

# Notice of Meeting

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# Executive

**Thursday, 3rd November, 2022 at 5.00 pm**

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

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

Date of despatch of Agenda: Wednesday, 26 October 2022

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

Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council's website at [www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk)



## Agenda - Executive to be held on Thursday, 3 November 2022 (continued)

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

## Part I

	<b>Pages</b>
1. <b>Apologies for Absence</b> To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).	7 - 8
2. <b>Minutes</b> To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 22 September 2022.	9 - 10
3. <b>Declarations of Interest</b> 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' <a href="#">Code of Conduct</a> .	11 - 12
4. <b>Public Questions</b> 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.	13 - 14
5. <b>Petitions</b> 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.	15 - 16

## Items as timetabled in the Forward Plan

	<b>Pages</b>
6. <b>Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report (EX4242)</b> Purpose: to present the annual progress report on the Environment Strategy covering the second year of the delivery of the Strategy from July 2021 to July 2022.	17 - 52
7. <b>MTFS Planning (EX4257)</b> Purpose: to provide an update to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and outline the revised assumptions. <u>Members are required to set a budget by 11 March 2023. This papers</u>	53 - 60



## Agenda - Executive to be held on Thursday, 3 November 2022 (continued)

forms some of the background to the budget setting process in the run up to the Budget being approved by Full Council in early March.

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8. **Co-Production Framework for West Berkshire (EX4263)** 61 - 80  
Purpose: to summarise work carried out to develop an approach to working co-productively in West Berkshire. The report proposes a summary document for agreement entitled 'Co-Production in West Berkshire: The Essentials' (Appendix A).  
The document is supplemented by a co-production toolkit for West Berkshire; including a 'how to' guide and practical tools, templates and training materials which together constitute a Co-Production Framework for West Berkshire.
- 
9. **Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire & Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership (EX4268)** 81 - 88  
Purpose: to set out the requirement to establish the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership as a joint committee. The report also notes the appointment of West Berkshire Council Members to the joint committee, and delegation of powers to agree the terms of reference for the joint committee.
- 
10. **Motion to Council - Sprinklers (EX4235)** 89 - 96  
Purpose: to provide a response to the motion submitted to Council on 8 July 2021.
- 
11. **Contract Award for the Provision of Grounds Maintenance (EX4208)** 97 - 110  
Purpose: to seek Executive approval to award the Grounds Maintenance Contract following a tender process.
- 
12. **York House - Freehold disposal (EX4279)** 111 - 118  
Purpose: to discuss and make recommendation for the freehold disposal of York House.
- 
13. **Extension of existing leisure management contract from January 2023 to June 2023 (EX4267)** 119 - 126  
Purpose: to consider the extension of the current leisure management contract to June 2023 to allow for the conclusion of the leisure management procurement process.  
The financial details are included in a Part II report due to the commercially sensitive information that could influence the current live procurement for a new 10 year management contract.
- 
14. **Members' Questions** 127 - 128  
Members of the Executive to answer questions submitted by Councillors

## Agenda - Executive to be held on Thursday, 3 November 2022 (continued)

in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution.

### 15. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

RECOMMENDATION: That members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items as it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information of the description contained in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 specified in brackets in the heading of each item. [Rule 8.10.4 of the Constitution refers.](#)

## Part II

16. **Contract Award for the Provision of Grounds Maintenance (EX4208)** 129 - 142  
*(Paragraph 3, information relating to financial/business affairs of a particular person)*

Purpose: to seek Executive approval to award the Grounds Maintenance Contract following a tender process.

17. **York House - Freehold disposal (EX4279)** 143 - 152  
*(Paragraph 3, information relating to financial/business affairs of a particular person)*

Purpose: to discuss and make recommendation for the freehold disposal of York House.

18. **Extension of existing leisure management contract from January 2023 to June 2023 (EX4267)** 153 - 194  
*(Paragraph 6 – information relating to proposed action to be taken by the Local Authority)*

Purpose: to consider the extension of the current leisure management contract to June 2023 to allow for the conclusion of the leisure management procurement process.

The financial details are included in a Part II report due to the commercially sensitive information that could influence the current live procurement for a new 10 year management contract.

Sarah Clarke  
Service Director: Strategy and Governance





## West Berkshire Council Strategy Priorities

### Council Strategy Priorities:

**PC1: Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes**

**PC2: Support everyone to reach their full potential**

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

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

**GP2: Maintain a green district**

**SIT1: Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships**

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



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Executive – 3 November 2022

## **Item 1 – Apologies for absence**

Verbal Item

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Executive –3 November 2022

## **Item 2 – Minutes**

Report to follow

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Executive –3 November 2022

## **Item 3 – Declarations of Interest**

Verbal Item

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## Item 4:

### **Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 3 November 2022.**

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

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

*"Regarding document "Issues relating to the old football ground" section 7 it states the financial risk will need supporting by capital receipts from housing. The only part of the estate where delivery of housing is not a significant challenge in terms of flood zones and protected employment land is the old football ground. Can you explain how the U turn to now use the land for commercial will generate enough capital receipts?"*

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

*"Why has the GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE SPD promised in Planning Policy CS18 adopted on 26th July 2012 not materialised?"*

**C. Question submitted by Richard Bobrucki to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Leisure and Culture:**

*"Bearing in mind that that it's been publicly declared by WBC to be ready to open to Newbury residents in summer 2023. Please may I ask if there has been any delay, for any reason, in the on-site works required to redevelop the Newbury Lido?"*

**D. Question submitted by Paul Morgan to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Leisure and Culture:**

*"Bearing that the main purpose of the "Levelling Up Fund", as the name suggests, is to "assist and focus on the most deprived areas across the UK", does the Council genuinely believe that submitting a £3.5 million bid for the Newbury Lido is a) appropriate and b) justifiable?"*

**E. Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Leader of the Council:**

*"Please would the Council explain why it released a promotional video for Newbury Electronics Ltd on the 27th of July 2022 that was created by the Council's in house Comms team and paid for by the residents of West Berkshire?"*

**F. Question submitted by Simon Pike to the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance and Strategic Partnerships:**

*"What is the average and maximum length of time for the Council to respond to requests for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoI) and/or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR)?"*

## Item 4:

### **Public Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 3 November 2022.**

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

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

*"I cannot find any links or pages on the web site which relate to Existing Green/Blue Infrastructure work in place for West Berks showing Mapped Sub Categorized Open Spaces, and the possibilities for creation and improvement of Local Nature Recovery Networks and wildlife corridors, so if a mapped GBI Strategy/Framework/SPD does not exist what will be produced for the Section 19 Consultation of the Local Plan Review as a GBI Framework usually forms part of the Evidence for this phase?"*

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

*"Please would the Council explain why the footpath opposite the Skyllings turning on the London Road (RG142BA) has been left uncompleted for over 4 years now?"*

**I. Question submitted by Alan Pearce to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport & Countryside:**

*"Please would the Council confirm that the London Road Industrial Estate cannot be redeveloped on a plot-by-plot basis as no individual planning application can be approved to comply with common drainage law unless the current Faraday Road Football Ground is incorporated in a holistic drainage system for the area. This system would incorporate hard top drainage crates covered over with artificial turf to store the high volumes of urban runoff needed to comply with common drainage law as the water table on the estate is so high?"*

Executive – 3 November 2022

## **Item 5 – Petitions**

Verbal Item

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# Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	3 November 2022
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter
<b>Report Author:</b>	Jenny Graham
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4242

## 1 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to present the annual progress report on the Environment Strategy covering the second year of the delivery of the Strategy from July 2021 to July 2022.

## 2 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive note the Annual Progress Report on the Environment Strategy (as included in Appendix A) which is published on the Council's website.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	There are no direct funding implications as a result of this report. Projects and actions already underway have existing budgets. Teams across the Council will use the budget setting process to plan for future programmes and secure funding for them.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	There are no direct HR implications as a result of this report.
<b>Legal:</b>	There are no direct Legal implications as a result of this report.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	A high-level risk register has been developed for the Environment Strategy. This is kept up to date and the

	Environment Delivery Project Board is used to keep it under review.			
<b>Property:</b>	There are no direct property implications as a result of this report.			
<b>Policy:</b>	This annual report aims to demonstrate how the Environment Strategy is being delivered and will play a part in informing and shaping relevant Council policies and plans across the organisation. This is already happening and with relevant training of staff and Members this influence and understanding will become more effective.			
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>				
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		No impact directly as a result of the annual report and more widely this will need to be dealt with on a project by project basis through the PMM process to ensure delivery does not have a negative impact on equalities.
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		No impact directly as a result of the annual report and more widely this will need to be dealt with on a project by project basis through the PMM process to ensure delivery does not have a negative impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics.

## Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report

<b>Environmental Impact:</b>	X			The purpose of the annual report is to demonstrate the delivery of the Environment Strategy which seeks to have a positive impact on the environment in numerous ways. It has a primary target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 and has a vision which can be found in section 4 of the <a href="#">Environment Strategy</a> . As the projects within the Delivery Plan are implemented there will be consideration in the detailed planning stages as to whether there are unintended negative environmental impacts that require mitigation.
<b>Health Impact:</b>	X			The projects and activities within the Delivery Plan that have been delivered and have a focus on carbon reduction will have health benefits from a reduction in air pollution. Some projects delivered to date are not purely focused on outcomes that reduce carbon and also seek to improve health and wellbeing as a key benefit.
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		X		There is not a significant ICT impact.
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		X		There is not a significant impact on Digital Services.

<p><b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b></p>	<p>X</p>			<p>The main Council Priority to which the projects and actions within the Delivery Plan contribute is <b>maintain a green district</b>. They do this in so many ways but will have a key focus on reducing carbon.</p> <p>Other priorities from the Council Strategy that the Environment Strategy helps to deliver are:</p> <p><b>Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire.</b> Projects within the Delivery Plan seek to support businesses to be more efficient (especially impacting on energy and waste) and to develop in a green and sustainable way.</p> <p><b>Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy.</b> The Delivery Plan includes active travel infrastructure, green and blue infrastructure and influencing the environmental standards of other infrastructure, including housing.</p>
<p><b>Core Business:</b></p>	<p>X</p>			<p>As a result of projects delivered the Council will see some of its core business processes improved as the Environment Strategy starts to have an impact.</p> <p>For example, the implementation of the Social Value Policy that includes environmental factors is having a positive impact on our procurement outcomes and how they can align with the Environment Strategy and bring environmental benefits.</p>
<p><b>Data Impact:</b></p>		<p>X</p>		<p>It is not envisaged that there will be any data impacts.</p>



<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>Environment Board have had the opportunity to consider the draft Annual Progress Report and are kept up to date with projects throughout the year.</p> <p>Various teams have been consulted within the Council and specifically officers who attend the Environment Delivery Project Board.</p> <p>Members on the Environment Advisory Group have also considered the draft Annual Progress Report.</p>
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## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Annual Progress Report for the Environment Strategy. It specifically covers the period from July 2021 through to July 2022. It is, however, part of the continuous story of how the Council is addressing climate change and environmental issues in West Berkshire.
- 4.2 The Annual Progress Report is included in Appendix A and sets out actions and achievements under each strategic objective of the Environment Strategy including case studies. The report also demonstrates how the Council has listened to feedback it has received throughout the year in a 'You asked, we did' section.
- 4.3 An important part of the report is to provide an update on the Council's carbon footprint and also to report on the carbon emission data for the District. The Council's carbon footprint has been reduced by 25% over the last 2 years following the baseline being established in 2019/20. The emission data for the District as a whole shows that over the last 2 years of reporting the reduction in impact has been 18% for the factors where there is most local influence.
- 4.4 There has been significant activity as reported in Appendix A. An important part of this process of reporting is not just to provide highlights of the previous year but to also look forward to scenarios for our progress on the path to net zero and consider what this means for future actions and investment decisions. The progress report this year starts to do this and will be developed in future years as our data collection and scenario planning continue to be improved.

## 5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 It has been another busy year of action building on previous work and progressing some significant projects. The highlights of the period for which we are reporting (July 2021 – July 2022) can be found in Figure 1 within the Annual Progress Report (Appendix A): *Environment Strategy Highlights July 2021- July 2022*.
- 5.2 There are two key strands of action:
  - 1) reducing the Council's own carbon emissions with actions from across the organisation contributing to this (along with those of our major contracting partners),

- 2) engaging with key stakeholders and encouraging and facilitating action in local communities, with businesses and amongst individuals to help reduce carbon emissions within the District.
- 5.3 Internally, we have further expanded the Environment Delivery Team which has helped to raise the profile of the Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan and enabled greater cross-team working with various areas of the Council. We have recruited a number of Eco-Champions across all Directorates to help staff fully understand what part they and their teams can play in reducing the Council's impact. The plans to deliver a solar farm have progressed well and updates will be available through our [dedicated webpage](#). Carbon-neutral road surfacing projects were delivered in Beedon, Burghfield and Thatcham and the A4 Western Avenue Active Travel scheme has been delivered to support more sustainable travel in Newbury. To help build our resilience to climate change, planning permission was sought and granted for two further flood alleviation schemes in Thatcham.
- 5.4 Externally, carbon reduction in the District is being addressed by continuing to build relationships with local residents, community groups, schools and businesses. The West Berkshire Parish Climate Forum continues and has covered a range of topic areas to help encourage and inform communities regarding actions they could take. A number of initiatives have taken place linking with businesses aimed at promoting green business and also providing funding for local businesses to reduce their carbon impact. We have linked with organisations across West Berkshire with an interest in our natural environment and developed an informal 'West Berkshire Natural Solutions Delivery Partnership'. This has linked with local land owners and will continue to develop to bring together work that can support biodiversity improvements and natural carbon reduction projects.
- 5.5 The reported actions and projects within the annual report are making a difference and this is confirmed in the reduction of the carbon impact both for the Council's activities and that for the District as a whole. There has been a reduction of approximately 3,000 tonnes of carbon emissions from the Council's activities from the baseline in 2019/20 to the latest reporting period of 2021/22. This 25% reduction in 2 years shows good progress. The progress for the District is monitored through data supplied by BEIS (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy) on a calendar year basis. There is always a lag in the figures being reported meaning that the latest figures are for 2020. The progress over 2 years from 2018 to 2020 shows an 18% reduction in impact for the District when considering elements where there is most opportunity for local influence (e.g. not including the impact of the A34 and M4 strategic roads).

## 6 Other options considered

- 6.1 There is a commitment to report on an annual basis on progress delivering the Environment Strategy. The pattern of reporting is to look at achievements and actions from July one year through to the end of June the following year. This aligns with the approval of the Environment Strategy in July 2020. Within this the actual carbon footprint data is captured for each financial year with the most relevant period being reported in the Annual Progress Report. The District's data which comes from BEIS is based on a calendar year and, again, the most up to date published position is included in the APR. It is an option to look at different approaches to the timing of reporting but

there seems to be some logic in having a baseline that corresponds to the initial approval of the Environment Strategy.

- 6.2 It is not an option not to report on such an important area as carbon reduction. The Council is seeking to always improve on how it reports information. In line with this continuous improvement, a project to assess the carbon impacts of each relevant action or project in the Delivery Plan has been progressed this year. Further work needs to be done on how this can be incorporated into the presentation of results and a forecast of impacts going forward. Each year as our understanding of impacts and data improves we will endeavour to improve the quality and accuracy of our reporting.

## 7 Looking to the future

- 7.1 Whilst this annual report includes initiatives and achievements up to July 2022, work continues at pace and there have been further significant achievements since then that will of course be featured in our next annual progress report. For example, planning permission was granted for a solar farm near Grazeley in August 2022. We will be progressing with this project in the coming year. Also, the Executive approved support for electric / hybrid taxis at their meeting in September 2022 by agreeing a series of measures to help the taxi trade 'go green' including subsidies.
- 7.2 The impact of the Environment Act and related secondary legislation will be watched closely to see how this will influence our work in West Berkshire. We are also progressing some significant work through the Natural Solutions Delivery Partnership which we will seek to share the next time we report.
- 7.3 There have been a few years now of gathering data to report on the Council's carbon footprint. As our collected data grows, we can start to plot our progress and look at possible future scenarios of our pathway to achieving net zero carbon by 2030. Figure 3 in the report starts this process and is a tool we will develop as our knowledge of impacts from our projects and actions grows and as our plans for future investment are further developed.

## 8 Conclusion

- 8.1 The annual report demonstrates the actions that have taken place to progress our work on delivering the Environment Strategy over the last year. It is part of the ongoing story of how the Council is responding to the challenges of climate change and protecting our environment.
- 8.2 The Council's carbon emissions and those recorded for the District are decreasing. Good progress is being made with 25% reduction over the last 2 years for the Council's activities and 18% reduction for the District as a whole.
- 8.3 Actions will continue to be delivered through focusing on the Environment Strategy Delivery Plan which is kept up to date throughout the year and published on the [Council's website](#).

## 9 Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix A – Annual Progress Report on the Environment Strategy

**Background Papers:**

The Environment Strategy was approved by the Executive in July 2020 – the papers relating to that decision can be found [here](#) and the [published strategy](#) is on the website.

A stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment and Data Protection Assessment have both been carried out in relation to this work. This information is available on request.

**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:** The Environment Strategy has impacts across the District

**Officer details:**

Name: Jenny Graham  
Job Title: Environment Delivery Manager  
  
Tel No: 01635 519623  
E-mail: Jenny.Graham@westberks.gov.uk

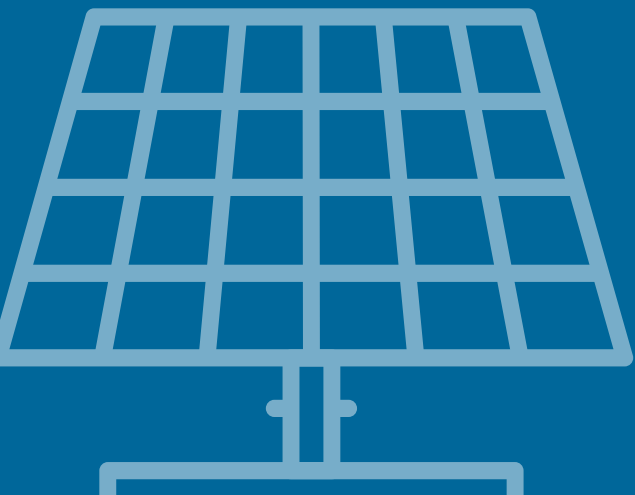
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**Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report  
(July 2021- July 2022)**

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# Environment Strategy

Annual Progress Report  
(July 2021 – July 2022)





**Climate change is one of today's biggest threats. Its impacts are seen globally and locally, some of which are devastating. As a Council we are determined to play our part and help others to take action so that together we continue to reduce our impact. Over the last 2 years the Council has reduced its carbon footprint by 25%. This is great progress and we recognise that our actions have to continue at pace in order to reach our ambitious target of being carbon neutral by 2030. The wider impact across the District of West Berkshire is also reducing and the Council will seek to continue to lead by example and share good practice and ideas to facilitate wider change.**

Since the last report on progress delivering our Environment Strategy, the UK has hosted COP26 in Glasgow with local MP, Alok Sharma, carrying out the role of COP President. This was a significant opportunity to showcase the innovation and commitment to climate change which has real momentum in the United Kingdom. Here in West Berkshire there is great evidence of this commitment to tackling climate change amongst residents, businesses and communities. You will read about many examples in this annual report which only touches the surface of what is happening across the District.

As a Council we are focusing on progressing many actions and projects from our Delivery Plan. It is important that we engage with people regarding our climate actions throughout the year but we also value this opportunity to bring together an overview of the past year of delivery. You will read about new mini recycling centres, behavioural change campaigns, planting trees, further plans for flood alleviation schemes, carbon neutral road surfacing, waste reduction education, new active travel routes and much, much more including an award for our innovative green bond.

In these challenging times reducing our carbon impact remains a priority. We will continue to be ambitious and innovative and work in new ways through creative partnerships. It is only by working together that we will see the progress needed to make real change. We encourage you to keep talking with us and sharing your ideas and actions in order that, together, we can make a difference.



**Councillor Lynne Doherty**  
Leader of the Council



**Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter**  
Executive Member for Environment



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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The challenge we all face with regard to climate change is recognised across the globe, taking no action is not an option for any responsible organisation.

***We are the first generation to feel the effect of climate change and the last generation who can do something about it.” —President Obama***

- 1.2 On 2nd July 2019, West Berkshire Council (WBC) unanimously declared a Climate Emergency. As part of this commitment to act, we have set a target of carbon neutrality for the Council by 2030 and to support, encourage and facilitate carbon neutrality across West Berkshire. We recognise this is an ambitious target which requires everyone to work together in order to achieve it.
- 1.3 Following the declaration and building on the work already underway, an Environment Strategy was written and

published in July 2020. We published our inaugural annual report on delivery of the Environment Strategy in November 2021, which highlighted the actions, achievements and progress from July 2020 to July 2021. Our annual reports form part of our commitment within the Environment Strategy Delivery Plan to keep everyone informed, as well as to describe the measures we still need to take on our journey towards carbon neutrality.

- 1.4 This report also compares the Council's baseline carbon footprint (from 2019/20) with the latest data for 2021/22. It also provides the most up to date published figures indicating the emissions across West Berkshire District.

*Please note, words in bold can be found in our glossary along with a number of other useful terms. The glossary was created as a result of feedback received during our public consultation last year (Spring 2021).*



## 2. Background Information

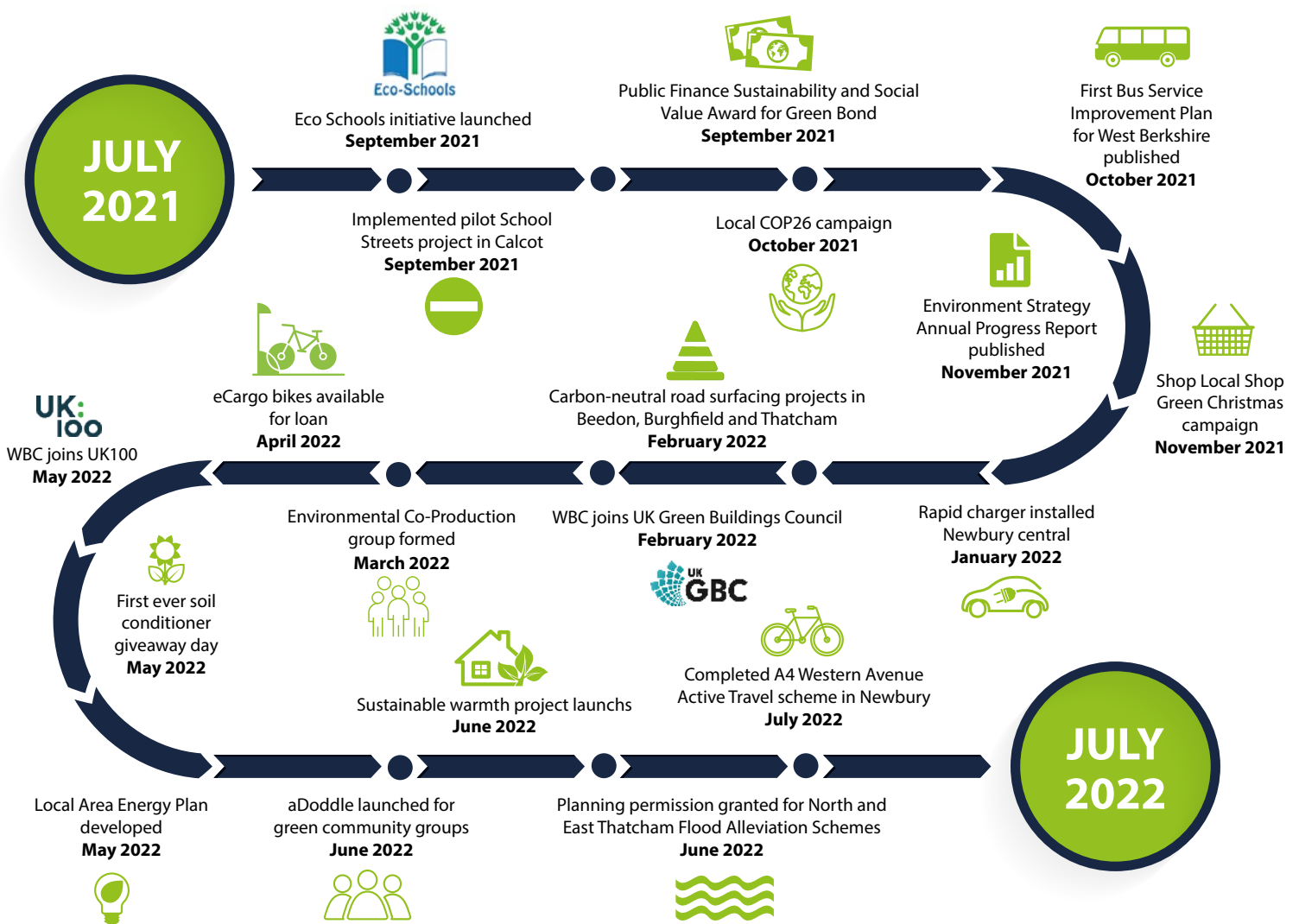
- 2.1 The Environment Strategy, developed after an extensive period of consultation, describes the vision for West Berkshire's environment and specifically how the District needs to respond to climate change.
- 2.2 Our Environment Strategy Delivery Plan provides a framework of actions, timescales and responsibilities to show how we intend to achieve the aims within the Environment Strategy. These actions have been categorised in accordance with the strategic objectives from the Environment Strategy: Carbon Neutral by 2030; Responsible Economic Growth; Healthy Communities; Resilient to Climate Change and Working with our Communities and Partners.
- 2.3 We are committed to continuous improvement and it's important to note that the Delivery Plan, whilst building on the work from the past, will evolve as we develop partnerships and new opportunities for action arise. The Delivery Plan will act as a basis for us to work from. With this in mind, the plan will remain 'live' and be continuously developing between now and 2030.
- 2.4 As a direct result of the declaration of a climate emergency for West Berkshire an Environment Delivery Team was established to help to deliver and coordinate these actions as well as engage and work with residents, partners, schools, businesses and community groups.
- 2.5 To help monitor progress across the organisation an Environment Delivery Project Board meets regularly involving representatives from key service areas. Its role is to ensure the actions within the Delivery Plan are reported on regularly and progress is monitored accurately. As a direct result of regularly monitoring progress, the Council is able to deliver on its commitment to keep an up to date version of the Delivery Plan published on the website.



# 3. The Second Year - summary of actions and achievements

3.1 The second year of delivery of the Environment Strategy has seen further action across the Council and within the communities of West Berkshire. This has built upon previous work to improve the environment. Some projects have been delivered in full, others have been started and there has been an element of establishing new groups and ways

of working which will assist the journey towards being carbon neutral. Figure 1 provides a summary of achievements between July 2021-2022. This is followed by summaries of actions and achievements against each strategic objective of the Environment Strategy, including case studies.

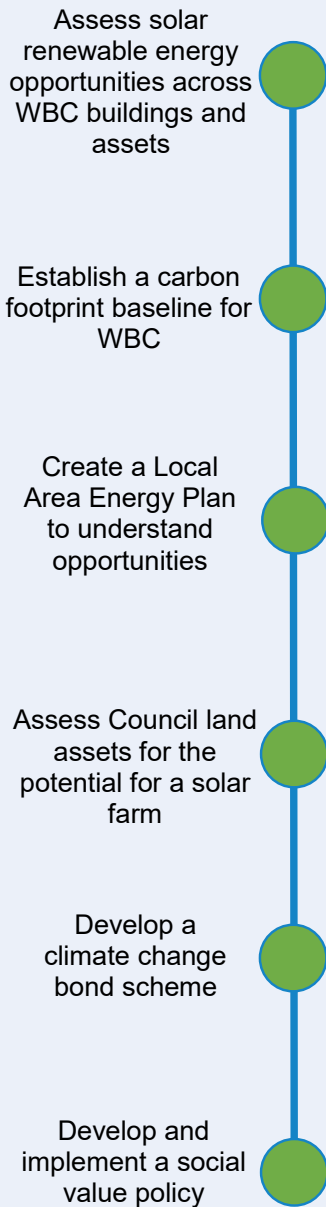


# CARBON NEUTRAL BY 2030



**44% of short term actions complete**

**56% of short term actions in progress, on track**



= Complete

This list is a summary. To see our full list of actions, [click here](#).

## Our progress so far:

- In September 2020, we established our carbon baseline, which quantifies the greenhouse gas GHG emissions generated by the Council's assets and activities, as well as the GHG emissions associated with the district as a whole. We have since used this baseline to help us calculate our 2021/22 progress with our carbon reduction target to date.
- In March 2022, we applied for planning permission for a solar farm near Grazeley. Plans will see more than 60,000 solar panels installed on up to 75 acres of land we already own. This would generate enough electricity each year to power the equivalent of approximately 7,282 homes. This is a major step forward in our plans to increase renewable energy in the district and will save an estimated 2578 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in its first year of operation.
- We are committed to sourcing the Council's energy from renewable suppliers as soon as possible. We currently have 'Blue' energy – which is sourced from nuclear energy and is a low carbon alternative to using fossil fuels.
- Our Local Area Energy Plan is now complete and will help us to plan and prioritise our energy needs and low carbon energy projects throughout the District in the following years.
- Since summer 2021, our Natural Solutions Delivery Partnership (NSDP) have worked with local expert organisations in developing an approach to increase natural solutions across the district. The Partnership's work will inform a spatial strategy and plan. As part of this process, engagement has taken place with local Landowners which included a district wide Natural Solutions Landowner event to explore opportunities for biodiversity improvements and carbon sequestration on private land.
- In June 2022, we launched an exciting new project called 'Trees for Schools' to supply all West Berkshire maintained and academy schools in the District with between one and five trees to plant on their school sites. This will be a fantastic way to encourage the future generation to play their part in tackling Climate Change. So far, we have 22 schools signed up and they've committed to planting nearly 100 trees.
- In March 2022, we formed a co-production pilot group to deliver a community energy guide for West Berkshire communities. West Berkshire Council is working towards a more inclusive decision making environment through Co-production, inviting residents and stakeholders to join the conversation.
- In September 2021, West Berkshire Council won the Public Finance Sustainability and Social Value Award for our Community Municipal Investment. This recognised our innovative approach to funding our climate action whilst benefitting investors.

## CASE STUDY: Newbury Library LED lighting upgrade

In November 2021, we reported our estimated savings for the new energy efficient LED lighting we installed at Newbury Library. It is estimated that each year the new lights will save £2,632.43 in energy costs and 15.03 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (based on energy costs from November 2021).

The system also includes autism friendly 4 colour full spectrum adjustable lighting in specific areas of the library, designed to give a glow of colour and facilitate a calm and softly lit environment to make Newbury Library more accessible as an autism friendly environment.

The overall cost of the project was £65k including a grant of £4.5k from the West Berkshire Autism Partnership Board.

[Find out more and take a virtual tour of the library here.](#)





# RESPONSIBLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

**100% of short term actions in progress, on track**

## Our progress so far:

- Following the Local Plan Review Regulation 18 Consultation feedback, a strong theme came through around carbon emissions within buildings and improving energy efficiency. We have responded to this by undertaking some work with external experts to review policies within the draft Local Plan Review relating to energy efficiency and carbon emissions within buildings. A number of options have been examined with the agreed approach currently being drafted into an updated policy which will be available at Regulation 19 Consultation.
- Work is underway on our next Local Transport Plan (LTP4) which will be key in reflecting the aims of the Environment Strategy and setting the local scene to support Government agendas such as the decarbonisation of transport. The LTP will link closely with the Local Plan Review.
- Our Waste Management Team have been visiting schools to educate pupils on waste reduction, reuse and recycling. We have also planned an event for local secondary schools in autumn 2022 to promote and encourage green careers.
- In December 2021, we showcased 22 local independent businesses which are helping to get us closer to our carbon neutral goal, through our 'Shop Local, Shop Green' magazine.
- In March 2022, we awarded our COVID recovery grant, known as the ARG (Additional Restrictions Grant) Challenge Fund. One of the criteria for accessing funding was sustainability improvements, and successful applicants included solar panels for pubs, ground source heatpumps for restaurants and energy efficiency improvements for a local café. We are also providing green business support on our [new business website](#).
- In June 2022, the Executive approved a LRIE Project Refresh report, setting out the next stages for delivering regeneration on the London Road Industrial Estate (LRIE). The approach focuses on attracting investment in employment space and jobs that aligns with carbon net zero ambitions; a commitment to working in partnership with leaseholders and potential partners to grow current LRIE businesses in a sustainable way and encourage new businesses; and a sustainable design-led approach to place-making to create an appealing destination for businesses that includes seeking external funding for public realm improvements. This is a move away from the residential-led approach set out in the 2020 Development Brief but has responsible economic growth at the heart of the project.

- Reflect environmental aims with the Local Plan
- Develop the next Local Transport Plan for the district
- Work with local Education providers to increase climate change awareness in schools
- Lobby for high environmental standards and engage with consultations
- Refresh the Highways Asset Management Plan taking into consideration the Environment Strategy

● = In progress, on track

This list is a summary. To see our full list of actions, [click here](#).

## CASE STUDY: Carbon Neutral Road Surfacing










In February 2022, we finished a road resurfacing programme aimed at improving local roads whilst remaining carbon neutral. This was one of the first projects of its kind in the district. Working with our term contractor, Volker Highways and supply chain provider Miles Macadam, the project used an innovative new material which has a lower-carbon footprint than other similar products. The overall carbon footprint of the project was reduced by 38% which, along with the planting of 152 trees to offset the remainder, has been delivered in a carbon-neutral way. The roads resurfaced as part of the programme were in Beedon Hill and Old Oxford Road in Beedon, Hose Hill in Burghfield, Reading Road in Burghfield, and Floral Way in Thatcham.







# HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



- Develop the Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan 
- Deliver Cycle Hubs in Theale and Newbury, and investigate further locations 
- Continue to provide cycle training for children 
- Pilot a 'School Streets' initiative 
- Implement a new sustainable travel policy for staff 
- Work with local businesses to promote sustainable travel by staff 
- Encourage the take up of emerging sustainable transport technologies 
- Increase the cycle storage capacity at all secondary schools 
- Invest in walking and cycling routes and provide safety training 

 = In progress, on track  
 = Complete

This list is a summary. To see our full list of actions, [click here](#).

**44% of short term actions complete**

**60% of short term actions in progress, on track**

## Our progress so far:

- In February 2022, we started our cycle and footway construction along the A4 Western Avenue between Newbury and Speen. The works involved: improvements to existing walking and cycling paths, as well as crossings and pedestrian refuge islands, construction of new cycle tracks and footway and safety improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Our Public Protection Partnership team started a behaviour change campaign aimed at tackling idling drivers to improve air quality. Working with consultants WSP, a baseline report has been undertaken, to identify current behaviours, idling hotspots and data patterns. We are now finalising our intervention proposals for September 2022.
- We have continued to provide Bikeability Family courses, with 80 families taking part in the 2021 summer holidays. We received positive feedback from attendees and the training has been offered again for the 2022 summer holidays.
- In order to give schools greater flexibility to access road safety training, we have moved our Road Rangers (KS1) and Safer Steps (KS2) training online. We have also carried out a study on barriers to active travel with 3 of our local schools, the results of which we will use to influence future projects.
- In August 2021, our new car club provider (Enterprise) started offering electric vehicles for residents to hire. It currently operates in Newbury with the hope of expanding across the district.
- In April 2022, we started offering new eCargo bikes to local businesses as part of a new sustainable transport scheme. These bikes are equipped with 700 litre cool boxes and are a great alternative for local deliveries and business promotion.

## CASE STUDY: School Streets

The council is committed to improving walking and cycling for everyone, making it healthier and safer. As part of phase 2 of the government's Active Travel Fund, a grant was awarded to encourage Active Travel, part of which enabled the council to introduce a pilot 'school streets' scheme at Calcot Infants and Junior schools, launched on 2 September 2021. The scheme involves restricting non-essential traffic outside the school for set periods of time at the start (drop off) and end (pick up) of the school day.

The benefits include:

- Greater road safety
- Cleaner air
- Better opportunities for active travel.

Since the pilot was introduced, sustainable journeys to these schools have increased significantly with an 88% increase in pedestrian movement and a 33% in cycle and/scooter use. This scheme will now be made permanent and we have begun communicating with other schools in the district.



# RESILIENT TO CLIMATE CHANGE



**100% of short term actions in progress, on track**

## Our progress so far:

- Our wildflower verge project in partnership with BBOWT (Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust) is a long term 'natural' project which aims to encourage the wildflowers already present on our rural verges to establish themselves whilst reducing the vigour of grass and weeds. You may have seen wildflower verges on the A4 from Thatcham to Theale and from Newbury to Hungerford. There are other examples on the rural verges around Kintbury and Inkpen, particularly around Coombe Gibbet. This project is now in its third year and continues to prove popular with residents and the local wildlife!
- Over the past year, the four trial recycling banks (installed in March 2021) have collected 29 tonnes of plastic pots, tubs and trays which diverted this plastic away from energy from waste or landfill facilities and into recycling. Plans are in place to provide two more sites across the district for plastic pots, tubs and trays these will be located at Theale and East Garston.
- Key representatives from the Council's Highways team attended a 'Carbon Management in Infrastructure' Training Course to gain a better understanding about how to reduce and monitor carbon emissions from our highways projects.



Review and update our Flood Risk Management Strategy with influence from the Environment Strategy



Undertake feasibility assessment of highway verges for Wild Flower projects



Work with partners to develop Natural Flood Management projects



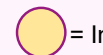
Reuse, recycle and compost at least 60% of municipal waste we handle by 2030



Review our Sustainable Drainage policy to ensure it reflects the aims of the Environment Strategy



Further reduce the frequency of hedgerow cutting in areas where this does not affect safety



= In progress, on track

This list is a summary. To see our full list of actions, [click here](#).

## CASE STUDY: Flood Alleviation Schemes

Planning approval was granted for two more flood alleviation schemes in North Thatcham off Bowling Green Road and Heath Lane, and East Thatcham off the junction of A4 and Floral Way.

The schemes form part of the Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) for Thatcham published in 2010 following the widespread surface water flooding in 2007. The flood defences in the SWMP form a strategic network of basins and reservoirs around the northern perimeter of Thatcham that will prevent surface water from the fields above Thatcham causing floods in the future. The schemes can therefore be regarded as future climate resilience for Thatcham.





# WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERS



Develop good communications to ensure our communities have the information they need



Use our website effectively to provide relevant and up to date information for the community



Develop strategic partnerships and affiliations with stakeholders and organisations



Separate food waste collections to all eligible households by 2025




The continuation of the provision of separate garden waste collections from households



Maximise the opportunities for reducing carbon emissions via Government funding for home owners



 = In progress, on track

This list is a summary. To see our full list of actions, [click here](#).

## 82% of short term & ongoing actions in progress, on track

### Our progress so far:

- Since October 2021, six new Parish Councils have signed up to the Greening Campaign and have successfully launched the scheme with residents in their communities. This campaign provides a tailored action plan for each community so that everyone is involved in the effort to go green. Talk to your Parish or Town Council about signing up and [find out more here](#).
- Since spring 2022, we have been working to launch the Sustainable Warmth scheme across West Berkshire. This scheme aims to raise the energy efficiency ratings of low-income and low EPC-rated homes, through measures including insulation, double glazing and low carbon heating technologies. This scheme will continue throughout 2022 and into 2023, and we will be engaging with local communities to help reach eligible residents.
- In March 2022, we launched a survey about the upcoming separate weekly food waste collection service. We received 3,053 responses with 82% of respondents thinking it is extremely or very important to recycle food waste. 73% of respondents state they will use the new food waste service when it starts. The responses are being used to shape our communications and service where possible.
- In March 2022, our Waste team began school visits to educate pupils on reducing, re-using and recycling their waste. So far, we have interacted with over 600 pupils. We also held 7 drop in sessions at local libraries where waste officers were present to talk to members of the public about waste reduction.
- In March 2022, we relaunched the Real Nappy trial packs with pick up locations at all libraries across West Berkshire. So far, 45 packs have been distributed.
- In May 2022, we launched our first ever soil conditioner give-away with Veolia at our Integrated Waste Management Facility at Padworth. This saw 25 tonnes of soil conditioner collected by residents. There was a high demand for the material, which is a fine grade, peat free soil conditioner, made from garden and food waste collected from households across West Berkshire.
- In June 2022, we launched our partnership with [aDoddle community mapping](#) to showcase our fantastic environmental groups in the district. This platform is a great way for groups to improve their presence online and allows residents to find their local group and volunteering opportunities.
- We've continued to send out monthly Environment Newsletters and have now gained over 4250 subscribers. If you'd like to hear more on environmental action and community [updates click here to sign up](#).
- We've been continuing our West Berkshire Parish Climate Forum to engage our local Town and Parish Councils. This forum has helped provide support and expert advice as well as the opportunity for communities to get involved in local work.
- Over the past year we have been improving our response to waste issues, such as fly tipping. We have already seen a 12% decrease in total number of fly tips in the past year. We are currently expanding the teams which will enable more enforcement activities to take place.
- Plans are in place to open two new mini recycling centres in Theale and East Garston. The new sites will have banks for plastic pots, tubs and trays and cans, textiles, small electricals, food and drink cartons (including paper tubes with metal ends) and cardboard/paper. This will make recycling more convenient for our residents.

# WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERS



## **CASE STUDY: Trees for Schools project**

In June 2022, we launched an exciting new project to supply schools in the District with trees to plant on their school sites. We hope this will be a fantastic way to encourage the future generation to play their part in tackling climate change and experience the positive impact of nature on both their physical and mental health.

Encouraging children to be closer to nature and tree planting as a carbon sequestration measure are both identified in the Council's Environment Strategy.

Tree planting also adds to the character and biodiversity of our district. There are also links to the national Eco-Schools programme, another initiative we are running with schools in the district.

Contact your school to encourage them to take part!



## **CASE STUDY: 'The Hickson Hedgerows' rewilding and community planting project**

Since February 2022, we have been working on the Hickson Hedgerows project after being approached by a Great Shefford resident regarding the potential environmental enhancement of two areas of nearby Council owned land.

The areas of land were unused and were mown periodically by West Berkshire Council contractors. The local community wished to enhance these areas for the benefit of everyone living locally. Residents and WBC representatives and Great Shefford Parish Council worked together to make the project a reality.

The project has been named 'Hickson Hedgerows' in memory of long time Great Shefford residents, Jean and Lister Hickson who lived in the village for over 30 years and were very much at the heart of the community. The couple loved gardening and bee keeping.

The following activities have taken place at Hickson Hedgerows:

- The planting of three Tai Haku cherry trees provided by West Berkshire Council
- Creation of a bug hotel to be furnished by the local under 5s group and Primary School
- The creation of a laid hedge and workshop by Newbury Environment and Wildlife Team (NEWT)
- The creation of a dead hedge
- Mown paths created by Great Shefford Parish Council
- Creation of flower beds and planting
- The area has become more attractive to local wild life



This is a fantastic example of a community group enhancing their natural environment with support from the Parish and District Council.

# WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERS

Berkshire  
Buckinghamshire  
Oxfordshire



We partner with Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) to deliver an array of projects to enhance wildlife, biodiversity and access to green spaces in West Berkshire. Over the 2021/22 period, BBOWT delivered a range of access improvement projects. Read some of the case studies below.

## CASE STUDY: Greenham Common

Greenham Common is one of the main accessible greenspaces in Newbury and the surrounding areas, providing open space that can be used by a range of stakeholders such as families, cyclists, dog walkers and nature lovers alike.

To help us manage this increased visitor pressure, we spent £15,577 resurfacing 0.4ha (4000sqm) of the car parks at Crookham and the Control Tower. Furthermore, to ensure that once people had arrived on site we could encourage them towards the less sensitive wildlife areas, we installed a new 30m stretch of footpath that is suitable for wheelchair use. Improving entrances and car parks provides visitors with the sense of a well-managed facility that encourages people to act in a positive and responsible way when visiting Greenham Common.

The photos below show before and after the path was installed, encouraging users to walk out into the roam zones.

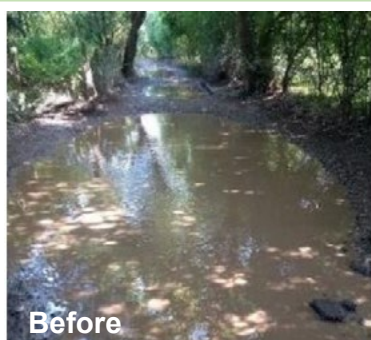


## CASE STUDY: Thatcham Nature Discovery Centre

The Nature Discovery Centre is a popular visitor attraction bringing in an estimated 120,000 visitors a year. The circular walk round the lake is a local favourite, however there were sections of the path that were not fully accessible by wheel chair as well as areas of the path that were starting to erode.

To address these issues, we spent £19,263 on 250m of track improvements and resurfacing, improving accessibility to and from the car parks. Where the paths had become eroded or needed resurfacing we carried out 50m of footpath improvements.

Additionally, our team of volunteers spent over 400 hours undertaking weekly task days through the winter laying a 250m stretch of hedgerow. By laying the hedge along the main footpath we have significantly enhanced the feel of this part of the site, and hopefully helped increase visitor's connection with the countryside in a largely suburban area. We have opened up the darker areas of the path by removing dense blackthorn, widened the path in places by pushing back the vegetation, and created an attractive landscape feature using traditional hedgerow management techniques.





## 4. You asked....we did

4.1 The Council seeks to listen and respond positively where possible to suggestions made by residents, businesses and community groups. There are formal ways of receiving requests such as through consultation exercises and more informal ways such as through general engagement work or conversations with officers working on particular projects.

4.2 Opportunities for engagement are welcomed and below are some examples of how the Council has been able to respond positively to requests and suggestions that were made through a consultation on active travel.

### *You asked for safer ways to walk and cycle along Reading Road between Mortimer and Burghfield*

We have supported Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council, to enable the Parish to procure a consultant to assess scope and costs for a dedicated pedestrian and cycle route between the two villages.

### *You asked us to make it safer for pedestrians walking through Mortimer village*

We have carried out work to improve a section of the footway between Mortimer village and St Mary's Primary School, making this section wider and safer for pedestrians.

### *You asked for improved cycle facilities at Mortimer Station*

We have submitted a funding bid to Great Western Railway to provide additional cycle parking at the station, with the intention that any additional racks should be covered by existing CCTV.

### *You asked for improved secure bike parking at Aldermaston Station*

We have submitted a bid to Great Western Railway to install CCTV at the station, so that users can feel safe parking their bike when using the trains.

### *You asked for more bike parking at Pangbourne*

We have installed a cycle stand adjacent to Pangbourne Co-op to help residents choose more sustainable ways to travel.

### *You asked for better pedestrian and cycle facilities along the B4000 between the A4 and Stockcross village.*

After a successful bid to the Department for Transport, we received £280k in March 2022 to construct a shared pedestrian and cycle route between Stockcross and the A4/A34/B4000 roundabout. This scheme is currently in design.

### *You asked for vehicles to be slowed down on the A4 by Tesco and B&Q, so that it is safer for cyclists and pedestrians*

We constructed raised tables and provided markings as part of the A4 cycleway scheme.

### *You asked for Public Rights of Way improvements to the West Mills Towpath in Newbury so that the footway could be improved*

We have devised a scheme and identified £70k of funding to improve the section from Mallard Court to Monkey Bridge.

# 5. Update on the Council's carbon footprint

- 5.1 After the declaration of a climate emergency in 2019, the Council worked on establishing its own carbon footprint. This was reported on for the period April 2019 – March 2020 and forms our baseline. A specialist contractor assisted in quantifying the **greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions** generated by the Council's assets and activities.
- 5.2 For the purposes of this report, we have defined the Council's **operational control** as a boundary to isolate our carbon emissions, therefore, if the Council has control of an asset, it has been included within our calculations.
- 5.3 Those GHG emissions that extend beyond our control are categorised in different scopes. These are as follows:
- **Scope 1 emissions** (aka direct) come from sources that are owned or controlled by the Council e.g. our vehicles
  - **Scope 2 emissions** (aka indirect) come from the generation of electricity/ heat etc. used in our buildings
  - **Scope 3 emissions** (aka indirect) come from goods/ services that the Council utilises but are not directly responsible for, e.g. investments, activities of our contractors
- 5.4 It is mandatory to report on Scope 1 and 2 emissions and Scope 3 emissions are optional. We have included the Scope 3 emissions from our largest contracts

(waste (Veolia) and highways (Volker Highways)).

- 5.5 As indicated above, West Berkshire Council's carbon reporting cycle aligns with the financial year, i.e. 1st April to 31st March, annually. Therefore, activity data within the period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022 has been used to update the carbon footprint and to compare against the baseline data and position reported last year.
- 5.6 Using the data available the Council's carbon emissions (or carbon footprint) are calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{ACTIVITY DATA} \times \text{EMISSIONS FACTOR} = \text{EMISSIONS (tCO2E)}$$

Activity data is data associated with West Berkshire Council's activities (e.g. diesel consumption in litres).

The emission factors are the amount of GHG emissions associated with the activity data (e.g. the emissions from the combustion of a litre of diesel).

tCO2e stands for **tonnes of CO2 equivalent** and is a metric measure that is used to compare emissions from various greenhouse gases on the basis of their GWP Global Warming Potential by converting amounts of other gases to the equivalent amount of CO2.  
<https://coolerfuture.com/en/blog/co2e>

**Table 1: West Berkshire Council's Carbon Footprint 2019/20 – 2021/22**

Emissions Scope	Emissions Source	2019/20 (Baseline)		2020/21		2021/22		difference CO <sub>2</sub> e (tonnes) between baseline and 21/22	% difference between baseline and 20/21
		CO <sub>2</sub> e (tonnes)	% of total emissions	CO <sub>2</sub> e (tonnes)	% of total emissions	CO <sub>2</sub> e (tonnes)	% of total emissions		
1	Stationary Combustion (e.g. energy use)	3,502	30%	3,219	33%	3,586	41%	84	2%
	Mobile Combustion (e.g. vehicles)	664	6%	354	4%	553	6%	-111	-17%
	Sewage Processing and Refrigerants	146	1%	120	1%	137	2%	-9	-6%
	<b>Total Scope 1</b>	<b>4,312</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>3,693</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>4,276</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>-36</b>	<b>-1%</b>
2	Purchased electricity	3,496	30%	2,947	30%	968	11%	-2,528	-72%
	<b>Total Scope 2</b>	<b>3,496</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>2,947</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>968</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>-2,528</b>	<b>-72%</b>
3	Contractor Emissions	2,575	22%	2,397	25%	2,359	27%	-216	-8%
	Leisure Centres	1,229	11%	691	7%	1,066	12%	-163	-13%
	Business Travel	8	0%	0	0%	8	0%	0	5%
	<b>Total Scope 3</b>	<b>3,811</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>3,089</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>3,434</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>-377</b>	<b>-10%</b>
<b>All Scopes</b>		<b>11,620</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9,728</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,678</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-2,942</b>	<b>-25%</b>

5.7 Table 1 shows the data for the 2019/20 baseline and data for 2020/21 and 2021/22 with the percentage differences between the latest position and the baseline calculated for each scope. The overall position is that the latest 2021/22 figures show a 25% reduction in emissions from the baseline. The top 2 areas with the biggest reduction in terms of percentage change are purchased electricity and mobile combustion. Comments on each of these are below

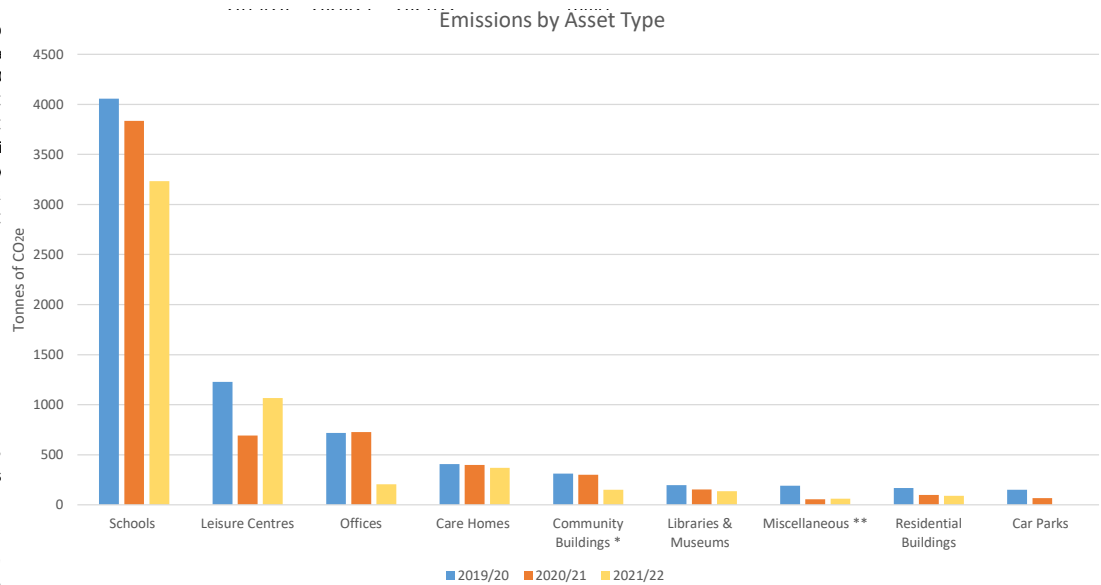
**Purchased electricity:** Following initial discussions with the Central Energy Contract electricity supplier and the Council's Environment Board, for financial year 2021/22 the Council changed its existing electricity supply to 'Blue'. This means that all the electricity supplied through the Central Energy Contract came from 'Zero' carbon nuclear sources. As a result, the 'Scope 2' carbon emissions associated with electricity consumption have

significantly reduced.

The Council recognises that as an organisation it is still consuming electricity at significant levels and will continue to implement policies and actions that follow the Energy Hierarchy (reduce / efficiency / renewables) to lessen its impact.

**Mobile Combustion –** This is a measure of the emissions associated with transporting people, materials or goods in connection with Council work activities. This dropped significantly in 2020/21 as a result of the Covid19 pandemic and lockdown restrictions. It has increased again in 2021/22 but not to the previous level of the baseline. There has been a 17% reduction overall. This can be explained by the greater use of online meetings, virtual training events and conferences replacing the greater travel activities that would have taken place before these more efficient ways of working became commonplace.

**Figure 2:  
Council  
emissions by  
asset type**



\* Includes Community Buildings, Day Centres & Family Hubs.

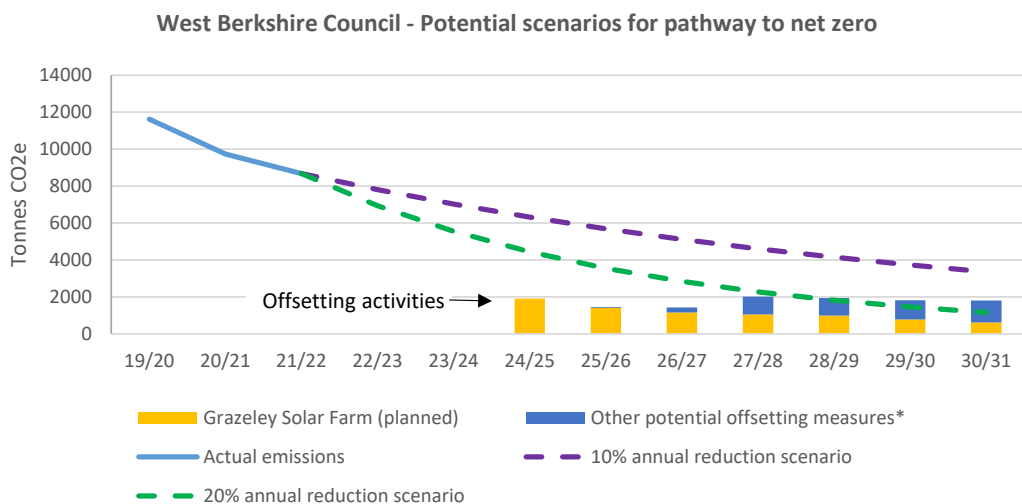
\*\* Includes Miscellaneous buildings, Land, Retired Buildings, Industrial Buildings & Sewage works

5.8 The Council has significant numbers of buildings and other assets that all contribute to the carbon footprint. Figure 2 above shows the changes in emissions in relation to the Council's assets reported by asset type. The impact of the Covid19 pandemic can be seen in the data for leisure centres where there is a reduction for 2020/21 and then an increase from that position to 2021/22. This reflects the fact that leisure centres were closed for periods within 2020/21 and normal activities were not able to take place causing a significant drop in emissions for that year. Emissions have increased again as normal activities resumed in 2021/22 but there is still an overall reduction when compared to the baseline position.

5.9 There have been a few years now of gathering data to report on the Council's carbon footprint. What does this tell us about our journey to net zero carbon and what we need to do in future years to be on track to reach our target? As our collected data grows, we can start to plot our progress and look at possible future scenarios. Figure 3 starts this process and is a tool we will develop as our knowledge of impacts from our projects and actions grows and as our plans for future investment are further developed.

5.10 The graph at figure 3 shows our actual emission figures as the blue line for the first 3 years of collecting data. The purple and green lines indicate the two scenarios if the Council's carbon footprint reduced by 10% or 20% each

**Figure 3:  
Potential  
scenarios for  
pathway to net  
zero**



\*measures include further renewable energy generation, tree planting and other natural carbon sequestration projects (see text for additional explanation)

year. We recognise that progress would not be uniform like this and is more likely to have some steeper drops in places and then some smaller changes for other years. These are therefore simply indicative scenarios. We have been undertaking some work to look at the measures in our Delivery Plan and assess what their carbon impacts could be over the period to 2030. This is not relevant for all projects and actions but we plan to develop the graph at figure 3 with this information to add a scenario which is an extension of the blue line. This will help inform us where we calculate our existing planned measures will take us on the pathway to net zero and identify the gaps requiring further action. The graph is therefore work in progress and you can expect to see further versions in future progress reports informed by our continuous process of improved data collection and future scenario planning.

5.11 The Environment Strategy recognises that alongside actions to reduce our emissions there will need to be some offsetting activity to enable us to reach a position of net zero carbon by 2030. This offsetting is shown in figure 3 in the yellow and blue bars. Some offsetting projects are already planned such as Grazeley solar farm and the impact of this is shown in yellow. There are still options in terms of the solar farm and detailed planning of the project will determine which option is delivered. The minimum benefits from the solar farm development have been used in figure 3 to present a conservative picture.

5.12 There are other offsetting activities discussed in the Environment Strategy that are still in the investigation and planning stages. These are represented in the blue bars and are indicative amounts at this stage. For example, there is a commitment to generate at least 21.5MW through renewable energy projects so the generation in addition to Grazeley solar farm is included in the blue bars. Alongside this the other potential offsetting measures include estimates of carbon sequestration through projects that might include tree planting and wetland habitat creation for example. The nature of these projects and amounts of carbon able to be sequestered will become clearer as we work alongside our partners and organisations especially through the Natural Solutions Delivery Partnership.

5.13 This figure is therefore very much a work in progress and is intended to be a helpful tool in demonstrating the progress being made and the gaps that remain which can help to direct future investment.



## 6. Update on the District's emissions

- 6.1 The carbon emissions for the District as a geographical area are reported using data published by the Government. Each year the Government provides data at local authority level which is 'per capita carbon dioxide emissions in tonnes'.
- 6.2 Two sets of data is produced – a 'full set' and a 'sub set'. Both sets of data report on the overall emissions from the following activities: transport, industry & commercial, domestic and agriculture. The 'sub set', however, removes data over which the local authority has no control. For example, in relation to transport this would remove the travel associated with the strategic road network (M4 and A34) as these roads are managed by National Highways and not the Local Highway Authority.
- 6.3 There is a 2 year period between when the emissions occur and when they are confirmed and reported by BEIS (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy). Data is reported per calendar year. The latest year for reporting is 2020. These figures are included in Table 2 along with the two previous years. When BEIS publish the figures for each new year they also review their previous methodologies for earlier years and make any necessary revisions. This is why you may see changes in previously reported year's figures within Table 2.
- 6.4 The overall reduction in emissions for the full set over the last two reported years is 22%. The reduction for the sub set is 18%. The latest published figures will include any impact of the Covid19 lockdown restrictions. It is expected that the 2021 figures may not show a further reduction but could increase slightly reflecting the significant change in activities which the lockdown forced for 2020.
- 6.5 Continuous action is needed across the District to reduce emissions and the Council recognises its role in encouraging and influencing communities, businesses and residents as well as ensuring the policies and plans it sets align with carbon reduction aims. Actions within the Delivery Plan highlight the need to work with businesses, local communities and landowners and farmers to help all those who live and work in West Berkshire to have a positive impact and help to address the climate crisis. Further work in these areas will be progressed as we continue on this journey towards net zero.

**Table 2: Full Set and Sub Set Per Capita Carbon Dioxide emissions (tonnes) for West Berkshire**

	Full Set	Sub Set
2018	7.3	5.6
2019	7.0	5.2
2020	5.7	4.6

# 7. Conclusion

- 7.1 This second year of delivering our Environment Strategy has seen most of the restrictions associated with the Covid19 pandemic lifted and activities start to settle into what might be called a 'new normal'. There has been a focus on recovery and renewal and it has been encouraging to see local businesses and organisations include 'green' practices in their plans for recovery and growth. This has been supported by the ARG Challenge Fund that the Council was able to distribute, supporting local recovery ambitions.
- 7.2 The projects and activities included in this annual report are part of the ongoing journey to reduce the Council's impacts and lead by example in our local area. There are many other organisations in West Berkshire who are also leading by example and we hope to feature some of their stories in our next progress report and in our Environment Newsletters published each month.
- 7.3 As we continue on this journey we are looking ahead to what the next year will bring with the introduction of our separate food waste collections, the development of a new Local Transport Plan, further progress on our solar farm project, the progression of some pilot habitat creation projects through the Natural Solutions Delivery Partnership and further support for greening the taxi trade and supporting the transition to electric vehicles.
- 7.4 Our 'co-production' work this year has demonstrated again how important engagement is. As we continue on the path to net zero as a District we look forward to the many engagement opportunities this will bring and the greater impact we can have by working together.

# Glossary

This glossary provides an explanation of terms used in this annual report along with some additional terms which may also be of general interest relating to climate change and our environment.

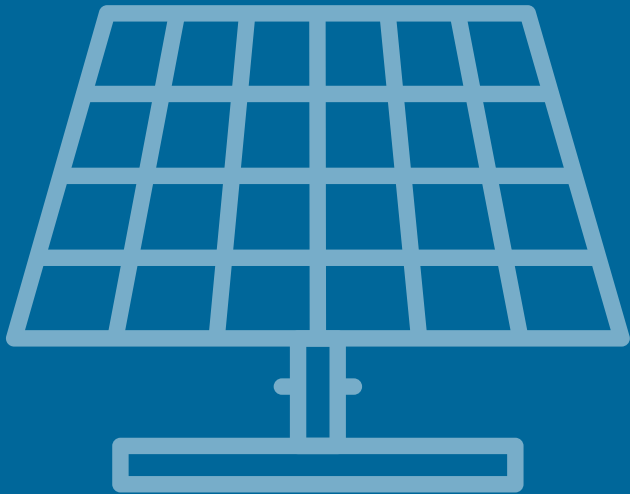
Abbreviation	Term	Explanation
	<b>Anaerobic Digestion</b>	A process in which organic matter is broken down by micro-organisms in an oxygen free 'tank' to produce fuels.
<b>AONB</b>	<b>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	Area of countryside designated for conservation in recognition of its national importance.
	<b>Baseline</b>	A fixed point of reference used as a starting point for comparison purposes.
	<b>Biodiversity</b>	The variety of plant and animal life.
	<b>Carbon budget</b>	The maximum amount of greenhouse gases that can be emitted over a certain period.
<b>CCS</b>	<b>Carbon capture and storage</b>	Trapping carbon at its emission source, and then storing it long term.
<b>CO2e</b>	<b>Carbon Dioxide Equivalent</b>	A term used to describe different greenhouse gases in a common unit. For any greenhouse gases and their amount, it is the amount of carbon dioxide which would have the equivalent warming impact.
	<b>Carbon footprint/carbon audit</b>	The total greenhouse gas emissions caused by a person/event/organisation/product, expressed as the carbon dioxide equivalent.
	<b>Carbon neutral/ carbon neutrality</b>	The act of reducing a person's/events/organisations/products carbon footprint to zero through energy efficiency measures and external emission reductions projects.
	<b>Climate change</b>	The long-term shift in the planets weather patterns and temperatures.
<b>CCA</b>	<b>Climate Change Act 2008</b>	Provides the framework for the UK's climate change policy
	<b>Climate Change Bonds</b>	Fixed income bonds, linked to climate change solutions.
	<b>Climate Emergency Declaration</b>	The Declarations vary for each organisation. The Council's Declaration is set out in the Introduction section of the Environment Strategy.
	<b>CO2 emissions within the scope of influence of Local Authorities</b>	The UK produces a breakdown of carbon dioxide emissions by Local Authority area as a subset of its annual inventory of greenhouse gas emissions. The emissions deemed to be within the scope of Local Authorities exclude large industrial sites, railways, motorways and land-use.
<b>CCC</b>	<b>Committee on Climate Change</b>	Independent body to advise the government on climate change.
<b>CIL</b>	<b>Community Infrastructure Levy</b>	A charge which can be levied on new developments within the Local Authority's area. It helps deliver required infrastructure.
	<b>Delivery Plan</b>	The Council's plan on how the objectives of the Environment Strategy will be achieved.

	<b>Economic Development Board</b>	Newly formed Economic Board which will oversee the Economic Development Strategy, implementing an action plan to fulfil its objectives.
<b>EU ETS</b>	<b>European Union Emissions Trading System</b>	The first and largest greenhouse gas emissions trading system in the world. It works on a 'cap and trade' principle where allowances are set. Allowances are auctioned off or allocated for free. Emitters must ensure they have enough allowances to meet their emissions or purchase more. Those who reduce their emissions and have spare allowances can sell off their credits.
<b>GWP</b>	<b>Global Warming Potential</b>	The potential of a Greenhouse Gas to trap additional heat in the atmosphere relative to Carbon dioxide. Specifically, it is a measure of how much energy the emissions of 1 tonne of a gas will absorb over a given period of time, relative to the emissions of 1 tonne of carbon dioxide. The larger the GWP, the more that gas warms the Earth compared to CO <sub>2</sub> over that time period.
	<b>Green energy</b>	Definitions would usually mean the gas or electricity were from 100% renewable sources.
<b>GHG</b>	<b>Greenhouse gases</b>	Gases in the atmosphere that absorb and re-emit heat. They occur naturally in the Earth's atmosphere but human activity increases these, leading to increased warming and climate change.
<b>GDP</b>	<b>Gross Domestic Product</b>	The total monetary/market value of the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period.
	<b>Health and Wellbeing Board</b>	A partnership that brings together West Berkshire's leaders of the health and social care system.
<b>KPIs</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	A measurable value/outcome to gauge how well an organisation is meeting its key objectives.
<b>LULUCF</b>	<b>Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry</b>	A greenhouse gas sector defined by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
<b>LCWIP</b>	<b>Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Programme</b>	Sets out the Council's long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks
	<b>Local Plan</b>	The plan is part of the overall Development Plan for West Berkshire, setting out our local planning policies.
<b>LTP</b>	<b>Local Transport Plan</b>	Aims to deliver effective transport solutions for all by increasing choice and minimising congestion.
<b>NAEI</b>	<b>National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory</b>	The Inventory is compiled by Ricardo. It is the standard reference inventory for the UK and includes emission estimates for a wide range of important pollutants.
	<b>Nature Recovery Plan</b>	The plan defines the objectives and key actions required to improve biodiversity and wildlife in the district
	<b>Net zero</b>	There is no commonly agreed definition. However it is the intention that the activities of the Council should result in no net impact on the climate from greenhouse gas emissions.
	<b>Per capita</b>	The district's emissions divided by the number of people to give a value per person. This can be useful in comparing other areas of differing population size.

	<b>Operational Control</b>	A method of providing a boundary for an organisation to isolate its carbon emissions. This method describes where an organisation has functional operational control of an asset it will be included in calculations.
	<b>Scope 1 Emissions</b>	aka direct emissions, come from sources that are owned or controlled by an organisation, e.g. vehicles
	<b>Scope 2 Emissions</b>	(aka Energy indirect) come from the consumption of electricity used in an organisation's buildings
	<b>Scope 3 Emissions</b>	(aka other indirect) emissions come from goods/ services that an organisation utilise but are not directly responsible for e.g. investments.
<b>SME</b>	<b>Small medium enterprises</b>	Small or medium businesses are generally defined as businesses with less than 250 employees.
<b>SuD</b> s	<b>Sustainable drainage systems</b>	Systems designed to manage the drainage of surface water.
	<b>Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership</b>	An organisation bringing together business, public sector, education and community together to drive the local economy.
	<b>Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum</b>	A Forum to help prepare, respond and recover from emergency incidents.
	<b>The National Adaptation Programme</b>	This sets out the actions that the UK government and others will take over the next five-yearly cycle to adapt to the challenged of climate change.
<b>ULEV</b>	<b>Ultra low emission vehicle</b>	A vehicle that emits no more than 75g/km CO <sub>2</sub> , based on the NEDC test, at the tailpipe. This includes pure electric, hydrogen, range-extender and plug in hybrid vehicles.
	<b>Whole life carbon</b>	The emissions created for every stage of an item/ buildings production, use and disposal.









## MTFS Planning

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	3 November 2022
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Ross Mackinnon
<b>Report Author:</b>	Joseph Holmes/Melanie Ellis
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4257

### 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and outline the revised assumptions. Given the significant volatility within existing financial planning assumptions due to very high levels of inflation, the anticipated pausing of further work on the fair funding review by Government and upcoming reforms that have significant financial implications, e.g. Adult Social Care Reform, this report is presented to provide an update on the financial planning assumptions.
- 1.2 Members are required to set a budget by 11<sup>th</sup> March. This papers forms some of the background to the budget setting process in the run up to the Budget being approved by Full Council in early March.

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 For Executive to request further proposals from officers to close the gap in the 2023/24 budget.

### 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	Additional savings requirement of £9.2m bringing the total savings requirement to £15.8m. This is on the basis of all inflation, modelled growth and priority 1 and 2 investments being approved.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	n/a
<b>Legal:</b>	n/a

<b>Risk Management:</b>	Risk of further inflation			
<b>Property:</b>	n/a			
<b>Policy:</b>	n/a			
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>				
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		x		
<b>Health Impact:</b>		x		
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		x		
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		x		
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>		x		

<b>Core Business:</b>		x		
<b>Data Impact:</b>		x		
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>				

## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 There have been some substantial changes to the macro-economic picture for the country and for local authorities since the MTFS and Budget was approved by Full Council in March 2022.
- 4.2 The MTFS has been updated to reflect increasing inflation and demand. If all the increases to inflation, modelled growth and investment were put into the budget, the savings requirement would increase from £6.6m to £15.8m.
- 4.3 The significant increase in the savings requirement is being driven by three main areas:
  - (a) Inflation - £4m (expenditure, pay and inflation in the social care model)
  - (b) Increased demand – £9.2m (increased investment, and social care model)
  - (c) Residual impact of Covid-19 - £0.8m (Car parking, leisure)
- 4.4 The increases are offset by £2.3m gain from no business rates reset, £1.2m proposed use of reserves to support the pay award, £0.6 improved Taxbase and £0.7m additional grant funding.
- 4.5 To date, savings proposals total £6.2m, which would leave a further £9.6m to find.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Introduction

There have been some substantial changes to the macro-economic picture for the country and for local authorities since the MTFS and Budget was approved by Full Council in March 2022. Increasing inflation due to a range of events, for example increasing energy costs, the war in Ukraine, a consequential increase in interest rates from the Bank of England and a range of rate setters internationally, and an increase in cost of living for residents will stimulate a range of further economic measures that will impact on the economy. The new Chancellor of Exchequer announced a range of measures at a fiscal event on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September. Following this announcement, Government departments have been requested to find efficiencies in the lead up to the next Budget. It has also been confirmed that the fair funding review is to be postponed, potentially until 2025/26 at the earliest.

## Background

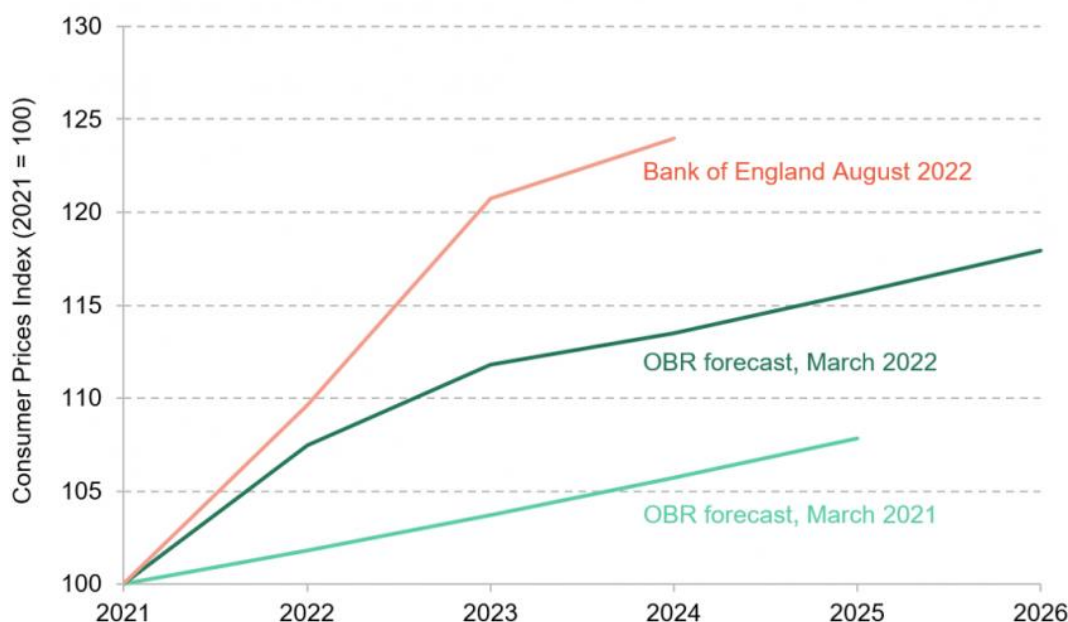
5.1 The MTFS was approved by Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022 when:

- (a) Inflation was 5.5% (Jan CPI announced 16.2.22)
- (b) Adult Social Care (ASC) client numbers were 1704 and forecast to increase to 1763 during 2022/23.
- (c) ASC inflation estimates were 2.7% with up to a 7% inflation provision in risk reserves.

5.2 In the six months since the budget was set:

- (a) The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) has increased each month and rose by 10.1% in the 12 months to July 2022.
- (b) ASC client numbers have reached 1788 and are forecast to increase to 1824 by 31.3.2023.
- (c) ASC inflation has been awarded to providers at 5.6%.

5.3 The Bank of England forecasts, published in August 2022, have inflation reaching a 40-year high of 13% in coming months and remaining elevated over the following year.



Source: Office for Budget Responsibility, *Economic and Fiscal Outlook March 2021 and 2022*; Bank of England, *Monetary Policy Report August 2022*

5.4 Funding assumptions and cost estimates have been revised and are shown in the table below.

## MTFS Planning

Line ref	Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	2023/24		Changes since previous MTFP
		Mar-22 £m	Sep-22 £m	
	Council Tax income	1.99%	1.99%	
	Adult Social Care Precept	1.00%	1.00%	
1	Council Tax (incl. ASC)	114.1	114.5	Increased taxbase estimate
2	Retained Business Rates/rates funding	23.0	25.4	increased Business Rates estimate due to no reset
3a	2022/23 Services Grant	1.3	1.3	
3b	Other non-ringfenced grants	0.0	0.1	
4	New Homes Bonus	1.2	1.2	
5	Lower tier services grant	0.2	0.2	
6	Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding	6.8	6.8	
7a	Social Care Grant	4.0	4.6	Increased grant forecast
7b	Market Sustainability & Fair Cost of Care Fund	1.8	1.8	
8	Collection Fund deficit (-)/ surplus	-0.8	-0.7	Improved position
<b>9</b>	<b>Funds Available</b>	<b>151.6</b>	<b>155.2</b>	
10	Base Budget	141.3	141.3	
11	Pay inflation	2.7	5.2	Extra 2% 22/23 and 23/24
12	Contract inflation and non pay inflation	1.4	2.8	£0.7m waste, £0.3m energy, £0.4m other increases
13a	Modelled growth	3.1	9.6	
13b	Cost of ASC reforms	1.8	1.8	
14	Investment	1.3	1.3	
15	Additional investment	0.0	3.5	Additional investment bids
16	Increase in capital financing cost	0.6	0.6	
17	Savings and income requirement	-6.6	-15.8	£9.1m additional savings requirement
<b>18</b>	<b>Annual Budget Requirement</b>	<b>145.5</b>	<b>150.3</b>	
19	One off investments	0.7	1.0	
20	Adult Social Care BCF and iBCF ringfenced funding	6.8	6.8	
<b>21</b>	<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>153.0</b>	<b>158.1</b>	
22a	Use of reserves to support one off investment	-0.7	-0.9	
22b	Use of reserves to support 23/24 budget gap	0.0	-1.2	To support one year pay award increase
23	Use of Collection Fund and Business Rates reserves	-0.8	-0.7	Improved position
<b>24</b>	<b>Budget Requirement after use of reserves</b>	<b>151.6</b>	<b>155.2</b>	
	<i>£10k roundings may apply</i>			

### (a) Council Tax and ASC Precept

Assumptions remain as originally set with a Council Tax increase of 1.99% and a 1% increase for the ASC Precept, which are assumed to be the maximum limits before requiring a referendum. Rates will be confirmed by Government as part of the Autumn Statement.

The taxbase assumption has been increased from 0.6% to 1% due to the number of new homes forecast to be completed in the district.

### (b) Retained Business Rates

The fair funding review was originally due to impact on the 2020/21 budget, and in March 2022 there was no confirmation on when the review would happen. The MTFS was built assuming a 2023/24 hard reset of business rates to a new baseline (so growth above the existing baseline not being retained by WBC) with a cost of £4m p.a. but with transitional funding.

The reset will not now happen for 2023/24, which has led to an improved position in the MTFS.

### (c) Social Care Grant

The original assumption has been increased by £600k due to latest revised forecasts by sector experts.

### (d) Pay inflation

Pay increases in the 22/23 budget were built at 2%. Negotiations are still ongoing but 4% seems a more realistic estimate. The impact of this is £1.2m, which can be mitigated by releasing the OBB reserve.

The original assumption for 23/24 was also a 2% pay increase. Increasing this to 5.5%, which is the proposal from the Local Government employers will cost £1.2m plus a further £1.2m to build in the ongoing impact of a 5.5% increase in 22/23.

### (e) Contract and other inflation

The largest contract is for waste and the annual increase is based on January RPIX. The 2022/23 budget was built based on the January RPIX at 8% equating to £1.4m. This will be the rate for 2022/23.

2023/24 was estimated at an increase of 4.5%. However, based on inflation estimates, a rate of 9% may be more realistic. This would equate to an additional requirement of £717k.

There has been an unprecedented increase in global prices caused by a number of issues including low inventories and Russian supply. The UK has been hit particularly hard due to its heavy reliance on gas as an energy source. Overall levels remain extremely high with volatile market conditions. The estimated impact is a £300k increase to previous estimates.

In Home to School Transport (HTST), although operators use different models to calculate their costs, for our in-house transport, fuel makes up just under 10% of total cost. With 10% of HTST budgets totalling £320k, annual inflation could amount to £106k. There are no inflationary clauses in the contracts, but a few requests have been received from operators as a result of current fuel pressures.

### (f) Modelled growth

When the 22/23 budget was built, the ASC model was showing 2.7% inflation based on December 2021 figures, with a worst case scenario of 7%. An offer of 5.6% inflation was made to providers, costing £1.2m above 2022/23 budget provision. £1.7m was provided for in reserves for this possibility.

There will be a cumulative impact on 2023/24 budgets, with the £1.2m shortfall from 2022/23 needing to be built into budgets.

The 2023/24 model was also built into the MTFS at 2.7% and the current estimate of 3.5% (using long term forecast CPI) would lead to a further shortfall of £550k.

Demand has also increased, with client numbers which were initially forecast to increase to 1803 for 23/24, now being forecast at 1889

## MTFS Planning

In Children & Family Services (CFS), there are also inflationary and demand increases.

The original modelled growth estimate was £3.1m which has now risen to £9.6m, an increase of £6.5m.

### (g) Additional investment

Investment proposals have been categorised into three levels of priority. The MTFS originally planned for £1.3m of ongoing investment, but the total of Priority 1 and 2 now total £4.8m, leaving a shortfall of £3.5m. Priority 3 would be a further £250k.

### (h) Savings requirement

If all the increases to inflation, modelled growth and investment in Priority 1 and 2 were put into the budget, the savings requirement would increase to £15.8m.

To date, savings proposals total £6.6m, which would leave a further £9.1m to find.

## 5.5 The significant increase in the savings requirement is being driven by three main areas:

- (a) Inflation - £4m (expenditure, pay and inflation in the social care model)
- (b) Increased demand – £9.2m (increased investment, and social care model)
- (c) Residual impact of Covid-19 - £0.8m (Car parking, leisure)

The increases are offset by £2.3m gain from no business rates reset, £1.2m proposed use of reserves to support the pay award, £0.6 improved Taxbase and £0.7m additional grant funding.

## 5.6 In addition to the pressures being seen in the revenue budget setting, the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) had a deficit of £3m at 31.3.2022, which is forecast to increase to £4.6m by 31.3.2023. In 2020, DLUHC introduced a statutory override that separated local authorities' DSG deficits from their wider finances, meaning provision does not need to be made from general reserves. This statutory override is due to end at the end of 2022/23, and if this is not extended, would lead to a significant reduction in general reserves.

## Proposal

### 5.7 For Executive to request further proposals from officers to close the gap in the 2023/24 budget.

## 6 Other options considered

N/A

## 7 Conclusion

Investment bids, modelled growth and savings proposals were presented to Budget Board on 29<sup>th</sup> September for consideration, and will return in December. The financial position will continue to be monitored and regular updates provided to Budget Board. Decisions will be made over the coming months regarding the level of affordable investment and savings that can be made to produce a balanced budget in March 2023.

## 8 Appendices

N/A

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### Subject to Call-In:

Yes:  No:

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

### Officer details:

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# Co-Production Framework for West Berkshire

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	3 November 2022
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Graham Bridgman
<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	18 August 2022
<b>Report Author:</b>	Sam Shepherd, Programme Manager, Local Communities
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4263

## 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to summarise work carried out to develop an approach to working co-productively in West Berkshire.
- 1.2 The report proposes a summary document for agreement called “Working Together: Co-Production in West Berkshire: The Essentials” (in Appendix A). The attached document is supplemented by a co-production toolkit for West Berkshire; including a ‘how to’ guide and practical tools, templates and training materials which together constitute a Co-Production Framework for West Berkshire.

## 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that Executive agree the document in Appendix A “Working Together: Co-Production in West Berkshire: The Essentials” which summarises the local Co-Production Framework.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	<p>It is anticipated that the Co-Production Framework, summarised by the document in Appendix A will be delivered on a project-by-project basis by relevant Teams. This would be within existing resources.</p> <p>Co-Production has been developed with citizens who have volunteered their time. Further work is being undertaken to explore the possibility of paying expenses or allowances to participants of co-production. If appropriate, any approach to</p>

	expenses would supplement the Framework developed to date.			
<b>Human Resource:</b>	A number of Council officers who already carry out some elements of community engagement as part of their role have been trained as trainers in co-productive approaches. It is anticipated that the Framework which is summarised in Appendix A will be rolled out by those officers already trained. Delivery will therefore be by Teams across the Council, within their existing resources.			
<b>Legal:</b>	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.			
<b>Risk Management:</b>	The key risk arising from this report is the staffing resource and capacity to use co-productive approaches in relevant projects as co-production takes longer than making decisions without citizen involvement. Linked to this is buy-in to the process of citizen involvement to allow time and resourcing in projects to undertake co-production effectively.			
<b>Property:</b>	There are no direct property implications for the Council arising from this report or its proposals.			
<b>Policy:</b>	There are no national policies which relate to this report or its proposals.			
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>	X			
<b>A</b> 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 inequalities, as it seeks to drive greater inclusion across communities.
<b>B</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 inequalities, as it seeks to drive greater inclusion across communities.

<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		X		There are no direct environmental implications for the Council arising from this report or its proposals.
<b>Health Impact:</b>	X			The proposals outlined in this report will help improve engagement with our communities, which in turn helps deliver the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy which seeks to deliver on all aspects of improved health and wellbeing.
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		X		There are no IT implications for the Council arising from this report or its proposals.
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		X		There are no direct digital implications for the Council arising from this report or its proposals.
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>	X			<p>The proposals in this report will help to improve the following Council strategy priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships</li> <li>• Support everyone to reach their potential</li> </ul> <p>The proposals outlined in this report directly deliver an action in the Council's Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023.</p>
<b>Core Business:</b>	X			The proposals outlined in this report will support stronger relationships between the Council and those we serve.
<b>Data Impact:</b>			X	There are no direct data or data protection implications for the Council arising from this report or its proposals.

<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>This report and the attached Co-Production Framework has been shaped by working co-productively with a Steering Group of local citizens, a lead Councillor and Council officers.</p> <p>The Framework, summarised in Appendix A has itself therefore been co-produced. The content within it has been tested with a wider group of citizens, council officers, Councillors, Town and Parish Councils and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners.</p>
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## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 It is commonly said that “we are better together”. Through the Covid-19 pandemic, we have seen the enormous strength that exists when public services, residents and communities come together. We recognise we don’t always have the answers and that not only do local people know what is needed within our services and communities; by working and taking action together, we can achieve great things.
- 4.2 The DRAFT West Berkshire Co-Production Framework is summarised in Appendix A has been co-produced with local citizens to set out how we will bring together residents as equal partners with Councillors and council officers in the design, delivery and evaluation of services.
- 4.3 Our Co-Production Framework forms part of the Council’s wider commitment to improving our communications, engaging communities and including people in the decisions that affect their lives through the “Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023”. It is also an approach supported by the Care Act 2014 which encourages co-production for service users and carers to influence the way that services are designed, commissioned and delivered.
- 4.4 We have tested the Co-Production Framework in environment services, working towards a co-produced guide on community energy projects. It is anticipated that co-production will next be applied in the development of Library services, Public Health, Adult Social Care and Care Leavers services and the report outlines how we will assess which projects we apply co-production to.
- 4.5 This report describes the process we have undertaken to produce the DRAFT Framework summarised in Appendix A. The Framework describes our locally determined definition of co-production, principles, aims and outcomes. It is supported by further documents and materials which complete the Framework; these are a training manual, training slides and a co-production toolkit which helps guide anyone in West Berkshire get the information and materials they need to undertake co-production.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Background

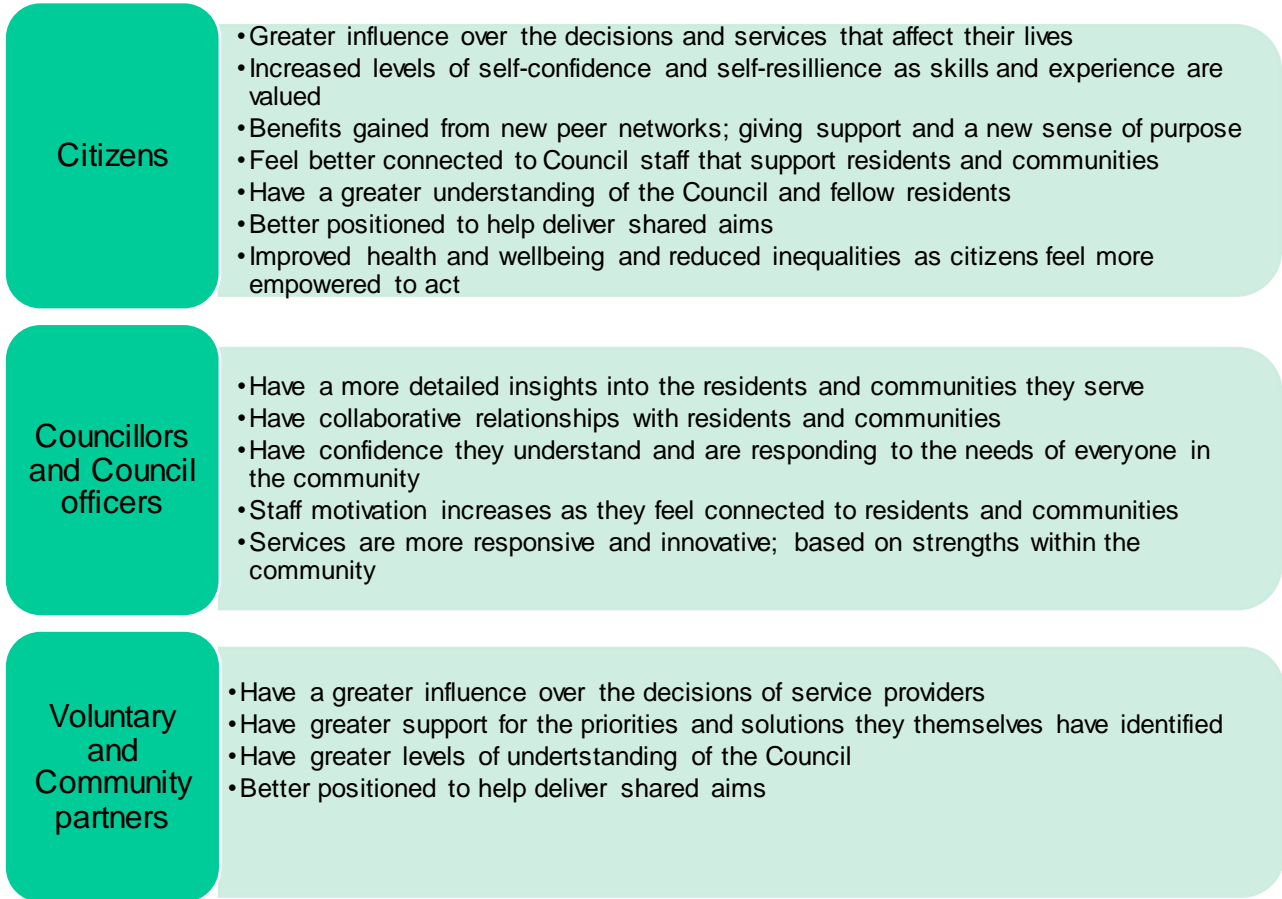
- 5.1 A key action within Council's Communication and Engagement Strategy (2020-2023) was to "co-design, deliver and agree a framework which embeds community co-production as a way of working". This was aimed at empowering communities by supporting community life, social connections and the development of locally-determined solutions to local challenges.
- 5.2 Since March 2022, we have had some expert support to help us work alongside West Berkshire citizens to:
- Establish a Co-Production Steering Group for West Berkshire, made up of local citizens, lead Councillor and Council officers to develop a Co-production Framework.
  - Develop a Co-Produced Framework which outlines a vision, aims, objectives, outcomes and approach to co-production in West Berkshire.
  - Develop a best-practice co-production toolkit for West Berkshire (including a 'how to' guide and practical tools, so staff and people with lived experience feel supported to co-produce).
  - Develop a training package and deliver a train-the-trainer approach to embed skills and expertise in co-production across the Council.
- 5.3 The culmination of this co-produced piece of work is a Framework which seeks to offer increased engagement for those using Council services, families, carers, residents and communities over the decisions and services that affect their lives.

### Benefits of co-production

- 5.4 By adopting co-production, we seek to better connect citizens with public services, to build a greater sense of self-determination and self-resilience. Community life and social connections are all factors that make a vital contribution to people's health and wellbeing. These aspects of community build a sense of resilience and can help buffer against disease and reduce inequalities; this is often referred to as social capital<sup>1</sup>.
- 5.5 The following outlines the benefits we are seeking with co-production:

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<sup>1</sup> What Makes Us Healthy (2012) <http://www.assetbasedconsulting.co.uk/uploads/publications/WMUH.pdf>



**Strategic direction**

5.6 Before work commenced on detailed development of local co-production, discussions were had amongst officers and Councillors to ensure there was a shared understanding of co-production, that we explored the opportunities and challenges which co-production may pose and to test aspirations for co-production in West Berkshire. Feedback included the following:

*Opportunities with co-production for West Berkshire*

- The timing for co-production is right; the Council has built relationships with communities throughout the Covid pandemic.
- Different services could benefit from co-production in different ways e.g. where we have statutory services for defined groups residents (such as social care) and where we more deliver services for the wider community (such as environmental services). A flexible approach will be needed to make co-production appropriate to the services and projects using it.

*Challenges with co-production for West Berkshire*

- Co-production will take longer than traditional processes. It may also be challenging as different views are captured throughout the process.
- Co-production is new to West Berkshire so there will need to be good communication about what it is and the benefits of being involved; it will need to demonstrate tangible outcomes.

## Co-Production Framework for West Berkshire

- Depending on each project circumstance; we will need to ensure we are clear about the expectations for people involved in co-production. We need to be mindful of the capacity of people to be involved. We will need to build trust, respect and shared goals through each co-produced project. We need everyone to be empowered to make decisions.

### *Success and ambition*

- Success will be different for each project and for each stakeholder and it may have many forms e.g. better communication and engagement.
- Co-production will be a success if it becomes the 'norm' of how we work and when residents proactively report they are influencing what is happening on the ground.
- We will need to start small and learn from experience; then move from service to service/project to project. We know that some legal/statutory requirements will constrain which services and projects we co-produce. We will need to assess whether co-production should apply in each circumstance.

5.7 The above feedback was used to shape the direction we have taken as we co-produced a framework for West Berkshire.

### **Co-producing the Framework**

5.8 To ensure we had a robust and best-practice approach to co-production, we secured some expert assistance through the appointment of 'Co-Production Works'. With the guidance of Co-Production Works, we advertised for participants, received applications, evaluated and appointed a Co-Production Steering Group for West Berkshire. The Group was made up of local citizens, a lead Councillor and Council officers. From March to August 2022 the Steering Group met six times, during which it:

- Developed a definition, principles, aims and outcomes for co-production in West Berkshire.
- Developed a training package and delivered a train-the-trainer approach to embed skills and expertise in co-production across the Council.
- Developed a best-practice co-production toolkit for West Berkshire (including a 'how to' guide and practical tools, so staff and people with lived experience feel supported to co-produce).

5.9 The Steering Group also initiated a sub-group to use the approach in environmental services. The subject and focus of the sub-group was co-produced and given the need to be realistic about time constraints, the project was agreed to be:

*To produce an introductory guidance, note which could be provided to town and parish councils or other community groups who are considering a community energy project.*

5.10 The sub-group work is ongoing and will conclude early November 2022.



## Testing the Framework

- 5.11 To test the co-production framework with a wider audience, residents from our Community Panel and officers across the Council took part in an online feedback event. This was undertaken in July 2022 to both validate the direction of travel and gather feedback on the emerging approach.
- 5.12 Three more testing events have been held; one with local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) representatives, one with Town and Parish Councils and one with West Berkshire Council Councillors.
- 5.13 Feedback from the testing events have been reflected in the document attached in Appendix A and fuller details of this feedback can be seen in Appendix B.

## Embedding co-production

- 5.14 To start embedding co-production in the Council, Co-Production Works worked to develop a 'train-the-trainer' programme alongside our Steering Group members; some of whom brought previous training expertise to the process.
- 5.15 A train-the-trainer event was held in July 2022, with nine staff successfully completing the training. The staff involved were nominated on the basis that they have community engagement as a part of their role; either now or in the future. Feedback from the event was very positive and a peer support group across the Council has now been formed to support staff as they train others in co-productive approaches.
- 5.16 Alongside the Co-Production Framework summarised in Appendix A, materials have been developed to accompany the Framework and support delivery of co-production across the Council. There is a trainer's manual, slides, resources and the information required to conduct training for any co-productive project.
- 5.17 A further supplement to the Framework is a best-practice co-production toolkit for West Berkshire; including a 'how to' guide and practical tools, so staff and people with lived experience feel supported to co-produce. This toolkit forms an important part of the overall Framework; it includes, guidance on setting outcomes and the measurement co-production a self-reflection tool, templates (such as Steering Group Terms of Reference) and other how-to guidance and practical tools. Once the Framework is agreed, these will all be made available on the intranet and online.

## Decision to co-produce

- 5.18 We will look to apply co-production where there is real opportunity to create an equal partnership with citizens. Every co-production experience will offer constraints, opportunities and lessons to learn; this means our approach to co-production is likely to evolve as we implement our approach. In assessing whether co-production should apply in a specific circumstance, projects need to meet the following criteria:
1. The project is at an early stage and so contains opportunity for co-production (i.e. not all decisions have been taken about the shape of the project)
  2. Staff capacity exists to support the co-production process. Support will be offered (from the BCT Team) but staff time will be needed to receive co-production training

and to then facilitate the process (e.g. recruiting citizens, setting up and running meetings).

3. Time for co-production can be built into the project timescale.
4. There is an appetite among residents and/or stakeholders to get involved.
5. The project aligns with the priorities within the [Council's Strategy](#).
6. There is support for co-production in the project by the Head of Service and Portfolio Holder.

5.19 It is anticipated that co-production will next be applied in the development of Library services, Public Health, Adult Social Care and Care Leavers services, with projects assessed against the above criteria.

5.20 The outcomes of each co-produced project will be captured, along with any lessons-learned so we can understand how best to apply co-production in the future.

### **Involvement expenses**

5.21 Remunerating citizens who participate in co-production is considered good practice. Co-production has been developed locally with citizens who have volunteered their time. We are exploring the possibility of paying expenses to participants of co-production to reflect the principle of equality and to demonstrate the value of citizen involvement. If appropriate, any approach to expenses would supplement the attached Framework.

## **6 Delivery and next steps**

6.1 Work will conclude by the sub-group on environmental services early in November, with the production of a guide to help those interested in community energy projects get started. Any learning from this process will also be incorporated in documents which support the Co-Production Framework.

6.2 To roll out and embed co-production, training will be delivered to staff where necessary. A peer group of co-production trainers has been formed and a member of staff has been identified who can coordinate, support and offer assurance on co-production as it rolls out on a project-by-project basis across the Council.

## **7 Conclusion**

7.1 As part of a commitment to improving our communications and engagement, the West Berkshire Co-Production Framework has been co-produced with local citizens. It sets out how we will bring together residents as equal partners with Councillors and council officers in the design, delivery and evaluation of services.

7.2 The approach can be flexed to any appropriate situation or project. Training, support, resources and materials are being made available to ensure roll-out of co-production across the Council where a co-productive approach can be taken.

## **8 Appendices**

8.1 Appendix A – DRAFT of Working Together: Co-Production in West Berkshire: The Essentials.

8.2 Appendix B- Feedback from Co-Production Testing Events.

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**Background Papers:**

[Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023](#) (approved at Executive, October 2020)

**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

**Officer details:**

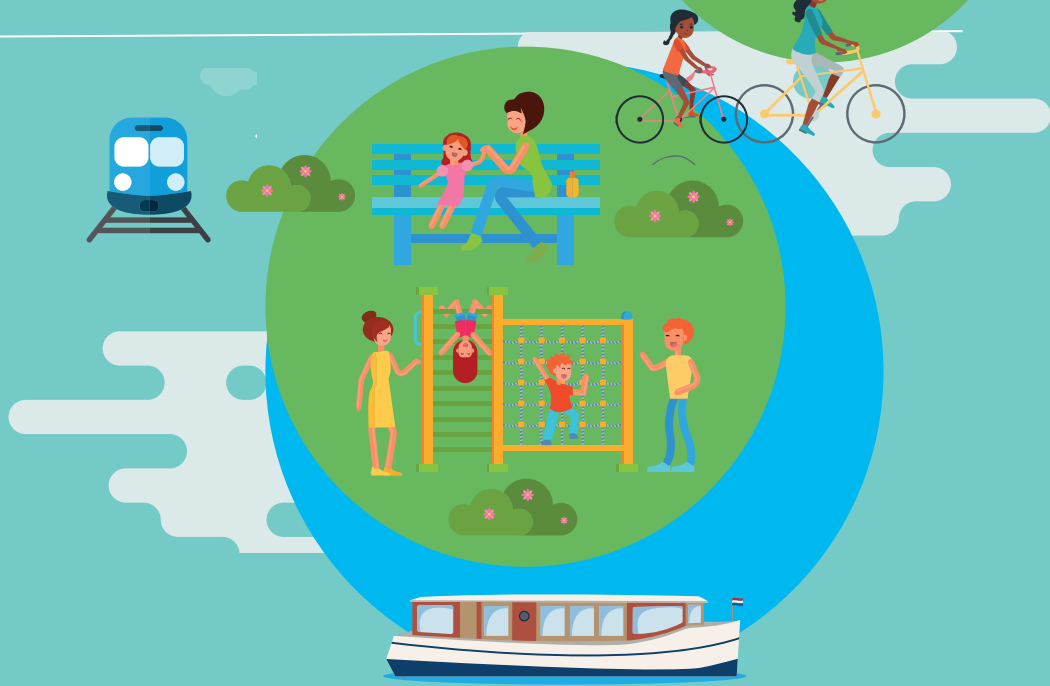
Name: Sam Shepherd  
Job Title: Programme Manager: Local Communities  
Tel No: 07920 101875  
E-mail: [Sam.shepherd1@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Sam.shepherd1@westberks.gov.uk)

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# Working Together

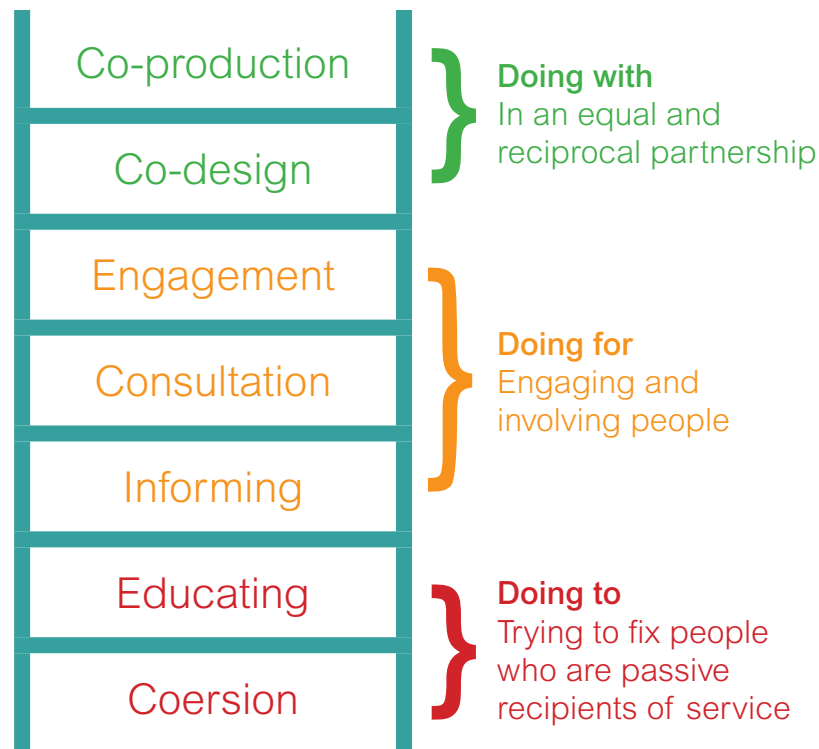
## Co-Production in West Berkshire: The Essentials



# About Co-Production

Everyone is talking about co-production but exactly what is it? “Co-production” has become a commonly-used term for describing activities that involve citizens working with and alongside professionals to improve public services.

Co-production builds on and is related to consultation, citizen participation, public engagement, service user involvement and self-advocacy. The below illustrates and describes how Co-production is different:



\*Diagram adapted from Think Local Act Personal:

[TLAP-Ladder-of-Coproduction-Landscape-Poster-A3.pdf](#) [thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk](http://thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk)

Consultation and engagement usually encourages people to input by asking for their ideas, experience and opinions. Co-production is different because it also needs people’s actions.

In co-production, relationships with professionals mean the people involved play an active role in shaping and implementing their own or community support. Co-production means that power is shared more equally between those who use services and those who provide them. Everyone’s skills and personal resources are put to use.



# Benefits of co-production

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## Why co-production?

In West Berkshire a Co-production Steering Group came together to develop the local approach to Co-production. The Group made the following statement about why this way of working matters:

'Co-production matters because working in this way will lead to the creation of better services and stronger communities:

Creating services with people results in better quality decisions and outcomes. Together we will come up with a wider range of ideas and perspectives. Services will be closer to what the community needs and wants. This avoids duplication, encourages learning, and builds networks.'

## The benefits of co-production

The following summarises the benefits of co-production and based on a Social Care Institute of Excellence publication (SCIE, 2022). SCIE says that co-production can have a positive impact on people who use services and carers, on staff and results in service improvements.

### Benefits for people who draw on services

Members of the public who get involved in co-production are likely to experience the following benefits:

- increased self-confidence, self-esteem, and sense of empowerment
- better health and wellbeing
- increased engagement and trust
- higher levels of satisfaction with, and awareness of, services.

### Benefits for staff who work in services

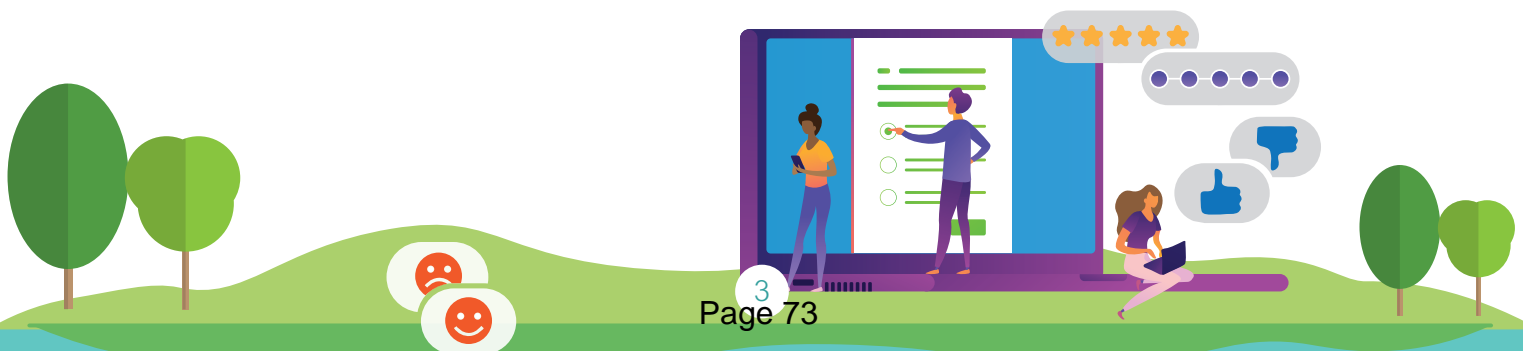
For staff, emerging evidence suggests their involvement results in positive outcomes, including:

- improved job satisfaction, motivation, and practice
- higher levels of trust and engagement, including involvement in future projects and dialogue with people who draw on care and support and carers.

### Service improvements

There needs to be more research into the links between co-production and service improvement. However recent studies have shown that co-production can lead to:

- increased uptake of services
- decreased demand on services
- positive changes in service delivery
- improvement in staff practice.



# Working Together: A West Berkshire Co-Production Framework

## Background

West Berkshire Council like many other local authorities has been working over the years to change the ways it relates to residents and communities. The following summarises the journey over time:



## Developing Local Co-Production

To build on a strong history of working to engage communities in West Berkshire, a project to develop a local approach to Co-production was started early in 2022.

The Co-production Framework project was carried out over six-months to lay the foundations for local co-production. The objectives of the work were to:

- Establish a Co-production Steering Group made up of residents, council officers and Councillor representation
- Develop a shared vision through the Steering Group to produce a West Berkshire Co-production Framework
- Produce guidance and practical tools on co-production for staff and communities.
- Develop and deliver a train-the-trainer, co-production training package
- Test out the approach on an aspect of the council's Environment Strategy

The project has co-produced a distinctive West Berkshire approach to co-production. The approach draws on established good practice, local culture and history.





## Defining Co-Production in West Berkshire

For West Berkshire, the following definition is used for co-production:

***‘Co-production is a process that involves residents and communities as equal partners with council officers and Councillors in the design, delivery and evaluation of services.’***

## Principles of co-production

These principles have been drawn up by the West Berkshire Co-production Steering Group:

### **Equality**

Working together as equals. Appreciating our diversity of experience and expertise.

### **Making a difference**

Creating change and making West Berkshire better for everyone. Being both brave and realistic.

### **Inclusive**

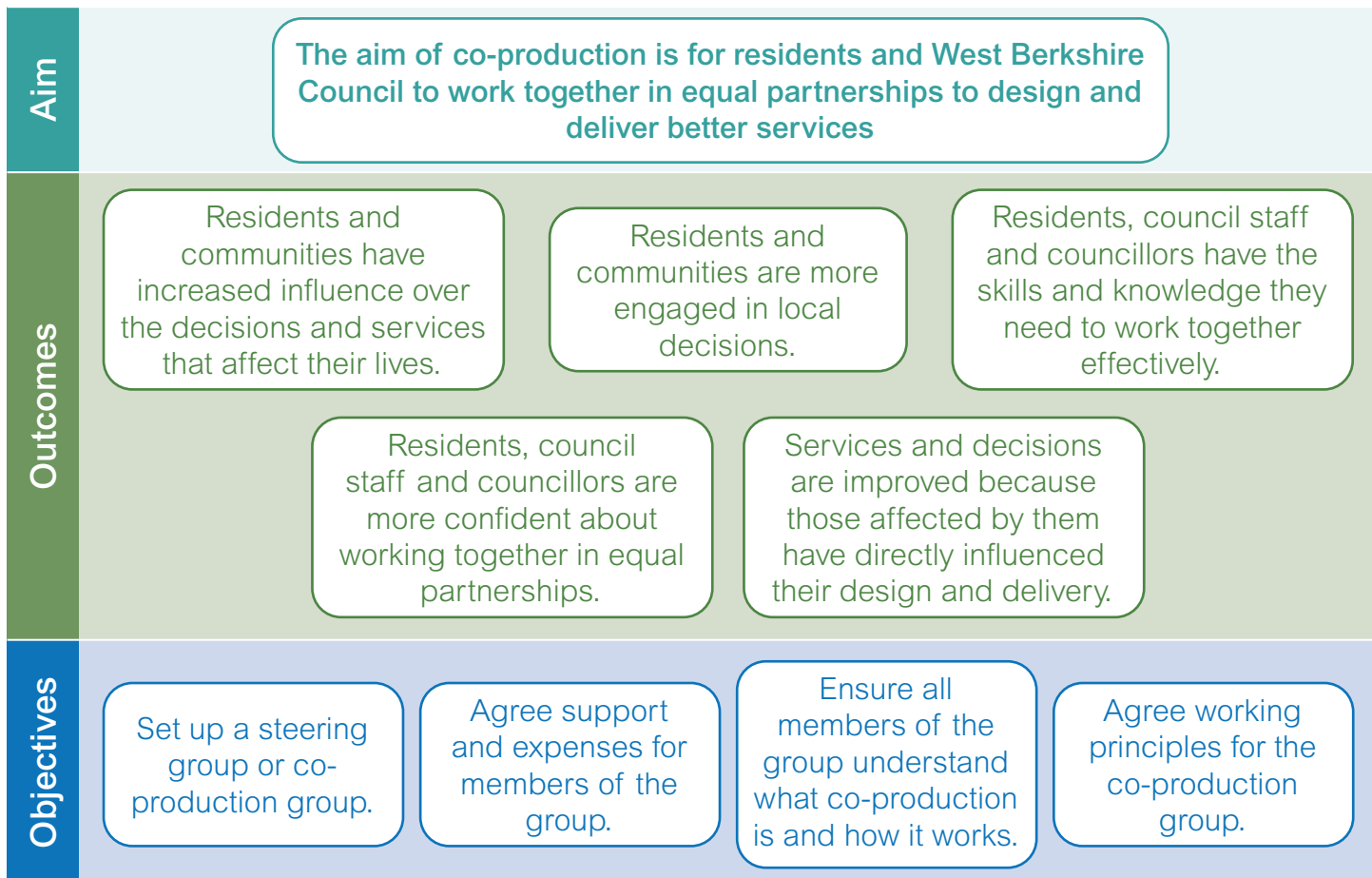
Creating opportunities for everyone to get involved. Being proactive about making everything we do accessible to all.

## Co-production aims, outcomes and objectives

Co-production engages residents and gives them greater influence over the design and delivery of services. This should lead to better services for everyone.

While every co-produced project will be different, with its own aims, activities and outcomes, the West Berkshire Co-production Steering Group identified some general aims, outcomes and activities that would be common to all co-produced projects or pieces of work. The following would be flexed according to the project they apply to and the improvements being sought:





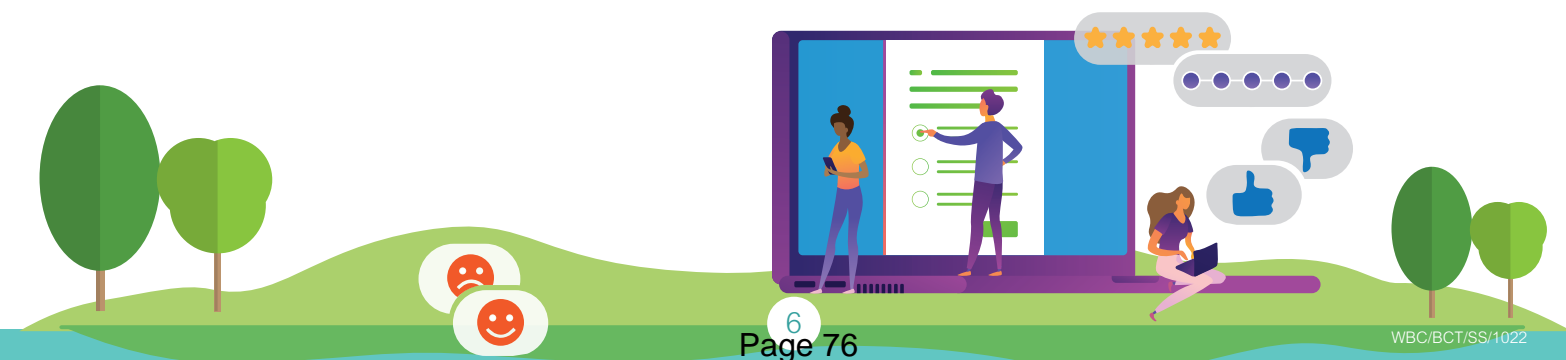
These aims and outcomes are starting points. Each co-production project will then tailor them and make them more specific to the project in question. This includes making clear which specific improvements are being sought. For example, the aim of a test project in environmental services was:

*For residents and West Berkshire Council to work together in equal partnership to develop an introductory guidance note on community energy generation in West Berkshire.*

Outcomes one to four above are to do with co-production and these would be relevant to any co-produced project or piece of work. The fifth outcome is to do with designing and delivering better services. These will need to change this to make it specific to the aim of the project they are applied to. It should link closely to the aim of the project.

## Making it real

This document has explained the essentials about co-production in West Berkshire; there are a host of materials which have been locally co-produced as part our 'Working Together', Co-Production Framework. This includes a 'how to' guide, with materials and practical tools, so staff and people with lived experience feel supported to co-produce. There is also trainer's manual, slides and training resources and the information required to conduct training for any co-productive project. These can be found here: [www.westbersk.gov.uk/link-tbc](http://www.westbersk.gov.uk/link-tbc).



## APPENDIX B

### Co-Production Testing Events: Feedback

#### *Definition*

- The definition makes sense; that it's about working with the public and including people in the design, delivery and evaluation of services. It is good to be clear that citizens are involved, but that the Council has the 'authority' to make the decision.
- Elected members were missing in the definition- it should be about council officers and elected members. The question was posed about whether we should be talking about visitors- those that work and learn here as well?
- Would be useful to be clearer that co-production is building on a strong history of engaging communities in West Berkshire.

#### *Principles*

- The principles are good; participants were supportive of them and said they cover what is needed.
- The 'equality' principle means we also need to be clear about the constraints of each project to truly offer equality and we need to understand legal constraints in each scenario.
- Great aspirational principles- but need to 'walk the walk'. Need to recognise and ensure there is a commitment to give officers the time and space to engage with a diverse range of people. Time is needed to dedicate to ensure that those whose voices are seldom heard can be incorporated into co-production. Guidance will be needed on how to reach out so there is a balance with people volunteering to be involved and reaching out for people to be involved.
- Making sure we capture how the principles made a difference to people

#### *Challenges*

- Committing to the time/resources to do co-production well- both from the council perspective and in communities and voluntary organisations are stretched. The time can be significant.
- There is a digital divide- so it needs to be access for all, including those who do not have online access and those voices who are seldom heard.
- How do we involve people who are less well-heard. Make sure the right voice is in the room- how do reach those we need to hear?
- Make sure that we involve organisations that represent people and their views (e.g Heathwatch).
- There could be personalities which do not agree in the process and a difference of opinion. This might lead to services we weren't expecting; the process could be scary and exciting at the same time!

#### *Outcomes*

- The outcomes could be made smarter, but success measures will need to be appropriate for each project that uses co-production. When seeking service improvement, it needs to be clear WHAT improvement will be sought.
- Some words are very subjective e.g what 'better' means will be different in different circumstances.
- The language is important; citizens are vital to reflect as equals in the process. This means that equality needs to be embodied in the language used throughout the outcomes and the whole project.

#### *Will the Framework lead to success?*

- Need to illustrate the impact co-production has had on how people influenced decision making (could use both case studies/quotes of those involved alongside the numbers of who has been involved to demonstrate impact)
- There needs to be a clear and determined commitment to working in this way from the council to help people feel as though they are influencing decisions and services. People will need to know which opportunities exist so communication will be key to success.

#### *How it could be applied*

- How do you prioritise which services to apply co-production to? Is it what residents most wish to prioritise? Is it applied where it will affect the most people? Is it where there is the most cost? Is it applied where there are change- e.g. social care changes?
- There could be a list of opportunities so it is clear what people can get involved with co-producing.
- Communication about co-production could help increase awareness of what West Berkshire Council delivers (versus other organisations such as Town and Parish Councils).
- Need to be mindful of the impact of the co-production process both on citizens but also on some local Voluntary and Community Sector organisations.
- Children's social care (there is a requirement that children are involved- this is perhaps more participation and engagement than co-production but there is room for more co-productive approaches)
- Should the decision-making process illustrate how co-production has been considered and applied in each decision the council takes?
- Adult social care. There is a project where we are going to be gathering the service user experience; starting with mapping of the service-user voice and identifying gaps then look at filling them. Co-production would be really useful in this process.
- Libraries; communities are heavily invested in their libraries. How do we evolve libraries as community hubs? How we involve the community with that could be vital to success as they are at the heart of communities
- Regulatory services (e.g Environmental Health and Trading Standards) may have limitations in certain aspects of what can be co-produced due to

the nature of the role they fulfil. They should however not be disregarding for co-producing elements of their service delivery.

- Could there be elements of Planning services which could be co-produced? What about co-producing Neighbourhood Development Planning?
- In environment services, collaborative action is needed to achieve climate priorities; could charging points be co-produced?

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## Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire & Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	3 November 2022
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Graham Bridgman
<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	3 October 2022
<b>Report Author:</b>	Gordon Oliver
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4268

### 1 Purpose of the Report

This report sets out the requirement to establish the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) as a joint committee. It also notes the appointment of West Berkshire Council Members to the joint committee, and delegation of powers to agree the terms of reference for the joint committee.

### 2 Recommendations

It is recommended that Executive:

- (a) approve the creation of a joint committee to act as the Integrated Care Partnership covering the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West area;
- (b) note the appointment by the Leader of the Executive Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing as the West Berkshire Council representative on the Integrated Care Partnership joint committee;
- (c) note the appointment by the Leader of all remaining Executive Portfolio Holders as substitutes on the Integrated Care Partnership; and
- (d) note that the Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing will be given delegated powers by the Leader to agree the final version of the Terms of Reference for the Integrated Care Partnership, in collaboration with other Members of the Integrated Care Partnership.



### 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. More broadly, the establishment of the Integrated Care System and its associated structures aims to allow greater integration of services. This may include changes to the current arrangements where West Berkshire Council and the local NHS commissioning body (now the Integrated Care Board) could pool some of their budgets through Section 75 arrangements. Any such changes would be subject to separate approval processes.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	There are no direct staffing implications associated with this report. It is anticipated the Member and Officer time taken to participate in this new partnership forum will drive efficiencies of working for a range of teams in the Council and therefore it will have a positive impact on staff capacity
<b>Legal:</b>	As set out in paragraph 5.6 of this report, West Berkshire Council has a statutory responsibility to form an Integrated Care Partnership with the Integrated Care Board and other upper tier local authorities within the area covered by the Integrated Care System. This report seeks approval to establish the joint committee and appointment of Members to the joint committee to support this statutory duty.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	A detailed risk assessment is not required for this report. There are both opportunities and risks to West Berkshire Council from the formation of the Integrated Care System, but this is managed via the council's usual risk management processes.
<b>Property:</b>	There are no direct property implications arising from this report.
<b>Policy:</b>	The formation of Integrated Care Partnerships is a national policy as set out in the Health and Care Act 2022.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>				
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			One of the four aims of Integrated Care Systems is to tackle inequalities in outcomes, experience and access. These inequalities in health can be experience by a range of population groups, including those with protected characteristics. It is therefore anticipated that supporting the establishment of the new ICP will have a positive impact on equality and inclusion.
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		X		This paper does not have any direct sustainability implications. Where any new or amended services are established because of greater integration, they will be individually assessed for their sustainability implications. Any travel and other associated impacts for Council Members and staff participating in a new joint committee will be managed via existing policies to mitigate such impacts.
<b>Health Impact:</b>	X			Integrated Care Systems bring together providers and commissioners of NHS services with local authorities and other local partners to plan, co-ordinate and commission health and care services. They are designed to help improve population health and healthcare, and tackle inequalities in outcome, experience and access.

<b>ICT Impact:</b>		X		There are no direct ICT implications arising from this report.
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		X		There are no direct implications for Digital Services arising from this report.
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>	X			The work of the Integrated Care Partnership will contribute to the Council Strategy priority to 'support everyone to reach their full potential'. In particular it will support the commitment to 'improve the health and wellbeing of our residents'.
<b>Core Business:</b>		X		The Integrated Care Partnership will build on existing relationships with the NHS and neighbouring local authorities.
<b>Data Impact:</b>		X		There are no data implications associated with setting up the Integrated Care Partnership, since it will primarily be taking decisions based on aggregated data rather than individuals.
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>Formation of the Integrated Care Partnership is a statutory requirement.</p> <p>Consultation on the draft Terms of Reference for the Integrated Care Partnership has been carried out between the founding members. Public consultation is not required for the agreement of the Terms of Reference.</p>			

## 4 Executive Summary

4.1 Changes introduced as part of the Health and Care Act 2022 established Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) as legal entities and created new NHS bodies called Integrated Care Boards (ICBs). All ICSs are required to establish new partnership forums called Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs). These bring together ICBs and upper tier Local Authorities (LAs) that have responsibility for Social Care and Public Health in order to integrate the services they plan, purchase, and provide for local residents.

4.2 The ICP will cover the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) area and the founding members are:

- Buckinghamshire Council;

- Oxfordshire County Council;
- Reading Borough Council;
- West Berkshire Council;
- Wokingham Borough Council;
- The BOB Integrated Care Board.

4.3 These founding members of the ICP are working together to agree the terms of reference for this new partnership board.

## **5 Supporting Information**

### **Introduction**

5.1 This report sets out the changes to the health landscape arising from the Health and Care Act 2022, including the formation of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) and their associated Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs). It describes the arrangements that will apply across Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB), and seeks approval to establish the BOB ICP as a joint committee and appoint Members of West Berkshire Council to the ICP.

### **Background**

#### **Integrated Care Systems**

5.2 ICSs are geographically based arrangements that bring together providers and commissioners of NHS services with local authorities and other local partners to plan, co-ordinate and commission health and care services. They gained formal legal status on 1 July 2022

5.3 The aims of ICSs are fourfold.

- To improve population health and healthcare;
- To tackle inequalities in outcome, experience and access;
- To enhance productivity and value for money;
- To help the NHS to support broader social and economic development.

5.4 West Berkshire is within the BOB ICS which covers the area of Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West.

5.5 Commissioning arrangements within the NHS have also changed to enable the creation of ICSs. This means that the Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group no longer exists and its functions are now discharged by the BOB ICB.

## Integrated Care Partnerships

- 5.6 The ICP is formed in accordance with Section 116ZA of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 as introduced by Section 26 of the Health and Care Act 2022. The ICP is a statutory joint committee of the BOB ICB and the upper tier local authorities within the ICS who are responsible for Adult Social Care and Public Health, namely Buckinghamshire Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Reading Borough Council, West Berkshire Council, and Wokingham Borough Council.
- 5.7 In addition to the Founding Members listed above, it is proposed within the BOB ICP Terms of Reference that wider health and social care partners are also included with the membership of the ICP. This includes: Oxfordshire City or District Council; NHS provider trusts for acute, mental health and ambulance services; primary care; Healthwatch; voluntary and community sector representation; Oxford Academic Health Sciences Network; and a social care provider.
- 5.8 Integrated care partnerships are required to publish an integrated care strategy to set out how the assessed needs (from the joint strategic needs assessments of the areas the partnership covers) can be met through the exercise of the functions of the ICB, partner local authorities, or NHS England.
- 5.9 Partnership working, integration of services and development of joint strategies are approaches to improving outcomes for local residents that are already well established within work programmes of health and social care organisations. Much of this current work is overseen by the Health and Wellbeing Boards for each local authority. The creation of ICPs is not intended to duplicate existing arrangements, but provide opportunity to establish greater integration at a larger system footprint. The principle of subsidiarity is critical to the establishment of ICPs, meaning that decisions and planning will happen at a Berkshire West level whenever possible.

## 6 Proposal

- 6.1 It is proposed to: approve the establishment of the BOB ICP as a joint committee; appoint the Executive Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing as the Council's representative on that committee; and appoint all other Executive Portfolio Holders as substitutes.

## 7 Other options considered

- 7.1 None - the formation of an ICP is a statutory requirement. If the Executive does not approve the formation of the joint committee then the ICP would be established without West Berkshire Council as a member.

## 8 Conclusion

- 8.1 The Executive Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing is considered to be the most appropriate Member to represent West Berkshire Council, since they are also Chairman of West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board. Appointment of all Executive Portfolio Holders as substitutes provides additional flexibility and should ensure that West Berkshire Council is always represented at ICP meetings.

## 9 Appendices

9.1 None

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### Background Papers:

None

### Subject to Call-In:

Yes:  No:

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

**Wards affected:** All wards

### Officer details:

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## Motion to Council - Sprinklers

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<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	3 November 2022
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Richard Somner
<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	1 October 2022
<b>Report Author:</b>	Bryan Lyttle/Richard Turner
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4235

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### 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 At Council on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2021 the following motion was submitted;

Sprinklers:

That this Council:

- Acknowledges that sprinklers and other Automatic Fire Suppression Systems (AFSS) save lives, protect property, reduce the impact of fire on the environment, reduce interruption to business and improve safety for individuals in the community in general and firefighters. In recognising these benefits supports the National Fire Chief's Council position on sprinklers by writing to Central Government to express support for the creation of a legal requirement to fit sprinklers or AFSS in buildings.
- Commits to installation of sprinklers or other AFSS within its own building stock when planning for and constructing new buildings or as a retrofitted solution when undertaking major refurbishments of existing buildings.
- Through building regulations, promotes and supports the installation of sprinklers or other AFSS for all new or refurbished buildings and particularly those that present the most significant risk to the public and firefighters.

1.2 The Chairman requested that the Item be debated at the Planning Advisory Group prior to the report being considered by Executive.

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to agree the proposed letter be sent to the Minister (attached).

2.2 Members are asked to agree the introduction of AFSS to its own new building stock and existing buildings as part of a major refurbishment on a risk based approach.

### 3. Implications

3.1 **Financial:** The provision of an AFSS is a minimum of £2,000 additional cost for a residential development. Commercial developments require a more bespoke system and

therefore no cost can be given at this stage. Further costs will be incurred if the AFSS cannot be connected to the mains water supply.

As an example, fire suppression water mist systems have been installed in both the new Theale Primary School and Highwood Copse School, with a cost in the region of £100k per site.

- 3.2 **Policy:** As stated in the report.
- 3.3 **Personnel:** None
- 3.4 **Legal:** None
- 3.5 **Risk Management:** None
- 3.6 **Property:** Contained within the report.
- 3.7 **Other:** N/A

#### 4. Other options considered

- 4.1 Not to support the motion.

## Executive Summary

### 5. Introduction / Background

- 5.1 The motion to Council:

- Acknowledges that sprinklers and other Automatic Fire Suppression Systems (AFSS) save lives, protect property, reduce the impact of fire on the environment, reduce interruption to business and improve safety for individuals in the community in general and firefighters. In recognising these benefits supports the National Fire Chief's Council position on sprinklers by writing to Central Government to express support for the creation of a legal requirement to fit sprinklers or AFSS in buildings.
- Commits to installation of sprinklers or other AFSS within its own building stock when planning for and constructing new buildings or as a retrofitted solution when undertaking major refurbishments of existing buildings.
- Through building regulations, promotes and supports the installation of sprinklers or other AFSS for all new or refurbished buildings and particularly those that present the most significant risk to the public and firefighters.

### 6. Proposals

- 6.1 The motion requests that the Council writes to the Minister in support of the National Fire Chiefs Council Position and that building regulations are changed accordingly. It also calls on the Council to install sprinklers in its own buildings.

- 6.2 The inclusion of sprinklers in domestic and commercial property has already been enacted by the Welsh and Scottish Assemblies.

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 Planning Advisory Group, debated the issue and noted the cost and if the Minister did act upon the letter and AFSS became a legal requirement then it would become part of West Berkshire Council's Building Control policy. The Property Department thought that a viability assessment should be carried out on the council estate once guidance was received and that if sprinklers are an alternative solution then they should be included rather than an automatic across the board retrofit.
- 7.2 Councillors discussed the issue with comments made around that it had been debated previously and that it was best to go with a risk based approach with regards to both new build and when undertaking refurbishment of the council estate. It was also mentioned that because the Council didn't own housing stock or tower blocks it wasn't a real issue of safety as public and office buildings have evacuation policies. It was suggested that instead the Council should focus on residential establishments that care for the vulnerable and strengthen the existing policy and take into consideration disabled children in schools as well. Both Bracknell Forest and Royal Borough have taken on board this risk based approach that considers the firefighters most at risk.
- 7.3 It was noted that a formal Automatic Fire Suppression System Policy (AFSS) already exists within the council (section 8). This AFSS policy applies to new build and major refurbishment capital projects. The policy lays out the circumstances where the policy applies, the method of risk assessment including the risk outcome that would require the installation of a fire suppression system.
- 7.4 The AFSS policy has resulted in the installation of a suppression system in both the new Theale Primary School and new Highwood Copse Primary School.
- 7.5 Planning Advisory Group agreed that a report with a recommendation would be written stating that West Berkshire Council would use a risk based approach in considering installing sprinkler systems into its buildings.

## **8. Supporting Information**

- 8.1 Following a scrutiny review into the installation of automatic fire suppression systems in Council Buildings by the Safer Select Committee, an Individual Decision (ID-2739) by Cllr. Alan Law was approved on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014, adopting the Automatic Fire Suppression Systems Policy.
- 8.2 The Automatic Fire Suppression Systems Policy (AFSS) applies to:
- (1) Buildings in the freehold ownership of West Berkshire Council or where sufficiently long leasehold exists to create a strong degree of ownership;
  - (2) New buildings, extensions or major refurbishments where legislation requires the installation of an automatic fire suppression system;

- (3) New buildings, extensions or major refurbishments which meet the definition of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 section 55: 'Meaning of Development' and are *permanent* in nature;
- (4) Applies to projects with a gross project value greater than £350,000 and the estimated cost of the AFSS is less than 15% of the approved construction budget;

8.3 The AFSS Policy follows a risk assessed approach in three stages:

- (1) Assessment of the criteria to establish if the refurbishment or new build project will require to apply the AFSS policy;
- (2) An AFSS Risk Assessment is to be carried out by a competent Fire Risk Assessor. Such assessment is to establish if the proposed construction represents a High, Average or Low risk.

Inclusion of a sprinkler/AFSS will apply where and outcome is High risk or Average risk.

In the case of schools, assessment is to use the risk analysis tool contained within the Department for Education: Building Bulletin BB100 – Design for Fire Safety in Schools.

- (3) In cases where risk assessment has recommended the inclusion of a sprinkler/afss, the project team may carry out a cost benefit analysis (CBA), only in circumstances where the cost of the afss is greater than 3% of the total construction cost.

Should the project be eligible and the project team choose to carry out a CBA, this is to establish if the afss represents value for money.

It may also be the case that introduction of other design elements into the project may represent either a reduction in risk score or a more beneficial method of reducing fire risk.

8.4 The installation of an afss represents a significant capital investment in a new build or major refurbishment project.

The above criteria assists in ensuring the requirement for an afss is not disproportionate in terms of the overall project budget.

In addition to the capital cost, the budget manager for the site will be required to ensure that there is ongoing revenue funding to maintain the system.

8.5 The application of the AFSS Policy is the responsibility of the Project Officer and the Design Team Members for each individual project.

The project team will, in applying the AFSS Policy appoint specialist assessors as well as the WBC Insurance Officer.

8.6 Each capital project within WBC's capital programme under the Project Management Methodology, will have project governance through a Project Board.

The Project Board receives both updates on progress but also requires to approve the progression of the project through the design stages of the project (in accordance with the Royal Institute of British Architects – RIBA plan of Works 2020). This will include reports and information on all elements of the design, including the afss.

## **9. Appendices**

Proposed letter to the Minister

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XXNovember 2022

Copies via E- Mail to:           **Development & R**  
Council Offices  
Market Street Newbury  
Berkshire RG14 5LD  
**Our Ref:**  
**Your Ref:**  
**Please ask for:** Bryan Lyttle  
**Direct Line:** 01635 519638  
**e-mail:**  
bryan.lyttle@westberks.gov.uk

Dear Secretary of State,

### **Re. Residential Fire Suppression Systems in England**

On behalf of West Berkshire Council I write to petition you to bring the Building Control Legislation in England in line with that for Scotland and Wales and require new and converted residential homes to install fire suppression systems.

The Welsh Assembly adopted new Building Regulations in October 2013 for implementation in January 2016 and the Scottish Government introduced similar legislation in March 2021.

The consultation as a result of the terrible disaster at Grenfell Tower into “Sprinklers and Other Fire Safety Measures in New High-Rise Blocks of Flats” did not go far enough, it should have considered all residential development.

Indeed in the Governments response to that consultation, it is recognised that the harmonisation of guidance across the United Kingdom would be welcome (para 17 Government Response: Sprinklers and Fire Safety Measures in New High Rise Blocks of Flats May 2020).

As the building standards already require automatic fire suppression systems in high rise flats the option to extend the mandatory requirements to all new-build: residential development including open market housing, social homes; flats; and shared multi-occupied residential buildings so that they are fitted with automatic fire suppression systems is an easy option.

In 2019, the National Fire Chiefs Council have investigated the effectiveness, reliability and contribution sprinklers made for life and property safety using evidence from actual fires and found that: sprinklers are 94% efficient in their ability to operate and 99% effective in extinguishing or controlling a fire.



Whilst the lowering of the threshold to 11m from 18m is welcomed it is not enough. Only last year three properties were severely damaged in Red Cottage Drive and West Berkshire Council also had to open its major incident centre in response to a three storey townhouse fire which resulted in the loss of two lives and total building failure.

I appreciate that the recent consultation also resulted in the comment “There was a clear view that sprinklers provide life safety benefits, although respondents also noted that the costs can be significant for developers and that proper maintenance, including getting access to individual flats, can be challenging” (para 18 Government Response: Sprinklers and Fire Safety Measures in New High Rise Blocks of Flats May 2020).

However, there is no evidence from Scotland or Wales to show any decline in house building because of the introduction of this measure, so one must ask if it can be done in Scotland and Wales why are English house builders unwilling to do so?

I therefore urge you to bring the English Building Control regulations in line with those for Scotland and Wales with regard to the provision of automatic fire suppression systems in the next update of the regulations.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Somner". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Richard Somner  
Executive Member for Planning, Transport and Countryside

# Contract Award for the Provision of Grounds Maintenance

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	3 November 2022
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Richard Somner
<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	24 August 2022
<b>Report Author:</b>	Chris Pathmadeva, Category Manager for Communities and Wellbeing and Countryside Team
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4208

## 1 Purpose of the Report

This paper seeks Executive approval to award the Grounds Maintenance Contract following a tender process.

## 2 Recommendations

2.1 The Executive resolves to:

- (a) award the contract for the provision of Ground Maintenance Services to the successful bidder; and
- (b) 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 and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	The current revenue budget for the Grounds Maintenance Contract is £703k, with an additional yearly contribution of £58k from Commuted Sums bringing the total annual budget to £761k. The new contract proposal has an annual cost of

**Contract Award for the Provision of Grounds Maintenance**

	<p>£1.02m, including an additional allowance of £10k for ad hoc work. This leaves a Revenue budget pressure of £317k.</p> <p>This pressure will be fully funded in 23/24 from existing Commuted Sums currently in reserves (there are currently commuted sums to the value of £505k for grounds maintenance use in the Council's reserves).</p> <p>Beyond 23/24, the Service will continue to draw on commuted sums to cover the shortfall, however efficiencies in service delivery will also be brought forward (subject to a delegated revision to the contract) to bring costs closer to the existing budget. As a last resort, investment bids would be sought from the Council's revenue budget to cover any remaining shortfall.</p> <p>The contract will be subject to CPI in April of each year, however there will be no inflation until April 2024. This will be factored into the contract inflation process for budget build purposes.</p> <p>Jonathan Martin, Finance Manager, 23/08/22</p>
<p><b>Human Resource:</b></p>	<p>The playground inspection function is being brought in-house – TUPE will apply and Harriet Saunders, HR Manager, is assisting with this transfer</p>
<p><b>Legal:</b></p>	<p>The Contract was advertised through the Council's In-Tend procurement portal in line with Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's constitution. The contract will need to be finalised prior to commencement on terms included in the tender.</p> <p>In relation to the budgetary constraints from year 2024 onwards please note that the contract as tendered did not anticipate a reduction in specification during the term and was not therefore tendered on that basis. The financial pressure suggests that we may need to reduce the specification at some point within the initial term, if the funding shortfall cannot be met. This would potentially expose the Council to a material amendment and be likely to expose the Council to loss of profit and other costs that may be required by the Contractor to effect the change.</p> <p>It should be noted that if the money is not in the budget for the contract, the Executive cannot award the contract for the Term.</p> <p>Claire Say, Principal Lawyer, 21/09/22</p>

<b>Risk Management:</b>	N/A			
<b>Property:</b>	N/A			
<b>Policy:</b>	N/A			
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>				
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			The contract requires adherence to Equality Act 2010 and The Equality and Human Rights Commission's Guidance for Employers
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The contract requires adherence to Equality Act 2010 and The Equality and Human Rights Commission's Guidance for Employers

**Contract Award for the Provision of Grounds Maintenance**

<b>Environmental Impact:</b>	X			The contractor has committed to the provision of a number of electric vehicles on this contract with an opportunity to expand this over the life of the contract as technology improves. The successful bidder have previously been involved in the installation of wildflower turf on roundabouts which have environmental benefits in their own right but also reduce maintenance inputs. Both parties will work towards reducing pesticide use to the absolute minimum. The successful bidder are aware of potential changes in rural verge maintenance for wildflowers whilst maintaining road safety and will be integral to the project ongoing.
<b>Health Impact:</b>				N/A
<b>ICT Impact:</b>				N/A
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>				N/A
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>				This report will meet the following Council Strategy priorities:  Maintain a green district
<b>Core Business:</b>				BAU
<b>Data Impact:</b>				N/A

<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>A pre-market engagement event was carried out with potential service providers. This included a Prior Information Notice (PIN) to suppliers to notify of the forthcoming procurement as part of the stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Richard Somner – Portfolio Holder</p> <p>Claire Say – Principal Lawyer</p> <p>Jonathan Martin – Finance Manager</p> <p>Harriet Saunders – HR Service Manager</p> <p>Procurement Board</p>
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## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 This report seeks approval from Executive to award a 5 year contract (with an option to extend for a further period of 5 years) relating to the provision of Grounds Maintenance across West Berkshire following an open tender process. The contract is due to commence in January 2023.
- 4.2 The aggregated value of this contract dictated that it be advertised in accordance with the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 as an open tender process.
- 4.3 The preferred option for procurement was approved by Procurement Board on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022
- 4.4 The contract covers the following provisions:
- Urban open spaces and parks grass maintenance
  - Urban and rural highway grass cutting
  - Litter, litter bins and dog bins
  - Sports pitches maintenance including a major sports facility with grass and artificial surfaces at Henwick Worthy.
  - Maintenance of horticultural areas including roundabouts
  - Also including buys ins; i.e. schools grounds maintenance, council facilities grounds maintenance, parish dog bins collections
- 4.5 Three bids were received by the Council. The evaluation panel consisted of 4 officers from the Countryside Team and the evaluation criteria was based on 70% Quality (including 10% Social Value) & 30% Price.
- 4.6 The successful bidder scored 74 points out of 100 in the scoring matrix, with the unsuccessful bidders scoring 71 and 68 respectively.
- 4.7 Officers are therefore seeking approval from Executive to formally award the Contract to the successful bidder.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Introduction

- 5.1 Following the submission and approval of the Procurement Strategy on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022 to Procurement Board, the Grounds Maintenance Invitation to Tender was advertised on the Council's procurement portal and all relevant Government portals in June 2022 and 3 tender proposals were received in July 2022.

### Background

- 5.2 Many of the landscaping and grounds maintenance industry's markets were adversely affected by the C-19 outbreak due to responsive actions by the government, including stay-at-home measures and the closure of schools, retailers, hotels and sports clubs. As a result, demand for industry services fell during 2020/21, and is likely to remain constrained in the current year.
- 5.3 Global supply chain and manufacturing disruptions are expected to have limited the equipment, machinery and materials available for the industry to use, inflating costs for operators.
- 5.4 Companies are expected to continue to contend with businesses and consumers, including local authorities, managing spending budgets with greater care while economic conditions remain uncertain. These factors were likely to be reflected in contractor costs.
- 5.5 Grounds maintenance contractors are also experiencing difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, with many staff on the front line of services being paid at or close to the minimum wage. Within the current contract we are experiencing greater machinery downtime due to supply chain issues. Both of these factors are absolutely critical to the delivery of a successful contract.
- 5.6 It was very clear that uncertainties regarding fuel prices and the rate of inflation would have an impact on how contractors tendered for this particular contract.

### Proposals

- 5.7 All bids received were evaluated in accordance with the published evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria, amongst other things, tested all bidders' ability to deliver the service and addressed the issues, noted below at s5.17, which have arisen in the course of the previous contract. As a consequence of retendering and careful selection the following improvements will be realised over the life of the Contract.
- 5.8 The proposed urban grass team are well staffed with full time and seasonal operatives and significantly they have a team leader to oversee productivity and be responsible for the same. Lack of supervision has caused issues in the current contract. They have a designated horticultural operative linked to a team leader who will carry out work on roundabouts and other horticultural operations. This level of staffing is very much required on this contract. Under previous contractual arrangements the horticulture team were shared with Newbury Town Council.



- 5.9 The contractor will have access to the Services contract management and customer enquiry management system which will deal with finance, budgeting, open space management, employee and works programme management. Public requests for service will be handled directly by the Contractor against a set service standard (KPI) for which the contractor will be accountable. This provides a greater level of customer service than the current ELM system which will be replaced.
- 5.10 To ensure that it is not simply “business as usual”, the successful bidder is required to ensure standards are continuously achieved. Staff will be re-trained at the start of the contract and a bespoke Quality Standards Pictorial Guide will be produced, which will be aligned to the Council’s Specification. Daily self-monitoring undertaken by Team Leaders ensure standards are achieved whilst detecting any substandard work. This enables immediate rectification actions to be taken by the client and contractor. A minimum of 15% of the previous day’s recorded task completions will be monitored by the contractors’ Assistant Contract Manager through site inspections and viewing photographs uploaded onto the contract management system.
- 5.11 Other added benefits include a promise to provide residents access to the contractor’s work schedules and engaging with them to proactively gain feedback to help inform improvements and deliver a customer-focused, quality service. Furthermore they will host online webchat event each season, allowing residents to talk directly to contractor’s Management Team.
- 5.12 They will have also designated ‘Community Champions’, who will be given additional customer service training and be competent communicators. They will wear a ‘Community Champion’ high-viz identifying them whilst onsite, providing a visible presence for the public to ask questions and engage with them.
- 5.13 The Successful bidder have stated that they will be paying staff a sum close to the living wage which should help address recruitment and retention issues, both of which have significantly hampered the current contract to date.
- 5.14 Officers are clear that regular proactive contract management will be required in order to hold the contractor to account and to ensure they deliver against each of the promises made in their submission.

## **Finance**

- 5.15 The estimated annual contract costs, including for additional works, is £1.03m. The overall contract revenue budget available is £703k. This represents an increase of £283k in the contract value and a budget pressure of £327k. The most significant increase in costs is down to the maintenance of grassed areas and cleansing operations.
- 5.16 The costs for the first year (up to the end of March 2024) of the contract are fixed and thereafter adjusted on an annual basis by CPI.
- 5.17 The significant price increase in the proposed contract sum should be viewed with respect to the following

- The main price increases are in the areas of grass cutting (£344k) and waste/dog bin cleaning (£135k).
- The current contract from 2018 has been significantly under resourced and performed particularly poorly. Service requests for Grounds Maintenance (grass cutting and dog bin emptying) issues forms the single largest area of correspondence for the Environment Department.
- The Board will note that WBC currently benefit from economies of scale as a result of the shared contract with Newbury Town Council (NTC) – these savings will not be realised in the proposed new contract from 2023.
- The new contract does not represent a change in specification, however it is clear that the previous contract was significantly under-priced which resulted in quality issues throughout the life of the current contract.
- To address the recruitment issues in this area increased salaries have been proposed. This should assist with staff retention, which has been a significant issue in the current contract.
- As will be experienced across the Council, inflation and fuel costs are significantly increasing, as are machinery and plant deployed on the contract and these risks will have been built into all tender prices
- The contract will be subject to CPI in April of each year, however there will be no inflation until April 2024.

## 6 Other options considered

- 6.1 Officers considered procurement options for grounds maintenance prior to the commencement of the current contract in 2018. Particular consideration was given to an in-house option as well as procurement through an existing framework. Both were dismissed for reasons which are still relevant in the current climate. An in-house service isn't appropriate for a contract of this size given the capital investment required and the lean client structure which exists, whilst frameworks often apply a 'one size fits all' approach which are unresponsive to change.
- 6.2 Another approach officers considered briefly was to break down the various contract elements into lots. This approach had its own advantages and disadvantages.
- 6.3 Overall officers considered that in practice breaking the contract up and employing multiple companies was more likely to increase the risk of failure of the contract as they may, in fact, have less resilience given the current economic uncertainties, Brexit concerns and Covid 19 impacts. Greater certainty over contract size has inherent value in itself making the tender more attractive to bidders.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The Executive resolves to:
- (c) award the contract for the provision of Ground Maintenance Services to the successful bidder; and
  - (d) 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 – Equalities Impact Assessment

8.2 Appendix B – Data Protection Impact Assessment

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### 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

### Officer details:

Name: Chris Pathmadeva  
Job Title: Category Manager – Communities & Wellbeing  
Tel No: 01635 503607  
E-mail: [chris.pathmadeva1@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:chris.pathmadeva1@westberks.gov.uk)

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## Appendix A

### Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

<b>What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:</b>	Contract Award for the provision of Grounds Maintenance for the period from January 2023 to March 2028
<b>Summary of relevant legislation:</b>	
<b>Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's priorities for improvement?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes</li> <li>• Support everyone to reach their full potential</li> <li>• Support businesses to start develop and thrive in West Berkshire</li> <li>• Develop local infrastructure including housing to support and grow the local economy Maintain a green district</li> <li>• Ensure sustainable services through innovation and partnerships</li> </ul>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name of Budget Holder:</b>	Paul Hendry
<b>Name of Service/Directorate:</b>	Environment Department / Place Directorate
<b>Name of assessor:</b>	Chris Pathmadeva
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2022
<b>Version and release date (if applicable):</b>	

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

**(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed**

decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
<b>Aims:</b>	Provision of a Grounds Maintenance contract
<b>Objectives:</b>	The main objective is to make sure that we have a Grounds Maintenance Contract, in place after the 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2023, which provides value for money and delivers a quality service to our customers whilst addressing the issues faced in the current contract
<b>Outcomes:</b>	The issues faced in the current contract have been addressed by the successful bidder and regular contract monitoring meetings will ensure issues are dealt with on a proactive rather than reactive basis
<b>Benefits:</b>	The proposed urban grass team are well staffed with full time and seasonal operatives and significantly they have a team leader to oversee productivity and be responsible for the same

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

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	Positive	The contract requires adherence to Equality Act 2010 and The Equality and Human Rights Commission's Guidance for Employers
Disability	Positive	The contract requires adherence to Equality Act 2010 and The Equality and Human Rights Commission's Guidance for Employers
Gender Reassignment	N/A	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N/A	
Pregnancy and Maternity	N/A	
Race	Positive	The contract requires adherence to Equality Act 2010 and The Equality and Human Rights Commission's Guidance for Employers

**Contract Award for the Provision of Grounds Maintenance**

Religion or Belief	Positive	The contract requires adherence to Equality Act 2010 and The Equality and Human Rights Commission's Guidance for Employers
Sex	Positive	The contract requires adherence to Equality Act 2010 and The Equality and Human Rights Commission's Guidance for Employers
Sexual Orientation	N/A	
<b>Further Comments:</b>		
N/A		

<b>(3) Result</b>	
<b>Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Clauses within the contract address the requirement to adhere with equality legislation and promote equal opportunities	
<b>Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Clauses within the contract address the requirement to adhere with equality legislation and promote equal opportunities	

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

**Name:** Chris Pathmadeva

**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022

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

## Appendix B

### 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](mailto:dp@westberks.gov.uk)

Directorate:	Place
Service:	Environment
Team:	Countryside Team
Lead Officer:	Paul Hendry
Title of Project/System:	Provision of Grounds Maintenance
Date of Assessment:	23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2022

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

	Yes	No
<p><b>Will you be processing SENSITIVE or “special category” personal data?</b></p> <p><i>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”</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Will you be processing data on a large scale?</b></p> <p><i>Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Will your project or system have a “social media” dimension?</b></p> <p><i>Note – will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Will any decisions be automated?</b></p> <p><i>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?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



	Yes	No
Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised</p>		

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.

# York House – Freehold disposal

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	3 November 2022
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Ross Mackinnon
<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	16 September 2022
<b>Report Author:</b>	Richard Turner
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4279

## 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To discuss and make recommendation for the freehold disposal of York House.

## 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Executive resolves to delegate to the Executive Director Resources and the Executive Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development, the disposal of the freehold of York House on the open market (either through a marketing agent or auction)

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	Disposal of the freehold will realise a capital receipt for WBC.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	There are no anticipated Human Resources implications.
<b>Legal:</b>	WBC Legal Services Team will require to be instructed to act for WBC in the legal sale and transfer of the site.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	There is opportunity to both remove the revenue costs and the risks associated with the ownership of the asset, particularly in its current vacant condition.
<b>Property:</b>	Property Services will lead on the disposal and make appointments necessary to conclude the sale.

<b>Policy:</b>	<p>Over an extended period of time the Asset Management Group has offered opportunity to the operational services to present a viable operational purpose for York House to support those services and the policies they support. A number of options have been explored but none has been successful.</p> <p>There is now opportunity to realise a capital receipt which can benefit the council’s capital programme and its funding.</p>			
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>				
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	N	Y	N	
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	N	Y	N	
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>	N	Y	N	
<b>Health Impact:</b>	N	Y	N	
<b>ICT Impact:</b>	N	Y	N	
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>				
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>	N	Y	N	

<b>Core Business:</b>	N	Y	N	
<b>Data Impact:</b>	N	Y	N	
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	Through engaging with WBC operational services to seek expressions of interest in pursuing an operational use of York House.			

## 4 Executive Summary

4.1 York House, located at 50 Andover Road, Newbury RG14 6JW is on a site of approximately 0.33 acres, constructed in the 1920's as a residential property and offers circa 3,300 sq. ft. of accommodation.

During its history as well as use as a private home the property has also been used as residential care home and more recently a community based clinic for Children's Services and supporting staff.

4.2 Following transfer of West Berkshire Council, Children & Family Services staff from York House to West Point House in May 2018, there have been a number of different expressions of interest in the building for operational purposes, none of which has proved viable.

4.3 Most recent interest has been explored by the WBC Housing Team for the purposes of the development for affordable housing, which resulted in no interest being expressed through local Registered Providers.

4.4 On an interim basis the Housing Team has been using the building for operational purposes as a 'touchpoint' for the Rough Sleeping Team. This has operated between January of 2020 and September 2022, with the building now returning to being managed as a vacant asset.

4.5 At its meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> August 2022, Asset Management Group (AMG) agreed that all avenues for an alternative use had been exhausted and recommendation be progressed for the disposal of the freehold of York House.

4.6 With the approval to progress with a disposal, the asset will be placed on the open market through a property agent or through auction

The council has had some recent success in disposal at auction with 1A Bath Road being sold well above anticipated value. Auction may be a good method for York House.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Introduction

5.1 York House has been largely vacant since May 2018, although having temporary operational use between January 2020 and September 2022. All potential operational options have been explored and none has come forward as viable. It is now proposed to progress to a disposal of the asset.

### Background

5.2 At its meeting of 12 December 2017 the Asset Management Group (AMG) received a report proposing the transfer of West Berkshire Council (WBC) Children & Family Services staff from York House to West Point House. This was agreed with the transfer of staff was made in May 2018 with York House becoming vacant.

5.3 At its meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018 AMG agreed to retain York House and pursue expressions of interest from WBC operational services and that of external interested parties. The following options were explored, none of which has proven viable to progress:

- (a) Adult Social Care      Respite Care accommodation;
- (b) Approach made to the WBC and SHA (Sovereign Housing Association) Joint venture. No interest expressed owing to the small nature of the site;
- (c) Interest received in leasing the property by a local GP practice;
- (d) Interest from St Barts school;
- (e) Interest from WBC Housing team to pursue possible emergency accommodation and house in multiple occupation;
- (f) Interest from WBC Housing Team to pursue disposal to a Registered Provider for the purposes of developing for affordable housing;

5.4 In addition to the above, interest has been received from WBC Education Service for the purposes of education for young people with SEN & SEND, specifically young people of secondary age who are emotionally based school avoiders (EBSA) (received at AMG 22 May 2022). This remains a potential option but a Business case and Brief is yet to be drafted.

5.5 In the interim it was agreed the Housing Team use the site operationally as a 'touchpoint' for their services. This has operated since January 2020 and the site is currently being returned to WBC Property Services and managed as a vacant asset.

5.6 At its meeting of 18th August 2022, Asset Management Group (AMG) agreed that all avenues for an alternative use had been exhausted and recommendation be progressed for the disposal of the freehold of York House.

## Proposals

- 5.7 The disposal of the freehold of York House on the open market (either through a marketing agent or auction) with an estimated sale value of £700,000.
- 5.8 Disposal through an auction is an attractive option with the sale being almost instant and transfer of funds quick. If disposing by way of auction a suitable reserve price will be applied to the sale on the recommendation of the auctioneer or WBC appointed valuer.

## 6 Other options considered

- 6.1 Do nothing. The property is currently vacant, has no current operational need and costing WBC revenue funding to maintain the vacant property. Not recommended.
- 6.2 There remains the opportunity to progress the proposal from the WBC Education Service for the purposes of education for young people with SEN & SEND, specifically young people of secondary age who are emotionally based school avoiders (EBSA).

This option is not yet certain and more detailed feasibility work is required to offer certainty to progress. This will prolong the period of vacancy for the site.

- 6.3 Option has already been pursued in 2018 for the purposes of the redevelopment for ASC respite care. This was withdrawn by the service.
- 6.4 Option has already been pursued in 2018 for the potential disposal of the site to the West Berkshire Council and Sovereign Housing Association, Joint venture. Feedback was that the site was too small for viable redevelopment.
- 6.5 Option has already been pursued in 2020/21 for the leasing out of the site to a local GP Practice which has expressed an interest. The GP practice withdrew following a site visit.
- 6.6 Option has already been pursued in 2021/22 following expression of interest from St. Barts School. Following numerous communications St. Barts has not progressed this any further.
- 6.7 During 2018, the WBC Housing Team expressed an interest in development of the site for emergency accommodation for the homeless. This proposal was withdrawn by the service.
- 6.8 Further interest was expressed in 2020 by the WBC Housing Team for the development of the site for affordable housing through a procurement process with local Registered Providers. Following a procurement process there was insufficient interest to progress.
- 6.9 To retain the vacant property pending yet to be identified service need to come forward.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Given the exhaustive search for both internal operational, and external potential uses for the site it is felt WBC has now reached a point where the best approach is to proceed with the disposal of the asset.

## 8 Appendices

### 8.1 Appendix A – Photographs, location plan and floor plans

#### Subject to Call-In:

Yes:  No:

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

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position

Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

**Wards affected:** Newbury Wash Common

#### Officer details:

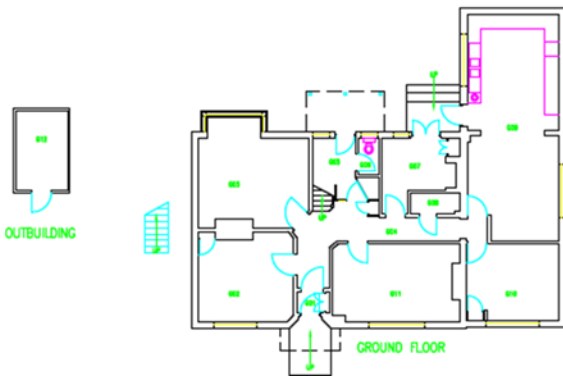
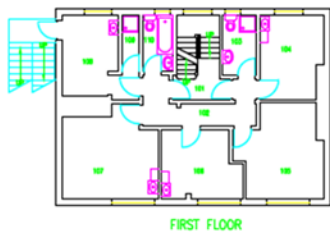
Name: Richard Turner  
Job Title: Property Services Manager  
Tel No: 01635 503653  
E-mail: [Richard.Turner@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Richard.Turner@westberks.gov.uk)

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York House – Freehold disposal



# Extension of existing leisure management contract from January 2023 to June 2023

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	3 November 2022
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Howard Woollaston
<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	6 October 2022
<b>Report Author:</b>	Paul Martindill
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4267

## 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To consider the extension of the current leisure management contract to June 2023 to allow for the conclusion of the leisure management procurement process.
- 1.2 The financial details are included in a Part II report due to the commercially sensitive information that could influence the current live procurement for a new 10 year management contract.

## 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 Executive resolves to:
- 2.2 Approve the forecasted costs relating to the extension of the Leisure Contract, as detailed in the Part II report, until the conclusion of the tender process due to be completed by June 2023 and that the Service Director for Communities and Wellbeing approves the variation agreement in consultation with Legal Services and Finance.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	In collating the revised budget pressures the following factors have been taken into consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued loss of income resulting from the business disruption caused by the Covid pandemic</li> </ul>

**Extension of existing leisure management contract from January 2023 to June 2023**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The unprecedented cost of energy inflation</li> <li>• Contract inflation at 9.1%</li> <li>• Efficiency savings that were based on the new leisure contract being procured one year earlier.</li> <li>• New competition in the local fitness market</li> </ul>
<b>Human Resource:</b>	<p>Provided the contract runs to the end of the agreed contract extension then TUPE will apply in relation to the obligations of the operator of the new contract.</p>
<b>Legal:</b>	<p>There needs to be a variation in place with the financial scope clearly set out including against the base position. Any negotiations with Parkwood should ensure that there is no double counting including for energy provision.</p> <p>Any changes that entail termination of a service provision or termination of individual centres will need to be carefully considered.</p> <p>Since this report is not going to be in before end of October deadline for extension and that you have already committed to the tender process, it would be prudent to issue a letter to Legacy Leisure stating that until the Executive any continuation of this contract is on the existing financial position.</p> <p>Shiraz Sheikh, Sarah House &amp; Dawn Bond 03.10.2022.</p>
<b>Risk Management:</b>	<p>The impact of energy cost inflation represents the biggest risk to accurately predicting the budget pressure for the remainder of this financial year and for the period April to June 2023.</p> <p>The impact of the general cost of living crisis on leisure centre attendances and income generation is difficult to predict with precision.</p>
<b>Property:</b>	<p>Only one site, Northcroft Leisure Centre, is owned by West Berkshire Council and does not have any Joint Use Agreements in place with schools and Parish Councils.</p>
<b>Policy:</b>	<p>Leisure Centres provide a major contribution to the health and well-being of residents</p>

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>		X		
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Health Impact:</b>		X		
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>		X		
<b>Core Business:</b>		X		
<b>Data Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	Any proposal to reduce the leisure offer would be subject to a formal consultation exercise as per Council policy.			



## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 Budget pressure on the leisure centre service has been driven by two primary factors, the disruption caused to business continuity by the Covid pandemic and energy inflation and the associated cost of living crisis.
- 4.2 The Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy (SLC) was selected from the Sport England approved list to review Parkwood's financial forecasts to the end of extended contract period. Their conclusion is that the contract has not seen a particularly strong post-Covid recovery compared with national averages, but that the recovery is within the range of other contracts reviewed. The SLC report is included in the appendices of the Part II report.
- 4.3 All options to mitigate the cost to the Council have been explored and are detailed in the Part II report.
- 4.4 Recent Government announcements relating to energy caps for businesses is forecast to achieve some savings in the period October 2022 to March 2023. Professional leisure bodies are continuing to actively lobby National Government for support because the current economic circumstances are an existential threat to the leisure industry.
- 4.5 In view of all the options considered, it is recommended to extend the contract for a further six months to enable the current procurement process to be completed and a new contract awarded in March 2023 with commencement on 01 July 2023.
- 4.6 The contract extension will be on the basis of the continuation of an open book arrangement.
- 4.7 The new leisure contract will reveal the impact of the Council's committed capital investment (£9M+) alongside new proposals for programming and marketing. Following the evaluation of tenders, the Council will be better informed of the long-term financial costs of maintaining all the leisure centre services. It is therefore, recommended to support the leisure operator through to the end of the current contract period until June 2023, and then to determine the scope of services and on-going affordability, when the contract evaluation is reported to West Berkshire Council in March 2023.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Introduction

- 5.1 During the Covid pandemic, leisure centres were required to close for a period of five months in 2020 and for four months in 2021, resulting in substantial business disruption. The national leisure industry has not witnessed a return to pre-Covid pandemic levels for attendances. In 2022 energy inflation, and the associated cost of living crisis, has resulted in a stagnating recovery, creating severe budget pressures for the current financial year.

## Background

### Support Agreement during Covid Pandemic

- 5.2 In line with Government guidance for Local Authorities, a support mechanism was agreed with the leisure operator. This was essential to ensure the leisure operation could remain viable during closures when no income was achieved.
- 5.3 The closures did not run over a continuous 12 month period, however, the centres were closed for almost ten months in total. Following each of the three openings, Covid restrictions continued to apply which meant that centres could not operate at their full capacity for approximately a further seven months.
- 5.4 With the extension of the current contract for an additional year, it is a condition of the agreement that the leisure operator continues to receive support until either a recovery is seen or the extension to the contract comes to an end.

### Current Position

- 5.5 Central Government support ceased in March 2022, leaving local authorities to negotiate with leisure operators to determine the ongoing levels of financial support required to continue service delivery.
- 5.6 In 2022 the UK has witnessed a significant increase in energy inflation, unprecedented in the last 50 years and this has added significant operational costs to leisure centre management. However pre-agreed energy purchasing arrangements undertaken by Parkwood has offered a degree of protection to inflation in comparison to other leisure contracts. Over the course of the coming months, these purchasing arrangements end.
- 5.7 Due to the costs of heating pools, supplying power to fitness equipment, the cost of heating, lighting, air conditioning in sports halls and changing rooms, energy inflation has a much more significant impact on leisure centres than on other services.
- 5.8 In March 2022 a new 220 station Pure Gym opened approximately 0.5 miles from Northcroft Leisure Centre creating additional competition in the leisure market.
- 5.9 In summary, these factors have led to a budget pressure until the conclusion of the current contract at the end of June 2023.
- 5.10 To test the legitimacy of Parkwood's financial forecasts (both income and expenditure) and to compare their performance with other operators in the market, an external review was commissioned and undertaken by Sports, Leisure and Culture (SLC), an approved consultancy from Sport England's Framework of Suppliers. Parkwood were fully co-operative during this process.

### Key Findings in SLC Report

- 5.11 The SLC report highlights that comparisons should be used with extreme caution given that a number of factors will impact on recovery including the mix of facilities, age of the building, local demographics, local changes to demand and supply and local decisions relating to the speed of reopening.

5.12 The national fitness market has failed to return to pre-Covid levels. This impact has been exacerbated in West Berkshire by the opening of new competing facilities in the area, which have taken market share from Council provision.

### **The Benefits of the Leisure Centre Services**

5.13 Since 2015, West Berkshire has witnessed increasing provision from the commercial sector, with the arrival of the David Lloyd Centre and, in more recent years, the expansion of Pure Gyms. Most of the commercial sector is providing its services primarily for adults. In contrast to this, West Berkshire's public leisure centres provides a unique offer of affordable health and well-being services that make a significant contribution to the health and social well-being of all residents.

5.14 Prior to Covid, leisure centres were at just over 1,000,000 visits per annum. Uniquely, the centres provide swimming lessons for more than 20 primary schools and some secondary schools, and there are more than 2,500 children on the centres swimming programme outside of school usage. Many older people who experience problems with joints use swimming as their main activity to sustain their health. The pools are also heavily used by children and families during school holiday periods.

5.15 West Berkshire's leisure centres offers a home to many local sports clubs including Newbury and District Swimming Club, Burghfield FC, four martial arts clubs, badminton clubs, cricket clubs, West Berkshire Fencing Club and West Berkshire Roller Skating Club, enhancing community cohesion and local identity and bringing together children, adults, volunteers and coaches to enable many people to fulfil their sporting potential and improve their quality of life.

5.16 Specific health initiatives run from West Berkshire's leisure centres including the Activity for Health programme which includes the GP Exercise on Referral programme which is targeted at people at risk of coronary heart disease and provides a first stepping stone back into activity, which can potentially be live saving.

### **Proposals**

5.17 To retain the full opening of the leisure centres and to report on the affordability of retaining the full service following the completion of tender evaluations and negotiations to Executive in March 2023.

5.18 During this period Parkwood performance will be actively monitored by the leisure client team to try to improve the financial position.

5.19 The leisure client team will also actively review all proposed expenditure relating to maintenance and equipment to ensure vital services are maintained but any areas of optional expenditure are evaluated before budget is committed

## **6 Other options considered**

6.1 These are detailed within the Part II report



## 7 Conclusion

7.1 The review of financial performance and forecasts for 2022/23 has not revealed any opportunities for the Council to significantly reduce the cost of its leisure facilities in the short term. The income and expenditure forecasts provided by Parkwood Leisure are generally reasonable. Under an open book process the actual costs will be determined by Parkwood's operational performance and may be less than those forecast but equally, the possibility remains that the costs could be as forecast, or even worse. Similarly, an upturn in market conditions linked to stronger income recovery than projected by Parkwood will reduce the deficit but if recovery rates continue to stagnate then this could have the opposite effect. In the current circumstances it is recommended to provide financial support and to extend the current contract from January to June 2023 to enable the procurement of a new leisure management contract to be concluded – please refer to Part II report for financial details.

## 8 Appendices

8.1 None

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### 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

### Officer details:

Name: Paul Martindill  
Job Title: Interim Service Lead - Leisure  
Tel No: 07575202839  
E-mail: [paul.martindill1@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:paul.martindill1@westberks.gov.uk)

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## Item 14:

### **Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 3 November 2022.**

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

**A. Question submitted by Councillor Lee Dillon to the Portfolio Holder for Leader of the Council:**

*"Why do residents have to pre-register for WBC webinars?"*

**B. Question submitted by Councillor Carlyne Culver to the Portfolio Holder for Internal Governance and Strategic Partnerships:**

*"What plans does the council have to raise awareness among voters of the need to possess an acceptable form of ID in readiness for next May's election?"*

**C. Question submitted by Councillor Gareth Hurley to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education:**

*"In these changing times, our children and young people face difficulties and challenges of many kinds. What is the Council doing to help them?"*

**D. Question submitted by Councillor Tony Vickers to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transformation:**

*"What if any powers does this Council have to control persistent light pollution from sources in the countryside?"*

**E. Question submitted by Councillor Adrian Abbs to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

*"Can the Portfolio holder detail the legal grounds under which the Council can see the former football ground as part of the LRIE, given the land is still classed as a football ground and an asset of community value?"*

**F. Question submitted by Councillor Adrian Abbs to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Economic Development:**

*"Exactly how is the council going to achieve the change of status of the Faraday Road football ground to one where it serves another purpose connected to the LRIE?"*

**G. Question submitted by Councillor Adrian Abbs to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transformation:**

*"What is the exact progress to date made by West Berkshire Council towards net zero?"*

**H. Question submitted by Councillor Adrian Abbs to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transformation:**

*"How is West Berkshire Council going to encourage use of its kerb side charging points along West Mills Road?"*

## **Item 14:**

### **Member Questions to be answered at the Executive meeting on 3 November 2022.**

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 Adrian Abbs to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transformation:**

*“As it has declared a climate emergency, has WBC performed a recent review of the energy consumption across its properties to see where energy savings can be made?”*

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# Agenda Item 17.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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