (2.4%);
- Environmental services (3.3%);
- Faith support (4.0%);
- Support for vulnerable people (13.2%);
- General community support (7.35%).

3.10 In Phase I, when respondents were asked which areas across West Berkshire they served, it showed a relatively even spread across the district:

Area	Response
Bucklebury, Bradfield, Aldermaston and surrounding areas	48.53%
Burghfield, Mortimer and surrounding areas	52.94%
Downlands, Ridgeway, Basildon and surrounding areas	39.71%
Hungerford, Kintbury and surrounding areas	60.29%
Lambourn and surrounding area	45.59%
Newbury	66.18%
Pangbourne, Tilehurst, Purley and surrounding areas	50.00%
Thatcham	60.29%

3.11 When respondents were asked in Phase II how ready they felt to support the community following the Covid-19 pandemic, 92% felt somewhat, very or extremely ready to support the community. Only 8% felt as though they were not ready.

3.12 It is recognised that there is huge strength which exists within the local VCS; in its skills, knowledge, experience and capacity. When asked about the things that organisations do well now, respondents from Phase II drew attention to activities which relate to the following:

What the organisation/ group do well	% of respondents
Providing services	37.2%
Providing support	21.5%
Creating social and community connections	15.7%
Communicating	7.4%

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What the organisation/ group do well	% of respondents
Partnership working	5.8%
Supporting or delivering environmental improvements	5.8%
Supporting or improving artistic endeavours	4.1%
Managing financial affairs	3.3%
Providing advocacy	1%

3.13 Respondents in Phase II were asked how they currently share what they are doing well and best practice with others. They responded with the following:

How best practice is shared	% of respondents
At meetings	19.8%
Networking	19%
Forums/Groups	14.9%
Not currently sharing with others	11.6%
Informal conversation	10.7%
Social media	10.7%
Newsletters/village magazines/website	6.6%
At events	6.6%
Response to requests for information	2.5%
Email	1.6%

3.14 The responses to this question show that there is an untapped opportunity for almost 12% of respondents to share what they do well with others.

3.15 Those that participated in Phase II were asked how they currently collaborate with others in the voluntary and statutory sector. They indicated this was through the following:

How collaboration takes place	% of respondents
Collaboration with individual partners	28.1%
Attendance at Meetings/ Events/ Networking	14%
Email	6.6%
Personal/ Individual Contacts	5%
Forums	3.4%
Volunteer Participation	1.6%
Referrals	1%
Surveys	1%
Facebook	1%
Data Provision	1%
Zoom	1%
WhatsApp	1%
Good Exchange Platform	1%

3.16 Respondents in Phase II were asked what it was they were focusing efforts on at the moment and what they felt the key issues are for the communities they serve. Of those that responded (105 respondents), they said the following:

How groups/orgs focus their efforts	% of respondents
Returning to face to face /resuming services post Covid	22.3%
Specific / new project	21.5%

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Service delivery	18.2%
Attracting new members/users	5.8%
Recruitment	5%
Planning	5%
Surviving	4.1%
Fundraising/addressing finances	2.5%
Updating/reviewing policies	1.6%
Training	1%

3.17 Respondents in Phase II were asked about the issues that were affecting the communities they serve at the moment, respondents said it was:

Issues facing the community	% of respondents
Mental Health issues (anxiety/loneliness/ loss of confidence)	30.6%
COVID	18.2%
Financial hardship/reduced income	14%
ASB/dogs attacks/traffic and similar issues	5.8%
Activities closed/social provision	5.7%
Paperwork and ensuring safety	5%
Suitable facilities/buildings needed	5%
IT Accessibility	4.1%
Manpower	3.3%
Transport	2.5%
Physical health/mobility loss	2.5%
Flood threat	1.7%
Ageing	1.7%
Reduction in clients	1.7%
Food Poverty	1%
Racial discrimination	1%

Accessing support now

3.18 When respondents were asked in Phase I if they currently access VCS support, the majority (58%) responded to say that they do not. Of the 42% accessing VCS support services, the types of support they are accessing are shown in the below table.

Support accessed	Response (PI)
Business administration and/or legal support/advice	21.43%
Communication regarding local and national Volunteer	
Community Sector news, legislation, events, etc.	50.00%
Funding advice/support	32.14%
Operating procedures, health and safety advice for volunteers	28.57%
Peer support and co-working	28.57%
Volunteer/leader training	28.57%
Volunteer recruitment and support	60.71%
Other (please specify)	14.29%

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- 3.19 The majority of respondents from Phase I (70%) indicated that where they were accessing VCS support services, this was easy or very easy to access. Only 4% of respondents were finding VCS support difficult to access.
- 3.20 When asked about how responsive services are to their needs, 100% of those that responded said that they felt the VCS support services were either somewhat, very or extremely responsive to their needs. Added to this, 82% of Phase I respondents said they felt some aspects of existing support services were working well. It can be inferred therefore that existing VCS support services are largely working well for those that responded to the survey in Phase I.
- 3.21 There were however some respondents (35% in Phase I) who felt as though some aspects of VCS support were not working for them. The reasons listed for this include:
- A need to be more inclusive (including geographically) and better connect organisations that have a shared interest/purpose;
 - A need for more help with fundraising;
 - A need for the sector-view to be established on issues to feed in to sector-advocacy;
 - A lack of capacity and funding (not willingness or skills) in existing support;
 - A need to have better communication and collaboration with statutory services; it was cited that *“the statutory sector rarely shows much interest in working effectively with the voluntary sector, risking gaps. When the statutory wants the voluntary sector to compromise standards by requiring compliance with SLAs that deters the voluntary sector. ...There should be a focus on creating a better informed statutory sector”*.
- 3.22 The responses to this question demonstrate that there is a need for capacity building within existing support services to help address concerns of inclusivity and level of resource. There is also a need to address how statutory services relate to the VCS.
- 3.23 In Phase II, a more expansive question explored the types of VCS support that organisations were already accessing. The following shows that amongst a long list of support, almost two thirds of respondents are accessing support with funding sources and availability and almost half of the respondents are accessing support for having discussions with local authorities:

Support	Responses
Funding sources and availability	64.86%
Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG	47.30%
Applying for funding	45.95%
Talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests	45.95%
Promoting your group or organisation	44.59%
Support with volunteering	32.43%
Knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general	32.43%
Training	28.38%
Safeguarding	24.32%
Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard	24.32%
New or changes to legislation	21.62%

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Representing the interests of your group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy)	21.62%
Demonstrating impact of funding	14.86%
Shared resources or back office functions	13.51%
Other (please specify)	13.51%
Outcome report writing	12.16%
Representing the interests of the people you work with (advocacy)	12.16%
Governance advice	9.46%
Support for managing the 'business' side of your group, eg finance, risk, performance and future planning	8.11%
Providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages	6.76%

3.24 It is not possible to compare the results of the Phase I and II questions on what sort of support that the sector is accessing now because the answer categories for each question were different. However there are some comparisons which can be drawn. Respondents in different phases were more frequently accessing different types of support services. The majority of Phase I respondents were accessing support for volunteer recruitment, whilst the top service in Phase II were funding sources and availability. The top three in each phase were:

Phase I	Phase II
Volunteer recruitment and support	Funding sources and availability
Communication regarding local and national Volunteer Community Sector news, legislation, events, etc.	Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG
Funding advice/support	Applying for funding

3.25 In Phase II, the survey explored the points of access for VCS support. The results of this showed that the top ways in which respondents were accessing services were the following:

Support accessed	Majority accessed by
Funding sources and availability	Nearly 40% are accessing this through a variety of sources (including the Good Exchange, the National Lottery, national funding streams, national bodies, word of mouth and newsletters)
Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG	Nearly 60% of organisations are getting this support from the Council itself
Applying for funding	Just over 40% are accessing this through a variety of sources (including the Good Exchange, the National Lottery and national bodies)

3.26 When looking at how support services are currently accessed, the respondents to Phase II indicated that they access support in a number of different ways. This is through peer networks, through the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire, directly from the Council but many 'other*' routes too. These include the Good Exchange, the National Lottery, national funding streams, national bodies, word of mouth, newsletters and support services offered beyond West Berkshire (such as Basingstoke Voluntary Action).

3.27 The table below highlights where Phase II respondents are receiving most of their support from;

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Support	Peer support	VCWB	WBC	Online	Other*
Funding sources and availability	15.56%	20.00%	13.33%	13.33%	37.78%
Applying for funding	18.52%	11.11%	3.70%	25.93%	40.74%
Demonstrating impact of funding	50.00%	10.00%	0.00%	10.00%	30.00%
Outcome report writing	33.33%	16.67%	0.00%	16.67%	33.33%
Training	5.00%	0.00%	15.00%	30.00%	50.00%
Governance advice	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	28.57%	57.14%
Support with volunteering	14.29%	33.33%	9.52%	14.29%	28.57%
Shared resources or back office functions	25.00%	0.00%	12.50%	0.00%	62.50%
Support for managing the 'business' side of your group, eg finance, risk, performance and future planning	40.00%	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	40.00%
Safeguarding	27.78%	0.00%	16.67%	5.56%	50.00%
New or changes to legislation	14.29%	0.00%	7.14%	42.86%	35.71%
Promoting your group or organisation	20.00%	6.67%	20.00%	26.67%	26.67%
Representing the interests of your group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy)	26.67%	0.00%	26.67%	20.00%	26.67%
Representing the interests of the people you work with (advocacy)	12.50%	12.50%	12.50%	12.50%	50.00%
Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard	31.25%	6.25%	18.75%	0.00%	43.75%
Providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages	25.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	50.00%
Knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general	31.82%	18.18%	13.64%	18.18%	18.18%
Talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests	35.48%	9.68%	9.68%	16.13%	29.03%
Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG	9.68%	6.45%	58.06%	9.68%	16.13%

3.28 The key messages from the data presented above are;

- Peer networks is key to local VCS organisations for many different aspects of support. They are used by:
 - 50% of respondents for demonstrating the impact of funding
 - 40% for support for managing the 'business' side of their group or organisation (eg finance, risk, performance and future planning)
 - 33% for talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests.

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- Approximately 30% for a) outcome report writing b) talking to parts of the community who are less well heard and c) knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general
- Around 25% for a) safeguarding b) representing the interests of a group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy) and c) providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages.
- VCWB services are used by a third of VCS respondents for volunteer recruitment, by 20% for funding sources and availability and almost 20% for talking to and meeting other groups or organisations.
- West Berkshire Council is useful for support to 58% of respondents for having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, and for 27% of respondents to represent the interests of a group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy).
- Online support is accessed by 43% of respondents for support with legislative changes and for 25% of respondents in providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages.
- VCS groups and organisations are using many other support routes for many functions. Where respondents indicated they were getting support from 'other' sources, this was from:

Sources of support	% of respondents
Local businesses/community	34%
National organisation	31%
WBC	9%
CCB	6.25%
Basingstoke Voluntary Action / Basingstoke BC	6.25%
GCT/Good Exchange	6.25%
Berkshire Association of local councils	3.1%
Health	3.1%

Support needs: now and in future

- 3.29 When respondents in Phase II were asked if there was anything their group or organisation found difficult at the moment, two thirds (66%) responded to say that they do. Of those that responded this way, they indicated they found the following difficult:

Difficulty	% of respondents
Funding	28.79%
Face-to-face Contact/ Social Distancing	21.21%
Premises/ Public Space/ Facilities	18.18%
Recruitment and retention	16.67%
Raising Awareness/ Engagement with Service	12.12%
Events	10.61%
Planning	9.09%
Technology	4.55%
Administrative	4.55%
Transport	3.03%
Speeding	3.03%
Support Services	1.5%

Difficulty	% of respondents
Partnerships	1.5%

3.30 When asked about the group or organisation’s longer term vision in Phase II, three respondents shared their written vision document with us and others outlined that the following aspects were in their longer term vision:

Vision	% of respondents
Obtain/ Improve Premises/ Facilities	15.70%
Improve service offering	14.05%
Maintain service provision	13.22%
Expand service provision	12.40%
Member support/ engagement	12.40%
Collaboration links with local community/ organisations	9.09%
Service recovery	9.09%
Review/ agree strategy	5.79%
Other recruitment	3.31%
Service accessibility	2.47%
Increase membership/ attendance	2.47%
Volunteer recruitment	1.65%
Raise awareness & recognition	1.65%
Improve systems	1.65%
Secure funding	1.65%
PR/ marketing	1.08%

3.31 68% of respondents in Phase II said told us that they thought barriers exist to them in achieving their long term vision. These barriers included:

Barriers to achieving a vision	% of respondents
Funding/ costs	42.65%
Staffing/recruitment/retention	22.06%
Premises/ public space/ facilities	17.65%
Technology	5.88%
Face-to-face contact/ social distancing	4.41%
Raising awareness/ engagement with service	4.41%
Covid	4.41%
Transport	2.94%
Other organisations	2.94%
External Support	1.47%
Other	1.47%

3.32 When asked about the support that VCS organisations need now and the future, the following table highlights the area in which at least 50% of respondents indicated a support need.

Support needed	Now	Future
Promoting your group or organisation	76.92%	23.08%
Funding sources and availability	71.15%	28.85%
Training	70.59%	29.41%

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Support needed	Now	Future
Knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general	69.57%	30.43%
Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard	68.75%	31.25%
Talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests	65.63%	34.38%
Applying for funding	61.90%	38.10%
Representing the interests of your group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy)	60.87%	39.13%
Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG	58.82%	41.18%
Support for managing the 'business' side of your group, eg finance, risk, performance and future planning	57.14%	42.86%
Support with volunteering	54.05%	45.95%
Providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages	53.85%	46.15%
Shared resources or back office functions	53.33%	46.67%
Representing the interests of the people you work with (advocacy)	52.94%	47.06%
Demonstrating impact of funding	52.00%	48.00%
Outcome report writing	50.00%	50.00%
Other (please specify)	50.00%	50.00%
Governance advice	46.15%	53.85%
Safeguarding	44.44%	55.56%
New or changes to legislation	37.50%	62.50%

3.33 The key messages from the answers to the above include:

- At least 50% of all VCS respondents indicated a support need in every category, either now or for the future;
- Over 70% of respondents indicated a need now for support in a) promoting a group or organisation b) funding sources and availability and c) training. Coupled with the responses to a question on the barriers for organisations to achieve their vision; funding is not only a significant need (71%), it is a significant barrier too (43% of groups);
- Over 60% of respondents indicated a need now for support in a) knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general b) talking to parts of the community who are less well heard c) talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests d) applying for funding e) representing the interests of a group, organisation or sector (advocacy);
- Support needs for now and for the future were identified quite differently by respondents. Support needs for the future are not those identified for now and although respondents indicated a future need for support across all categories, fewer respondents identified a future need;
- At least 50% of all respondents indicated a future need for a) outcome report writing b) governance advice c) safeguarding d) changes to legislation and e) other categories of support which includes; demonstrating impact through research and

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audit, legal aspects related to running a community project, reaching diverse communities and assistance with transport issues.

3.34 When respondents in Phase II were asked how they would like to receive the aspects of support they need (either now or in the future). The following table highlights where at least 25% of Phase II respondents would like to receive their support from:

Support	Peer support	VCWB	WBC	Online	Other
Funding sources and availability	8.89%	28.89%	28.89%	24.44%	8.89%
Applying for funding	11.76%	17.65%	29.41%	32.35%	8.82%
Demonstrating impact of funding	13.64%	31.82%	22.73%	22.73%	9.09%
Outcome report writing	16.67%	27.78%	16.67%	22.22%	16.67%
Training	14.29%	14.29%	35.71%	14.29%	21.43%
Governance advice	30.00%	20.00%	30.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Support with volunteering	7.14%	57.14%	17.86%	10.71%	7.14%
Shared resources or back office functions	41.67%	16.67%	8.33%	25.00%	8.33%
Support for managing the 'business' side of your group, eg finance, risk, performance and future planning	33.33%	8.33%	25.00%	25.00%	8.33%
Safeguarding	0.00%	6.25%	56.25%	31.25%	6.25%
New or changes to legislation	15.38%	0.00%	38.46%	38.46%	7.69%
Promoting your group or organisation	6.67%	26.67%	33.33%	20.00%	13.33%
Representing the interests of your group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy)	5.56%	27.78%	33.33%	22.22%	11.11%
Representing the interests of the people you work with (advocacy)	28.57%	14.29%	28.57%	14.29%	14.29%
Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard	12.00%	28.00%	24.00%	16.00%	20.00%
Providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages	9.09%	9.09%	27.27%	27.27%	27.27%
Knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general	33.33%	28.57%	19.05%	14.29%	4.76%
Talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests	29.63%	29.63%	18.52%	14.81%	7.41%
Having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the council, CCG	15.63%	15.63%	43.75%	15.63%	9.38%

3.35 The key messages from this data are;

- Peer support was a preferable route for at least 40% of respondents to get support with shared resources or back office functions. At least 30% would like to receive support from peer networks for managing the 'business' side of a group (eg finance, risk, performance and future planning) and for knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general. A further nearly 30% would like to use peer networks for talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests.
- Almost 60% of respondents wanted to receive support for volunteering from VCWB. Around 30% of respondents want to receive support from VCWB for a) demonstrating impact of funding b) talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests c) funding sources and availability and d) knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general and e) Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard.
- More than 55% of respondents would like to receive support for safeguarding from West Berkshire Council. 44% of respondents would like the Council to provide support for having discussions and a relationship with local authorities, eg the Council, CCG and 38% would like the Council to provide support for new or changes to legislation. At least 30% of respondents would like the Council to support with governance advice, promoting a group or organisation and representing the interests of a group, organisation or sector as a whole (advocacy). A further almost 30% would like the Council to support a) funding sources and availability b) applying for funding c) representing the interests of the people groups work with (advocacy) and d) providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages.
- 38% of respondents would like to receive support for new or changes to legislation from online sources. A further 32% of respondents would like to have online support for applying for funding and 31% for safeguarding. At least 25% would like to receive online support for a) providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages b) shared resources or back office functions c) support for managing the 'business' side of your group, (eg finance, risk, performance and future planning).
- With regards to where support would otherwise be accessed, 28% of respondents wanted to access support for providing information in other formats, eg braille/other languages and only 21% wanted to access training from 'other' sources. These other sources include; multiple partners, a local directory and a single umbrella organisation.

3.36 When respondents in Phase II were asked if there was anything else they wanted to say about the support they receive, the support they need or would like to receive, the following were the key messages:

- A desire to develop better contact and closer working with the Council
- They would like to be provided with up to date information and legislation changes
- Groups learn through making mistakes and this learning could be better shared
- Acknowledgement of the value the sector brings to West Berkshire is needed
- A single point of contact for the sector and mentoring would be really helpful.

3.37 When respondents in Phase II were asked if there were any further comments they wished to make, there were six respondents who expressed thanks for the opportunity to feed in their view, there were two who expressed dissatisfaction with the survey itself, one who said there was a need for brokerage of opportunity across the sector and one who expressed concerns about the capacity of the sector overall.

4 Workshops and interviews

4.1 The following outlines the qualitative feedback gathered throughout the two phases of engagement.

Phase I

4.2 During Phase I, three workshop sessions were carried out with a total of 17 representatives of voluntary and community groups. In addition, seven respondents took part in one to one interviews. The guiding questions for each of these sessions can be found in Appendix E. The following outlines the key feedback gathered during this part of the engagement.

4.3 Respondents considered VCWB, Healthwatch, Greenham Trust, CCB, the Community Support Hub and Churches as providers of current voluntary and community sector support services. There was very positive feedback for the following services provided by existing providers:

- Volunteer Recruitment Fair;
- Newsletter - this was considered excellent and an important local resource;
- Volunteer vacancies and recruitment;
- Funding opportunities highlighted in the newsletter;
- Advertising;
- Administrative support for some local forum groups was seen by these groups as very important;
- Some respondents who used VCWB saw them as providing all the services needed of a VCS Support Organisation.

4.4 Respondents shared that they organise their own networking and felt that there was a lack of commitment by the Council to the sector in terms of funding. Respondents said that there is scope for improvement in the Councils recognition of the significant contribution of the VCS and success in future provision of support services depended on the Council involving the sector in long term planning and a commitment to sustainable funding. This ongoing financial investment was deemed to be essential, given the fluctuations in funding for support in the past.

4.5 In Phase I those attending an interview or workshop were asked what features a Voluntary Sector Support Organisation (VCSSO) should have. They replied to say a support service should:

- Have a physical place for access by the public and communities i.e./ Broadway House;
- Start and build from an asset/strength based approach;

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- Be independent and not a service provider as this creates a conflict of interest;
- Not bid or compete for contracts/money that the organisations it serves are bidding for;
- Be approachable and become a trusted name;
- Be a new organisation, not an extension of an existing organisation;
- Not duplicate effort of other organisations;
- Be a strong networker, working collaboratively throughout the district to build robust relationships across the sector;
- Be proactive in gaining local traction to ensure they represent the VCS, have a voice and enable access;
- Encourage growth of the sector, make it easier for organisations to develop and flourish;
- Be accessible to all, including local businesses who want to be involved with corporate volunteering.

4.6 When asked about what a scope of a VCSSO should be, feedback included the following points. Respondents said it should:

- Identify opportunities for organisations to collaborate, especially where they are competing for the same (sometimes small) pots of money;
- Provide and signpost to free training;
- Provide online toolkits and help with development of policies;
- Offer HR support for smaller organisations;
- Work collaboratively with the Local Authority and other statutory partners to identify areas of need;
- Support organisations in achieving a Quality Assurance mark;
- Support with evaluation and evidencing of outcomes;
- Provide a voice at the table for smaller organisations;
- Provide signposting. In addition to a digital platform offer printed material, in easy read and various languages;
- Provide a link to the Small Charities Coalition;
- Support smaller organisations; both to start up (giving mentoring support) and to be successful at accessing funding;
- Disseminate national and local news and information in a way that makes it more accessible;
- Foster networking between organisations. Grouping similar organisations together and making sure there is a forum to work together;

- Help these organisations to save time and resources and overcome barriers;
- Facilitate monthly network meetings for the sector;
- Engage with commissioners, representing the sector and smaller organisations if required.

Phase II

- 4.7 During Phase II, four interviews were carried out with respondents. The guiding questions for this can be found in Appendix F.
- 4.8 The interviews were with organisations and representatives who have extensive history in West Berkshire and also with representatives who are relatively new to the local landscape.
- 4.9 Participants who have had a long history in the VCS in West Berkshire noted that there has been a cycle of investment and disinvestment in the voluntary sector in West Berkshire. Empowering West Berkshire (EWB) was cited to have been the most successful of the historical VCS support organisations. The disinvestment from EWB was a huge disappointment to many across the sector.
- 4.10 VCWB runs good services, which are valued by the sector. They have the skills and experience to support the sector, but sometimes do not have enough capacity. They picked up many VCS support functions when EWB came to an end, but without the same funding.
- 4.11 A comprehensive mapping exercise was stated to be needed of the VCS sector. There is also a need for the Council to better acknowledge and illustrate the true financial benefit of VCS organisations and volunteers locally.

Things now

- 4.12 Strengths in the sector include the people within it; they have the passion and skills to be effective. The sector is full of dedicated people who commit their own time and the relationship between them is strong.
- 4.13 A key challenge for many organisations currently is getting back up and running following the pandemic; many have shifted their delivery to run more online. Some organisations have introduced a blended model of delivery with some face to face services but some online. The pandemic has impacted everyone; but some parts of the community have experienced more significant impacts (for example those with mental health issues and dementia in particular). There is a digital divide which has been exacerbated by Covid.
- 4.14 Fundraising is the top issue for those in the sector; this has been exacerbated by Covid as organisations have not been able to fundraise in the same way. Anything which is grant funded is stretched (Lottery, Good Exchange). Applications take a huge amount of effort and time and the huge variability of information required mean it is difficult to streamline and be efficient in applications. It was estimated that approximately 25% of all effort in running a voluntary sector organisation is taken up with applying for funding. An example was given that an application for the Good Exchange can take 1.5 days to complete. Support would be helpful for which funding pots are applicable, where funding opportunities exist and how to apply. Greenham Trust and the Good Exchange were reported to have made a huge difference in helping organisations with funding. One respondent said *“my charity wouldn’t be going if it weren’t for them”*.

4.15 There is a lack of affordable transport options locally, particularly in the rural areas and so there is a serious need to ensure that services do not become focused in Newbury and Thatcham only for statutory support.

Things in future

4.16 The role of support in the sector is to bring organisations together, help with sharing and networking and event organisation. There is a need too to link through to statutory organisations such as the Council, CCG and Sovereign so that there is a two way representation for the sector.

4.17 A quality assurance function, which used to be run by EWB would be helpful to give quality marks for voluntary sector organisations which then in turn, help them get funding.

4.18 What is important for the future is sustainability. It is not about having gold plated services; it's about having something sustainable.

Support needed

4.19 Safeguarding will always be a support need in the sector as organisations need to have a policy, a code of conduct, process, assurance and training that needs to be refreshed at least every three years. This is also true of safer recruitment training and assistance with DBS checks. Those just setting out especially need support.

4.20 Help and guidance on the following was cited as examples of what is needed by way of support:

- Help with developing / checking policies eg GDPR advice;
- Legal obligations;
- Best practice and sharing of experience;
- Safeguarding training and advice;
- Skills development for staff;
- Employment/recruitment and training for staff in VCS organisations;
- Partnership support;
- Sharing of information across the sector;
- Technical assistance eg with setting up a website;
- Grant monitoring, budgeting and receipts;
- Some 'how to' and fact sheets would be really helpful;
- A list of contacts of others in the sector; particularly for those with similar interests to get peer support. A voluntary sector forum would be helpful to coordinate and pull together information for and across the sector;
- Skills sharing and supporting each other through buddy groups (not about what an organisation does that is in common, about the skill sets available to each other);

- Advocacy for the voice of small groups and harder to reach communities to represent with statutory/Local Authority on their behalf;
- There is a need for support with back office functions for small organisations. Community accountancy would really help organisations understand and manage budgets better;
- A HR portal too would assist with managing back office HR functions for small organisations, this might include support for remote workers, which many are now following Covid;
- A social value exchange would be helpful, whereby those experts within the community who may be recently retired but have significant skills can help and advise VCS groups. This may extend into the brokering of equipment (eg laptops) exchange/donation from businesses to community groups;
- A pool of coaches/mentors for VCS organisations would be helpful, such as surveyors and accountants who can help and support organisations with their objectives and offer inexpensive or free and impartial advice. This could develop as a skills bank for West Berkshire.

4.21 An organisation/person that provides ‘the glue’ in the voluntary sector is needed to connect the right people at the right time. This will need a special kind of person to deliver this role so that the personal and social relationships are fostered and connected.

5 Key messages

5.1 Following two phases of engagement, the views of 161 VCS representatives were captured in quantitative surveys and 27 representatives gave their views in explorative, qualitative interviews or workshops. It is estimated¹ that more than 20% of the local VCS views have been fed in to this work.

5.2 From the sector engagement undertaken and data captured as a result; the following headline messages have been identified.

The local sector

5.3 The majority of the VCS sector in West Berkshire is not connected with a bigger, national charity or structure. In addition, the majority of organisations in the local VCS sector have longevity; having been established for more than six years. Almost 60% of local VCS organisations or groups are led by volunteers. Few local VCS organisations are run by paid staff only and at least 20% of organisations have more than 50 volunteers connected with their organisation. When extrapolated, this indicates that the number of people volunteering in local organisations runs in to several thousands.

5.4 All sections of the community are supported by VCS organisations or groups, although there are comparatively fewer organisations that responded who are supporting diverse communities (36% on average vs 50% or more supporting younger, older or vulnerable adults).

5.5 A significant proportion of the VCS sector are providing support or services in the health and wellbeing arena (46% on average) and in running a club or support group (36% on

¹ Estimation based upon a sector size of 700 organisations.

average). Those undertaking support or services related to interpretation or non-verbal communication and environmental services are comparatively few (an average of 3% and 6% respectively).

- 5.6 Self-assessed strengths in the sector primarily relate to delivering services and support to communities. Best practice is shared through numerous routes, but approximately 11% of organisations or groups do not currently share what they do well with others, representing an untapped opportunity for the sector.
- 5.7 Most local VCS organisations are currently focused on recovering from Covid, and this is a significant issue too for the communities they serve. Communities served by West Berkshire's VCS are reported to be struggling most with mental wellbeing (30%). The vast majority of VCS respondents reported feeling ready to support the community following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Existing support services

- 5.8 There has been a history of investment and disinvestment in the local VCS support which has not been helpful for local organisations. Existing support services, particularly (but not exclusively) those provided by VCWB are highly valued by those in the local sector that use them.
- 5.9 Most VCS organisations are not currently accessing support services; where they are, 100% said current VCS support services were responsive to their needs. Existing VCS support services are therefore largely working well; however services were said to need to be more inclusive, help more with fundraising and have greater capacity, but there also needs to be better understanding of the VCS sector by those in the statutory sector. A key message was that support services have significant skills, knowledge and experience but are restricted by capacity.
- 5.10 The majority of Phase I respondents were accessing support for volunteer recruitment, whilst the top service in Phase II were funding sources and availability. The sector currently accesses a wide range of support through a variety of means. This includes peer networks, through VCWB, directly from the Council but many 'other' routes too. These other routes include local bodies such as CCB, Greenham Trust, faith groups, funding bodies such as the Good Exchange, the National Lottery and national funding streams. National (or parent) bodies are a source of support too; as are word of mouth, newsletters and support services offered beyond West Berkshire (such as Basingstoke Voluntary Action). Peer support is key to local VCS organisations for many different aspects of support.

Support needs

- 5.11 The biggest support need for the sector is related to funding; two thirds found funding difficult now and almost 40% said funding was a barrier to them achieving a long term vision. Aside from help with promoting a group's activity, it was the most significant support need (71%).
- 5.12 At least 50% of the VCS organisations that responded have at least one support need for now or the future. Top needs for now are promoting a group or organisation, funding sources and availability and training. Top needs for the future are outcome report writing, governance advice, safeguarding and understanding changes to legislation.

5.13 Preferred routes for receiving support included the following:

- **Peer support.** This was seen as important for getting support with shared resources or back office functions and managing the 'business' side of a group (eg finance, risk, performance and future planning) and for knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general.
- **VCWB.** Almost 60% of respondents wanted to receive support for volunteering from VCWB and a third of respondents wanted to receive support from VCWB for a) demonstrating impact of funding b) talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations with similar interests c) funding sources and availability and d) knowing about, talking to and meeting with other groups or organisations in general and e) Talking to parts of the community who are less well heard.
- **WBC.** More than 55% of respondents would like to receive support for safeguarding from West Berkshire Council. The Council was also seen important as a mean of providing governance advice and legislative updates.
- **Online.** 38% of respondents would like to receive support for new or changes to legislation from online sources.

6 Next Steps

6.1 Information from this report will be used in the following ways:

- Disseminated to all those that took part in the engagement;
- Used as the evidence-base upon which West Berkshire Council and Berkshire West CCG will consider options to meet support needs for the local VCS sector within the available financial envelope identified.

APPENDIX A: Co-Produced Engagement Plan for Phase II	
<p>Aims:</p> <p>a) Ensure the support needs of the voluntary and community sector are well understood;</p> <p>b) Voluntary and community sector colleagues can co-design solutions to meet the needs identified.</p>	
WHAT?	HOW?
<p>What questions should we be asking the sector to establish their needs around support services?</p> <p>To support mapping and identify gaps & opportunities to work together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What service does your organisation provide? • Who does your organisation support? • How well established is your organisation? • What groups and forums are you part of and do these overlap in membership and agenda? • What synergies are there between your organisation and others supporting similar communities? • How interested would you be in meeting with colleagues across the wider sector? Would this need to be themed? • How could mapped information be kept current and accessible? • Would your group/network be well placed to extend any engagement with those you serve? <p>To understand needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the strengths and challenges in your organisation? • What strengths can you bring to the sector and the community? • What are your immediate priorities and longer term vision? • What are your current and anticipated future challenges? • What would your organisation like to do but cannot currently and what are the barriers you face? • What are the issues which are affecting the community you work with? (eg impact of other service provision on people- bus services and rise in those home educated) 	<p>How should we engage sector colleagues in a meaningful and inclusive way? What format and methods do we need to use?</p> <p>Meaningful and inclusive approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate in a genuine partnership relationship – trust, transparency and ethics • Listen to the sector • Ensure engagement is meaningful • Reach out to every organisation in West Berks – wider VCS sector representation is needed including smaller groups and communities • Step away from corporate / strategic language • Establish clear lines of communication • Cannot over communicate - keep sharing and encourage re-sharing • Hold networking events to find out synergies and encourage peer support, developing a network of skills in the sector • Communicate the impact of work being done within the sector • Use different types of engagement for different communities and groups, taking a multicultural / multifaceted approach • Personalised & targeted approaches - work with existing organisations, groups and forums to engage with those they serve • Go to where the people are, especially for seldom heard or harder to reach communities • Break engagement down into themes, working with groups that have similar interests. Have specialists to facilitate discussions • Have 2 way conversations where the Council feedback what their needs are too of the sector

<p>To understand what support services are needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need to support you in delivering services? • What support do you access already? • How do you access this support? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding advice - Training - Governance advice - Group support - Shared administration • What does your group/organisation need specifically to ensure that those you serve are able to participate in engagement and be heard? • What support do you need to promote your service? • What support do you need around safeguarding? • Do you have a need for assistance with interpreters or materials in other formats for those that you serve? • What would enable your organisation to best operate in the world as impacted by COVID? • What support do you need from West Berkshire Council outside of support provided by the VCSE sector? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share what is happening and what the engagement is delivering <p>Formats & Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be mindful of digital inclusion / exclusion, offering alternatives for those not digitally enabled • Community Conversations and Hub Newsletter • One to one conversations • Social Media and What's App groups • Micro-website • Surveys • Email – short, with bullet points and links to further information for those interested • Microsoft Forms (especially for young people) • Focus-group meetings with a clear agenda and benefit • Use as many methods as possible and offer these at different times of the day/week • Events across the district to engage with the wider public as a future step beyond VCSE engagement & when COVID restrictions allow
<p><u>WHO?</u></p>	<p><u>WHEN?</u></p>
<p>Who do we need to ensure is included in the engagement? Can you help us reach these groups and people?</p> <p>Overarching considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be clear about what you mean by 'Voluntary Sector' • Ensure wide approach across the whole of West Berkshire with engagement (not just Newbury) • Cross reference lists to identify gaps and support finding the 	<p>What is a sensible timeframe for colleagues to engage over?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work out the balance between moving at pace to maintain momentum whilst allowing time to develop relationships • Think quickly to capitalise on the COVID groups which exist • Look to prioritise the most needed areas and work backwards • Build a conversation, listening to problem solve. Flex and iterate

<p>groups/organisations that we may not know about</p> <p>Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Charity Commission website • Existing databases/ mailing lists - West Berkshire Directory, VCWB, West Berkshire Council <p>Groups/Forums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forums and VCSE groups who know their community and the way they want / are best able to engage • Berkshire Partners Meeting • SEND Providers Forum • Learning Disability Partnership Board • Children and Young People Forum • Industry leaders • All Faith Groups, Churches Together • Schools & youth organisations / clubs • Family hubs / Mother and Toddler groups / Playgroups • Homeless and rough sleeping groups • Mental Health support groups • Food & Fuel Poverty Groups • Arts & Culture • Active community residents / enthusiasts who aren't established community groups 	<p>approaches as learning develops during the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow enough time to make sure you get to the hardest to reach, a month at least – up to 3 months for a larger organisations • Depends on – The organisation Whether national or local Whether onward engagement is needed within the organisation or those they serve • Respect cultural and religious festivals/holidays • Have and communicate an end date and work flexibly in between • Online surveys – 10-14 days at most with a reminder a few days before close • Understand and respect organisations communications approaches and timelines. Plans may already exist for the year ahead – work together with organisations • Be sensitive to the impact of COVID and the workload this brings to organisations and individuals • Learn from others – what can they share about the do's / don't do?
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APPENDIX B: Phase I and II survey questionnaires

Both surveys requested the name of the organisation or group, the name of the person completing the survey and their role in the organisation or group. These were not mandatory questions, but the majority of respondents provided this information.

Phase I Survey Questions

- Q1 Is your organisation/group a registered charity or Community Interest Company providing services in West Berkshire?
- Q2 Are you a member of a larger national organisation?
- Q3 Are you a volunteer led community group in West Berkshire?
- Q4 How many paid members of staff does your organisation/group have?
- Q5 How many volunteers does your organisation/group have?
- Q6 Which local residents does your organisation/group support?
- Q7 Which of the following services does your organisation/group provide?
- Q8 What areas does your organisation/group serve?
- Q9 Do you currently access a voluntary and community support service?
- Q10 What support services do you access?
- Q11 How easy are the support services to access?
- Q12 How responsive are the support services to your needs?

Voluntary and Community Sector Support: Engagement Report

Q13 Are there any aspects of the current local voluntary and community support services that are working particularly well?

Q14 Are there any aspects to the current local voluntary and community support services that aren't working particularly well?

Q15 How important will the following support services be to your organisation/group over the next three years?

Q16 Do you currently network or participate in peer support with other local voluntary and community organisations/groups in West Berkshire?

Q17 Do you initiate this networking or is it facilitated by a local voluntary and community sector support organisation (VCSSO)?

Q18 Any further comments?

Phase II Survey Questions

Q1 How long has your group or organisation been going?

Q2 Is your group or organisation run by volunteers or paid staff?

Q3 What services does your group or organisation provide?

Q4 Who does your group or organisation support in the community?

Q5 What groups and forums are your group or organisation part of?

Q6 How ready is your group or organisation to support the community post pandemic?

Q7 What does your group or organisation do really well now?

Q8 How do you share best practice or what you are doing well with other groups or organisations?

Q9 How do you collaborate with voluntary sector and statutory partners?

Q10 What is your group or organisation focusing on right now?

Q11 What issues are affecting the community you work with currently?

Q12 Is there anything your group or organisation find difficult to do at the moment?

Q13 What is your group or organisation finding difficult at the moment, and why?

Q14 What are your group or organisation's longer term visions or plans?

Q15 If you have a published vision or plan you would like to share with us please upload here.

Q16 Are there any barriers facing your group or organisation which will make it difficult for it to achieve its long term vision or plans?

Q17 What are the barriers facing your group or organisation?

Q18 What areas of support does your group or organisation currently access?

Q19 How does your group or organisation receive support in these areas?

Q20 What areas, if any, would your group or organisation like support in, either now or in the future?

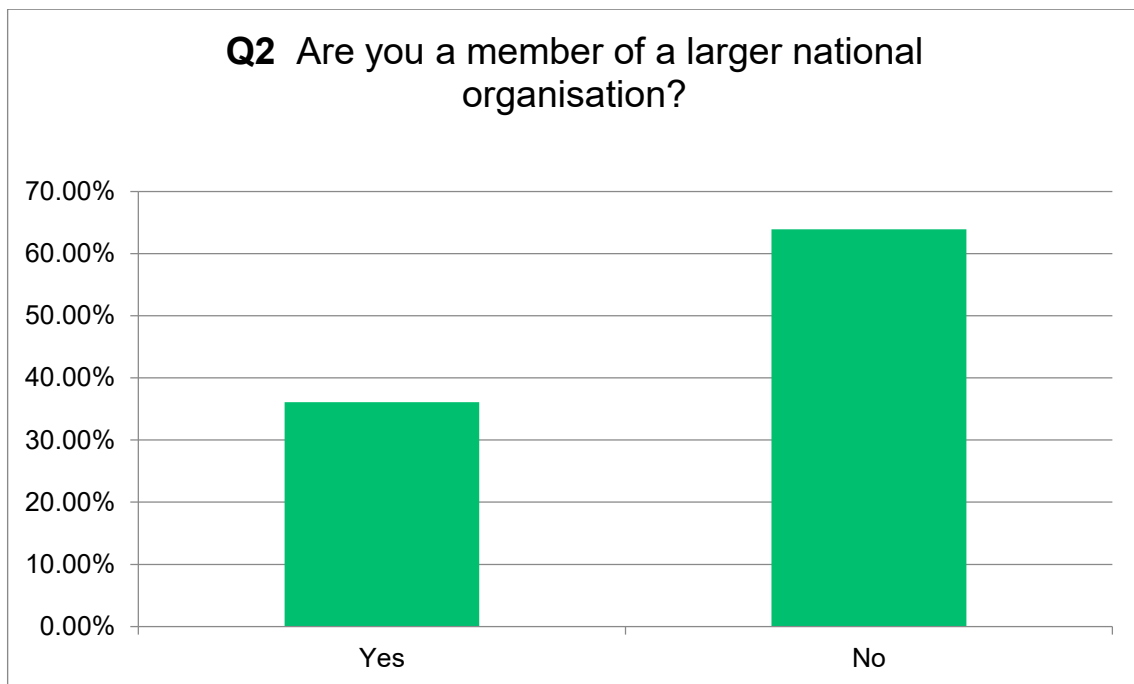
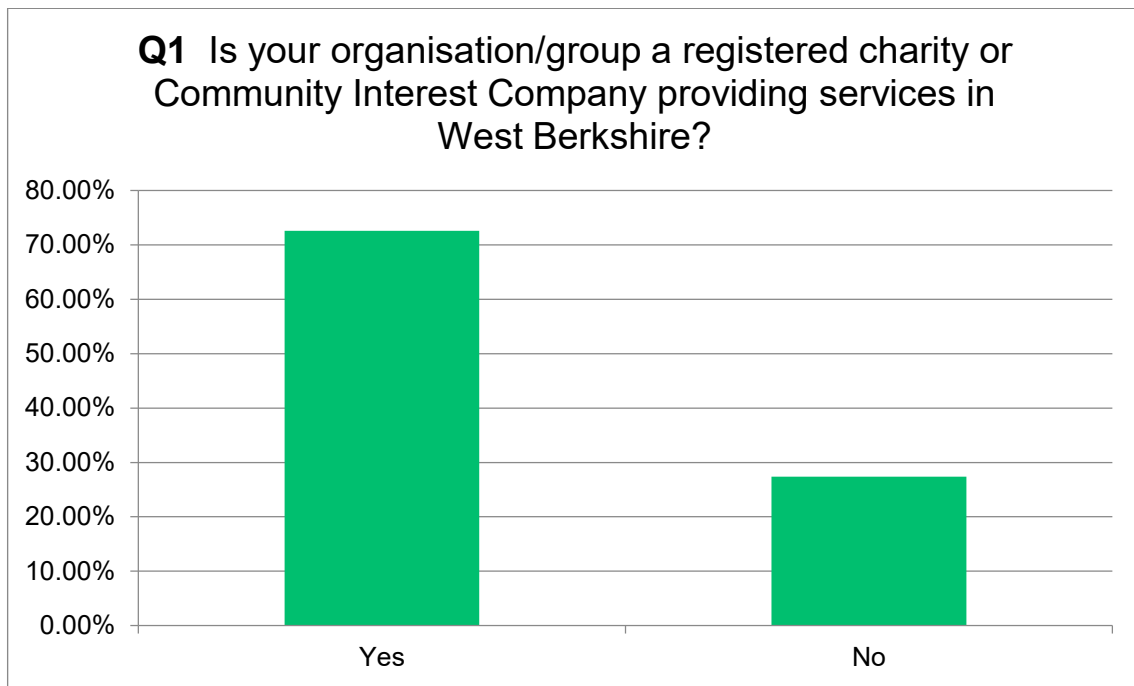
Q21 How would your group or organisation like to receive support in these areas?

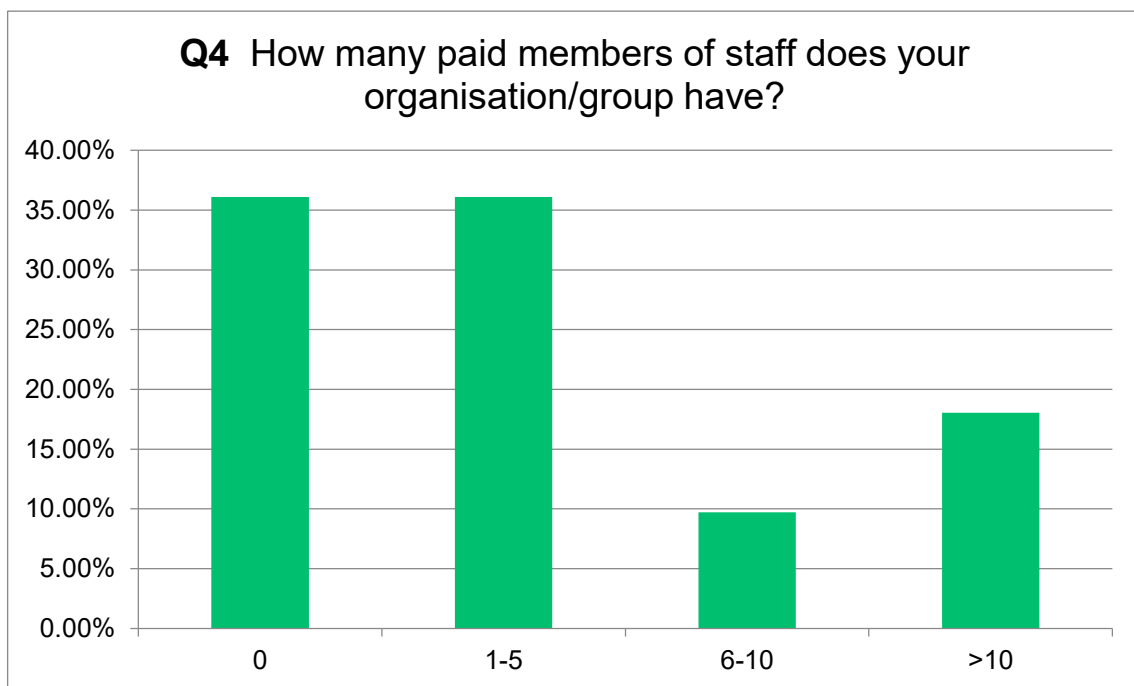
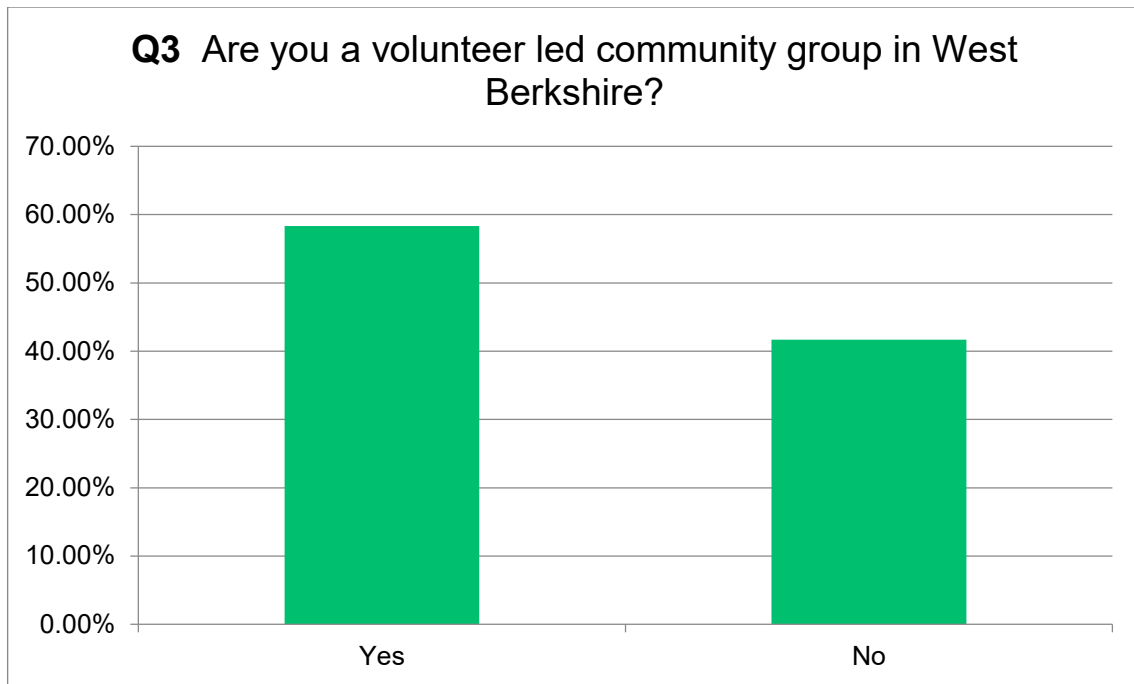
Q22 Is there anything else you would like us to know about the support you get already, the support you need, and how you would like to get it?

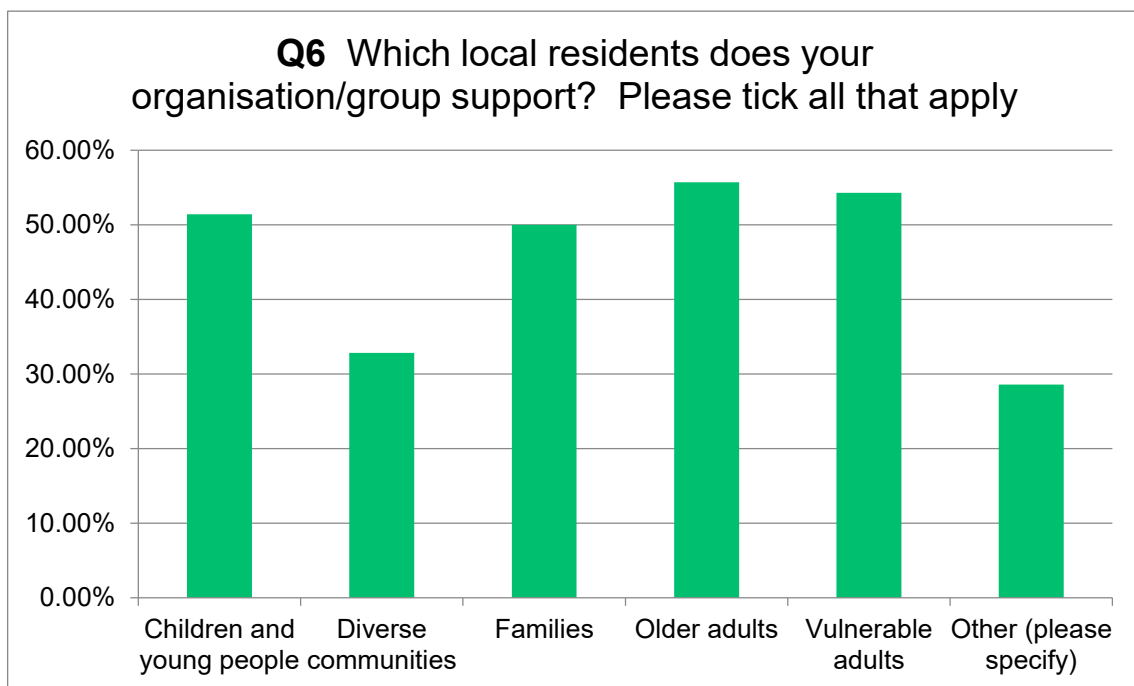
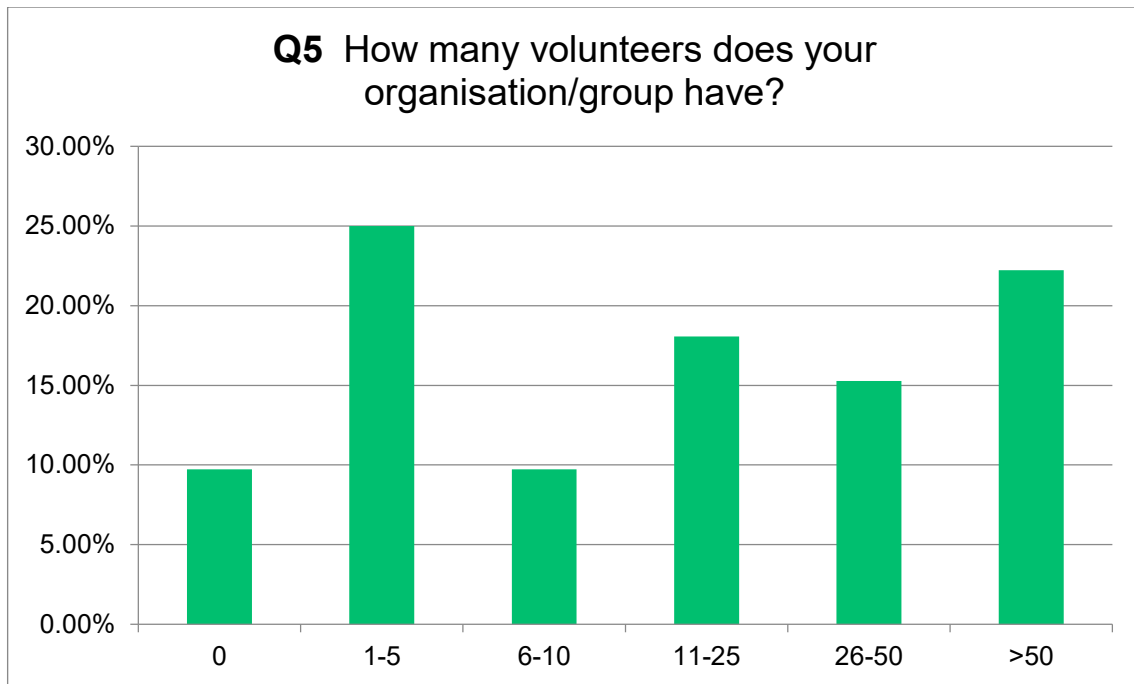
Q23 Do you have any other comments/feedback you'd like to share with us?

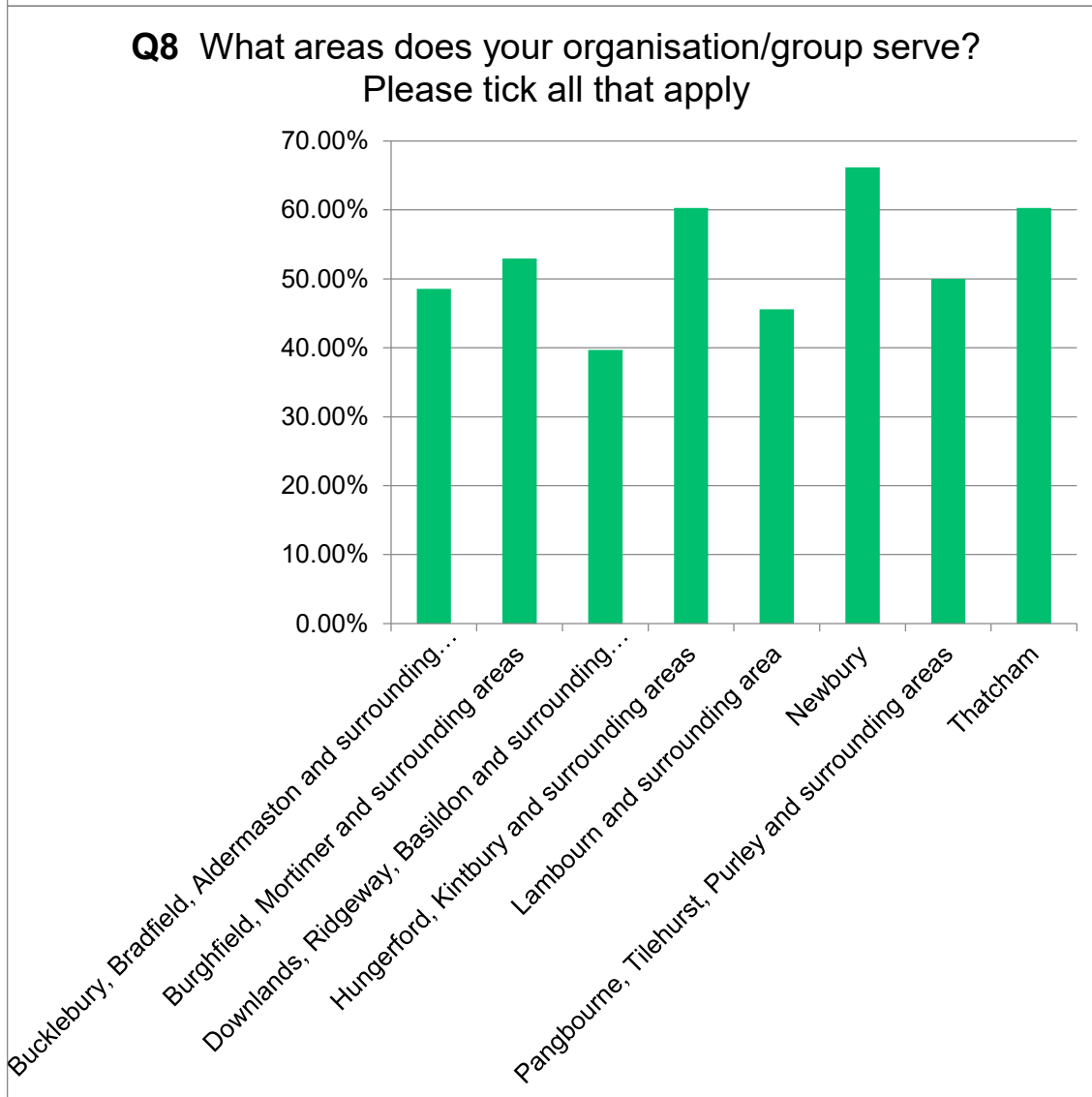
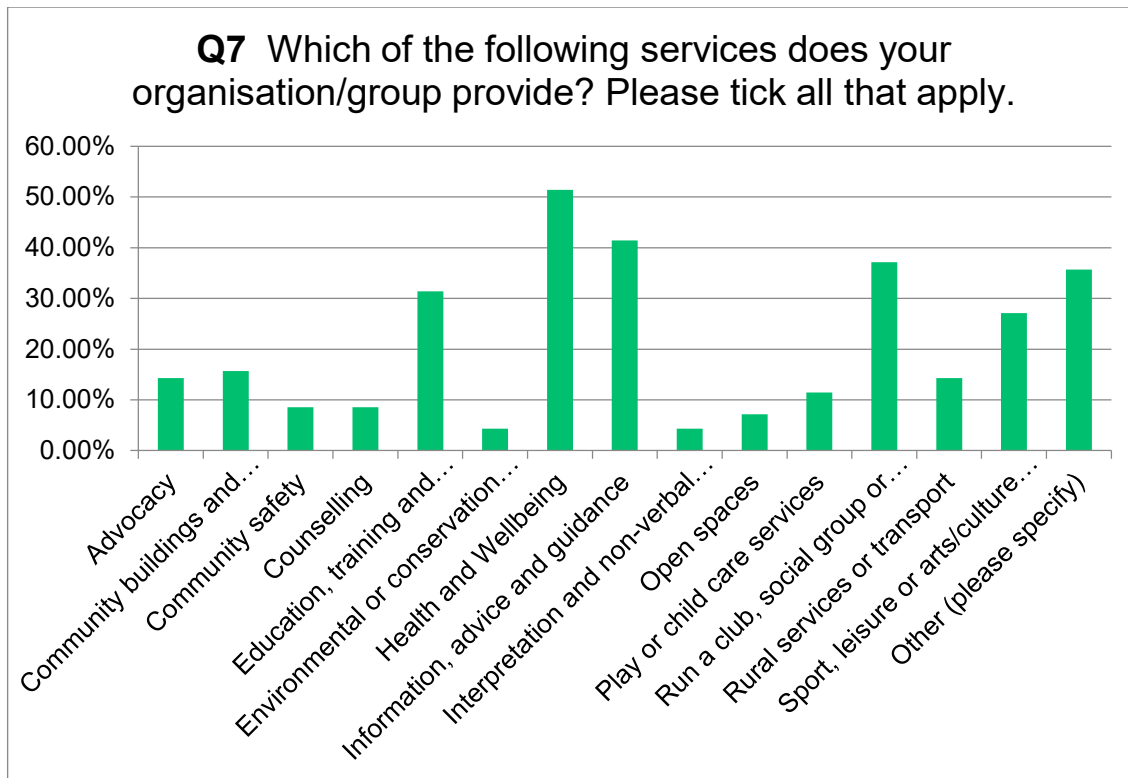
APPENDIX C: Survey Bar Charts

**Commissioning a Voluntary & Community Sector Support Service for West Berkshire
Phase I Bar charts**

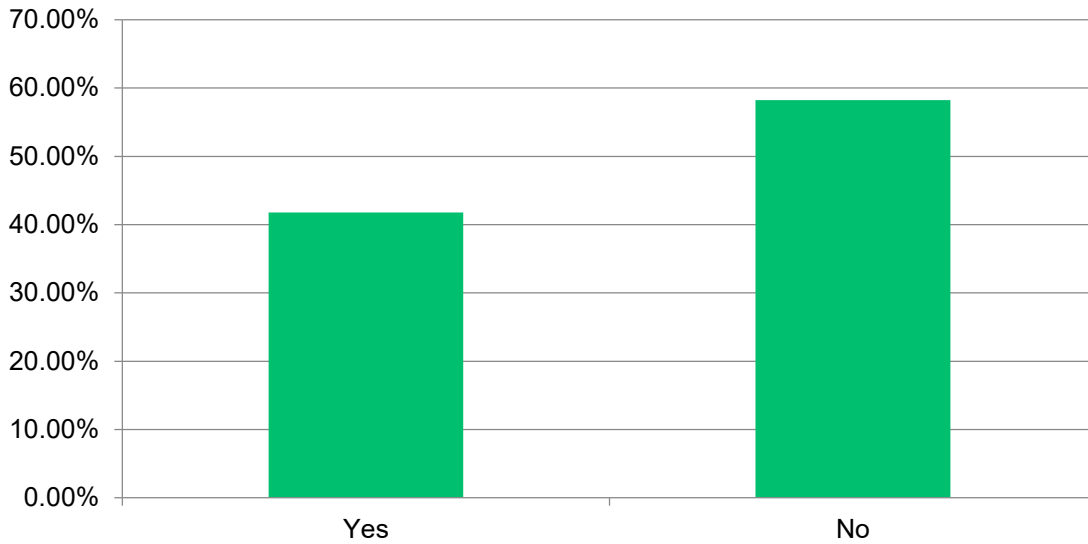




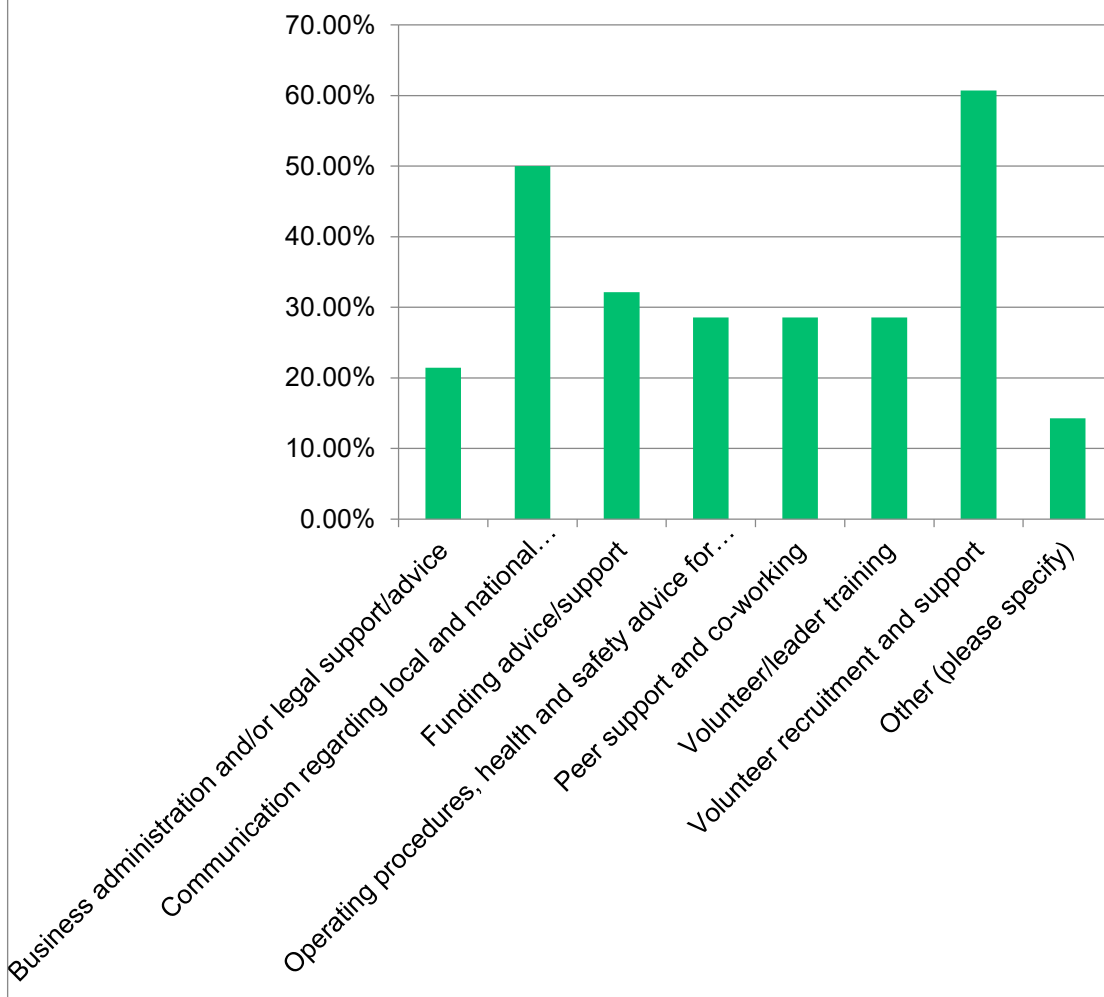


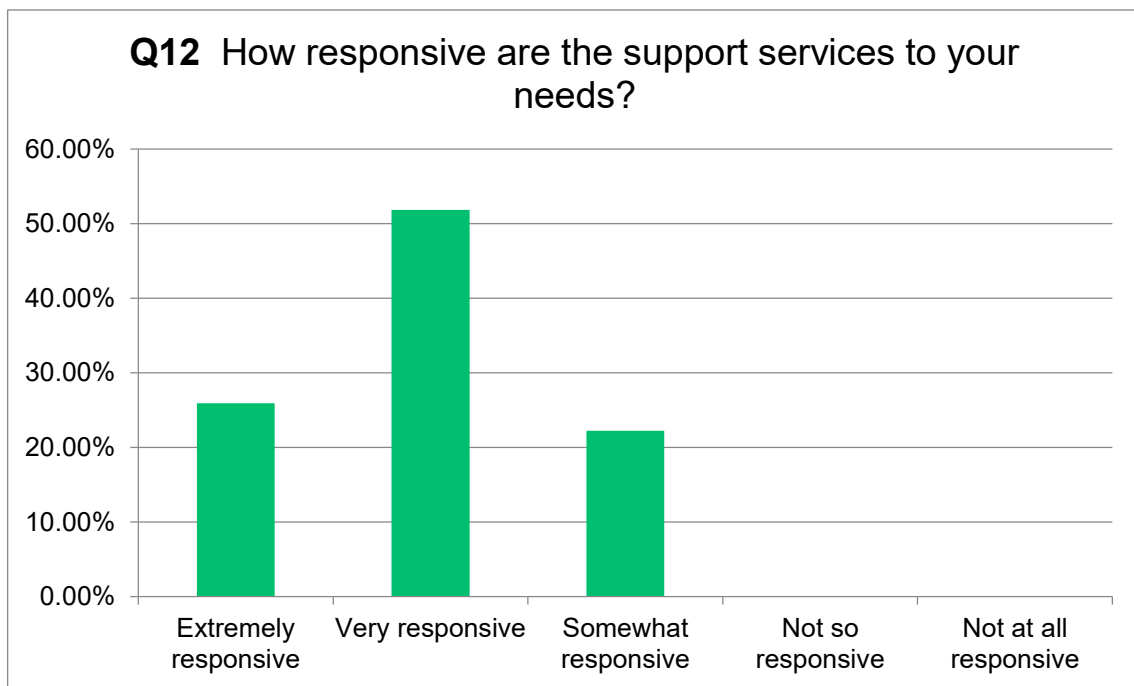
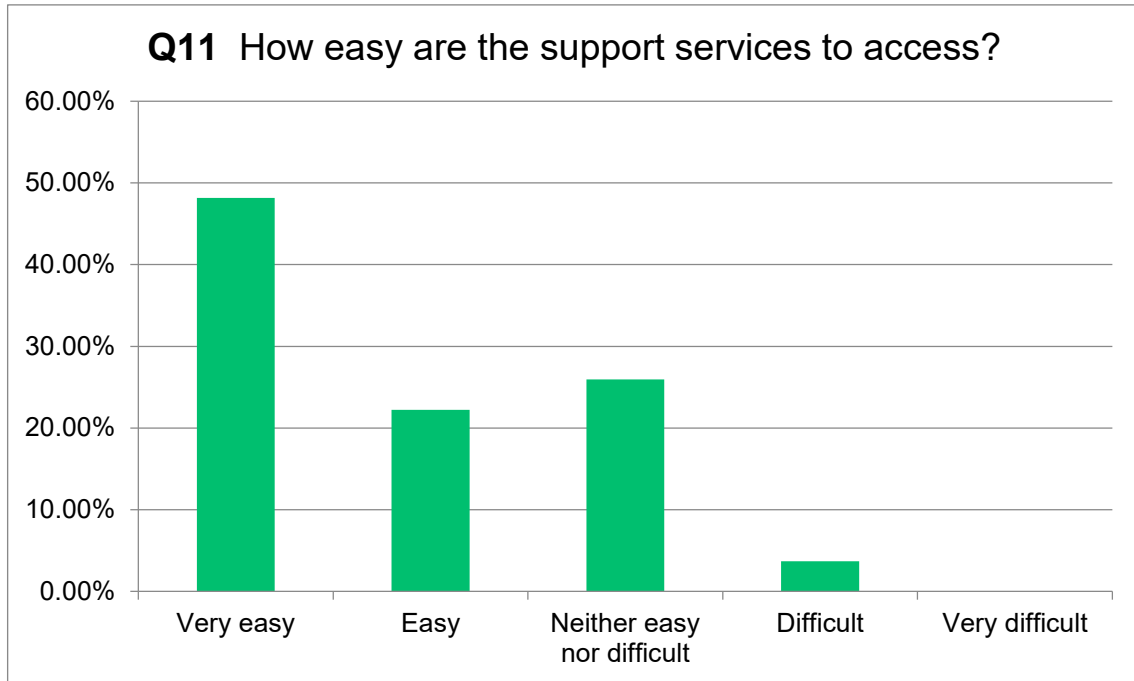


Q9 Do you currently access a voluntary and community support service?

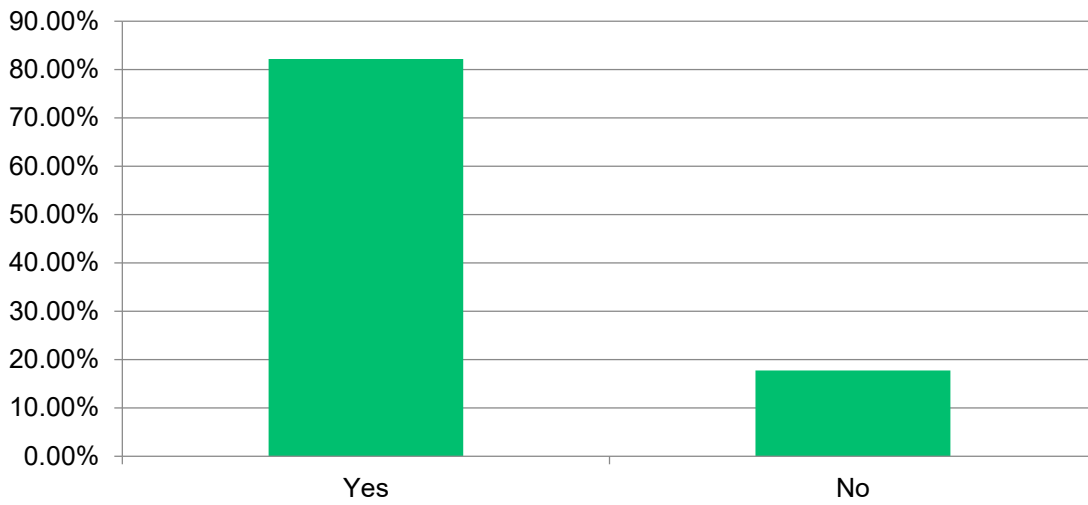


Q10 What support services do you access? Please tick all that apply.

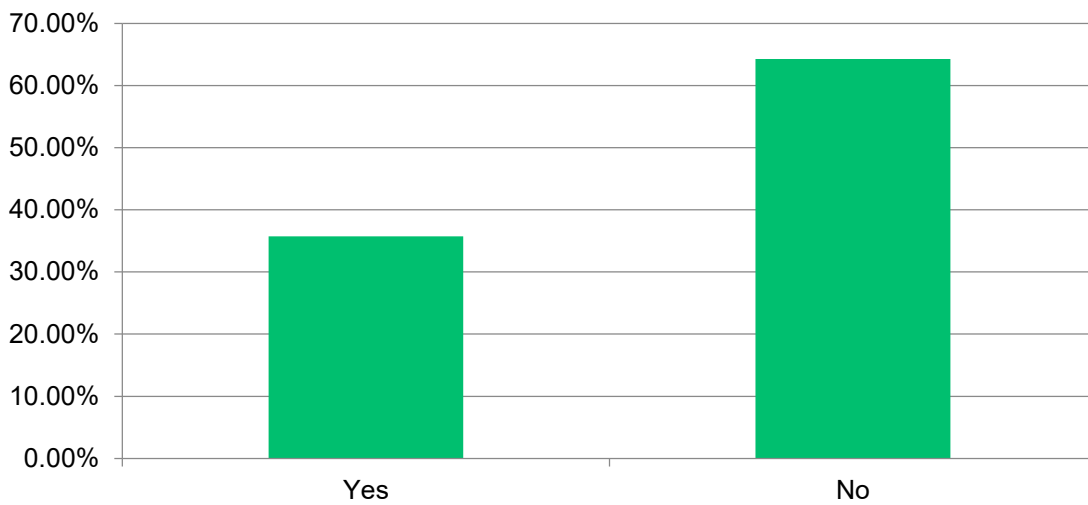




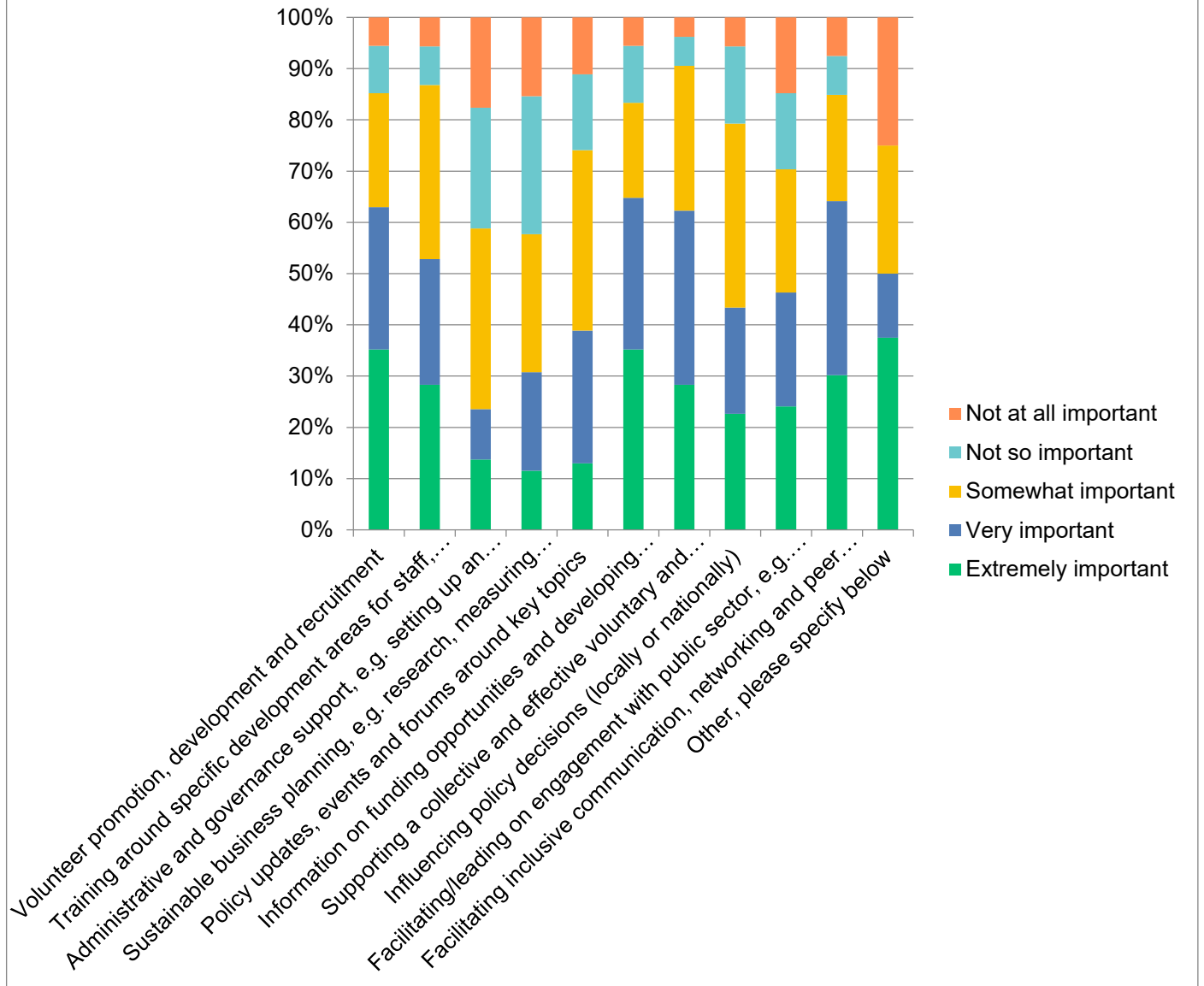
Q13 Are there any aspects of the current local voluntary and community support services that are working particularly well?



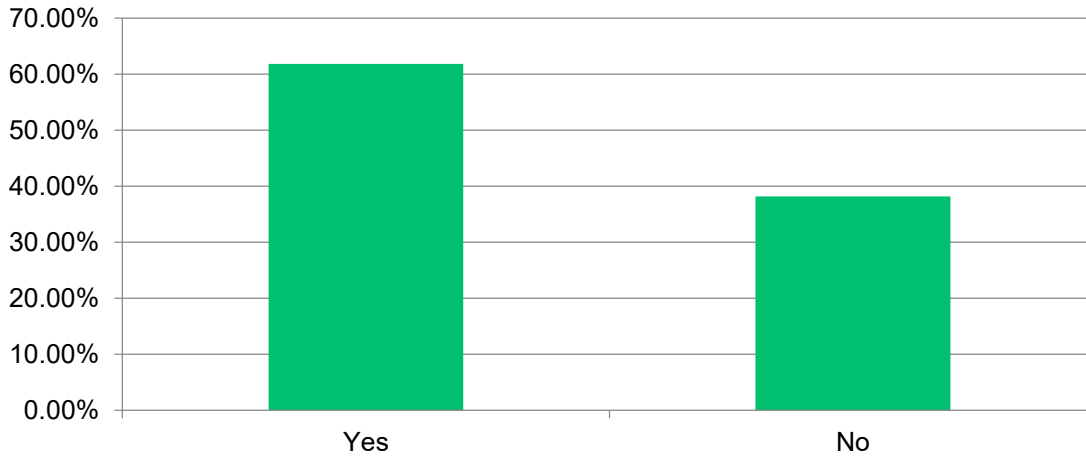
Q14 Are there any aspects to the current local voluntary and community support services that aren't working particularly well?



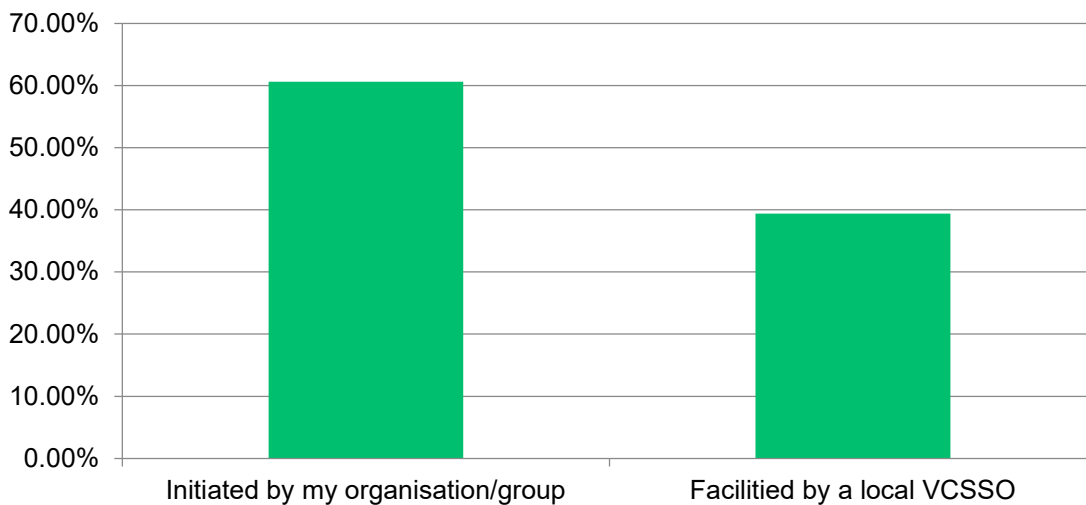
Q15 How important will the following support services be to your organisation/group over the next three years?



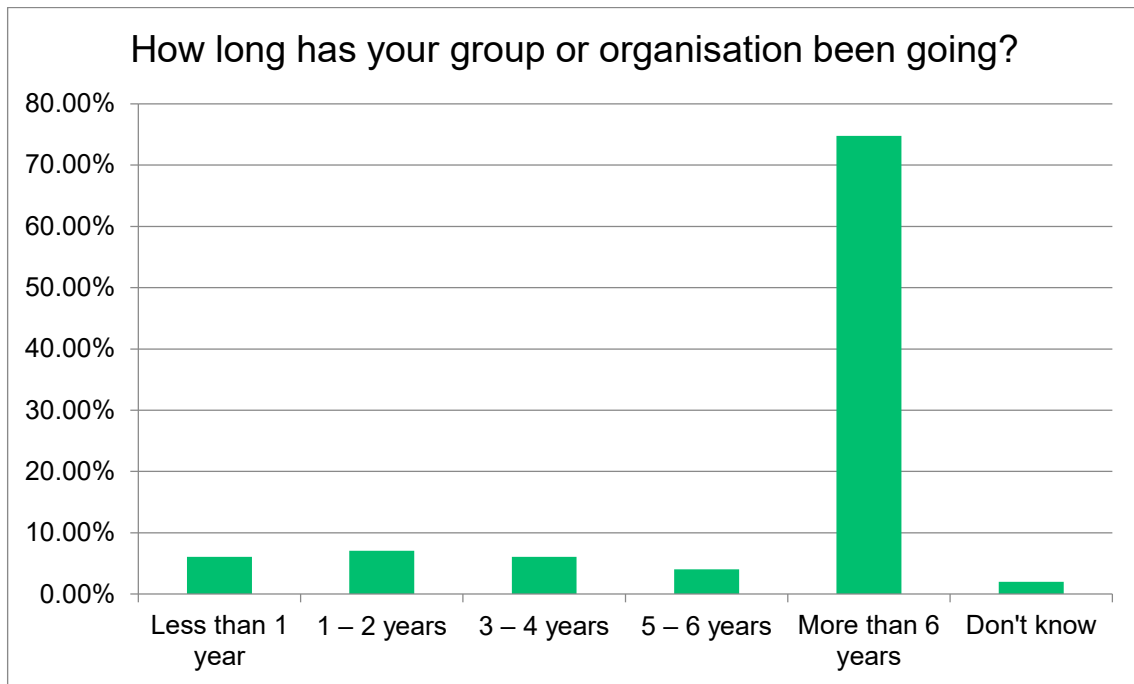
Q16 Do you currently network or participate in peer support with other local voluntary and community organisations/groups in West Berkshire?

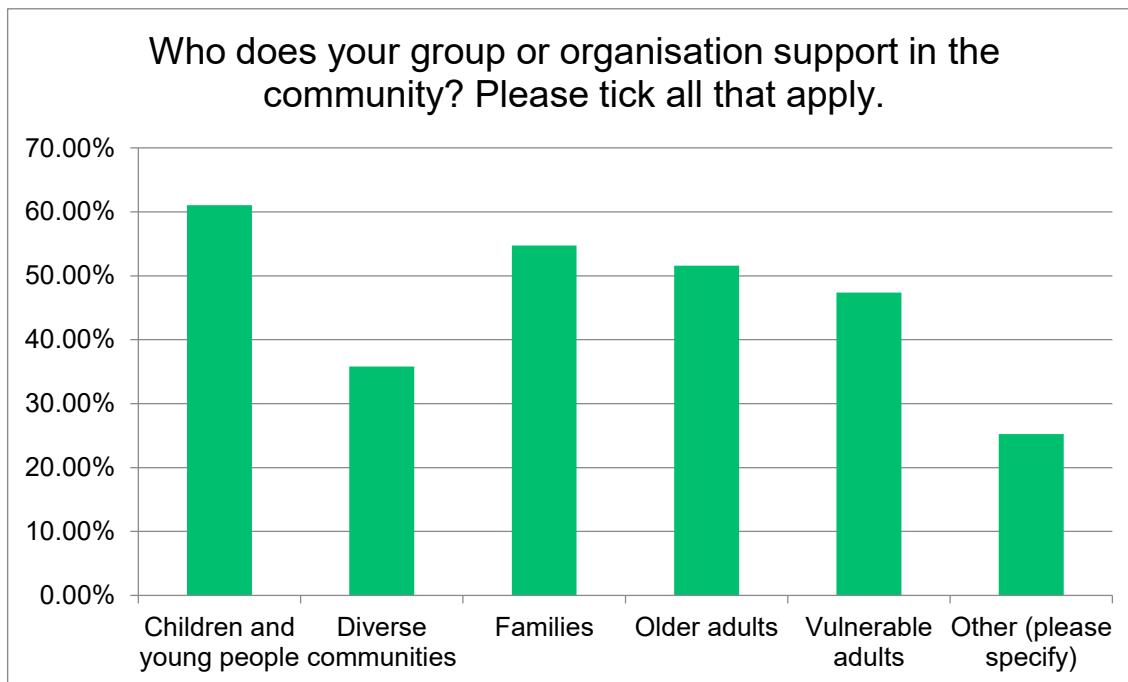
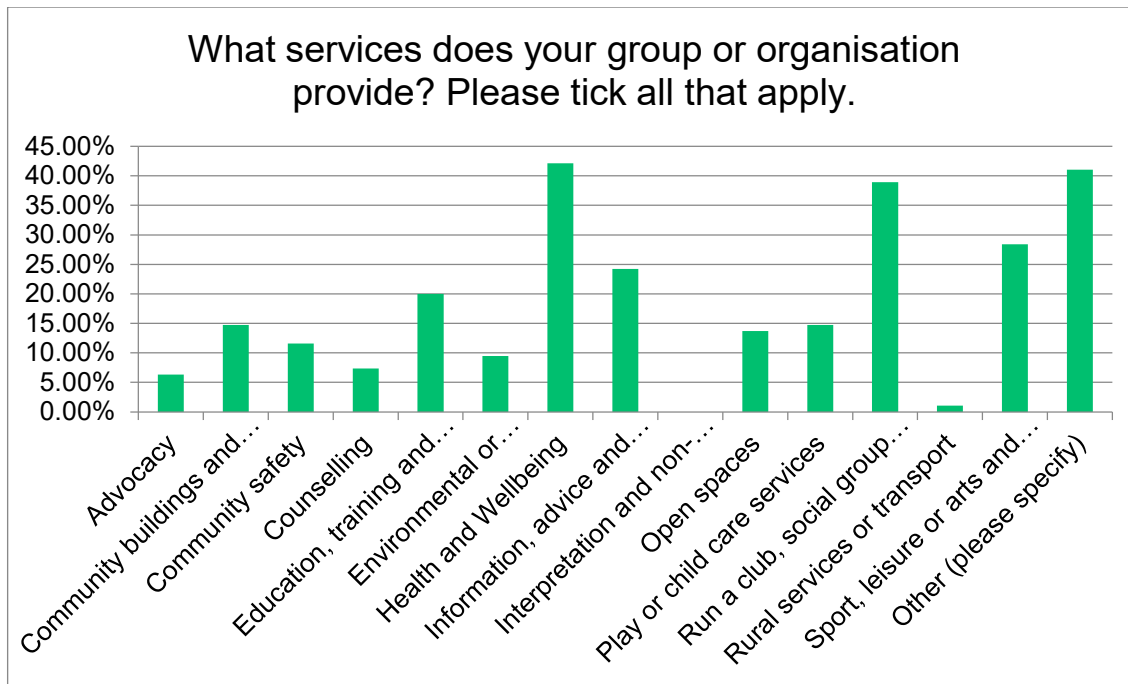


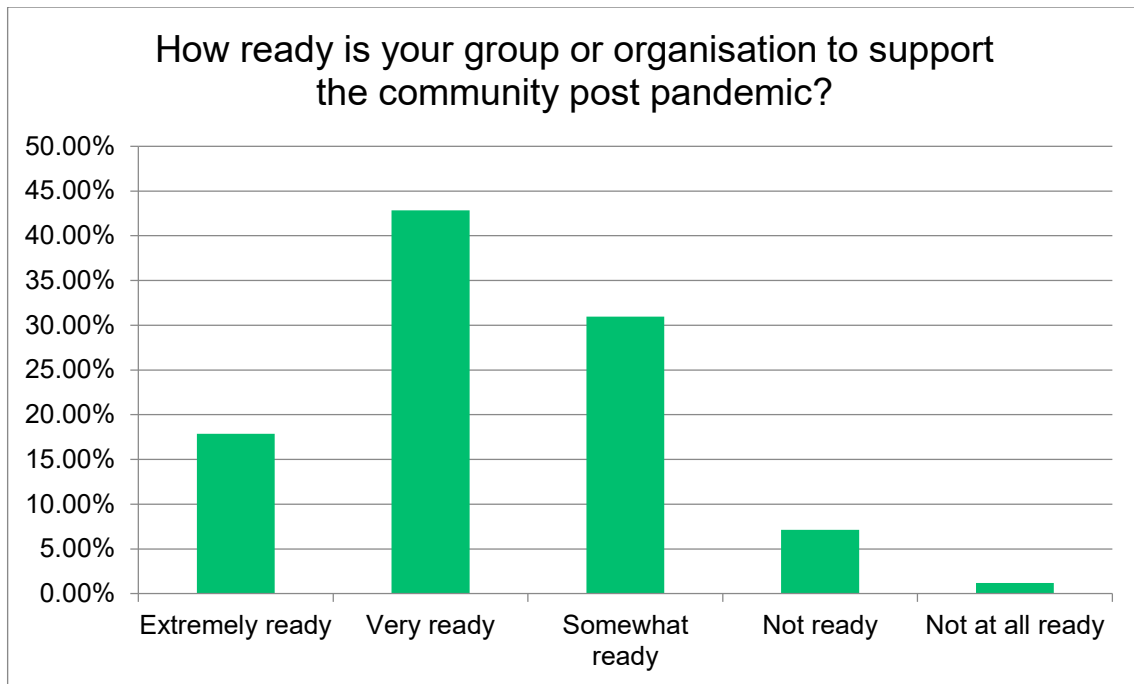
Q17 Do you initiate this networking or is it facilitated by a local voluntary and community sector support organisation (VCSSO)?

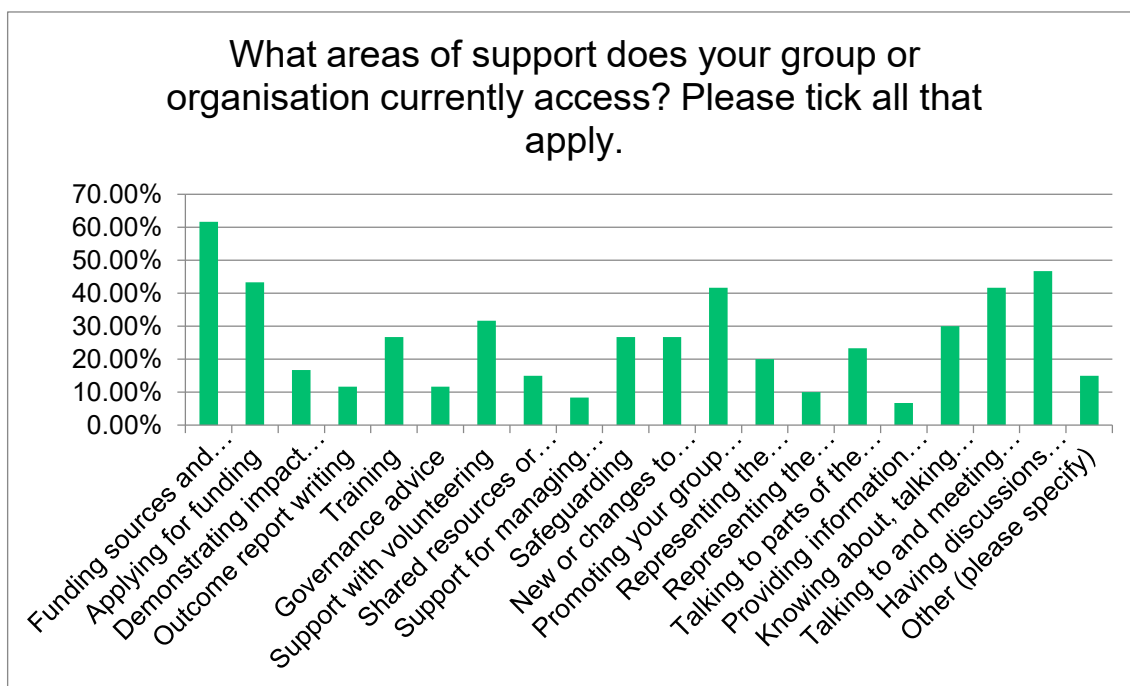
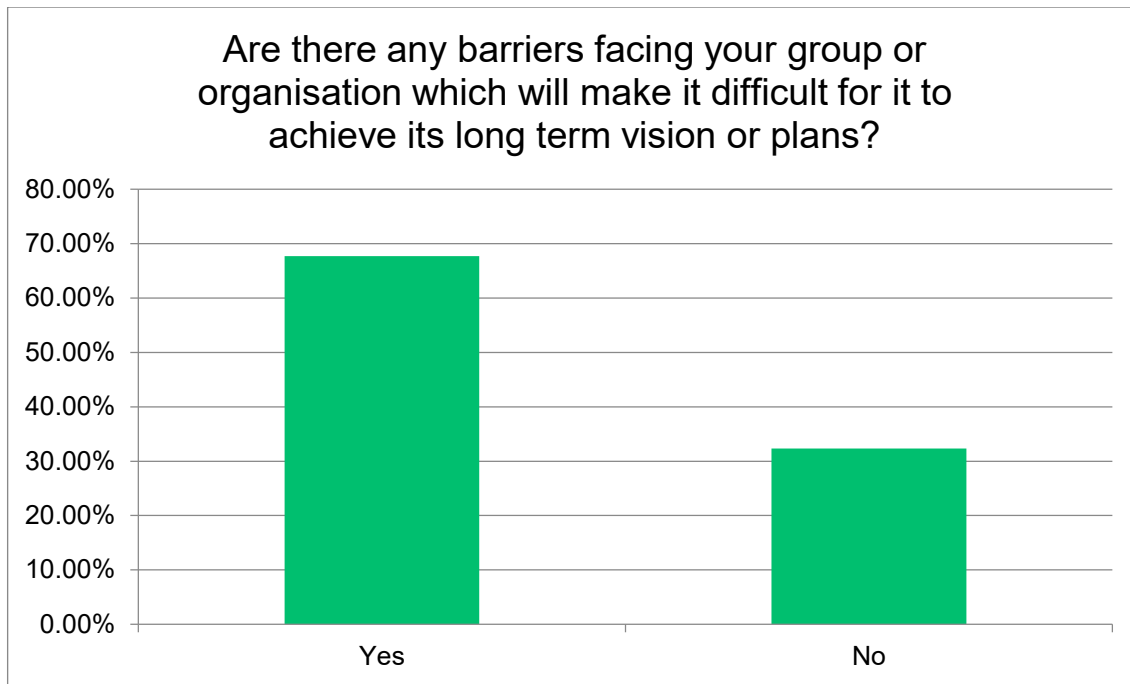


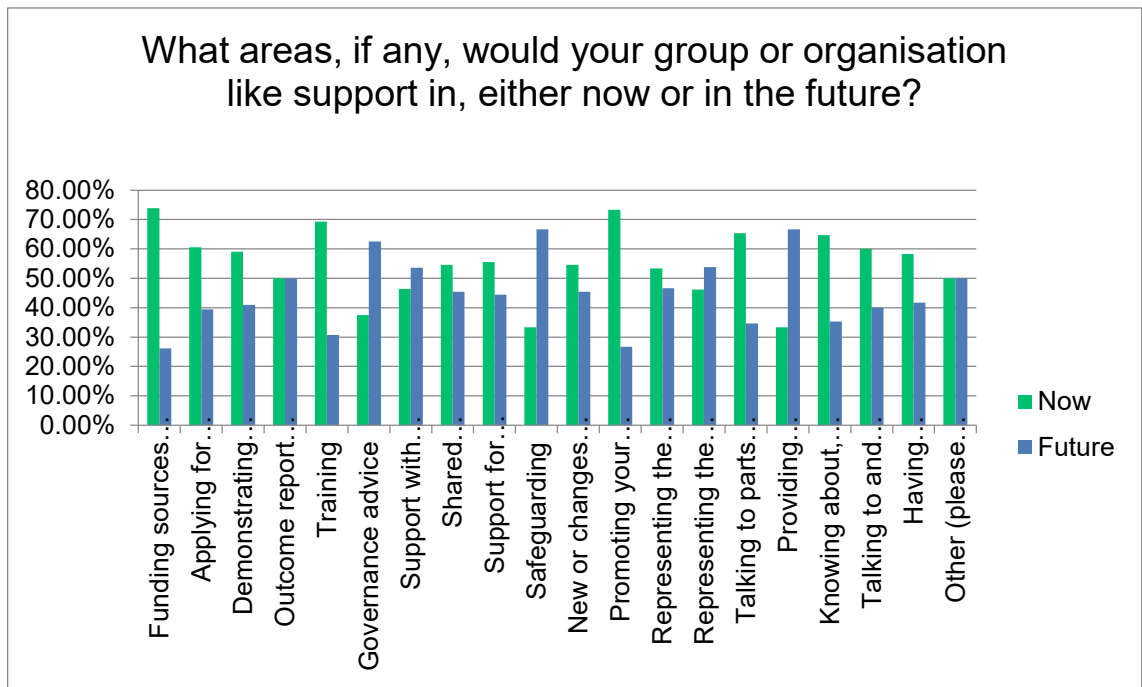
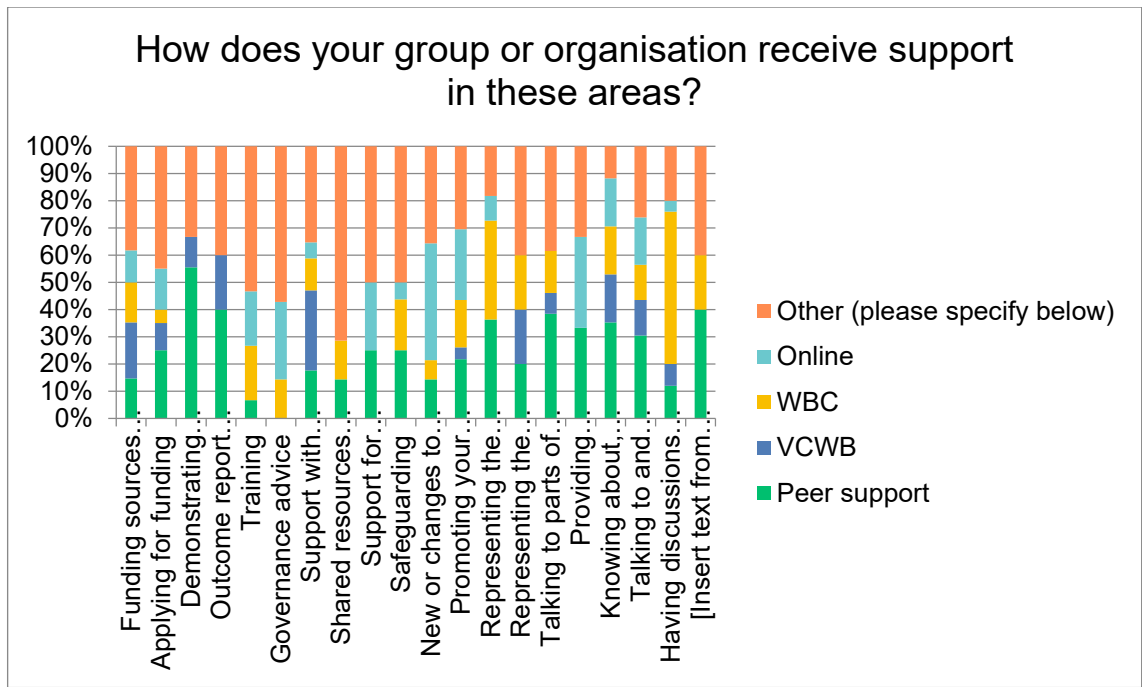
Phase II Survey Bar Charts

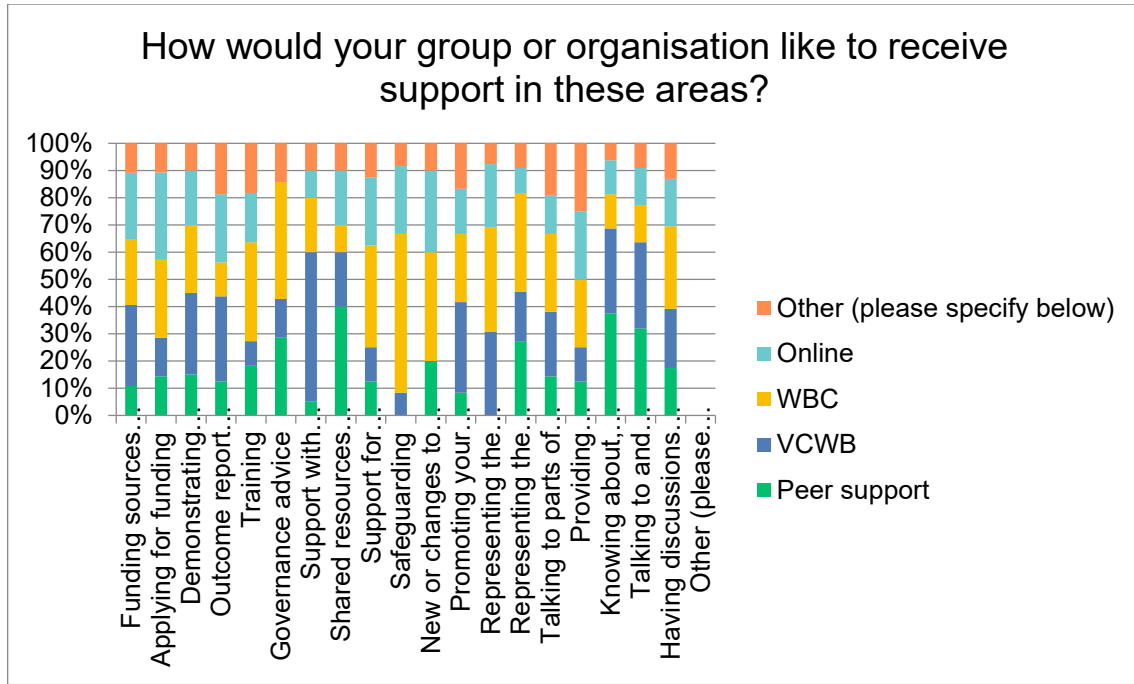












APPENDIX D Phase I Workshop Engagement

Workshop 1 – 24th November 2020 3.30pm – 5pm

Workshop 2 – 25th November 2020 1.30pm – 3pm

Workshop 3 – 26th November 2020 6.00pm – 7.30pm

Guiding Questions for Workshops

1. What would you want a VCSSO to do for you/your organisation? What is important to you?
 - How could a VCSSO support your work and help you to achieve your aims and objectives
 - What services would add value to your work
 - How would it help you be more productive, efficient, innovative

2. What works well / not so well in enabling our VCSE sector in West Berkshire?
 - Are you connected with other organisations that serve the same people as you / other organisation?
 - How easy are they to access?
 - How responsive are the services?
 - Gaps in current service?

3. How could a VCSSO make a difference to:
 - Your community / the people you support?
 - The service you provide?

APPENDIX E. Phase I, 1:1 Interview Engagement Interviews were conducted with seven organisations

Guiding Questions

1. What key areas are important to your organisation and that you would like a VCSSO to offer?
2. What would that support look like? / How could a VCSSO
 - Support you to achieve your aims and objectives
 - Add value to your work
 - Help you to be more productive, efficient,
 - Support you to develop your services / be more innovative
3. What voluntary and community sector support does your organisation currently engage with / receive support from
 - This could be other charities/groups, VCWB, CCG, WBC, Healthwatch etc.
 - How have you engaged with these?
 - What is working well, what could be improved, are there gaps?
4. How could a VCSSO make a difference to your community / the people you support / service you provide?
 - Peer support / joint working
 - Connect communities /organisations
 - Advocacy / Raise their voice / collective voice
 - Engage at strategic level on their behalf
 - Attract more funding
5. How much opportunity for interaction, peer support and joint working is there with other local VCSE organisations or community groups
 - How could this benefit your organisation? - help achieve common objectives, streamline costs, raise a collective voice
6. Is there anything additional that we haven't discussed today that you would like to share to help inform the VCSSO

APPENDIX F. Phase II, 1:1 Interview Engagement
Interviews were conducted with four organisations

Guiding Questions

<p>ABOUT YOU</p> <p>To help us understand the views and needs across different parts of the community and voluntary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which community group or organisation(s) are you part of? • What is your role in the group or organisation? • How long has your group or organisation been going? • What does your group or organisation do? • Who do you support in the community? • Where in West Berkshire do you deliver your service? • What groups and forums are you part of? 	<p>THINGS NOW</p> <p>We would like to understand how things are for your group or organisation at the moment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you feel your group or organisation does really well now? • How do you help other groups or organisations learn about what you already do well? • What are the things you are focusing on right now? • What are the issues which are affecting the community you work with? • Are there any things you find difficult to do in your group or organisation at the moment & why are they difficult?
<p>THINGS IN THE FUTURE</p> <p>We would like to understand how the future looks for your group or organisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your longer term visions or plans? • How could voluntary sector support make a difference to you achieving your vision or plans? • What things might make it difficult to reach your vision or plans? 	<p>SUPPORT YOU MIGHT NEED</p> <p>We would like to understand the support that your group or organisation may need to thrive; both now and in the future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What support do you already receive and where from? • What support needs do you have that are not met at the moment? • Where you would like future support needs to be provided?

SEMHAutism Secondary Resource Provision - Consultation

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	14 October 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Dominic Boeck
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	16 September 2021
Report Author:	Jack Caine and Richard Turner
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4089

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose: (1) the transfer of the former primary school site in Theale (the former site) to WBC from the Oxford Diocese Trustees (the Diocese) and (2) the long term future use of the Site as the location of a provision for secondary aged children with SEMH/ASD needs.

2 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Executive resolves to delegate to the Service Director for Strategy and Governance, in consultation with the Head of Finance & Property and the Head of Education, having first consulted the Executive Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education and the Executive Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development to enter into appropriate legal documentation for the acquisition of the former site from the Diocese, subject to agreement and for the purposes described below:

- (a) Subject to transfer of the former site to WBC, the site be allocated for the purposes of a provision for secondary aged children with SEMH/ASD needs.
- (b) That the SEMH/ASD be the primary and sole purpose for the former site, but the design development ensure efficient use of the former site.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>Subject to SoS approval if agreed by the Diocese the entire former site could be transferred to WBC at £nil cost. This is instead of the capital receipt WBC is entitled to. The Diocese would reinvest its current beneficial interest in the former site as a percentage proportion in the new school site in lieu of their share of a capital receipt from an open market disposal of the former site. The transfer of the former site to WBC would be based on WBC being responsible for all the Diocese costs. If the Diocese was to decide to dispose of the former site for 'best value' on the open market it is likely they would dispose of the former site based on 'hope' value having established the principle for housing development.</p> <p>Note: Of this total WBC only benefits from a capital receipt for part of the site including an adjustment for 'ransom' value of the Diocese land. The capital receipt received by WBC would be net of the Diocese share and all sales costs.</p> <p>Should the recommendation for SEMH/ASD at the former site not progress, the WBC Education Service will require to acquire an alternative site, with capital expenditure beyond the capital budget allocation in the capital programme. There is currently allocation within the capital programme of £2.36m.</p> <p>Although we anticipate that the initial cost of a placement will be disproportionate, the provision will start to offer significant savings to the high needs block from its third year onwards. Even accounting for these costs in the first two years, the site offers a projected net saving of £1,168,005 across this initial five year period.</p> <p>During the period of vacancy, pending the commencement of construction works for the SEMH/ASD project, there is an ongoing cost to WBC to manage the vacant site (rates, security, repairs, and energy).</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>None identified</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>There will be a need to negotiate and enter into appropriate legal documentation for the transfer of the site, subject to Secretary of State consent.</p> <p>Following acquisition of the site there will be ongoing statutory obligations requiring Secretary of State consent for future disposals or any change of use.</p>

	<p>The legal land issues are discussed in more detail in sections 5.14 to 5.23 in this report</p> <p>The specifics of the educational provision proposed both in terms of its nature and its governance is still subject to discussions following legal advice regarding The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and associated statutory guidance. Further advice from counsel is being sought.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>Locally, the number of children who require an EHCP or are registered as SEN Support with a primary identified need of SEMH or Autism has been on the rise. An increasing number of these children are being placed out of area in independent or non-maintained provision. The West Berkshire SEND Strategy highlighted the need to develop a continuum of local provision to allow more children and young people to have their needs met within their local communities. The advantages of doing this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That children and young people can be supported more cohesively within their local communities. • The local authority will be able to monitor the quality of the provision more closely. • Pressure will be reduced on the high needs block, as the costs of placing children in independent settings outside of the local authority is considerable. <p>The Education Service use of the site will support a capital programme project, and will benefit from avoiding the acquisition of a freehold site from the open market.</p> <p>By transferring the entire former site back to WBC, the ownership value that is held by the Diocese in the former site would be exchanged for a beneficial interest in the new Theale Primary School site, resulting in the Diocese holding a circa 35% ownership interest in the new site. For the life of the new site's use as a school, there is no material impact on its use or monetary exchange.</p> <p>The transfer of the former site to WBC is entirely the decision of the Diocese who may choose to dispose of the site on the open market rather than transfer to WBC. Additionally, any disposal of the site to WBC is subject to consultation with the Secretary of State (SoS). Pending formal completion of the legal documentation recording the exchange of land and progression with construction, the site will remain vacant and</p>

	will require ongoing management with associated budget requirements, all falling to WBC.			
Property:	Property Services are currently responsible for the management of the vacant site. Once complete the site will be managed in the same way other schools are managed within the estate.			
Policy:	The preferred option directly supports WBC Education Service statutory delivery of education and in particular SEMH/ASD provision.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		None identified. Through the public consultation, including direct engagement with key stakeholders, due regard has been given to the accessibility of the consultation by the Education Service.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			If the resource is established, young people with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, who may also have a diagnosis of other SEND (e.g. AUTISM, ADHD) will be able to access suitable education and support in their local community.
Environmental Impact:	X			If the resource goes ahead there will be reduced travel involved as children will be placed locally. The site is already largely developed for school use and lends itself to re-provision of similar use with minimal impact.
Health Impact:		X		None identified

ICT Impact:		X		None identified
Digital Services Impact:		X		None identified
Council Strategy Priorities:	X			Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes / Support everyone to achieve their full potential: support everyone on their learning journey to achieve their best.
Core Business:	X			Improve the core business delivery of SEMH/ASD services
Data Impact:	X			None identified
Consultation and Engagement:	A broad range of agencies, including parents and carers, were consulted on the idea as part of the SEND Strategy, which was co-produced in 2018. In 2020, a consultation was held on the proposal to establish new SEMH provision in West Berkshire. A second consultation has now been completed on the use of the old Theale Primary School as the site.			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 Due to demographic growth in the village of Theale, the primary school has required expansion resulting in the construction of a replacement school on a new site within Theale, a total investment of £8.8m. The replacement school is complete, and the school moved across to the new site in July 2020.
- 4.2 This leaves the former school site vacant, with opportunity for West Berkshire Council (WBC) to acquire the freehold site from the Diocese.
- 4.3 Upon the site becoming vacant the Diocese must dispose of the site. Before doing so the Diocese had a duty to first notify the Secretary of State for Education (SoS) that it intended to dispose of the site (the site containing small areas of playing field land) and to seek a direction as to whether or not the site should be transferred to an Academy pursuant to the Academies Act 2010.
- 4.4 The SoS direction and consent were issued on 8th June 2021 enabling the transfer of the land by the Diocese.
- 4.5 In circumstances where WBC takes ownership of the entire former site, the value of the land held by the Diocese in the former site will be exchanged for a beneficial interest in a proportion of the new school site. Throughout the life of the school this will have no impact, until any future disposal. The new school site is subject to statutory transfer to the diocese owing to its status as a Voluntary Controlled school.

- 4.6 The new school site is subject to a statutory transfer to the Diocese owing to the school's status as a Voluntary Controlled school.
- 4.7 Upon the simultaneous statutory transfer of the new school site by WBC to the Diocese and the transfer of the former site by the Diocese to WBC, WBC will: (1) have acquired the Statutory Transfer Land in lieu of an open market capital receipt from the sale of the Statutory Transfer Land, (2) have acquired the Old Site (3) have discharged its statutory duty to transfer the new site to the Diocese, and (4) have protected its percentage beneficial interest in the new school site.
- 4.8 Upon simultaneous transfer of the former site by the Diocese to WBC and the statutory transfer of the new school site by WBC to the Diocese, the Diocese: (1) will have discharged its obligation to pass the proceeds of sale of the Statutory Transfer Land to WBC (2) will have acquired a percentage beneficial interest in the new school site to a value equal to the percentage ratio of the Old Site to the former site (3) will hold WBC's percentage beneficial interest in the new site on trust for WBC.
- 4.9 An expressions of interest document was issued to all Heads of Service/Service Directors seeking interest from the Services, to establish options for the site should it be transferred into the ownership of WBC.
- 4.10 From this enquiry, WBC is presented with a number of potential options for the site:
- (a) Education Service Special Educational Need for secondary age SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) provision;
 - (b) Housing Joint Venture Disposal of the site to the WBC/Sovereign Housing Association (SHA) joint venture, resulting in opportunity for further affordable housing in the district.
 - (c) Capital receipt WBC could also simply seek to benefit from its proportion of the capital receipt once the site is sold by the Diocese.
- 4.11 While the hierarchy of council priorities can be subjective, where in this case Education provision is considered alongside the provision of affordable housing, it is recommended that WBC seek to have the land transferred back to it, for the preferred option of use for SEMH/ASD provision.

The recommendation is formed from the urgent case for SEMH provision expressed in this report, coupled with the legal encumbrances which require overcoming to enable a housing development (the requirement for SoS approval and s.77 application).

- 4.12 Locally, the number of children who require an EHCP or are registered as SEN Support with a primary identified need of SEMH or Autism has been on the rise. An increasing number of these children are being placed out of area in independent or non-maintained provision. The West Berkshire SEND Strategy highlighted the need to develop a continuum of local provision to allow more children and young people to have their needs met within their local communities. The advantages of doing this are:
- (a) That children and young people can be supported more cohesively within their local communities.

- (b) The local authority will be able to monitor the quality of the provision more closely.
- (c) Pressure will be reduced on the high needs block, as the costs of placing children in independent settings outside of the local authority is considerable.

4.13 A public consultation was conducted over a six week period from 9th November 2020 on the proposal to establish maintained provision. This consultation resulted in an overwhelming majority (97.7%) of respondents agreeing with the proposal.

4.14 Following this consultation the Castle School was identified as the host school for the provision and the former primary school site at Theale identified as a suitable site.

4.15 A further public consultation was then conducted for six weeks from 30th April 2021 which identified the Castle School as host school and Theale as the proposed site. Of the one hundred and forty six responses 86% said they did not have concerns about the use of the former primary school site in Theale.

4.16 The SEMH/ASD as a project has a capital budget allocation of £2.36m within the capital programme for the refurbishment/redevelopment of the Theale site. A budget pressure has been identified which will be addressed within the current capital programme refresh.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

5.1 Due to demographic growth in the village of Theale, the primary school has required expansion resulting in the construction of a replacement school on a new site within Theale. The newly constructed site is complete, was handed over to the school in July 2020 and is fully operational. The former school site is now vacant.

5.2 It is proposed to use the old Theale Primary School as the site of a 42 place provision. This development is intended to meet the needs of secondary-aged children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH) who may have a diagnosis of Autism. It is recommended that the vacant site, subject to acquisition from the Oxford Diocese, be allocated for operational use to deliver SEMH/ASD.

Background

SEMH/ASD

5.3 Locally, the number of children who require an EHCP or are registered as SEN Support with a primary identified need of SEMH or Autism has been on the rise. An increasing number of these children are being placed out of area in independent or non-maintained provision. The West Berkshire SEND Strategy highlighted the need to develop a continuum of local provision to allow more children and young people to have their needs met within their local communities. The advantages of doing this are:

- (a) That children and young people can be supported more cohesively within their local communities.
- (b) The local authority will be able to monitor the quality of the provision more closely.

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- (c) Pressure will be reduced on the high needs block, as the costs of placing children in independent settings outside of the local authority is considerable.

5.4 If the proposal goes ahead, young people attending the provision will receive a personalised curriculum with multi-agency support. There will be carefully planned opportunities to maximise inclusion in mainstream learning and social activities wherever possible. The resource will be developed in line with therapeutic thinking principles. The curriculum will be developed around principles of aspiration, preparing for adulthood, fostering positive community links and developing independence.

5.5 Ahead of a meeting of the Heads Funding Group in October 2020, modelling was undertaken to establish potential savings if a maintained SEMH provision was opened. These savings were based on the difference between the cost of a place in the new provision and the average cost of an external placement. For the purposes of this report, this modelling has been revised with current projected unit costs. A summary is provided in the table below:

Financial year	Nos on roll	Unit cost WBC provision	Total cost WBC provision	Nos on roll	Unit cost external provision	Total cost	(Saving)/deficit
2020-21	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2021-22	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2022-23	12	79,677	956,124	12	60,000	720,000	236,124
2023-24	21	60,942	1,279,782	21	60,000	1,260,000	19,782
2024-25	30	52,911	1,587,330	30	60,000	1,800,000	(212,670)
2025-26	39	47,667	1,859,013	39	60,000	2,340,000	(480,987)
2026-27	42	42,613	1,789,746	42	60,000	2,520,000	(730,254)

5.6 Although we anticipate that the initial cost of a placement will be disproportionate, the provision will start to offer significant savings to the high needs block from its third year onwards. Even accounting for these costs in the first two years, the site offers a projected net saving of £1,168,005 across this initial five year period.

5.7 A decision was taken to consult on the proposal to establish maintained provision. A survey questionnaire was published on the council's website on the 9th November 2020 for a 6 week consultation period and meetings were arranged with local stake holders. In summary,

- (a) An overwhelming majority (97.7%) of respondents agreed with the proposal to open a 42 place specialist resource.
- (b) Views which were expressed within the survey aligned closely with the council's overall vision for the provision.

- 5.8 Following the results of this consultation, The Castle School was identified as the host school for the provision. The Castle School is considered to be a good fit because of their significant expertise supporting children with SEND and because of their longstanding Ofsted outstanding rating.
- 5.9 A site search suggested that the old Theale Primary School was the most suitable site for the provision. The site itself satisfied the basic requirements of being small and separate from the host school whilst offering a suite of classrooms, hall, catering space and some specialist teaching facilities. In addition, the old Theale Primary school site is considered to have the following advantages:
- (a) The site and building lends itself well to educational use.
 - (b) It is available to refurbish and use (subject to final decision by the diocese).
 - (c) Reuse of this site for educational purposes represents an efficient use of resources.
 - (d) The school has good transport links from the M4.
- 5.10 On the 30th April 2021, a further consultation opened to establish the views of the public towards the use of the old Theale Primary School site. This included a public-facing webinar and a wider online survey. Local stakeholders were contacted ahead of this consultation to ask if they would like a separate meeting to discuss the proposals. A full list of stakeholders who were contacted can be found in Appendix A.
- 5.11 Tigers Day Nursery and Theale Parish Council requested separate meetings which were arranged alongside the wider public webinar. Attendees of all meetings were invited to ask questions, which are summarised thematically with the council's response in Appendix A. In brief:
- (a) Questions were asked about the identified cohort and the impact on local traffic. The suitability of the site was raised as a point of concern.
 - (b) A number of people were interested in the proposed curriculum and asked questions about sponsorship and management of the provision.
- 5.12 Respondents to the online survey were asked in what capacity they were responding, whether they had any concerns about the proposals or further comments to add. A more detailed breakdown of the responses received can be found in Appendix A. In summary:
- (a) Of the 146 responses received, 86% said they did not have concerns about the use of the old Theale Primary school as the site of the new provision.
 - (b) Over 36% of respondents identified as a parent or carer of a child with SEND; over 24% identified as education professionals and a further 23% as local residents.
- 5.13 Responses to the online survey, and questions raised in meetings, suggest the proposals are unlikely to face substantive opposition from local residents and stakeholders. A considerable majority of responses to the online survey have been in favour of the provision and many of the queries have concerned how young people attending will be supported and taught. This suggests that most respondents are keen

for the proposals to be successful and meet the needs of young people in the community.

The site and legal status

- 5.14 The now vacant former school site is currently in the registered ownership of the Diocese. The site comprises two registered titles (1) the old Victorian school building (the Old Site), (2) the remainder of the school (the Statutory Transfer Land). See appendix B (land edged red is Statutory Transfer Land and edged blue is the Old Site).
- 5.15 The Diocese has a 100% beneficial interest in the Old Site but has no beneficial interest in the Statutory Transfer Land, the Statutory Transfer Land having formerly been in the ownership of WBC and transferred to the Diocese by WBC pursuant to WBC's statutory duty to do so. The Statutory Transfer Land is held on trust for WBC by the Diocese.
- 5.16 Similar to the former school site, as the school now occupies the new replacement site, WBC has a statutory duty to transfer the new replacement site to the Diocese (excluding the playing fields). Following the statutory transfer of the new replacement site the Diocese must dispose of the former site.
- 5.17 If the Diocese disposes of the entire former site, on the open market, the Diocese would be entitled to retain the proportion of the capital receipt in respect of the Old Site and, after the deduction from the sale proceeds of the Diocese share and all other associated sale costs, WBC would be entitled to receive the remaining net proceeds of sale. The Diocese may also choose to reinvest its capital receipt in the new replacement site.
- 5.18 Although it is under no obligation to do so, in circumstances where the Diocese choose to transfer the former site to WBC the Diocese would retain its percentage beneficial ownership by investing the full value of the Old Site in the new replacement site. This would free up the entire site for transfer to WBC.
- 5.19 The Diocese is obliged to achieve 'best value' when disposing of the former site. Whether this relates to the split of capital receipt or the proportion of interest held by the diocese in the new school site.
- 5.20 In terms of land value, there will be a requirement in the event of disposal on the open market, that suitable split be agreed between the Diocese and WBC. This is likely to be based on disposing the land having established planning principles and thus sold with 'hope' value for development. Owing to the reliance on the Diocese land for access to develop the entire former site, any uplifted value of the WBC land is likely to be shared with the Diocese.
- 5.21 WBC has been in detailed discussion with the Diocese regarding the potential transfer of the site back to WBC at nil cost. This would be instead of the open market disposal meaning neither party would benefit from the capital receipt.
- To retain its financial interest (for land edged in blue – appendix B) the Diocese would retain an interest in the new Theale Primary School site. This financial benefit would only be realised in circumstances where the site ceased to operate as a school and the land sold.

- 5.22 The Statutory Transfer Land comprises three identified small areas of playing field land. Prior to any disposal (including any transfer back to WBC) of the Statutory Transfer Land by the Diocese, the Diocese must comply with its statutory obligation, pursuant to Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, of seeking the consent of the Secretary of State for Education to the disposal of those areas of playing field land. In addition the Diocese must notify the Secretary of State, pursuant to Schedule 1 of the Academies Act 2010, of its intention to dispose of the Statutory Transfer Land so that the Secretary of State can give a direction as to whether or not the Statutory Transfer Land (or any part of it) be transferred to any local Academy.
- 5.23 The Diocese complied with its statutory obligations to notify and seek the consent of the Secretary of State and on 8th June 2021 consent was received from the SoS for the land transfer to progress.
- 5.24 Discussion between WBC and the Diocese has resulted in the proposal that both WBC and the Diocese can discharge their respective statutory obligations simply by the exchange of the former site and of the new site by way of transfers to one another.
- 5.25 The DfE has indicated that should the Council wish to change its use or dispose of the old site (ie the statutory transfer land edged red not including the old school building edged blue – appendix B), as opposed to continuing an educational use, it will be necessary for the Council to seek S77 consent in respect of the three areas of playing field and to obtain the direction of the Secretary of State, relating to use by an academy, under Paragraph 12 of Schedule 1 of the Academies Act 2010.
- 5.26 An expressions of interest document was issued to all Heads of Service/Service Directors seeking interest from the Services, to establish options for the site should it be transferred into the ownership of WBC.
- 5.27 From this enquiry, there are two potential uses for the site, should WBC successfully acquire the site:
- (a) Operational use by the WBC Education Service for the purposes of providing SEMH/ASD services;
 - (b) The development of the site for housing purposes, particularly the delivery of affordable housing. The method of delivering this would be likely to be through the joint venture between WBC and Sovereign Housing Association (SHA)

Proposals

- 5.28 It is proposed, subject to transfer of the site from the Diocese that WBC develop the site for the operational delivery of services related to SEMH/ASD.
- 5.29 A budget allocation of £2.39m is within the current capital programme and a construction project is currently progressing through early design stages.

6 Other options considered

- 6.1 The option is available for WBC to withdraw its interest in acquiring the site from the diocese (at nil cost) with the diocese then disposing of the site on the open market for 'best value'. WBC would benefit from a proportion of the capital receipt.
- 6.2 WBC could complete the transfer of the site for the purposes of developing the site to provide affordable housing. The mechanism available to the council to deliver this is likely to be through the joint venture between WBC and Sovereign Housing Association (SHA).

A significant constraint on this option is the position of the DfE that prior to any change of use or disposal WBC would first need to seek Secretary of State consent under the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 and would need to seek a direction under the Academies Act 2010.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 There is demand within the District for the delivery of SEMH/ASD services, which requires a dedicated site.
- 7.2 WBC has the opportunity to acquire the Theale site from the Oxford Diocese at nil cost (although WBC would forego its share of capital receipt if the site was sold) for the purposes of the SEMH/ASD provision.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Outcome of consultation
- 8.2 Appendix B – Site layout showing split of ownership

Background Papers:

Report prepared by WBC Education Service related to the proposed provision of SEMH/ASD and the associated consultation.

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

- The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval
 - Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council
 - Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position
 - Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months
 - Item is Urgent Key Decision
-

 Report is to note only
Wards affected: Theale**Officer details:**

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Outcome of consultation

Outcome of consultation on proposal to establish a new specialist resourced provision for secondary-age learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) on the old Theale Primary School site

30th April to 13th June 2021

1. Background

1.1 Following a review of its provision and services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), West Berkshire Council developed its SEND Strategy 2018-23. This was co-produced with parents, schools, Health partners and other stakeholders. Implementation of the strategy is overseen by the SEND Strategic Partnership Board which has representation from all key stakeholders and partners.

1.2 The strategy has five strategic objectives:

- Objective 1: Improve the capacity of mainstream schools to meet the needs of children with SEND
- Objective 2: Expand local provision for children with SEND in order to reduce reliance on external placements
- Objective 3: Improve post 16 opportunities for young people with SEND, including better access to employment
- Objective 4: Improve preparation for adulthood, including transition from children's to adults' services in Social Care and Health
- Objective 5: Improve access to universal and targeted Health services for children with SEND

1.3 The creation of two provisions for primary and secondary children with social emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) and Autism was one of the areas for development highlighted in objective two. These provisions will be attached to existing West Berkshire maintained schools who will be responsible for their management.

1.4 A staffing model, costings and accommodation requirements were established between 2019 and 2020 and work was also completed to establish the demand for this type of provision.

1.5 Between the 9th November and the 20th December 2020 a consultation took place to establish the views of the public towards the proposals. At this time, no host school or site had been identified. In summary:

- 86 people responded to the consultation. Of these 86 people, 53.5% of these were parents and 16.3% of these were education professionals.
- In answer to the question “do you agree with our proposal to increase local provision for learners with complex needs related to SEMH and Autism” 97.7% responded yes.
- In answer to the question “do you agree with our proposal to develop a 42 place specialist resource for secondary aged pupils” 96.5% responded yes.

1.6 Following the results of this consultation, The Castle School was identified as the host school for the provision and a site search suggested that the old Theale Primary School was the most suitable site for the provision.

1.7 On the 30th April 2021, a further consultation opened to establish the views of the public towards the use of the old Theale Primary School as the site for this proposed SEMH provision. This included a public-facing webinar and a wider online survey and meetings with local stakeholders.

2. Consultation method

2.1 In common with the previous consultation, the proposals were set out together in a consultation document with a survey questionnaire. Both of these were published on the Council’s website on 30th April 2021 for six weeks.

2.2 Prior to the start of the consultation, local stakeholders were contacted to ask if they would like a separate meeting to discuss the proposals. These key stakeholders included:

- Theale Parish Council
- Holy Trinity Church
- Tigers Day Nursery
- Oxford Diocese
- Alok Sharma MP
- Theale Primary School
- Theale Green Secondary School

2.3 Tigers Day Nursery and Theale Parish Council requested separate meetings which were held virtually on Thursday 13th May and Tuesday 11th May 2021 respectively. The meeting with Tigers Day Nursery was attended by the SEN and Disabled Children’s Team Service Manager and the SEND Strategy Officer. The meeting with Theale Parish Council was attended by representatives from West Berkshire Council’s education service, property service and the Castle School.

2.4 A public webinar was organised during the consultation period. Representatives from the council’s education and property services attended this meeting to represent the proposal and the webinar was chaired by the Lead Member for Education from the council’s executive. Attendees of the webinar were also invited to ask questions which would be responded to publicly in the meeting. In all meetings, attendees were invited to ask questions which would be responded to publicly. These are summarised thematically, along with the responses to questions raised by the online survey in section 3.3.

3. Consultation survey results

3.1 Number and category of respondents

Table 1: Please specify the capacity in which you are responding. Tick all that apply:

	Frequency	Percent
Young person	1	0.7%
Parent or carer of a child with SEND	53	36.6%
Education professional	36	24.8%
Health professional	2	1.4%
Social care professional	2	1.4%
Theale Parish Council representative	2	1.4%
Holy Trinity Church (Theale) representative	0	0.0%
Oxford Diocese representative	0	0.0%
Theale local resident	34	23.5%
Other (please specify)	32	22.1%
Total number of survey responses	146	
Skipped	1	
Total number of question responses	145	

Survey respondents were able to identify as more than one of the categories. The majority of responses identified as a parent or carer of a child with SEND (36.6%). The next most frequently identified categories were Education professional (24.8%) and Theale local resident (23.5%).

3.2 Potential concerns about the proposal

Table 2: Do you have any concerns in relation to the use of the old Theale Primary School site for a specialist resourced provision?

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	20	13.9%
No	124	86.1%
Total number of survey responses	146	
Skipped	2	
Total number of question responses	144	

86.1% of respondents did not identify as having a concern about the use of the old Theale Primary School site as a specialist resourced provision.

3.3 Comments from respondents on the proposals

Table 3: What are your concerns? Please include ways in which your concerns could be addressed, if appropriate

	Frequency	Percent
Answered	17	11.64%
Skipped	129	88.35%
Total number of survey responses	146	

Table 4: Any further comments?

	Frequency	Percent
Answered	82	56.16%
Skipped	64	43.83%
Total number of survey responses	146	

Respondents who identified as having concerns about the proposals were asked in question 3 what their concerns were and possible ways that their concerns could be addressed. Question 4 asked respondents if they had any further comments about the proposals. A number of themes emerged through both sections. These are summarised below, alongside points which were raised in the webinar and meetings with stakeholders. The council's response has also been included.

Identified cohort and eligibility for entry

- “The title of the consultation document refers to SEND, however the body of the article refers to SEMH. Could we please have clarity on the purpose of this provision? Also, is this facility for those who have or are undergoing a formal diagnosis of a learning disorder such as Autism?”
- “As you need an EHCP to be considered for a place, and we know how hard it is to get one [..], won't this be a barrier and won't children be left with nothing whilst waiting for an EHCP?”
- “Given the chronic shortage of staff in CAMHs [...], long waiting lists and the difficulty of coordination between [...] services [...] how will the children be supported and how will this be commissioned for the school without this impacting on current services?”
- “Will the pupils all be coming from West Berkshire, or from out of area too?”
- “I am extremely keen for my son to be considered for a place in September 2022.”

Council's response:

Children who attend the provision will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Pupils of the provision will have emotional needs and, in many cases, they will have a diagnosis of autism. In some cases, they may have additional diagnosed needs such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). If children have presenting needs which are indicative of Autism or an anxiety disorder and these needs are a good fit for the provision, then the absence of a diagnosis won't be a barrier to entry.

Other children may have needs of this type, but at a less acute level. These children will be able to have their needs met within their mainstream school. Some of the children attending the provision may be from out of area. Children whose needs may be appropriate for the provision will be identified through an assessment for Education Health and Care plan or via annual review.

Transportation and parking

- “The proposal states that it is likely that most of the children will be transported to and from school, is it possible to have more information on the numbers expected to travel by minibus/public transport/family vehicles?”
- “Will children attending be accompanied onto and off site at both ends of the school day? Will any children travel independently without an adult?”
- “How many staff will be travelling in?”
- “What car parking facilities will be utilised for the transport of these children whether local authority organised or other, given the high levels of traffic in the area for both of the other schools?”
- “Though there are good reasons for using the site in Theale, I wonder whether a potential pupil [...] in Hungerford is likely to opt not use this site because of the travel time.”
- “My concern would be if some children require wheel chairs or could be frightened by traffic etc. Some kind of kiss and drop could work well to keep everyone happy and most importantly safe.”

Council's response:

It is not possible to be precise about numbers at this stage. We anticipate that most children will be transported to and from school by minibus or taxi. A small number may be brought to school by parents or independently, but only where it has been decided that this is appropriate. Staff will be present at the beginning and the end of the school day to assist with transitions in and out of school.

There will be up to 39 members of staff and it's difficult to say exactly where these will come from. Staff will be encouraged to car share and to use environmentally friendly methods of transport.

We appreciate that there is currently restricted access to the site. The design process will also look at on-site car parking to make it appropriate for the new facility and will aim to reduce the likelihood of parking off-site.

At the moment there is no provision of this type in West Berkshire, so children with acute needs of this type are often placed out of area to have their needs met. Although a site in Theale may represent a longer than ideal journey time for some children, this is still within acceptable limits and will be substantially preferable than being placed out of area.

Suitability of the site and refurbishment

- “The current school buildings are in a dilapidated state and much of the infrastructure was considered to be at the end of its useful life. Is it economically viable to reuse these buildings and is there sufficient capital funding?”
- “I understand there are questions about the site being in the ownership of the Church [/Diocese]. Has this been resolved?”
- “Will all the temporary buildings be removed? Will there be sufficient play space on site? Will the original house be used?”
- “There may be a small amount of children who have a physical disability as well as a mental health [need]. Will this [provision] be accessible to them? Will you have hoists and height-adjustable change benches?”
- “Is there a possibility that the whole site may not be used and if not, will any land be available for sale?”
- “I would like to hope that the site will have solar panels fitted to provide it [with a] sustainable energy supply.”
- “Is it large enough? Is it future proof? Is 42 places sufficient for the long term requirements?”
- “The old primary school would be better used to serve the Theale community.”
- “It is a very small, very old building outside of Newbury. I think our children would benefit from a modern purpose built facility in Newbury.”
- “There are quite a few specialist schools in close proximity and this site is close to the Reading border which could be an issue with many after a few places.”
- “I wanted to comment to say if this goes ahead, I would like to offer my time as a volunteer to help refurbish the school.”

Council’s response:

The buildings on the site are usable and will be subject to refurbishment. A design process will look at the buildings currently on the site and this is likely to recommend the removal of some modular buildings. The design process will also consider provision of utilities including heating in a way that is compliant with environmental standards as well as the council’s Environment Strategy. The council are currently undertaking a legal process to transfer the land back into the ownership of the Council. We have planned for a 42 place provision which we anticipate will meet the needs of secondary aged SEMH children in West Berkshire for the foreseeable future.

The old school house is one part of the school site. The design process will look at this building to decide how it could best be utilised. The site will be subject to refurbishment to ensure that the provision is equipped to fully meet the needs of this cohort of children in the same way a purpose built facility would.

If this provision is the best match for a child with a physical disability in addition to their other diagnoses or mental health needs then we would seek to make this provision accessible to them. We would make reasonable adjustments in order to do this. In the first instance, we would need to decide whether this provision is the best match for that particular child's needs.

At the moment, the use of the whole site is anticipated, so it is highly unlikely that any land will be available for sale. If the proposal does proceed, a contractor will be hired to progress all the required work and refurbishment.

Management of the school

- "Is there another school sponsoring or associated to this facility?"
- "Where are you recruiting your staff from, what kind of training will the assistants have and will the staff be taken from existing schools?"
- "We may wish to see if there is potential for contracted transport to be integrated with transport to Theale Green and/or Theale Primary and Secondary ASD resources [...] there may be opportunities for using sustainable transport provision too"
- "While the use of the old Primary School buildings may offer more space the fact that it is a distance from the main school will make inclusion less likely to happen in the future.."
- "Funding cuts may impact quality of care"
- "It would be good for the existing school to provide outreach to the SEND school to offer support, mutual understanding of learning differences, skills and to help the SEND pupils interact with a wide cross-section of society. [...] [I]t would be helpful to have strong links to businesses that can foster and grow the young people's skills, acquaint them with the working world and put their academic studies to use."
- "It would be great to know if there is space available at the school to be able to run [community] meetings there too?"
- "Would be nice if [you] extend[ed] this to young adults too during the day as there is not many options for care when [they] finish school at 19. Would also be nice if they [offered] over night respite care. I would be interested in finding out about any jobs available too."

Council's response:

The Castle school are sponsoring this provision. They are an outstanding school, specialists in SEND and have expertise in how to teach children with Social and Emotional Health (SEMH) difficulties. The leadership team at the school are excited to develop the provision, including working with the local community and developing new staff. The Castle School will be in charge of recruitment and will recruit externally as any school would. Staff will be able to access a full induction package and expertise will be brought in as appropriate.

The school will have its own funding bands which will be budgeted to meet the needs of all attending pupils. The leadership team at Castle School are committed to working with local stakeholders, including schools and local residents to ensure the provision is a success. This will include use of the site by community groups as appropriate.

This provision will not offer overnight care or respite, however it will offer a post-16 curriculum for those attending.

Curriculum and provision

- “Will the school be offering GCSE exams for these students? Will the children be grouped by year groups or will the year groups be mixed?”
- “How will the classes be blended, by age or diagnoses?”
- “With the 12 initial pupils, will this only be Years 7 and 8, or will this be spread between the 11-18 age range?”
- “Will you be expecting to take pupils who have learning difficulties or will you take pupils who are close to ARE?”
- “My concern is if it looks like a school environment and some of these children have experienced trauma caused by a school, this may not work in helping them [be able to] access school and be able to attend.”
- “Will the premises have secure fencing and lockable entry?”
- “[How will you] ensure that the varying needs of the students are financed appropriately in the long term [and] at an individual level as the need & potential for development & security evolves.”
- “There are already a number of Send schools in the area that could increase their capacity and staff ratio.”

Council's response:

The Castle School will deliver a curriculum which will aim to meet the needs of the young people attending it. If specific young people require a GCSE exam, then this can be facilitated. In general, children will be grouped around need and careful consideration will be given towards the dynamics of each group. We envisage that the first cohort will primarily years 7 and 8, but we can't rule out year 9. We anticipate that children will be mainly within the mainstream range of ability and pupils will be able to access a mainstream curriculum with differentiation and appropriate support.

School leaders at The Castle are experienced at working with children who have experienced trauma. The curriculum will concentrate on meeting need which may have gone unmet in mainstream settings so that all children can thrive. This will be a therapeutic provision which will aim to work with children who have acute SEMH needs in ways which a mainstream school would not be able to.

There are currently no maintained SEND schools or provisions within West Berkshire which are able to meet the needs of this cohort of children. Our maintained special schools have waiting lists.

Behaviour that challenges

- "The site is adjacent to the village recreation grounds and a playground for small children. If this provision is likely to have older children with behavioural issues, what are the plans to safeguard the younger children in the village as well as the students from the nearby secondary school, both before and after school?"
- "Is this provision for children who have been excluded from mainstream schools due to their behaviour and SEMH (and who may or may not have SEND)?"

Council's response:

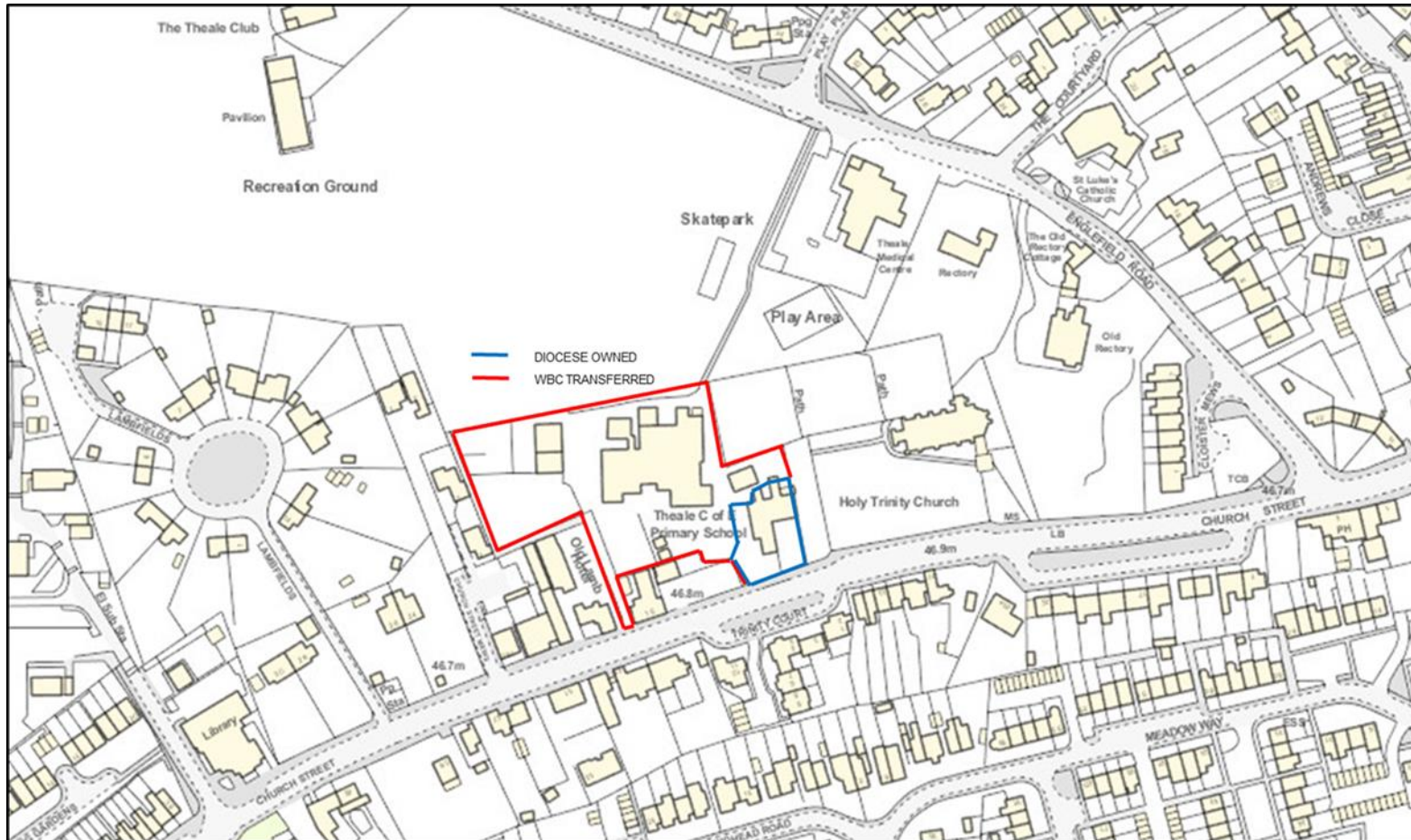
Unmet need is often the root cause when children exhibit behaviour that challenges in mainstream settings. We anticipate that a carefully planned, nurturing environment and a relationship based curriculum will ameliorate more challenging behaviours. Pupils will be supervised on site at all times and pupils will not be allowed off site during lunch time. When pupils do access resources in the community this will be done with supervision and support at all times.

The provision is for children who are unable to manage in a mainstream school, but it is unlikely they will have been excluded. They will have been identified as needing alternative provision through review of their EHCP and moved to specialist provision in a planned way. A small number of children who attend may have been excluded, but it is important to remember that

these are not children who choose not to conform, they are children whose additional needs cause them distress in a mainstream setting.

Site plan

Land with WBC interest in red and Oxford Diocese land in blue (value transferred into new school)



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Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (Up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities) Contract Award Report

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	14 October 2021
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Graham Bridgman
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	23 September 2021
Report Author:	Karen Felgate
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4111

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To award the contract for the supply/provision of Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities) following a tender process.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive resolves to:

- (1) award the contract for the provision of Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities) to the successful bidder
- (2) delegate authority to Service Director Communities and Wellbeing to award the contract for the provision of Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years) services to the successful bidder in consultation with the Head of Finance and the Portfolio holder for Public Health and Wellbeing
- (3) delegate authority to the Service Lead Legal & Democratic Services in consultation to finalise the terms of the agreement as set out in the tender documents and to make any necessary drafting or other amendments to the terms of the agreement which are necessary to reach final agreement but do not materially affect the intent and substance of the agreement.

3. Implications

- 3.1 **Financial:** The service was procured by Reading Borough Council on behalf of Berkshire West (West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham).
- 3.2 **Policy:** N/A

- 3.3 **Personnel:** N/A
- 3.4 **Legal:** The contract award process was in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 with contracts in place prior to commencement.
- 3.5 **Risk Management:** N/A
- 3.6 **Property:** N/A
- 3.7 **Other:** N/A

4. Other options considered

- 4.1 Decision to go out to tender was approved by Executive on 19th November 2019.
- 4.2 Other options for service delivery were considered in the procurement strategy which came to Corporate Board in 2019.

Executive Summary

This report provides an update to Executive on the outcome of the tender evaluation for a provider to deliver the Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities). This report also seeks sign off from Executive to award the contract.

5. Introduction / Background

- 5.1 This contract is for the provision of services known as the Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years).
- 5.2 This contract was a joint procurement in conjunction with Reading and Wokingham Borough Council's and was led by Reading Borough Council.

6. Proposal

The aim of the procurement is to provide a Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years) service for West Berkshire Council.

Responsibility for the commissioning of the 0-19 (up to 25 years) Healthy Child Programme has been with the Local Authority since 2013. Market testing was carried out and a Prior Information Notice (PIN) was published to inform the market of the forthcoming tendering exercise and to gauge level of interest in the contract, along with a market testing questionnaire. A market engagement event took place in May 2021.

A Memorandum of Understanding will be put in place between the Berkshire West commissioners. There is ability for one organisation to terminate their contract with the new provider without it affecting the delivery of service for the others.

- Current Supply

The current service is delivered by Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. This contract was commissioned by West Berkshire and was awarded for three plus two years however following the service of 6 months' notice it terminates in 2022. Bidders were informed as part of the 2019 tender process that a future joint tendering process would be taking place with Berkshire West to re-procure this service.

- Advertisement

The tender was advertised by Reading Borough Council on behalf of the three local authorities as an open tender process. Pre-tender consultation was carried out with potential service providers during the spring of 2021. The value of the contract was over the PCR 2015 threshold for Services and the tender was published on Find a Tender and Contracts Finder.

- Selection/Award Criteria

The tender was evaluated on 30% price and 70% quality/technical. The technical evaluation panels included representatives from Public Health in all three local authorities.

The initial term of the contract is from 1st April 2022 until 31st March 2025 with the option to extend for a further 2 years.

7. Conclusions

7.1 The Executive resolves to:

- (1) award the contract for the provision of Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities) services
- (2) delegate authority to Service Director Communities and Wellbeing to award the contract for the provision of Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years) services to the successful bidder in consultation with the Head of Finance and the Portfolio holder for Public Health and Wellbeing
- (3) delegate authority to the Service Lead Legal & Democratic Services in consultation to finalise the terms of the agreement as set out in the tender documents and to make any necessary drafting or other amendments to the terms of the agreement which are necessary to reach final agreement but do not materially affect the intent and substance of the agreement.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Data Protection Impact Assessment

8.2 Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment

8.3 Appendix C – Procurement Strategy Report (to follow)

Appendix A

Data Protection Impact Assessment – Stage One

The General Data Protection Regulations require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for certain projects that have a significant impact on the rights of data subjects.

Should you require additional guidance in completing this assessment, please refer to the Information Management Officer via dp@westberks.gov.uk

Directorate:	People
Service:	Public Health and Wellbeing
Team:	Public Health
Lead Officer:	Matt Pearce
Title of Project/System:	Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities)
Date of Assessment:	4/9/21

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

	Yes	No
<p>Will you be processing SENSITIVE or “special category” personal data?</p> <p>Note – sensitive personal data is described as “data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person’s sex life or sexual orientation”</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you be processing data on a large scale?</p> <p>Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will your project or system have a “social media” dimension?</p> <p>Note – will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will any decisions be automated?</p> <p>Note – does your system or process involve circumstances where an individual’s input is “scored” or assessed without intervention/review/checking by a human being? Will there be any “profiling” of data subjects?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes?</p> <p>Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If you answer “Yes” to any of the above, you will probably need to complete [Data Protection Impact Assessment - Stage Two](#). If you are unsure, please consult with the Information Management Officer before proceeding.

Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

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

- “(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:**
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; this includes the need to:**
 - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;**
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;**
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.**
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.**
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.”**

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

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

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

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:	Contract award Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years for young people with special educational needs and disabilities)
Summary of relevant legislation:	Public Contract Regulations 2015
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's key strategy priorities?	No
Name of assessor:	Karen Felgate
Date of assessment:	4/9/21

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

1 What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	Award the Public Health Nursing Service 0-19 (up to 25 years)
Objectives:	To jointly procure the service across the three local authority areas known as Berkshire West to ensure economies of scale and alignment of provision across the three local authority areas.
Outcomes:	This contract will enable provision of an improved, recovery focused, evidence based, and cost-effective integrated service for Public Health Nursing Services across Berkshire West
Benefits:	The new contract will offer integrated service provision for children and young people across Berkshire West as well as a more up to date service that offers a good range of interventions and access opportunities.

2 Note which groups may be affected by the proposed decision. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender

Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	Positive	Contract monitoring KPI data and meetings. Stakeholder consultation
Disability	Positive	Contract monitoring KPI data and meetings. Stakeholder consultation
Gender Reassignment	N/A	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N/A	
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive	Contract monitoring KPI data and meetings. Stakeholder consultation
Race	Positive	Contract monitoring KPI data and meetings. Stakeholder consultation
Religion or Belief	N/A	
Sex	N/A	
Sexual Orientation	N/A	
Further Comments relating to the item:		
N/A		

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

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

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area.

You will also need to refer to the [Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template](#).

4 Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	No
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	

Name: Karen Felgate

Date: 4/9/2021

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

Item 10:

Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 14 October 2021.

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

(a) **Question submitted by Councillor Jeff Beck to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste:**

"Can the Portfolio Holder for Environment please advise me what the Zero Carbon Tour hoped to achieve, when they recently called into Newbury College on their way to COP26?"

(b) **Question submitted by Councillor Claire Rowles to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care:**

"Can the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care tell me what impact the recently announced Health & Social Care Levy will have on the service?"

(c) **Question submitted by Councillor Dennis Benneyworth to the Leader of the Council:**

"Could the Leader give any further information regarding initial discussions on the 6 Unitary Authorities in Berkshire speaking to Government about a potential County Deal?"

(d) **Question submitted by Councillor Carolyne Culver to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste:**

"Will the council ban the use of glyphosate by its staff and contractors, as many other local authorities have done?"

(e) **Question submitted by Councillor Alan Macro to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Waste:**

"What proportion of roads in West Berkshire exceed the new WHO air pollution guidelines for PM2.5 particulates and nitrogen dioxide?"

(f) **Question submitted by Councillor Erik Pattenden to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport:**

"As the new 500-place multi-storey car park behind the West Berkshire Council Market Street offices are soon to be handed over to the Council, what changes in arrangements for its use are envisaged in the light of the post-Covid changes we are experiencing in travel and work habits?"

(g) **Question submitted by Councillor David Marsh to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education:**

"What impact has the opening of Highwood Copse had on the number of pupils enrolling for Reception classes at the four nearby primary schools (Falkland, John Rankin, St John's, The Willows)?"

(h) **Question submitted by Councillor Steve Masters to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

"Since it was initiated, what is the return on investment for the property investment fund after all costs in real and percentage terms?"

Item 10:

Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 14 October 2021.

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

(i) **Question submitted by Councillor Claire Rowles to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education:**

"Hungerford Primary in my ward took part in the successful Easter trial of the Holiday Activities and Food Programme, please can the Executive Member give me an update on how this was rolled out over summer?"

(j) **Question submitted by Councillor David Marsh to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education:**

"What impact has Highwood Copse had on the budgets of the four nearby primary schools?"

(k) **Question submitted by Councillor Steve Masters to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Transformation:**

"Has the council applied for funding (With appropriate partners) from the Department of Business, energy and industrial strategy (BEIS) Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Demonstrator in order to help local social housing providers insulate and heat their properties more efficiently and help our poorest residents save money on energy bills in these uncertain times?"

(l) **Question submitted by Councillor David Marsh to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education:**

"Do you still maintain that Highwood Copse was needed to provide capacity to meet current needs, rather than at some future date when Sandleford may (or may not) be developed?"

(m) **Question submitted by Councillor Steve Masters to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Strategic Partnerships and Transformation:**

"What progress has been made in the Joint venture with Sovereign Housing and will decarbonisation be part of any future discussions and plans?"

(n) **Question submitted by Councillor David Marsh to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

"In view of the council's Environment Strategy and carbon-reduction targets, why is the new roof at John Rankin School apparently not being fitted with solar panels?"

(o) **Question submitted by Councillor David Marsh to the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing:**

"Why did the council not take advantage of World Car-Free Day (22 September) and Bike to School Week (27 September) as opportunities to encourage residents and schools to become more engaged with its Active Travel policies?"

Executive – 14 October 2021

Item 11 – Exclusion of Press and Public

Verbal Item

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Agenda Item 12.

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Agenda Item 13.

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